



# General Assembly

Seventy-fifth session

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Official Records

*President:* Mr. Bozkir . . . . . (Turkey)

*The meeting was called to order at 10 a.m.*

## Agenda item 33

### The role of diamonds in fuelling conflict

#### Draft resolution (A/75/L.65)

**The President:** Trading in conflict diamonds continues to be a matter of serious international concern. These tiny pieces of carbon can have a devastating impact on people's peace, safety and security in producing countries. Systematic and gross human rights violations are synonymous with the conflicts fuelled by the illegal trade in diamonds, conflicts that have had a negative impact on regional security, particularly in Africa, where the earth's diamonds are concentrated. It is imperative that Member States continue to take action to curb the flow and impact of conflict diamonds in order to meet their obligations regarding peace and security as set out in the Charter of the United Nations.

Since its creation in 2003, the Kimberley Process has explored ways and means of curbing the flow of illicit diamonds to the legitimate diamond market. This unique tripartite arrangement between Governments, the diamond industry and civil society has helped to control and monitor the international trade in rough diamonds, including by helping to implement United Nations resolutions effectively. It demonstrates what we can achieve when we work together. I encourage broad participation in the Process in order to curb the flow of illicit diamonds. When legal, that trade can fuel economic development rather than conflict. Channelled effectively, this billion-dollar industry can

help countries reduce poverty and meet the Sustainable Development Goals. The coronavirus disease pandemic has exacerbated existing vulnerabilities and hurt those most in need the hardest, and available resources, including diamonds, must be channelled to meet their urgent needs.

Draft resolution A/75/L.65, which has been submitted to the Assembly for action today, reflects the substantial progress and activity that have been achieved under the aegis of the Kimberley Process. We must ensure that the Process remains relevant so that diamonds fuel development rather than conflict.

I now give the floor to the representative of the Russian Federation to introduce draft resolution A/75/L.65.

**Mr. Varganov** (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): The Kimberley Process is a unique intergovernmental mechanism for restoring peace and promoting the legitimate trade in diamonds, primarily for the benefit of the people of the African continent. It has a key role in regulating the trade in rough natural diamonds.

Over its more than twenty years of existence, the Kimberley Process participants have not only agreed on minimum rules applicable to the diamond trade but have significantly expanded its agenda to include issues that are an integral part of development, such as responsible supply chains and business conduct, including respect for human and labour rights, combating money-laundering and the financing of terrorism, minimizing the impact on the environment and protecting it, the

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development of the regions of diamonds' origin and transparency in their production.

The Russian Federation's chairmanship of the Kimberley Process in 2020 coincided with an unprecedented global health crisis caused by the coronavirus disease pandemic. The restrictions resulting from the pandemic affected virtually every area of international cooperation, and the Process was no exception. Contacts had to be limited and annual meetings cancelled, and the process itself was effectively frozen for almost a year. In the circumstances, in August 2020 the participating countries took an administrative decision to postpone the presidency of the Russian Federation to 2021 and Botswana's to 2022.

Despite the freeze, the Russian Federation, in its role as Chair, affirms its commitment to the principles of the Kimberley Process and is ready to foster cooperation within it. In that regard, we decided to submit draft resolution A/75/L.65, entitled "The role of diamonds in fuelling conflict", to the General Assembly for consideration during its seventy-fifth session, under agenda item 33. The text is generally of a technical nature.

We would like to thank all the delegations that took part in the consultations on the draft resolution for their constructive stance and flexibility during the negotiations. Thanks to that attitude, we were able to reach agreement in a spirit of cooperation and mutual support. We also thank the countries that joined us as sponsors, and we look forward to the adoption of the text today by consensus.

Finally, we would like to express our regret that a member of the 2021 Kimberley Process secretariat who was supposed to travel to New York to introduce the draft resolution could not attend due to the non-issuance of a United States entry visa, despite the fact that the application was submitted well in advance. That is further evidence of the abuse by the United States of its status as the host country of United Nations Headquarters and of discriminatory measures against individual delegations.

**The President:** I now give the floor to the observer of the European Union.

**Mrs. Vissers** (European Union): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union (EU). The European Union and its member States, which act as a single participant in the Kimberley Process

Certification Scheme, are happy to join the consensus on draft resolution A/75/L.65 today.

The year 2020 was like no other, including for the Kimberley Process, which collectively decided to make it a pause year and postpone the 2020 and 2021 chairmanships of the Russian Federation and Botswana, respectively, by one year. The coronavirus disease pandemic brought unprecedented challenges, from the direct threat to health and well-being to the severe disruption to societies and economies and the devastating impact on lives and livelihoods. The EU welcomes the resumption of the work of the Kimberley Process despite the continuation of the pandemic.

The EU is proud of what the Kimberley Process has achieved since the Certification Scheme entered into force in 2003. This joint initiative of Governments, civil society and the industry has reinforced the message that diamonds belong to the communities that mine them, not to militias. For several countries and communities, the Kimberley Process has made the difference between war and peace.

One of the unique, defining features of the Kimberley Process is its tripartite structure. Both industry and civil society are essential elements of the Process. They have greatly contributed to its establishment and operation. The EU has been at the forefront of this unique global partnership, grounded in the United Nations, since the very beginning. It will continue to work to advance the objectives of the Kimberley Process with a view to ensuring that all participants meet the minimum requirements. As Vice-Chair of the Kimberley Process Working Group on Monitoring, the EU remains committed to working together with Botswana to give impetus to that work in order to further strengthen the effectiveness of the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme. The EU welcomes the progress made towards the establishment of a permanent secretariat. In that context, we welcome Austria's candidacy to serve as its host.

The EU continues to place artisanal mining communities at the core of its work, in line with the Brussels Declaration on Internal Controls of Participants with Rough Diamond Trading and Manufacturing, the Moscow Declaration on Improving Internal Controls over Alluvial Diamond Production, the Washington Declaration on Integrating Development of Artisanal and Small-Scale Diamond Mining with Kimberley Process Implementation and the 2030 Sustainable

Development Goals, in order to promote economic and social development and prosperity. The EU therefore continues to encourage and support cooperation on the implementation of the Process with a regional dimension in order to address common challenges, building on the experience of the Mano River Union.

The EU strongly supports the calls for the Kimberley Process to evolve and adapt to meet future challenges in the global diamond supply chain and welcomes efforts to continue strengthening it to ensure that it remains fit for purpose and provides assurance that diamonds are not tainted by violence and truly benefit those who mine them. We strongly believe in transparency and accountability in the rough-diamond supply chain to ensure a diligent approach to responsible rough-diamond sourcing. As a member of the Kimberley Process Central African Republic monitoring team, the EU remains concerned about the situation on the ground and continues to follow developments closely. We welcome the continuing commitment of the Government of the Central African Republic to working collaboratively with the monitoring team in order to ensure the traceability of rough-diamond shipments as a crucial element in the integrity of the Kimberley Process.

The Kimberley Process stands out as an example of the positive change that the international community can bring about when we work together towards a common objective. It stands out as a practical example of rules-based multilateralism that has had a real impact on the lives of people and communities across the globe. The EU remains committed to ensuring that the Kimberley Process continues to fulfil its role as a unique tool for conflict prevention, a catalyst for good governance and transparency in natural-resources management and as an instrument for peacebuilding and sustaining peace. We look forward to working constructively in that regard with the Chair, the Vice-Chair and all participants and observers in the Kimberley Process in the year ahead.

**Mr. Mmalane** (Botswana): We join other delegations in thanking the Russian Federation for spearheading the introduction under this important agenda item of draft resolution A/75/L.65, entitled “The role of diamonds in fuelling conflict: breaking the link between the illicit transaction of rough diamonds and armed conflict as a contribution to prevention and settlement of conflicts”. Russia’s able stewardship of the Kimberley Process in these difficult

times of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic has been remarkable. The delegation has fought to ensure business continuity to the best of its ability, especially with regard to maintaining working groups and committees.

The Government of Botswana welcomes the draft resolution’s adoption today. We believe that it represents the progress achieved in the Kimberley Process over the past 18 years, but more importantly the challenges that we as diamond-producing countries are facing today owing to the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, which has negatively affected the economies of all the participants in the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme, without exception. My country, Botswana, has been dependent on the proceeds from diamond sales for more than four decades, proceeds that have enabled us to implement and achieve our national development agenda. It is diamond revenue that has enabled Botswana to rise from being one of the poorest countries in the world at its independence in 1966 to an upper-middle-income country today. The importance of diamonds to Botswana’s development agenda is therefore unquestionable. My country’s diamonds are for development. It is against that backdrop that Botswana has been a sponsor of this resolution for the past 18 years, with a view to protecting the integrity of the diamond sector. The unanimous adoption of this yearly resolution confirms anew the importance of the diamond sector as a catalyst for promoting economic and social development. I would like to highlight some aspects of the draft resolution that are of particular importance to my delegation.

Today’s draft resolution calls for ensuring that the positive benefits of the legitimate diamond trade go to the producing countries. It therefore underlines the need for continued international action with regard to the ethical exploitation, sale and trade of diamonds. It also calls for efforts to enhance cooperative assistance to diamond-producing countries on best practices, capacity-building and compliance with Kimberley Process standards, rules, procedures and certifications, an area that my delegation has long advocated for. I therefore want to take this opportunity to encourage all participants in the Kimberley Process to continue adhering to the high standards of the Certification Scheme. We must not let our achievements to date regress.

Since the establishment of the Process in 2003, the numbers of conflict diamonds have dropped drastically,

in a clear indication of the success of the Certification Scheme and the diversity of its membership. However, the pandemic poses a threat to the success achieved so far, owing to the disruption it has inflicted on some of the activities of the Process. That is especially true with regard to the programme of its Working Group on Monitoring and its review visits. My delegation therefore supports the call to include the subject of the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic to the diamond trade, and how we will build back better, as an agenda item for 2021.

In conclusion, I want to reaffirm my delegation's commitment to the Kimberley Process initiative and to assure the Assembly and the Russian Federation of our continued cooperation and support during its chairmanship. We look forward to a constructive intersessional and plenary session in Russia during the year.

**Mr. Reed** (United Kingdom): The adoption of draft resolution A/75/L.65 today is an opportunity for the international community to reiterate its commitment to working together to reduce the flow of conflict diamonds. The United Kingdom would like to take this opportunity to thank the Kimberley Process for warmly welcoming our country as its newest participant. We were a founding member of the Kimberley Process and have been involved in this initiative since it began. We see the Process as an important conflict-prevention measure and continue to be committed to its principles and values. The United Kingdom looks forward to working with the whole Kimberley Process community in order to make progress on its work to prevent conflict and tackle other challenges facing this important agenda.

**Mr. Mabhongo** (South Africa): Let me begin by congratulating the Russian Federation on its role as caretaker of the Kimberley Process in 2020 during the challenging circumstances of the coronavirus disease pandemic. We also congratulate Russia on its chairmanship of the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme in 2021, ably supported by Botswana as Vice-Chair, and we assure them of South Africa's full support for their work.

As part of the group of southern African diamond-producing countries that initiated the Kimberley Process, whose membership has grown to 56 participants — including the 27 members of the European Union jointly, as one participant — the

Kimberley Process has come a long way in the 18 years since it was established in 2003, with its members now accounting for approximately 99.8 per cent of the global production of rough diamonds. However, while great strides have been made by the Kimberley Process in addressing the role of conflict diamonds in fuelling conflict, including conflicts in Africa, and in creating a positive development impact for people dependent on the diamond trade, the continued trade in conflict diamonds persists and remains a serious international concern, as draft resolution A/75/L.65, which we are adopting today, recognizes. Those persistent challenges clearly point to the need for continually enhancing the effectiveness of the Kimberley Process by means of many of the measures highlighted in the draft resolution, which we therefore welcome and fully support.

I would like to conclude by reaffirming South Africa's strong commitment to upholding the integrity and credibility of the Kimberley Process and ensuring that it remains relevant and effective in addressing the issue of conflict diamonds.

**The President:** The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/75/L.65, entitled "The role of diamonds in fuelling conflict: breaking the link between the illicit transaction of rough diamonds and armed conflict as a contribution to prevention and settlement of conflicts".

I give the floor to the representative of the Secretariat.

**Mr. Nakano** (Department for General Assembly and Conference Management): I should like to announce that since the submission of the draft resolution, and in addition to those delegations listed in document A/75/L.65, the following countries have become sponsors of the draft resolution: Albania, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, India, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Montenegro, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Arab Emirates, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and Zimbabwe.

**The President:** May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/75/L.65?

*Draft resolution A/75/L.65 was adopted (resolution 75/261).*

**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 14 (continued)**

#### **Integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic, social and related fields**

##### **Draft resolutions (A/75/L.62 and A/75/L.63)**

**The President:** I now give the floor to the representative of Morocco to introduce draft resolution A/75/L.62.

**Mr. Hilale (Morocco) (spoke in French):** It is my great pleasure to introduce draft resolution A/75/L.62, on the commemoration by the General Assembly of the International Day of Argania on 10 May every year.

Argania is an ancestral source of sustainable development for millions of people in my country and millions of workers, businesses, intermediaries and consumers across the world. This essence, which is unique to Morocco, was classified by UNESCO as an intangible cultural heritage of humanity in 2014 and by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) as a globally important agricultural heritage systems initiative in 2018.

By proclaiming 10 May annually as the International Day of Argania, the United Nations will promote it as a natural heritage of humanity and strengthen its impact on the socioeconomic, ecological, cultural, culinary, medical and sustainable development fronts. Argan, and its culinary and cosmetic derivatives, is an ancestral asset. Argan oil from Morocco, which is produced from trees managed in a centuries-old way by local people, and women in particular, working in cooperatives, has been frequently promoted both nationally and internationally and continues to be a vector for development that deserves our full attention and commitment.

This draft resolution promotes the role of the argan sector in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), including SDG 5, on gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls, especially in

rural areas. More than 4,000 local cooperatives are currently working on the production, manufacturing and promotion of argania, as well as in thousands of industrial and pharmaceutical cooperatives throughout the world. By commemorating the International Day of Argania, the United Nations is honouring the role of women in rural areas in creating jobs and preserving biodiversity. The International Day is also devoted to farmers, entrepreneurs, men and women alike, in supporting them in investing in sustainable techniques and promoting equitable value chains in solidarity that leave no one behind.

We are now in 2021, at the beginning of the Decade of Action for Sustainable Development. That gives the international community a deadline of 10 years to accelerate the implementation of the SDGs by 2030. For Morocco, the Decade of Action is also an opportunity to call for the conservation and recognition of argania as a national and international heritage whose intangible importance transcends borders. In 2020, His Majesty Mohammed VI launched a project to plant 10,000 hectares of argania in the vulnerable regions of Souss-Massa, Marrakech-Safi and Guelmim-Oued Noun. That project is large in scope and scale and its socioeconomic and ecological effects very much reflect how important resilience and adaptation to climate change are for our country, as well as for the United Nations and the planet as a whole.

In that connection, this draft resolution calls for strengthening financial support to initiatives for climate change led by developing countries, such as the Green Climate Fund, which has contributed to the project of preserving and planting argania in Morocco. The draft resolution will also be a catalyst for international cooperation with a view to supporting developing countries, helping professional organizations and local producers gain access to international markets and strengthening scientific research to innovate and add value.

Like many of the initiatives supported by international and national stakeholders, this draft resolution strengthens our collective choice to invest in the framework of sustainable development. My country will therefore continue to share its know-how to ensure that argania's full value is recognized and serves as an example of adaptation to climate change and socioeconomic development in developing countries, particularly in Africa. The protection of argania extends beyond the ecological dimension. It is a vocation that

fosters modern techniques for collecting and saving water, using renewable energy. Modern technologies and innovation are making possible what was once out of reach.

In conclusion, I would like to warmly thank all the delegations that collaborated on this draft resolution and participated in its negotiation process. I would also like to thank our national agency for the development of oasis zones and argan, the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, the FAO, UNESCO and the World Health Organization for their fruitful involvement in this issue. I enthusiastically invite delegations that have not yet done so to sponsor this draft resolution today and to align themselves with my country's drive to celebrate the International Day of Argania. Together we can give new momentum to sustainable development and contribute to releasing the full potential of the value chain of the biosphere.

**The President:** I now give the floor to the representative of India to introduce draft resolution A/75/L.63.

**Mr. Tirumurti (India):** I have the honour of introducing draft resolution A/75/L.63, entitled "International Year of Millets, 2023", submitted by Bangladesh, Kenya, Nepal, Nigeria, the Russian Federation, Senegal and my own country, India.

At the outset, we would like to thank the more than 60 delegations that have sponsored this initiative, and we invite others to join as well. We call on all members to join in promoting the International Year of Millets.

Millets, often called nutri-cereals, encompass a diverse group of cereals and were among the earliest plants to be domesticated. They have served as a traditional staple crop for millions of families in sub-Saharan Africa and Asia. More than 90 per cent of millet production today takes place in developing countries in Africa and Asia. Millets are more nutritious than rice or wheat. They are gluten-free, have a low glycemic index, are rich in protein, fibres and micronutrients such as iron, zinc and calcium, and hold immense promise for people with micronutrient deficiencies. They provide high energy, high dietary fibre, proteins with a balanced amino-acid profile and many essential minerals, vitamins and antioxidants, all of which play a substantial role in lowering diabetes. Millets also grow in poor soils with little or no inputs, have low carbon and water footprints, are resistant

to many crop diseases and pests and can survive in adverse climate conditions.

While millet cultivation has been historically widespread, its production is declining in many countries. There is an urgent need to promote the nutritional and ecological benefits of millets to consumers, producers and decision-makers to improve production efficiencies, research and development investments and food sector linkages.

The primary objective of the draft resolution before the Assembly is to raise awareness and increase direct policy action regarding the nutritional and health benefits of millet consumption and the suitability of millets for cultivation under adverse and changing climate conditions. Its adoption will help focus enhanced investment in research and development and extension services related to millets. The draft resolution is based on resolution 10/2019 of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), on the benefits of millet consumption, adopted by the FAO at its forty-first session, held in Rome in June 2019. The resolution requested the General Assembly to declare 2023 the International Year of Millets. The draft is also based on resolution 70/259, which proclaimed the United Nations Decade of Action on Nutrition, recommendation 10 of the second International Conference on Nutrition and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 2, on ending hunger, and 3, on ensuring healthy lives and promoting well-being.

We believe that the commemoration of the International Year of Millets will help to create greater awareness of millet production. It will contribute to food security, nutrition, support to the livelihoods and incomes of farmers, poverty eradication and the achievement of the SDGs, particularly in regions that are drought-prone or threatened by climate change. It will also help promote millets as a key component of the food basket. We are confident that with the active participation of all sections of society, we can reap a range of benefits during this International Year of Millets.

In conclusion, I would like to thank all the sponsors, especially the delegations of Bangladesh, Kenya, Nepal, Nigeria, the Russian Federation and Senegal, for their support in the work that led to the submission of this important draft resolution, whose adoption we will deeply appreciate.

**The President:** We shall now proceed to consider draft resolutions A/75/L.62 and A/75/L.63. Delegations wishing to make a statement in explanation of vote or position before the vote on either or both of the draft resolutions are invited to do so now in one intervention.

The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/75/L.62, entitled “International Day of Argania”. I give the floor to the representative of the Secretariat.

**Mr. Nakano** (Department for General Assembly and Conference Management): I should like to announce that since the submission of the draft resolution, and in addition to the delegations listed in document A/75/L.62, the following countries have also become sponsors of A/75/L.62: Algeria, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Benin, Bhutan, the Plurinational State of Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cabo Verde, Cambodia, Cameroon, the Central African Republic, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Comoros, Côte d’Ivoire, Cuba, Djibouti, Dominica, the Dominican Republic, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Eswatini, Ethiopia, Fiji, Gabon, the Gambia, Georgia, Ghana, Grenada, Guatemala, Guyana, India, Indonesia, Iraq, Israel, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kiribati, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, the Lao People’s Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libya, Malawi, Malaysia, the Maldives, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Nauru, Nepal, the Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Qatar, Rwanda, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Somalia, South Africa, Spain, the Sudan, Suriname, Tajikistan, Togo, Tonga, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Tuvalu, Uganda, Ukraine, the United Arab Emirates, the United Republic of Tanzania, Uzbekistan, Vanuatu, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

**The President:** May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/75/L.62?

*Draft resolution A/75/L.62 was adopted* (resolution 75/262).

**The President:** The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/75/L.63, entitled “International Year of Millets, 2023”. I give the floor to the representative of the Secretariat.

**Mr. Nakano** (Department for General Assembly and Conference Management): I should like to announce that since the submission of the draft resolution and in addition to the delegations listed in document A/75/L.63, the following countries have also become sponsors of A/75/L.63: Afghanistan, Algeria, Argentina, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, the Plurinational State of Bolivia, Brazil, Cameroon, the Central African Republic, Chile, China, Colombia, Cuba, Egypt, Eswatini, Ethiopia, Georgia, Guatemala, Guinea, Indonesia, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Israel, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, the Lao People’s Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Lesotho, Malaysia, the Maldives, Mali, Mauritius, Mongolia, Nicaragua, the Niger, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, the Philippines, Qatar, Rwanda, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Tajikistan, Togo, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela and Zambia.

**The President:** May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/75/L.63?

*Draft resolution A/75/L.63 was adopted* (resolution 75/263).

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

**Mr. Leiby** (United States of America): I have two explanations of position. I will first deliver an explanation of position on resolution 75/262, on the International Day of Argania.

The United States joins the consensus on the resolution, and we thank Morocco for its facilitation. We underscore the fact that certain documents referenced in the resolution, including the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, are non-binding documents that do not create rights or obligations under international law.

With regard to the twelfth preambular paragraph, the United States recognizes the use of argan oil in traditional and complementary medicine and in cosmetic products but does not recognize benefits or properties that have not been approved by the United States Food and Drug Administration.

On the fourteenth preambular paragraph, we disagree with the implication that financial flows should be one-way, from developed to developing countries, and we stress the importance of market integration and

private-sector involvement in sustainable development and climate adaptation and mitigation.

Lastly, on operative paragraph 4, the United Nations should not be dictating scopes of work to organizations through channels outside Member State and governing-body oversight, especially with no clear way of funding.

I shall now deliver our explanation of position on resolution 75/263, on the International Year of Millets.

The United States joins the consensus on the resolution, and we thank India for its facilitation. We underscore that certain documents referenced in the resolution, including the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, are non-binding documents that do not create rights or obligations under international law.

On operative paragraphs 3 and 4, the United Nations should not be dictating scopes of work to organizations through channels outside Member State and governing-body oversight, especially with no clear way of funding.

**Mr. Varganov** (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): The Russian delegation welcomes the adoption of resolution 75/263, on the International Year of Millets, 2023, and we thank India for that constructive and useful initiative.

Millet is one of the world's most ancient agricultural crops, including on Russian soil, where the grain produced from it is used in traditional recipes. Despite its nutritional value and health merits, in recent decades global production of it has dwindled. Even in the Russian Federation, a major millet producer and exporter, the harvest during the past year totalled just under 400,000 tons. We believe that the initiative prepared by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and supported by the General Assembly on the International Year of Millets will draw international attention to the merits of that important crop. In our view, it will help to facilitate the safeguarding of national gastronomic traditions and agricultural biodiversity and help to promote the principles of good nutrition and holistic agricultural development.

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

The Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 14.

### **Agenda item 130** (*continued*)

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

##### **(I) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Council of Europe**

###### **Draft resolution (A/75/L.64)**

**The President:** I now give the floor to the representative of Germany to introduce draft resolution A/75/L.64.

**Mr. Sautter** (Germany): I have the honour to introduce draft resolution A/75/L.64, entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Council of Europe", on behalf of Germany, as the current Chair of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe, and Greece, as the previous Chair.

The cooperation between the United Nations and the Council of Europe is characterized by a long tradition and is based on our shared vision of the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms, democracy, the rule of law and the importance of dialogue and strengthening multilateralism.

The draft resolution was agreed on by the Committee of Ministers in Strasbourg and subsequently submitted to the General Assembly for further consultations. It touches on numerous important issues such as human rights; the rule of law and democracy; gender equality and the fight against sexual and gender-based violence, including domestic violence and violence against children; the promotion of the rights of persons with disabilities; and the fight against racism and multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination. The draft resolution also elaborates on the disproportionate effect of the coronavirus disease pandemic on women and girls and the deepening inequalities caused by the pandemic, as well as on the work of the two organizations to counter the pandemic and their efforts to implement the Sustainable Development Goals, the protection of refugees and migrants, and the fight against terrorism, trafficking, organized crime and drugs.

We regret that it was not possible to include language on issues that are extremely relevant to the Council of Europe, owing to the resistance of some Member States in New York. The abolition of the death penalty is a cornerstone of the Council of Europe and a prerequisite for any State joining the Council. We respect the fact that different positions within the General Assembly



exist on this issue; however, we deeply regret that even our compromise proposals, which did not create any form of obligations and focused solely on the role of the Council of Europe, were not acceptable to some delegations.

The Council of Europe will continue its fight against the death penalty, which is a cruel and inhumane punishment that has been proven to have no deterrent effect. Similarly, we would have preferred a stronger reference to the discrimination against persons of diverse gender identities and sexual orientation. Widespread discrimination against them and scrutiny of them, sadly, continues to be a daily reality. Nevertheless, we believe that the current draft resolution presents a suitable compromise for moving forward with a view to ensuring cooperation between the two organizations. We thank all 40 delegations that sponsored this important draft resolution and invite everyone else to become sponsors today.

**The President:** The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/75/L.64, entitled “Cooperation between the United Nations and the Council of Europe”.

I give the floor to the representative of the Secretariat.

**Mr. Nakano** (Department for General Assembly and Conference Management): I should like to announce that since the submission of the draft resolution and in addition to the delegations listed in document A/75/L.64, the following countries have also become sponsors of the draft resolution: Albania, Andorra, Angola, Armenia, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Mexico, Monaco, Montenegro, the Netherlands, Portugal, the Republic of Moldova, Romania, San Marino, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

**The President:** May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/75/L.64?

*Draft resolution A/75/L.64 was adopted (resolution 75/264).*

**The President:** Before giving the floor for explanations of position, I would like to remind speakers

that explanations are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

**Mrs. Horváth** (Hungary): Regarding resolution 75/264, entitled “Cooperation between the United Nations and the Council of Europe”, Hungary joined the consensus and would like to add the following remarks in its national capacity.

The Hungarian Government acknowledges the contribution of the Council of Europe to strengthening multilateralism, protecting and promoting fundamental human rights and freedoms, and guaranteeing democracy and the rule of law. We consider it extremely important to support its work and operation. However, the present resolution, which aims to deepen the cooperation between United Nations and the Council of Europe, contains certain references that are not acceptable to us.

Hungary reaffirms that it cannot support any reference to the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence, as in operative paragraph 17. In that regard, throughout the negotiations we repeatedly voiced our concerns and asked for a neutral, factual reference to the Istanbul Convention, in line with the original proposal and with the formula that is widely used in the resolution when referring to other conventions of the Council of Europe. When referring to those conventions, the resolution merely states that they are open for accession, without explicitly inviting States to sign or ratify them. We deem it important that the facts should reflect an equal approach to all conventions.

Hungary wants to express that we maintain our position on the Istanbul Convention. In line with our declared national zero-tolerance policy on violence against women, Hungary fully agrees with the crucial aim of fighting violence against women and children and domestic violence, which has been an independent statutory definition in the Hungarian criminal code since 2013. In our view, it is not the ratification of a treaty but the tangible results of Government actions that make the prevention and combating of violence against women and domestic violence a reality. The Hungarian Government regards effective action against every form of violence against women as one of its most important priorities, and that goal is constantly reflected in the Government’s legislative efforts. We can therefore accept only a factual reference to the

existence of the Convention, and we cannot support calls and invitations for its signature and ratification.

Finally, it must be emphasized that Hungary has adopted neither the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration nor the global compact on refugees. The Hungarian Government therefore does not accept any references to those documents. Since the outbreak of the 2015 migration crisis, Hungary has consistently emphasized that the root causes of migration should be addressed locally. Instead of promoting migration, we have to stem all mass migratory movements, and we should focus on providing assistance to third countries locally by creating stable and secure conditions, thereby ensuring that people can stay in their homeland in peace and prosperity. It should also be highlighted that an uncontrolled influx of migrants, in addition to being an extremely serious security threat, also poses a serious public-health risk, especially during the current pandemic situation. Accordingly, Hungary dissociates itself from operative paragraph 19 as well.

**Mr. Shahin** (Egypt): We thank the co-facilitators, Germany and Greece, for their spirit of flexibility and compromise during the consultations on the draft resolution entitled “Cooperation between the United Nations and the Council of Europe” (resolution 75/264). We appreciate adopting a consensual and inclusive approach and listening to the concerns of Member States.

However, we note that some language was incorporated into the resolution without sufficient consultations, and we would point out that we have a reservation about the term “multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination” in operative paragraph 3. Due to its ambiguity and lack of a specific definition, we confirm that we do not accept its use to denote or refer to any non-consensual categories of rights and indicate that the term “multiple and aggravating forms of discrimination”, included in the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action, is consensual and more relevant.

**Mr. Ilnytskyi** (Ukraine): I would like to express our gratitude to the delegations of Germany and Greece for facilitating the preparation of resolution 75/264, which we have just adopted.

The item on cooperation between the two organizations was first included in the agenda of the General Assembly a little more than 20 years ago. We would like to point out that at the time it was stressed that there was a need to enhance cooperation between the

two organizations, taking into account the contribution that the Council of Europe had made to the United Nations, particularly in promoting the rule of law and the protection of human rights and democratic values.

It is still true that both the United Nations and the Council of Europe place human rights and dignity at the core of their missions and mandates. Stronger working links between them in this area can only help them their noble cause. For instance, the European Convention on Human Rights provided for the possibility of recourse to the European Court of Human Rights, whose judgments are of a legally binding character. Here we welcome the Court’s decision dated 14 January 2021, which ruled on the admissibility of the inter-State claims in Ukraine’s case against the Russian Federation. It is important to note that the Court considered as part of the relevant legal framework the General Assembly resolutions on the territorial integrity of Ukraine and on the situation of human rights in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol in Ukraine. That decision clearly demonstrates the relevance of the values and aims of the two organizations.

At the same time, I would also like to underline the fact that the Council has also made the abolition of capital punishment one of its two principal conditions for membership, striving to make it a universal value. As was mentioned by the German representative today, it is therefore regrettable that while that value is fully accepted by 47 Council of Europe members — countries that together constitute almost 25 per cent of the membership of the United Nations — it is still excluded from the resolution we have just adopted.

The Council of Europe has a significant capacity for conflict prevention through a combination of standard-setting, cooperation and monitoring at both the legal and political levels. Yet it is unacceptable when we hear in the Council of Europe that it is the United Nations that should deal with armed conflicts while the Council should continue its work on human rights, as if one can work on human rights in isolation from conflict resolution. That is the wrong logic. I reiterate that peace and security and human rights are interrelated issues. Gross human rights violations and intolerance lead only to conflict; indeed, they fuel wars.

Ukraine therefore expects the Council of Europe to pay due attention to the violations of human rights committed by the Russian Federation in the Donbas region and illegally occupied Crimea. We will continue

to demand that the Russian Federation provide the conventional and institutional monitoring mechanisms of the Council of Europe and other international organizations with access to the temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine, access that is currently impeded. We are confident that the Council of Europe has the necessary expertise and potential to conduct monitoring there, both on the ground and at a distance. The only missing component for launching that process is the necessary political will.

Today we adopted by consensus a framework resolution on cooperation between the United Nations and the Council of Europe. Its supporters include some who continue to blackmail both organizations. Some consider that it is worth listening to the institutions of the General Assembly and the Council of Europe as long they do not attempt to stop criminal actions against such countries' own peoples or their peaceful neighbours. When efforts are made to expose such illegal actions, claims are made that the authority of the General Assembly is under attack, as we heard from the Russian representative during the Assembly's consideration of Russian aggression against my country in this Hall on 23 February (see A/75/PV.54), and recently from the Russian Ombudsperson, who has the rank of major general of police, on human rights defenders and Council of Europe institutions:

“Whether we are in the Council of Europe or not, the temperature of confrontation will rise. The stronger Russia is, the more intense this struggle will be”.

Ukraine remains deeply concerned about the concession by the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe allowing the delegation of the Russian Federation to return to that Assembly, a step that was taken while Russia continued its armed aggression against my country and was deliberately refusing to comply with the relevant resolutions of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe and of the United Nations adopted in response to that aggression. I would like to refer to a statement by Mr. Heiko Maas, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Germany, who, as Chair of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe, underlined that “a peaceful and tolerant Europe cannot be taken for granted. Democracy, the rule of law and human rights are under pressure”.

I hope that in two years, when we come back to the draft resolution on cooperation between the United Nations and the Council of Europe, we will be able to open the web pages of the two organizations and find a rich storehouse of information on practical interaction and cooperation between them, including in the area of international peace and security.

**Mr. Karem (Iraq):** At the outset, I would like to thank the facilitators for the constructive approach and the spirit of flexibility shown throughout the consultations on draft resolution A/75/L.64, and to express appreciation for the related adoption of resolution 75/264, following an inclusive and consensus approach. However, with regard to paragraph 3 and the term “multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination”, we believe that this terminology is vague and lacks specific definition. Iraq would therefore like to express its reservation with respect to that paragraph.

**Mr. Polyanskiy (Russian Federation)** (*spoke in Russian*): The Russian Federation was not about to breach the consensus on resolution 75/264, which was just adopted, as we are governed by the established practice of reaching unanimous agreement on texts that pertain to cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations. However, we cannot ignore the fact that the negotiations on the resolution's content have left an unpleasant after-taste. And that is the view not only of our colleagues in New York but also of those in Strasbourg who drew up the initial draft. We would therefore like to dot every I and cross every T.

On 28 February we marked the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Russian Federation's entry into the Council of Europe. That event transformed a regional body into a genuinely pan-European organization that conducts dialogue on a broad agenda that ranges from the fight against terrorism to the protection of human rights, social policies, health care and issues pertaining to culture, youth and sport. Considering that the subjects of intergovernmental discussions at the regional level in Strasbourg and at the global level in New York and Geneva often coincide, cooperation between the two organizations on the directions their priorities should take can prove useful.

It is self-evident that joint priorities can only be determined together. This means that the relevant resolutions should be genuinely consensual in nature and should reflect the approaches of all interested States. And yet the facilitators of the work of drafting

this resolution for some reason decided that they are entitled to disregard the views of other States, including members of the Council of Europe. That specifically has to do with the imposition of controversial approaches on questions relating to promoting human rights, ensuring gender equality and preventing violence against women.

We are particularly surprised that the resolution's sponsors decided not to consolidate it with the inclusion of a key principle of international cooperation, which is that assistance to States can be rendered only with the consent of the host State. The entire work of the United Nations is based on that. We are similarly disappointed that in the context of the global efforts to combat the pandemic, the resolution does not mention the Secretary-General's call on 23 March 2020 for a halt to unilateral sanctions. That approach says much about the genuine position of those who proclaim themselves to be leaders in international humanitarian assistance.

We also believe that the paragraphs on the merits of the regional organization combating intolerance, ensuring the rights of ethnic minorities and freedom of expression of media outlets do not fully correspond to reality. There is still a great deal of work to be done in all those areas. In the Baltic countries, Ukraine and a number of other Eastern European countries, the situation frankly verges on disastrous. People have been deprived of their right to speak and be educated in Russian, which for many is their native language. The shameful phenomenon of statelessness has not been eradicated. Television channels considered objectionable are being shut down, and the work of news agencies is being blocked. There are numerous incidents in which undesirable journalists are persecuted or attacked. People are discriminated against for their linguistic and national characteristics. In the absence of condemnation by regional structures, the aforementioned States are daily rubber-stamping an increasing number of discriminatory laws. In January, for example, a 2019 Ukrainian rule regarding the functioning of Ukrainian as a State language entered into force, according to which conversation in Russian in public areas is now a punishable offence.

Clearly the Council of Europe has a long way to go before it can share its experience on these issues with

the United Nations. Nor can we support the intention to promote the Council of Europe Convention on Cybercrime, known as the Budapest Convention, which has a dangerous loophole that enables foreign Powers to encroach on States' digital sovereignty through cross-border access to national data. Instead, we would be well advised to focus efforts on drafting a comprehensive consensus document on cybersecurity. Russia's specific proposals in that regard are well known.

We hope that the tense negotiations that have just been completed will result in the right conclusions being drawn and that in future the sponsors of draft resolutions on this question will seek common ground and heed the views of all the members of both organizations, including during the document-preparation stage in Strasbourg.

**Mr. Aldahhak** (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): My delegation aligned itself with the consensus on resolution 75/264 because as a general rule we support cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations in areas that serve the objectives laid out in the Charter of the United Nations, which is the common denominator among our countries. First, however, Syria's position should not be interpreted in any way as an acceptance of conventions to which we are not party or texts and initiatives that we have not been consulted on. Secondly, we refuse in any case to accept the transformation of resolutions on cooperation between the United Nations and any regional or subregional organizations into politicized resolutions that aim to antagonize, target or isolate certain countries. Considering their titles, such resolutions should be about cooperation, dialogue and diplomacy, which is what we do. They must deal with our solidarity and efforts to achieve the objectives of the Organization. Once again, they must not aim to antagonize, isolate or accuse countries or United Nations Member States. The goal is cooperation, not increased tension.

**The President:** We have heard the last speaker in explanation of position after adoption. May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of sub-item (1) of agenda item 130?

*It was so decided.*

**Agenda item 130** (*continued*)**Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other organizations****(n) Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons****Draft resolution A/75/L.56**

**The President:** I now give the floor to the representative of the Netherlands to introduce draft resolution A/75/L.56.

**Mr. Zellenrath** (Netherlands): On behalf of its nearly 50 sponsors, I have the honour to introduce draft resolution A/75/L.56, entitled “Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons”. At the outset, as the main sponsor submitting this draft resolution, the Kingdom of the Netherlands wants to thank all delegations that have participated so constructively in the negotiations despite the challenges we have all faced during this pandemic.

The aim of this biennial resolution is to highlight the importance of the continued cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW). As the organization that oversees the implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention, the OPCW contributes to international peace and security by verifying the destruction of chemical-weapon stockpiles, working through industry inspections to prevent the emergence of chemical weapons, promoting the peaceful use of chemistry for activities not prohibited by the Chemical Weapons Convention and investigating alleged uses of chemical weapons. As host nation of the OPCW, the Netherlands has submitted this biennial draft resolution since 1997. Today’s draft resolution is an update of resolution 73/258, of 20 December 2018, and reflects factual developments since then. The final text that the Netherlands proposed was as balanced an outcome of the consultations and negotiations that we started in early December of last year as we could achieve.

Some of the issues were not easy to resolve, and though differences of opinion remain, the constructive attitude of many colleagues and their willingness to seek a final draft in a spirit of compromise were much appreciated. Furthermore, we have taken special care to phrase all clauses as factually as possible, avoiding qualifications that might cause controversy.

In recent years, the international community has been confronted with recurring allegations of the use of chemical weapons. Some of those allegations have already been attributed to various perpetrators, but many incidents still need to be investigated. The global community cannot ignore such atrocities and should bring those responsible to justice. The work of the OPCW is indispensable as a very important step towards achieving that goal, and a strong message of support for United Nations-OPCW cooperation is therefore now more crucial than ever.

We hope that the draft resolution can be adopted by consensus, and we invite delegations to support it in a spirit of compromise and cooperation. However, if a vote should be called for at the last moment, it is still our hope that the draft resolution can ultimately be adopted unanimously. We firmly believe we have struck the best balance possible in representing the various views that have been expressed, and we therefore again invite all delegations to support the draft resolution in the aforementioned spirit of compromise and cooperation and in appreciation of the importance of United Nations-OPCW cooperation.

**The President:** We shall now proceed to consider draft resolution A/75/L.56.

Before giving the floor to speakers in explanation of vote or position, I would like to remind the Assembly that explanations are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

**Mr. Dandy** (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, my delegation would like to stress the Syrian Arab Republic’s commitment to cooperating with the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) and its Technical Secretariat, in line with its obligations derived from joining the Chemical Weapons Convention in 2013.

My country accomplished all that was required in order for it to eliminate its entire chemical stockpile and destroy the related facilities, as Ms. Sigrid Kaag, Head of the OPCW-United Nations Joint Mission in Syria, asserted before the Security Council at the time. My delegation reiterates its condemnation of the use of chemical weapons by anyone, anywhere, at any time and under any circumstances.

My delegation would like to make the following comments on draft resolution A/75/L.56. First, while it is entitled “Cooperation between the United Nations

and the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons”, the authors included paragraphs that have nothing to do with the title and are lacking in objectivity, professionalism or a technical nature.

Secondly, the draft resolution is entirely politicized. The text is supposed to be purely technical, addressing only the cooperation mechanisms between the United Nations and the OPCW while building on positive points and working to avoid shortcomings and gaps. However, the draft resolution focuses on my country, the Syrian Arab Republic, in a way that is contrary to its objectives and that targets and antagonizes a Member State.

Thirdly, while the Syrian Arab Republic is mentioned by name in a number of paragraphs, an effort was made to exclude my delegation by not inviting it to participate in the informal negotiations on the draft resolution, showing a lack of transparency on the part of the facilitator, who failed in his responsibilities and disregarded the required criteria.

Fourthly, the draft resolution is not balanced. It selectively mentions mechanisms not agreed on by the Organization and reports that have not been approved by all Member States.

Fifthly, it is biased, totally ignoring the fact that terrorist organizations have chemical weapons that have been used against civilians. That is an issue that can never be questioned.

Sixthly, the Dutch Government, which is represented by the facilitator of the draft resolution, has an antagonistic attitude to my country and is supporting terrorist organizations in Syria. Prime Minister Mark Rutte of the Netherlands admitted that he personally intervened to obstruct parliamentary investigations into his Government’s provision of millions of dollars to as many as 22 terrorist organizations, including the so-called Levant Front, which even Dutch institutions classify as a terrorist group. Stef Blok, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands, also called for ending the investigations, considering that they will create major problems, disclose top-secret information and embarrass the allies that are certainly involved in the Dutch investigations. In September 2018, the Netherlands public broadcasting corporation confirmed that the Dutch Government supported the Levant Front and that the Government provided it with equipment and logistical services between 2015 and 2018.

Given the objective deficiencies of this draft resolution, my delegation requests a vote on its operative paragraphs 5, 6, 7 and 8, and then on the draft resolution as a whole. I call on all countries that support international law and the Charter of the United Nations to raise their voices against the politicization of the work of the United Nations, reject the use of United Nations mechanisms to target a founding Member State and vote against draft resolution A/75/L.56 and four of its paragraphs.

**Mr. Polyanskiy** (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): I regret to say that we are witnessing yet another attempt to submit for the General Assembly’s consideration an extremely politicized and unbalanced draft resolution (A/75/L.56) that is can only deepen dissension among Member States while in no way deepening the cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW).

This is the second such attempt we have observed recently. In early autumn of last year, at the prompting of our Western colleagues, the General Assembly adopted resolution 75/55, a biased, anti-Syrian document, on the implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC). Now we see the exact same motives in the document before us today. We would like to ask our Western colleagues where the added value is in a text 90 per cent of which is a ritual reiteration welcoming its accusatory conclusions about Damascus. Apparently they would like the General Assembly to literally rubber-stamp identical anti-Syrian resolutions every time the OPCW is cited in their titles.

Like many other States, the Russian Federation views as illegitimate the decision of the fourth special session of the Conference of States Parties to the CWC enabling the OPCW Technical Secretariat to overstep its mandate and to establish the so-called Investigation and Identification Team. This kind of innovation contravenes the CWC and undermines the prerogatives of the Security Council. There is increasing evidence with each passing day that the United States and its Euro-Atlantic allies are striving to transform the OPCW, a specialized international technical body, into a tool for advancing their own geopolitical interests.

The fruits of these political ventures began with the first report of the Investigation and Identification Team, which does not stand up to any criticism either of the methodology of its drafting or of its collection of

facts. After that came a deliberately unimplementable decision on Syria at the ninety-fourth session of the OPCW Executive Council, demanding that Damascus declare chemical weapons that it does not have. The Russian Federation does not accept the legitimacy of the Investigation and Identification Team itself or of its report and the decisions of the OPCW governing bodies based on it.

We also have a slew of questions about the work of the OPCW Fact-finding Mission in Syria, specifically with regard to the investigations into the incidents in Khan Shaykhun in 2017 and Douma in 2018. With a view to discussing the OPCW Technical Secretariat's numerous violations in those cases, last year we held an open Arria-formula meeting for Security Council members with the participation of independent experts. We urge all interested delegations to familiarize themselves with the materials on the meeting's conclusions, which were circulated as an official document of the General Assembly (A/75/649), dated 11 December 2020. It raises many inconvenient questions for the Technical Secretariat, none of which have so far been answered.

In its essence — which is a panoramic overview of all the directions taken in the cooperation between the United Nations and the OPCW and progress in that area — the draft resolution prepared by the Netherlands has been completely gutted. It seems that the only subject that the OPCW concerns itself with is the Syrian chemical dossier and, practically speaking, Syria itself. If we are focusing on country-specific aspects, it would be logical for the OPCW to also report, for example, on the progress that the United States has made on the destruction of its chemical arsenal, which has still not been completed. But not a word is said about it. Neither does the draft resolution reflect in any way the vital importance of the provisions of article XI of the CWC, on the social and economic cooperation of the States parties to the Convention.

In our view, it is extremely telling that the sponsors conducted no genuine negotiations on the text of the draft resolution. The delegation of the Netherlands organized only one round of informal consultations, with effectively no practical result. Not one of the many substantive comments made by delegations during that meeting was reflected in the final text.

We firmly believe that a draft resolution on cooperation between the United Nations and the OPCW should by definition be adopted by consensus.

Its purpose is to send a political message of the international community's unconditional support for the chemical-weapon non-proliferation regime and the positive nexus between the United Nations and the OPCW. And Russia would have been happy to accept that consensus had the draft met that criterion. Unfortunately, however, it is now aimed at a single goal — denigrating the Syrian authorities and promoting ideas that are damaging to the integrity of the CWC and the authority of the OPCW. That is something that we, as a responsible participant in the OPCW, cannot countenance. For that reason, the Russian Federation will vote against this politicized document. We also call on all States to do likewise if they are concerned about maintaining the OPCW's authority and ensuring that it does its real job effectively — that is, strengthening the chemical-weapon non-proliferation regime.

**Mr. Balouji** (Islamic Republic of Iran): I am taking the floor to explain my delegation's position on draft resolution A/75/L.56, on cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons. We have already shared our views with the draft resolution's main sponsor and suggested modifying operative paragraph 3 in order to highlight international cooperation in the areas of protection and assistance and of the peaceful uses of chemistry, since they are the two main purposes of the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC), and also in fulfilling the intended task of the Centre for Chemistry and Technology within the framework of the Convention. The paragraph should therefore have been modified to read as follows:

“Commends the continued work of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons in the field of international cooperation, assistance and protection, as well as to enhance the capacity of States parties to use chemistry for peaceful purposes and respond to threats involving toxic chemicals defined in Article II of the Chemical Weapons Convention, including through the development of a Centre for Chemistry and Technology as a platform where the Technical Secretariat and States parties can learn, exchange views and work in common purpose to further achieve the object and purpose of the Convention”.

We believe that it is essential that this draft resolution focus on the cooperation between the two organizations. At the same time, that should be achieved only by limiting the scope of the draft resolution to

topics that are covered in the agreement between the two organizations. However, operative paragraphs 5, 6, 7, and 8 of the draft resolution go beyond those areas and include issues on which OPCW member States differ. That is an attempt to politicize a purely procedural draft resolution that should be avoided. It is worth noting that during the informal consultations we urged that any contentious issues be excluded. That concern unfortunately went unheeded. We remain hopeful that the next version of this draft resolution will not include contentious issues, thereby enabling us to adopt it by consensus.

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

The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/75/L.56, entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons".

I give the floor to the representative of the Secretariat.

**Mr. Nakano** (Department for General Assembly and Conference Management): I should like to announce that since the submission of the draft resolution and in addition to the delegations listed in document A/75/L.56, the following countries have also become sponsors: Albania, Andorra, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Montenegro, North Macedonia, the Republic of Moldova and San Marino.

**The President:** Separate, recorded votes have been requested on operative paragraphs 5, 6, 7 and 8 of draft resolution A/75/L.56. There being no objection to those requests, I shall first put to the vote operative paragraph 5 of the draft resolution.

*A recorded vote was taken.*

*In favour:*

Albania, Andorra, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bahrain, Belgium, Bhutan, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, Hungary, Iceland, Indonesia, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kuwait, Latvia, Libya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Maldives, Malta, Mexico, Monaco, Montenegro, Morocco, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nigeria,

North Macedonia, Norway, Oman, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Togo, Turkey, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uruguay, Yemen

*Against:*

Belarus, China, Cuba, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, India, Nicaragua, Russian Federation, Syrian Arab Republic, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Zimbabwe

*Abstaining:*

Algeria, Angola, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Brunei Darussalam, Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Egypt, Iraq, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Madagascar, Malaysia, Mali, Mongolia, Nepal, Pakistan, Sudan, Thailand, Viet Nam

*Operative paragraph 5 of draft resolution A/75/L.56 was retained by 85 votes to 10, with 21 abstentions.*

[Subsequently, the delegation of Georgia informed the Secretariat that it had intended to vote in favour; the delegation of Senegal informed the Secretariat that it had intended to abstain.]

**The President:** I shall next put to the vote operative paragraph 6 of draft resolution A/75/L.56.

*A recorded vote was taken.*

*In favour:*

Albania, Andorra, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bahrain, Belgium, Bhutan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kuwait, Latvia, Libya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Maldives, Malta, Mexico, Monaco, Montenegro, Morocco, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, North Macedonia, Norway, Oman, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Singapore,



Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uruguay, Yemen

*Against:*

Belarus, China, Cuba, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, India, Nicaragua, Pakistan, Russian Federation, Syrian Arab Republic, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Zimbabwe

*Abstaining:*

Algeria, Angola, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Brunei Darussalam, Côte d'Ivoire, Egypt, Indonesia, Iraq, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Lebanon, Madagascar, Malaysia, Mali, Mongolia, Nigeria, Philippines, Sudan, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Togo, Viet Nam

*Operative paragraph 6 of draft resolution A/75/L.56 was retained by 83 votes to 11, with 22 abstentions.*

[Subsequently, the delegation of Georgia informed the Secretariat that it had intended to vote in favour; the delegation of Senegal informed the Secretariat that it had intended to abstain.]

**The President:** I shall next put to the vote operative paragraph 7 of draft resolution A/75/L.56.

*In favour:*

Albania, Andorra, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bahrain, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Estonia, Ethiopia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Kuwait, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Maldives, Malta, Mexico, Monaco, Montenegro, Morocco, Netherlands, New Zealand, North Macedonia, Norway, Oman, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uruguay, Yemen

*Against:*

Belarus, China, Cuba, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, India, Nicaragua, Russian Federation, Syrian Arab Republic, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Zimbabwe

*Abstaining:*

Algeria, Angola, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Brunei Darussalam, Côte d'Ivoire, Egypt, Fiji, Indonesia, Iraq, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Lebanon, Madagascar, Malaysia, Mali, Mongolia, Nigeria, Pakistan, Philippines, South Africa, Sudan, Thailand, Togo, Viet Nam

*Operative paragraph 7 of draft resolution A/75/L.56 was retained by 77 votes to 10, with 25 abstentions.*

[Subsequently, the delegation of Georgia informed the Secretariat that it had intended to vote in favour; the delegation of Senegal informed the Secretariat that it had intended to abstain.]

**The President:** I shall next put to the vote operative paragraph 8 of draft resolution A/75/L.56.

*A recorded vote was taken.*

*In favour:*

Albania, Andorra, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bahrain, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, Hungary, Iceland, India, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Kuwait, Latvia, Libya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Maldives, Malta, Mexico, Monaco, Montenegro, Morocco, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, North Macedonia, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, Togo, Turkey, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uruguay, Viet Nam, Yemen

*Against:*

Belarus, China, Cuba, Nicaragua, Russian Federation, Syrian Arab Republic, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Zimbabwe

*Abstaining:*

Algeria, Angola, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Côte d'Ivoire, Egypt, Indonesia, Iraq, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Lebanon, Madagascar, Malaysia, Mongolia, Nigeria, Sudan

*Operative paragraph 8 of draft resolution A/75/L.56 was retained by 88 votes to 8, with 16 abstentions.*

[Subsequently, the delegation of Georgia informed the Secretariat that it had intended to vote in favour; the delegation of Senegal informed the Secretariat that it had intended to abstain.]

**The President:** I shall now put to the vote draft resolution A/75/L.56 as a whole, for which a recorded vote has been requested.

*A recorded vote was taken.*

*In favour:*

Albania, Andorra, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Belgium, Bhutan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Cabo Verde, Canada, Chad, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, Guyana, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iraq, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Libya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritius, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nigeria, North Macedonia, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Togo, Turkey, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uruguay, Viet Nam, Yemen

*Against:*

China, Russian Federation, Syrian Arab Republic

*Abstaining:*

Algeria, Angola, Belarus, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Cambodia, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Madagascar, Nicaragua, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Zimbabwe

*Draft resolution A/75/L.56, as a whole, was adopted by 109 votes to 3, with 11 abstentions (resolution 75/265).*

[Subsequently, the delegation of Georgia informed the Secretariat that it had intended to vote in favour.]

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

**Mr. Mainero** (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*): My delegation, as it has traditionally done, voted in favour of resolution 75/265, on cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), which we have just adopted. The Chemical Weapons Convention is the main instrument that the international community has at its disposal in order to fully ban the use of chemical weapons. Argentina emphasizes the importance of ensuring full respect for all its provisions, and we therefore accepted the conclusions reached by the Investigation and Identification Team on Syria in its report.

Operative paragraph 7 of the resolution that we have just adopted refers to the report dated July 2020 of the Executive Council of the OPCW, of which we are a member, and that is why we voted to retain it. However, we also want to state that this is not the appropriate place for singling out a particular country, which undermines the goal of the resolution and could be damaging to the cooperation between the United Nations and the OPCW in future. Argentina will continue to participate in discussions with a constructive spirit, seeking to avoid politicization and to support the work done by the OPCW and the Investigation and Identification Team.

**Mrs. Castro Loredó** (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): The Cuban delegation would like to explain its vote on resolution 75/265, entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization for the Prohibition

of Chemical Weapons". As a State party to the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC), Cuba supports the continued cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW).

Unfortunately, however, we were not able to support the text. This is a generic topic that addresses the cooperation between both organizations. We do not support mentioning or singling out a specific country that is, furthermore, also a State party to the Convention. Nor do we support the resolution's inclusion of references to decisions adopted by the OPCW without a consensus among its States parties. It is therefore a priority for the General Assembly to resume the practice of adopting this resolution by consensus. We must preserve its goal and character. We must refrain from introducing controversial elements that do not enjoy consensus and affect the spirit of cooperation and of unanimous support for the activities of the OPCW.

**Mr. Nugroho** (Indonesia): My delegation wishes to explain its position on resolution 75/265, on cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), which was just adopted. Indonesia voted in favour of the resolution in order to reaffirm its full support for the cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons. We fully support the resolution's aim of reiterating the importance of collaboration between the United Nations and the OPCW in maintaining peace and security through the total elimination of chemical weapons. It should therefore concentrate on this matter and refrain from focusing on the substance discussed within the OPCW, which is outside the scope of cooperation with the United Nations. That has also been the General Assembly's practice in adopting similar resolutions on cooperation with other international organizations.

We would also like to stress the importance of consensus in adopting the resolution, not only to send a strong message on the importance of the full implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC), but also to reflect our shared interest and unity in achieving the end goals of the Convention. We appreciated the efforts of the penholder to conduct informal consultations in December and the engagement of other Member States on the draft resolution. We listened carefully to all the different views expressed by the various Member States. We want to underscore

the hope we had that the draft could have been agreed on in a consensual manner, taking into consideration the different views expressed.

We abstained in the voting on operative paragraphs 6, 7 and 8 of the resolution while supporting the overall thrust of promoting compliance by States parties to the CWC. We are of the view that the question of compliance has to be settled through the mechanisms under the Convention, in particular articles IX and XII. Moreover, any measures taken under those articles should be carried out in a credible, professional and impartial manner, according to the technical arrangements agreed to by the States parties to the Convention. We are hopeful that the next iteration of this resolution, in two years' time, will be adopted by consensus, focusing on strengthening the cooperation between the two organizations.

**Mr. Hassan** (Egypt) (*spoke in Arabic*): Egypt supports the cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), and stresses the need for that cooperation to reflect the OPCW's commitment to discharging its responsibilities in an impartial, independent and professional manner, while respecting and implementing United Nations resolutions on issues within the competence of the Organization and in line with its founding Convention, in addition to rejecting any politicized interference in the work of the OPCW Technical Secretariat. Egypt therefore once again voted in favour of resolution 75/265, entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons".

Egypt continues to condemn the use of chemical weapons by any party and under any circumstances. However, my delegation abstained in the voting on some of the paragraphs in the draft resolution, since we do not have enough information or evidence to make an informed decision, particularly given the increased controversy between the States members of the OPCW on certain of its reports. In addition, some countries that are sponsors of the resolution continue to obstruct efforts towards the total elimination of chemical weapons and do not support efforts to establish a zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East, in line with relevant international resolutions, whose implementation could have averted the recent unfortunate use of chemical weapons in the region.

**Mr. Mohd Nasir** (Malaysia): I am taking the floor to explain Malaysia's vote on resolution 75/265, entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons". Malaysia voted in favour of the resolution as a whole while abstaining in the voting on operative paragraphs 5, 6, 7 and 8 of the text.

Before touching on the resolution's subject matter, it is important to look at its process. Recalling the first informal consultations on the draft text convened in December 2020, it was obvious that there were different views and disagreements among Member States. Despite the gaps, my delegation believes in the importance of exhausting all possible efforts to try to breach those gaps. If there had been any follow-up consultation or engagement after that first round, perhaps we could have explored ways and means of developing some convergence of positions or formulations. That is certainly an important lesson for the future.

Moving on to the substance, there is no doubt about the importance of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) as the implementing body of the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC). Malaysia is of the view that all relevant organizations and entities should cooperate with the OPCW to facilitate its global endeavours. That is at the heart of this resolution, which is precisely about cooperation between two very important organizations, the United Nations and the OPCW. At the same time, certain paragraphs of the resolution reflect the decisions adopted during the special session of the Conference of the States Parties, held on 27 June 2018, which empowered the OPCW with an attribution mandate. The complex dynamics and intricacies between Member States surrounding the attribution mandate of the OPCW are well known. Reflecting that decision in this resolution would only trigger similar debates and reveal widening positions on the part of Member States.

In addition, the issues covered in operative paragraphs 6 and 7 of the resolution have been duly covered in the annual First Committee resolution on the Chemical Weapons Convention (resolution 75/55). Operative paragraph 8 of resolution 75/265 seems to further complicate the text by trying to import a whole dossier from the Security Council into the General Assembly. For that reason, Malaysia abstained in the voting on operative paragraphs 5, 6, 7 and 8 of the resolution.

While we strongly support the important cooperation between the United Nations and the OPCW, this resolution should have been better crafted so as to promote that element of cooperation. Though Malaysia voted in favour of the draft resolution as a whole, we certainly hope for a refined version of a cooperation resolution that would facilitate the work and operations of the two important organizations in future.

**The President:** May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of sub-item (n) of agenda item 130?

*It was so decided.*

#### **Agenda item 130 (continued)**

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

##### **(z) Cooperation between the United Nations and the International Fund for Saving the Aral Sea**

##### **Draft resolution (A/75/L.66)**

**The President:** I now give the floor to the representative of Tajikistan to introduce draft resolution A/75/L.66.

**Mr. Lafizov** (Tajikistan): Today it is my honour to introduce, on behalf of Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and my country, Tajikistan, draft resolution A/75/L.66, entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the International Fund for Saving the Aral Sea". We would like to take this opportunity to thank all delegations for their invaluable support and cooperation on the draft resolution, which this year has only technical updates, and to express our gratitude to its sponsors.

The issue of preserving the Aral Sea has global significance, and our countries consistently support the united efforts of the world community in resolving this ecological crisis. The draft resolution before us acknowledges the negative humanitarian, environmental and socioeconomic consequences of the tragedy of the Aral Sea basin, which goes beyond the region and represents a global concern. The draft resolution notes the necessity of further improving the activities of the International Fund for Saving the Aral Sea and strengthening regional cooperation, particularly in areas such as social and economic development, environmental protection, responding to natural disasters, water-resource management,

adaptation to climate change and the mitigation of its consequences, and other related areas.

One of the main points of the draft resolution concerns the holding of relevant consultations with the Executive Committee of the International Fund for Saving the Aral Sea, Member States and United Nations agencies. It also emphasizes the importance of the development and effective implementation of regional environmental protection programmes for sustainable development in Central Asia, including assistance programmes for the countries of the Aral Sea basin. In that context, the draft resolution invites the United Nations and its specialized agencies, organizations, programmes and funds, as well as the international financial institutions, to improve their cooperation with the International Fund for Saving the Aral Sea.

*Mr. Masuku (Eswatini), Vice-President, took the Chair.*

In conclusion, I would like to invite other delegations to join the sponsors of the draft resolution. It is our sincere hope that it will be adopted by consensus, as has always been the case at previous sessions.

**The Acting President:** The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/75/L.66, entitled “Cooperation between the United Nations and the International Fund for Saving the Aral Sea”.

I give the floor to the representative of the Secretariat.

**Mr. Nakano** (Department for General Assembly and Conference Management): I should like to announce that since the submission of the draft resolution, and in addition to the delegations listed in the document, the following countries have become sponsors of draft resolution A/75/L.66: Austria, Azerbaijan, Belarus, China, Georgia, Italy, Latvia, Poland, Romania, the Russian Federation, Spain and Ukraine.

**The Acting President:** May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/75/L.66?

*Draft resolution A/75/L.66 was adopted (resolution 75/266).*

**The Acting President:** I now give the floor to the representative of Kyrgyzstan, who wishes to speak in explanation of position on the resolution just adopted. I remind him that explanations are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

**Mr. Utebaev** (Kyrgyzstan) (*spoke in Russian*): The Kyrgyz Republic would like to inform the Assembly of its position on resolution 75/266, on cooperation between the United Nations and the International Fund for Saving the Aral Sea.

In 2016 the Kyrgyz Republic decided to freeze its participation in the activities of the International Fund for Saving the Aral Sea and its entities, owing to the Fund’s ineffectiveness and the lack of progress in reforming it. In 2010 and 2011 there were negotiations among experts and States of the region on this topic, but they yielded no results, due to the unconstructive positions of various States. Reforming the Fund requires the concerted efforts of all of its member States, and should be discussed and advanced by experts from the countries of the region who are not from the Fund’s entities, including the Fund’s leadership. Kyrgyzstan once again emphasizes that it is prepared to discuss this reform with the participation of all the States of Central Asia. We hope that in this way the Central Asian countries will succeed in reforming the Fund, with the aim of improving the effectiveness of the Fund and its entities while giving equal consideration to the interests and essential needs of all Central Asian States.

**The Acting President:** We have heard the only speaker in explanation of position after adoption. May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of sub-item (z) of agenda item 130?

*It was so decided.*

*The meeting rose at 12.05 p.m.*