



General Assembly

Sixty-third session

67th plenary meeting

Thursday, 11 December 2008, 10 a.m.
New York

Official Records

President: Mr. D'Escoto Brockmann (Nicaragua)

In the absence of the President, Mr. Beck (Solomon Islands), Vice-President, took the Chair.

Committee considered 8 items and adopted 11 draft resolutions.

The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

The report on agenda item 72, "Nationality of natural persons in relation to the succession of States", is contained in document A/63/436, and the draft resolution recommended to the General Assembly for adoption is reproduced in paragraph 7 of the report.

Reports of the Sixth Committee

The Acting President: The General Assembly will consider today the reports of the Sixth Committee on agenda items 72 to 79, 99, 110, 119, 129, 150, 151, 153 and 156.

The report on agenda item 73, "Criminal accountability of United Nations officials and experts on mission", is contained in document A/63/437, and the draft resolution recommended to the Assembly for adoption is reproduced in paragraph 10 thereof. The draft resolution builds upon last year's resolution on the topic, while including a number of additional elements aimed at enhancing international cooperation to ensure the criminal accountability of United Nations officials and experts on mission. Moreover, the Secretary-General would be requested to report to the General Assembly at its sixty-fourth session on the implementation of the resolution, on the basis of information received from Governments and the Secretariat.

I request the Rapporteur of the Sixth Committee, Mr. Marko Rakovec of Slovenia, to introduce in one intervention the reports of the Sixth Committee that are before the General Assembly.

Mr. Rakovec (Slovenia), Rapporteur of the Sixth Committee: I have the honour today to present the reports of the Sixth Committee on its work during the sixty-third session of the General Assembly. The Assembly allocated to the Committee 14 substantive and 3 procedural agenda items, organized under three of the headings corresponding to the priorities of the Organization, namely, "Promotion of justice and international law", "Drug control, crime prevention and combating international terrorism in all its forms and manifestations" and "Organizational, administrative and other matters". I propose to introduce the reports of the Sixth Committee on the various items in the order in which they fall under each of these three headings.

The report on agenda item 74, "Report of the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law on the work of its forty-first session", is contained in document A/63/438. The Sixth Committee recommended three draft resolutions for adoption by the Assembly, which are reproduced in paragraph 12 of the report. It is recommended that the Assembly adopt the United Nations Convention on Contracts for the International Carriage of Goods Wholly or Partly by

I shall begin with the first heading, "Promotion of justice and international law", under which the Sixth

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Sea, contained in the annex to draft resolution III of the report, and authorize a ceremony for the opening for signature to be held on 23 September 2009 in Rotterdam, the Netherlands.

The report on agenda item 75, "Report of the International Law Commission on the work of its sixtieth session", is contained in document A/63/439, and the two draft resolutions recommended to the Assembly for adoption are reproduced in paragraph 10 of the report. In one of the resolutions, the Assembly would, *inter alia*, take note of the draft articles on the law of transboundary aquifers, presented by the International Law Commission, the text of which would be annexed to the resolution.

The report on agenda item 76, "Status of the Protocols Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and relating to the protection of victims of armed conflicts", is contained in document A/63/440, and the draft resolution recommended to the Assembly for adoption is reproduced in paragraph 8 thereof.

The report on agenda item 77, "Consideration of effective measures to enhance the protection, security and safety of diplomatic and consular missions and representatives", is contained in document A/63/441, and the draft resolution recommended to the Assembly for adoption is reproduced in paragraph 7 of the report.

The report on agenda item 78, "Report of the Special Committee on the Charter of the United Nations and on the Strengthening of the Role of the Organization", is contained in document A/63/442, and the draft resolution recommended to the General Assembly for adoption appears in paragraph 9 thereof.

Finally, the report on agenda item 79, "The rule of law at the national and international levels", is contained in document A/63/443, and the draft resolution recommended to the Assembly for adoption is reproduced in paragraph 8 thereof. In connection with operative paragraph 10 of the draft resolution, the Sixth Committee has reached an understanding set out in paragraph 7 of the report.

The Sixth Committee adopted the 11 draft resolutions without a vote, and it is my hope that the General Assembly will be in a position to do the same.

I shall now turn to the second heading, "Drug control, crime prevention and combating international terrorism in all its forms and manifestations". The Sixth Committee considered agenda item 99,

"Measures to eliminate international terrorism", under this heading. The relevant report is contained in document A/63/444, and the draft resolution recommended to the General Assembly for adoption is reproduced in paragraph 11 thereof.

The Sixth Committee adopted the draft resolution without a vote, and it is my hope that the Assembly will be able to do the same. I wish to point out that, should the Assembly adopt the draft resolution on measures to eliminate international terrorism, it would, *inter alia*, request the Ad Hoc Committee established pursuant to resolution 51/210 to report to the Assembly during the current session in the event of the completion of the draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism. As in the past, it is envisaged that the item in question will remain open in the Assembly's agenda.

Under the third and final heading, "Organizational, administrative and other matters", the Sixth Committee considered five substantive and three procedural items. I will start with the substantive items.

The Sixth Committee considered agenda item 129, "Administration of justice at the United Nations". The relevant report is contained in document A/63/451, and the draft decision recommended to the General Assembly for adoption is reproduced in paragraph 11 thereof. Should the Assembly adopt this draft decision, the Ad Hoc Committee on the Administration of Justice at the United Nations established pursuant to Assembly decision 62/519 of 6 December 2007 would be reconvened from 20 to 24 April 2009 in order to continue the work on the outstanding legal aspects of the item, taking into account the results of the deliberations of the Fifth and Sixth Committees on the item, previous decisions of the Assembly and any further decisions that the Assembly may take during its sixty-third session prior to the meeting of the Ad Hoc Committee. The Ad Hoc Committee would report on its work to the Assembly at its sixty-fourth session.

The Sixth Committee also considered agenda item 150, "Report of the Committee on relations with the Host Country". The relevant report is contained in document A/63/452, and the draft resolution recommended to the General Assembly for adoption is reproduced in paragraph 8 of the report.

Furthermore, the Sixth Committee considered three requests for observer status in the General Assembly. It recommended that the Assembly grant

observer status to the following organizations: the South Centre, under agenda item 151; the University for Peace, under agenda item 153; and the International Fund for Saving the Aral Sea, under agenda item 156. The relevant reports for each of the requests are found in documents A/63/453, A/63/455 and A/63/454, respectively, and the relevant draft resolutions are reproduced in paragraph 7 of each report.

The draft resolutions and the draft decision under these items were also adopted by the Sixth Committee without a vote, and it is my hope that the General Assembly will be in a position to do the same.

Finally, under this cluster, the Sixth Committee considered three procedural items, namely item 110, "Revitalization of the work of the General Assembly"; item 119, "Programme planning"; and item 5, "Election of the officers of the Main Committees". The report under agenda item 110, containing the provisional programme of work of the Sixth Committee at the sixty-fourth session, is contained in document A/63/445. The draft decision by which the General Assembly would take note of the provisional programme of work is reproduced in paragraph 7 of the report. The report on agenda item 119 is reproduced in document A/63/450, and no further action is recommended for the Assembly to take. Furthermore, there is no report with regard to agenda item 5. Consistent with previous practice, the election of the officers of the Sixth Committee for the sixty-fourth session will be taken up at a later stage in the course of the current session.

International law continues to play an essential role in the conduct of international relations. It is the foundation upon which the Charter of our Organization is firmly based. Over the years, the Sixth Committee has been called upon to play an important role in assisting the General Assembly in performing its tasks related to the codification and progressive development of international law. This year, through the adoption of the draft resolutions and draft decisions set out in the reports that I have just introduced, the Sixth Committee has continued to focus its efforts on enhancing the role of the Organization and the attainment of its objectives with regard to three of the priority areas identified by the General Assembly: promoting justice and international law; drug control, crime prevention and combating international terrorism in all its forms and manifestations; and organizational, administrative and other matters. In some instances, the draft resolutions

require specific actions by States. It is my sincere hope that such actions will be taken in the months to come.

That concludes my introduction of the reports of the Sixth Committee. Let me take this opportunity to express my gratitude to the Chairman of the Sixth Committee, His Excellency Ambassador Hamid Al Bayati, for his commendable leadership. I also wish to thank the other members of the Bureau, Ms. Ana Cristina Rodríguez-Pineda, Mr. Scott Sheeran and Mr. El Hadj Lamine, for their cooperation and for the support given to me as Rapporteur. Further, I would like to express my gratitude and appreciation to the secretariat of the Sixth Committee, in particular Ms. Mahnoush Arsanjani, head of the Codification Division, for their tireless and highly professional support. It is sad news that Ms. Arsanjani is leaving her Office. On behalf of the Sixth Committee, I wish her all the best in the future.

Finally, I wish to express my sincere thanks to all representatives and colleagues for their invaluable contributions to the success of this year's session of the Sixth Committee.

The Acting President: I thank the Rapporteur of the Sixth Committee. I would like to join him in thanking the Chairman of the Committee and the other members of the Bureau for their excellent work.

If there is no proposal under rule 66 of the rules of procedure, I shall take it that the General Assembly decides not to discuss the reports of the Sixth Committee that are before the Assembly today.

It was so decided.

The Acting President: Statements will therefore be limited to explanations of vote. The positions of delegations regarding the recommendations of the Sixth Committee have been made clear in the Committee and are reflected in the relevant official records.

May I remind members that, under paragraph 7 of decision 34/401, the General Assembly agreed that

"When the same draft resolution is considered in a Main Committee and in plenary meeting, a delegation should, as far as possible, explain its vote only once, that is, either in the Committee or in plenary meeting, unless that delegation's vote in plenary meeting is different from its vote in the Committee."

May I remind delegations that explanations of vote are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Before we begin to take action on the recommendations contained in the reports of the Sixth Committee, I should like to advise representatives that we are going to proceed to take decisions in the same manner as was done in the Sixth Committee, unless the Secretariat is notified otherwise in advance. I therefore hope that we may proceed to adopt without a vote those recommendations that were adopted without a vote in the Sixth Committee.

Agenda item 72

Nationality of natural persons in relation to the succession of States

Report of the Sixth Committee (A/63/436)

The Acting President: The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the Sixth Committee in paragraph 7 of its report. We will now take a decision on the draft resolution. The Sixth Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 63/118).

The Acting President: May I take it that it is the wish of the Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 72?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 73

Criminal accountability of United Nations officials and experts on mission

Report of the Sixth Committee (A/63/437)

The Acting President: The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the Sixth Committee in paragraph 10 of its report. We will now take a decision on the draft resolution. The Sixth Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do likewise?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 63/119).

The Acting President: May I take it that it is the wish of the Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 73?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 74

Report of the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law on the work of its forty-first session

Report of the Sixth Committee (A/63/438)

The Acting President: The Assembly has before it three draft resolutions recommended by the Sixth Committee in paragraph 12 of its report. We will now take a decision on draft resolutions I to III.

Draft resolution I is entitled "Reports of the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law on the work of its resumed fortieth and its forty-first sessions". The Sixth Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

Draft resolution I was adopted (resolution 63/120).

The Acting President: Draft resolution II is entitled "Legislative Guide on Secured Transactions of the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law". The Sixth Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do likewise?

Draft resolution II was adopted (resolution 63/121).

The Acting President: Draft resolution III is entitled "United Nations Convention on Contracts for the International Carriage of Goods Wholly or Partly by Sea". The Sixth Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

Draft resolution III was adopted (resolution 63/122).

The Acting President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 74?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 75**Report of the International Law Commission on the work of its sixtieth session****Report of the Sixth Committee (A/63/439)**

The Acting President: The Assembly has before it two draft resolutions recommended by the Sixth Committee in paragraph 10 of its report. We will now take a decision on draft resolutions I and II.

We turn first to draft resolution I, entitled "Report of the International Law Commission on the work of its sixtieth session". The Sixth Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

Draft resolution I was adopted (resolution 63/123).

The Acting President: Draft resolution II is entitled "The law of transboundary aquifers". The Sixth Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do likewise?

Draft resolution II was adopted (resolution 63/124).

The Acting President: May I take it that it is the wish of the Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 75?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 76**Status of the Protocols Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and relating to the protection of victims of armed conflicts****Report of the Sixth Committee (A/63/440)**

The Acting President: The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the Sixth Committee in paragraph 8 of its report. We will now take a decision on the draft resolution. The Sixth Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do likewise?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 63/125).

The Acting President: I call on the representative of the Syrian Arab Republic, who wishes to speak in explanation of position on the resolution just adopted.

Mr. Taleb (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): My country would like to explain its position on the resolution just adopted under agenda item 76, "Status of the Protocols Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and relating to the protection of victims of armed conflicts".

We joined the consensus on the resolution despite our reservations regarding the preambular paragraph referring to the entry into force of the Protocol additional to the Conventions and relating to Adoption of an Additional Distinctive Emblem (Protocol III) of 8 December 2005. My country continues to have reservations regarding that Protocol, which was adopted when we were adopting conventions related to international humanitarian law. Those reservations, which were expressed during the negotiations leading to the adoption of the Protocol and were not mentioned in its text, still stand.

The Acting President: We have heard the only speaker in explanation of position.

May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 76?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 77**Consideration of effective measures to enhance the protection, security and safety of diplomatic and consular missions and representatives****Report of the Sixth Committee (A/63/441)**

The Acting President: The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the Sixth Committee in paragraph 7 of its report. We will now take a decision on the draft resolution. The Sixth Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 63/126).

The Acting President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 77?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 78

Report of the Special Committee on the Charter of the United Nations and on the Strengthening of the Role of the Organization

Report of the Sixth Committee (A/63/442)

The Acting President: The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the Sixth Committee in paragraph 9 of its report. We will now take a decision on the draft resolution. The Sixth Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 63/127).

The Acting President: May I take it that it is the wish of the Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 78?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 79

The rule of law at the national and international levels

Report of the Sixth Committee (A/63/443)

The Acting President: The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the Sixth Committee in paragraph 8 of its report. We will now take a decision on the draft resolution. The Sixth Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 63/128).

The Acting President: The Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 79.

Agenda item 99

Measures to eliminate international terrorism

Report of the Sixth Committee (A/63/444)

The Acting President: The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the Sixth Committee in paragraph 11 of its report. We will now take a decision on the draft resolution.

I shall first call on those representatives who wish to speak in explanation of position before action is taken on the draft resolution.

Ms. Chandra (India): Recent events have demonstrated that there should be no complacency in addressing issues relating to terrorism. It is necessary that the international community urgently convey a strong message that abhorrent acts of terrorism will not be tolerated and will encounter severe condemnation and punishment. We are joining the consensus on this draft resolution. Nevertheless, we reserve the right to introduce a proposal under this agenda item at any time.

Mr. Taleb (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): My delegation is joining the consensus on the draft resolution under agenda item 99, entitled "Measures to eliminate international terrorism", despite our reservations regarding the inclusion of a military organization among the organizations listed in its twenty-first preambular paragraph.

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

We will now take a decision on the draft resolution. The Sixth Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the General Assembly wishes to do likewise?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 63/129).

The Acting President: The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 99.

Agenda item 110

Revitalization of the work of the General Assembly

Report of the Sixth Committee (A/63/445)

The Acting President: The Assembly has before it a draft decision recommended by the Sixth Committee in paragraph 7 of its report. We will now take action on the draft decision, entitled "Provisional programme of work of the Sixth Committee for the sixty-fourth session of the General Assembly". The Sixth Committee adopted it. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft decision was adopted.

The Acting President: The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 110.

Agenda item 119**Programme planning****Report of the Sixth Committee (A/63/450)**

The Acting President: May I take it that the General Assembly wishes to take note of the report of the Sixth Committee?

It was so decided.

The Acting President: The Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 119.

Agenda item 129**Administration of justice at the United Nations****Report of the Sixth Committee (A/63/451)**

The Acting President: The Assembly has before it a draft decision recommended by the Sixth Committee in paragraph 11 of its report. We will now take action on the draft decision. The Sixth Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft decision was adopted.

The Acting President: The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 129.

Agenda item 150**Report of the Committee on Relations with the Host Country****Report of the Sixth Committee (A/63/452)**

The Acting President: The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the Sixth Committee in paragraph 8 of its report. We will now take a decision on the draft resolution. The Sixth Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do likewise?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 63/130).

The Acting President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 150?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 151**Observer status for the South Centre in the General Assembly****Report of the Sixth Committee (A/63/453)**

The Acting President: The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the Sixth Committee in paragraph 7 of its report. We will now take a decision on the draft resolution. The Sixth Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 63/131).

The Acting President: May I take it that it is the wish of the Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 151?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 153**Observer status for the University for Peace in the General Assembly****Report of the Sixth Committee (A/63/455)**

The Acting President: The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the Sixth Committee in paragraph 7 of its report. We will now take a decision on the draft resolution. The Sixth Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do likewise?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 63/132).

The Acting President: May I take it that it is the wish of the Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 153?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 156**Observer status for the International Fund for Saving the Aral Sea in the General Assembly****Report of the Sixth Committee (A/63/454)**

The Acting President: The Assembly has before it a draft resolution recommended by the Sixth Committee in paragraph 7 of its report. We will now take a decision on the draft resolution. The Sixth

Committee adopted it without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 63/133).

The Acting President: May I take it that it is the wish of the Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 156?

It was so decided.

The Acting President: The General Assembly has thus concluded its consideration of all the reports of the Sixth Committee before it. On behalf of the Assembly, I would like to take this opportunity to thank His Excellency Mr. Hamid Al Bayati, Permanent Representative of Iraq and Chairman of the Sixth Committee, members of the Bureau and delegates for a job well done.

Agenda item 11

The role of diamonds in fuelling conflict

Letter dated 20 November 2008 from the Permanent Representative of India to the United Nations (A/63/560)

Draft resolution (A/63/L.52)

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the Permanent Representative of India to introduce draft resolution A/63/L.52.

Mr. Sen (India): I have the honour to address the General Assembly today as Chair of the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme for 2008. In this capacity, it is my privilege to present, in fulfilment of the request of this Assembly made via paragraph 21 of its resolution 62/11, a report on the progress made in implementation of the Kimberley Process during the year.

Diamonds have played a particularly significant role in causing and prolonging conflict in several countries as a result of the misuse of wealth generated from this resource. In addition to financing devastating armed conflicts, the illicit trade in rough diamonds also impacts negatively on the legitimate international trade in diamonds. Efforts to address the problem through the perspective of an overall development agenda must focus not only on the supply side, but also on all parts of the supply chain, including processing, trading and purchase by the consumer.

It is in this context that the Kimberley Process has proved to be remarkably successful in breaking the linkage between conflict and illicit trade in diamonds, thereby protecting the peace, livelihood and security of millions of people across the globe. This success has translated into an increase in legitimate trade in diamonds. Today, diamonds have emerged as a vehicle of economic progress and as a means to confront development challenges in many countries. Over these years, the Process has emerged as a model for multi-stakeholder efforts, in which national Governments, industry and civil society have successfully collaborated to prevent conflict and promote peace, stability and development.

India was privileged to lead the Kimberley Process during 2008 in its continued multipronged efforts to further its implementation. The inclusiveness of the Process is a key area of its success. Membership is open on a non-discriminatory basis to all those willing and able to adhere to the requirements of the Scheme. Today, a substantial number of the diamond mining, trading and processing countries are part of the Kimberley Process. Mexico joined the Process in 2008, and approval has been given for the Republic of the Congo to resume trading in rough diamonds.

In addition, the inclusiveness of the Scheme is reflected by the fact that almost all participants are members of at least one of the many working groups of the Process. The commitment of participants has also been reaffirmed by their participation in review visits and technical workshops designed to enhance knowledge and skill in the sector and by their proactive extension of financial assistance to other participants.

During 2008, the Kimberley Process engaged with the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela by organizing a visit of the Chair's nominees following Venezuela's announcement, during the June intersessional meeting in New Delhi, that it would voluntarily separate from the Process for a period of two years and would cease certification for the export of its diamonds. The visit enabled the Process to arrive at a better understanding of the challenges faced by the country in its diamond sector. Venezuela no longer exports or imports rough diamonds. The Process has since decided that it will continue to engage with Venezuela in order to assist and support the country in developing appropriate internal controls over its alluvial diamond mining consistent with the minimum standards of the Process. Venezuela will continue to

participate in the Process, attend its meetings and submit production statistics during the period of voluntary separation.

This is yet another example of the mutual inclusiveness inherent in the Scheme and attests to the willingness of the Kimberley Process family to stand together, to learn from global best practices and to proactively provide assistance as and when required.

Transparency is another hallmark of the Kimberley Process. The Process took a step forward in that regard by releasing the sub-annual data for rough-diamond trading and production for the period 2004 to 2007. The statistics and annual reports submitted by participants and the reports of peer review visits continue to be the key elements of monitoring. All participants in the Scheme have submitted their respective statistics and annual reports for 2007, which have been analysed to identify implementation issues and best practices. In addition, statistical analysis for each peer review visit has been undertaken.

During the year, the Kimberley Process completed its ongoing work to finalize the diamond production profiles for Côte d'Ivoire, the Marange diamond field in Zimbabwe and Togo. Statistical protocols have been developed to complement that work. Moreover, an initiative has been launched to harness information technology in order to improve the quality of the data.

Artisanal alluvial producing participants in the Kimberley Process continued to follow up on the recommendations of the Process regarding artisanal alluvial production. A consolidated matrix of the inventories of those participants was published for the first time. The inventories will be updated every six months. In addition, technical assistance and training in support of the implementation of the Process continued.

During 2008, the Kimberley Process further deepened its engagement with the United Nations. Process experts participated in the joint visit by the United Nations and the Kimberley Process visit to Côte d'Ivoire. At the request of the United Nations, a Process expert visited Mali to examine a seized consignment of rough diamonds and confirmed its possible Ivorian origin. The Process will continue its close cooperation with the United Nations in Côte d'Ivoire, which continues to be the subject of United

Nations sanctions and is not trading in rough diamonds.

During its chairmanship of the Kimberley Process, India has endeavoured to strengthen the Process, particularly by building on previous traditions and conventions and by coordinating with the working groups and committees of the Process for improved implementation of Process decisions. In that regard, we express our gratitude to past Chairs of the Process for their efforts. Our sincere thanks go also to the chairs of the working groups and committees and to all Process participants, industry and civil society for all the cooperation and support that we received during the year.

As Chair of the Kimberley Process, India also has the honour to introduce draft resolution A/63/L.52, 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". The support of the United Nations for the Process has been a key element of its success, and the General Assembly has traditionally adopted an annual resolution expressing support for the activities of the Process.

As in previous years, this draft resolution highlights the important activities undertaken by the Process during the year. It also expresses satisfaction at the systematization of the work of the Kimberley Process with respect to continuing to develop transparent and uniform rules and procedures. It welcomes the guidelines endorsed by the New Delhi plenary, recommending interim measures on serious non-compliance with Kimberley Process minimum requirements setting out the guiding principles for determining serious non-compliance and an indicative list of escalating measures. The draft resolution also highlights the development perspective of the Process by acknowledging that the diamond sector is an important catalyst for achieving poverty reduction and meeting the requirements of the Millennium Development Goals in producing countries.

We look forward to the support of all delegations in adopting this draft resolution, which would reaffirm the continued importance that the General Assembly attaches to the work of the Kimberley Process.

Before concluding, I should like to make two small corrections to draft resolution A/63/L.52 as circulated, to bring it into conformity with the text

agreed during the informal consultations. In the middle of operative paragraph 10, the phrase “urges the Kimberley Process to” should be replaced with “led to the recommendation that the Kimberley Process”. In operative paragraph 13, the phrase “enabling Côte d’Ivoire to meet” should be replaced with the word “meeting”. Further, the phrase “sanctions imposed for” should be replaced with “sanctions on”.

Mr. Loulichki (Morocco): On behalf of the African Group, the delegation of the Kingdom of Morocco expresses its sincere appreciation to the delegation of India, Chair of the 2008 Kimberley Process, for providing leadership during its tenure. The African Group is fully supportive of the Kimberley Process, which, after only a few years of operation, has managed to increase the transparency and effective regulation of the trade in rough diamonds.

The African Group welcomes with great appreciation the substantial progress achieved in consolidating and strengthening the Kimberley Process, an instrument that stands as a vital tool of conflict prevention and deterrence. Before the introduction of the Process by the United Nations in the General Assembly as resolution 55/56 of 1 December 2000, the illicit diamond trade fuelled some of the most devastating conflicts witnessed by the African continent. In addition to financing conflicts, the illicit trade in rough diamonds also had a negative impact on the legitimate international trade in diamonds. However, it must be recognized that the constant mobilization of the international community has allowed significant strides to be made in halting and preventing the illicit diamond trade.

The Kimberley Process, whose membership represents 99.8 per cent of world diamond production, has played a leading role in orienting international efforts towards the attainment of the universal objective of breaking the link between the illicit transaction of rough diamonds and armed conflict. In that regard, the Kimberley Process is a mechanism that is both innovative and useful. It approaches the problem of conflict diamonds not merely at the level of extraction but also from the standpoint of processing and trading. Its Certification Scheme has been particularly effective in validating and regulating the production of and trade in rough diamonds. It truly affirms the sovereignty of States in the Process and is driven by voluntary efforts by its participants.

It is thanks to the Kimberley Process that conflict diamonds today make up only a small percentage of the world’s diamond market. Today, conflict diamonds represent less than one per cent of international trade, while in the 1990s they represented 15 per cent of such trade.

The Kimberley Process Certification Scheme has evolved into a complex system that allows for greater transparency in the diamond trade. According to the Kimberley Process Working Group on Statistics, in 2006 the Certification Scheme monitored \$35.7 billion in rough diamond exports, representing more than 480 million carats, and members of the Kimberley Process issued 55,000 certificates.

Diamonds are one of the major natural resources with which the African continent is endowed. Every year, about 65 per cent of the world’s diamonds, worth over \$8.4 billion, come from Africa. In Southern Africa alone, the diamond industry employs more than 38,000 people, and at the global level it is estimated that about 10 million people are supported, either directly or indirectly, by the diamond industry. Therefore, the economies of a great number of African States rely on the production and trade of diamonds. The active involvement of the African countries in the Kimberley Process and their leadership stand as testimony to their willingness to use these resources for the benefit of their populations’ economic and social well-being and for the building of infrastructure critical for development.

In that connection, the Group of African States would like to underscore the efforts of the Republic of Angola for the creation in 2006 of the African Diamond Producers Association, the objective of which is to coordinate policies and strategies for the sustained and durable development of the African diamond industry.

It is important to strengthen the features of the Kimberley Process that have been built up through the last eight years to become its distinctive advantages. Among these advantages, inclusiveness should be preserved so as to enlarge the partnership among producing, exporting and importing countries, the diamond industry and civil society.

In less than eight years, the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme has been able to bring most of the world’s rough diamond trade under its control and has set up an effective body of global governance. In order

to maintain this performance and guarantee the effectiveness of the Kimberley Process, the widest possible participation of the international community remains essential.

The Group of African States stresses that technical assistance provided by the donor countries is crucial to Kimberley Process participants and helps them to strengthen their internal controls and improve data gathering methods through reinforced cooperation in the field of statistics.

Equally important for the ongoing effectiveness of the Kimberley Process is the subregional cooperation aimed at stemming the illicit cross-border movement of rough diamonds in West Africa and South America. Transborder cooperation remains a crucial means of strengthening the international community's capacity to monitor and control the movement of rough diamonds, particularly where porous borders make doing so a challenge. In that respect, the African Group calls for better coordination in and sharper focus on the linkage between the work of the Kimberley Process and that of the United Nations in its endeavour to maintain international peace and security.

Finally, the Group of African States takes this opportunity to assure the incoming Chair of the Kimberley Process — Namibia — of our continued goodwill, support and cooperation in the coming years.

Mr. Delacroix (France) (*spoke in French*): I have the honour of speaking on behalf of the European Union regarding agenda item 11, "The role of diamonds in fuelling conflict".

The European Union, which participates as a single member in the Kimberley Process, would first like to recall the importance it attaches to the Process, which allows the international community to act in a transparent and coordinated manner in order to eradicate the trade in conflict diamonds. One year ago, on the occasion of the annual debate on the role of diamonds in fuelling conflict, the European Union reported to the General Assembly and handed over the chairmanship of the Process to India (*see A/62/PV.57*). Today, as we conclude this year of the Indian chairmanship, the European Union is pleased to note that the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme has further developed as a unique and effective tool for conflict prevention and has achieved significant progress in combating the scourge of conflict diamonds.

The credibility of the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme depends, first and foremost, on effective implementation by its participants, and the European Union is glad to note that there has been significant progress in this respect. The implementation of the Brussels Declaration on rough diamond trading and manufacturing centres has enabled the Kimberley Process to support efforts by producing and exporting countries to strengthen controls. This redoubling of efforts has resulted in significant seizures of illicit diamonds and demonstrated the concrete impact of the Kimberley Process.

Moreover, the Kimberley Process has itself been further strengthened, in particular with the launching of a second round of review visits in diamond trading and manufacturing centres such as Israel and the United Arab Emirates, but also to conflict-affected countries such as the Central African Republic, Liberia and Côte d'Ivoire. The European Union, as Chair of the Working Group on Monitoring, welcomes the continued commitment of participants that are subject to scrutiny by the Kimberley Process. We are pleased to announce that the European Community, as the largest trading entity in the world, is fully committed to this exercise and will receive a Kimberley Process review visit in February 2009.

The inclusive nature of the Kimberley Process has further expanded in 2008, with 75 countries now participating, including the 27 European Union member States. The European Community, as Chair of the Participation Committee, is proud to have supported Mexico's accession in 2008 to the status of participant. The decisions on Venezuela have shown that the Kimberley Process can maintain dialogue with a country experiencing difficulties in its implementation of the Certification Scheme, while ensuring that the Scheme's integrity is not affected.

The European Union believes that the Kimberley Process is a mechanism for dialogue and technical resolution that is especially relevant to the issue of the illicit trade in rough diamonds. We believe that it is not in the participants' interest to politicize the issues addressed by the Process during the annual consideration of this agenda item by the General Assembly. To the contrary, we consider it imperative that the Process remain independent and consensual. It is in that spirit of consensus that the European Union contributed constructively to the New Delhi meeting to and the negotiations on draft resolution A/63/L.52 and

made proposals to ensure that the text could be adopted by consensus.

However, the European Union believes that draft resolution A/63/L.52, entitled "The role of diamonds in fuelling conflict", presented to the Assembly for adoption, does not accurately reflect the discussions that took place from 3 to 6 November 2008 in New Delhi or take into account the situation in all those countries whose participation in the Kimberley Process was mentioned at the sixth meeting of the Process. In particular, we regret the fact that no reference is made to the continuing challenges faced by Zimbabwe in implementing the Process, even though Process participants noted them with concern.

The European Union also regrets that it was not possible to make a more positive statement, as is customary, regarding the election of the new Chair and Vice-Chair of the Kimberley Process. For its part, and as is customary every year the European Union welcomes the choice of Namibia as Chair and Israel as Vice-Chair of the Kimberley Process for 2009.

While reaffirming our strong support for the Kimberley Process and for its consideration within the framework of the General Assembly, we wished to express those reservations about the negotiation process for the draft resolution. Despite those reservations, we hope that the draft resolution can be adopted by consensus.

Mr. Alimov (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): The Russian Federation takes a generally positive view regarding the work of the Kimberley Process. We note its dynamic development and its enhanced international credibility. We welcome the major contribution made by India, as Chair of the Process for 2008, in fulfilling the requirements of the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme for rough diamonds with regard to problematic participants and the recommendations resulting from the triennial review of the Scheme.

The Process plays an important role in the accomplishment of tasks defined by the decisions of the Security Council and other United Nations bodies. The Russian Federation supports the efforts of the Kimberley Process to develop coordination with the Security Council in order to prevent conflict diamonds from entering the legal trade and welcomes the positive impact of the contributions of United Nations agencies in enhancing the effectiveness of the Process.

The Russian Federation welcomes the admission of Mexico as a participant in the Kimberley Process and the full readmission of the Republic of the Congo to the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme. While the overall number of Process participants has reached 49, representing 76 countries, we believe that it need not stop there. We support the aspirations of an additional 11 States to become participants in the Kimberley Process and, in principle, encourage admission to the Process of all States directly or indirectly involved in rough-diamond operations.

The Russian Federation welcomes the adoption, at the New Delhi meeting of the Kimberley Process, of decisions aimed at retaining those participants in the Process that are experiencing temporary difficulties in fulfilling the requirements of the Certification Scheme. We also welcome the willingness of the Process to provide support and technical assistance to such participants. As practice has shown, the capacities of the Process make it possible to effectively overcome difficulties in implementing the minimal requirements of the Scheme.

The Russian Federation believes that the normative basis for the Kimberley Process should be improved and adapted to the requirements related to its development and that a legal basis should gradually be developed for the activities of its working groups, participants and observers. In that regard, we welcome the adoption at the meeting of documents setting out rules and criteria for the selection of candidates for Vice-Chair of the Process, for the readmission of former Process participants and for the participation of guests of the Chair, as well as temporary measures to suspend participation in the Certification Scheme. The Russian Federation, as Chair of the Committee on Rules and Procedures, believes it is essential to continue to develop transparent and uniform rules and procedural standards and to develop a mechanism for consultations and coordination within the Kimberley Process.

In conclusion, we wish to thank India for its skilful and effective coordination of the work on draft resolution A/63/L.52, on conflict diamonds. In addition, we thank all partners, who have demonstrated a thoughtful and flexible approach and a readiness to compromise. We welcome the agreements reached on all paragraphs of the draft resolution concerning the substantive activities of the Kimberley Process. Adopting this annual draft resolution by consensus

should remain a key priority for delegations in the future.

Ms. Mongwa (Botswana): Let me begin by expressing our sincere appreciation to the delegation of India for the able manner in which they have conducted the affairs of the Kimberley Process during the course of their chairmanship. The report on the progress made towards the implementation of the Kimberley Process, presented as document A/63/560, and draft resolution A/63/L.52, on the role of diamonds in fuelling conflict, are clear testimony of India's sterling leadership in that regard.

We associate ourselves with the statement made by the representative of Morocco on behalf of the African Group.

The draft resolution is an important instrument that is predicated on a unique relationship between the United Nations system and the Kimberley Process, a voluntary tripartite body consisting of 75 countries, the diamond industry and non-governmental organizations — that is, 49 participants that have committed themselves to operationalizing the principles and objectives of the Kimberley Process through the implementation of the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme.

As members may be aware, the primary objective of the Kimberley Process is to eliminate illicit rough diamonds from the legitimate diamond trade in order to prevent such illegal transactions from promoting armed conflict and illegal activities that threaten international peace and security. It is thanks in no small measure to the unwavering support of the international community, embodied in General Assembly and Security Council resolutions such as this, that the Process is able to effectively and successfully attain its objective.

This annual draft resolution, which complements the Kimberley Process, serves to validate, consolidate and nurture that mutually beneficial relationship. It is also a demonstration of our individual and collective resolve and tenacity in doing everything in our power to continue to contribute to the prevention and settlement of conflicts by breaking the link between the illegal trade in rough diamonds and armed conflicts.

It is therefore heartening to note from the progress report that the Kimberley Process continues to make significant strides in regulating the international

trade in rough diamonds in order to ensure that all rough diamonds produced are from legitimate sources. While the report underlines challenges related to non-compliance by some participants that need to be addressed and other shortcomings, to a large extent it describes positive developments. These include enhanced implementation of Process requirements, greater participation in review mechanisms and increased transparency and accuracy in reported statistics, which are a key monitoring tool of the Process.

Undoubtedly, these commendable milestones epitomize what we can accomplish through the highest possible level of cooperation among Governments, civil society and the private sector. It therefore goes without saying that the widest possible participation in the Kimberley Process is essential for effective implementation, monitoring and compliance. We are pleased that the Kimberley Process continues to grow in size and scope, thus reaffirming its importance and relevance and its contribution to international peace and security.

My delegation remains confident that, through this initiative, we will continue to reduce the devastating impact of conflicts fuelled by trade in conflict diamonds. In this way, people in affected countries will no longer be afflicted by the curse of natural resources that has brought suffering and despair, but may instead enjoy the fundamental human rights of peace, security and safety.

In this connection, we note with satisfaction that as a result of the invaluable work of the Kimberley Process, today more than ever before, diamonds have become a major source of financing for social progress and economic development in many countries, particularly in Africa. We are therefore optimistic that, in the not too distant future, our deliberations will shift focus towards the role of diamonds in preventing conflict or, in other words, to “diamonds for development”.

My delegation attaches great importance to this issue for a number of reasons. Diamonds are a mainstay of our economy and, to a very great extent, account for our socio-economic accomplishment. Two years ago, my former President, Festus Mogae, presented the Kimberley Process report to the General Assembly, in his capacity as the Chair of the Kimberley Process. That year President Mogae said:

“For our people in Botswana every diamond bought means food on the table, better living conditions, better health care, safe drinking water, more roads and much, much more. It means at this time when our future is threatened by the AIDS pandemic, Botswana gives free anti-retroviral drugs to all those in need, provides food, clothing and support for over 60,000 AIDS orphans and finances programmes to prevent mother-to-child transmission of the virus.”

In short, for us diamonds are for development, and they enhance our prospects for achieving all our development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals.

Conflict diamonds should continue to be a matter of serious concern to the international community. It is thus imperative that this issue remain on the agenda of the Assembly to ensure that we continue to consolidate the achievements made and to build on the best practices in preventing diamonds from fuelling conflict. It behoves us to work continuously towards our common objective of saving present and future generations from the scourge of war, as enshrined in the ideals of the Charter of the United Nations, by supporting initiatives like the Kimberley Process.

Finally, I should also like to take this opportunity to welcome Namibia as the incoming Chair of the Kimberley Process for 2009 and to assure it of the continued cooperation, support and goodwill of my delegation.

Ms. Halpern (United States of America): The United States is pleased to co-sponsor the draft resolution on the role of diamonds in fuelling conflict. Those nations that participate in the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme deserve recognition for their commitment to reducing the number of conflict diamonds that reach the worldwide diamond trade and international gem markets. The unique multi-stakeholder approach in which Governments, the diamond industry and civil society organizations have collaborated and continue to collaborate to achieve this goal needs to be encouraged for even greater effectiveness. By working together, this multifaceted partnership has the potential to ensure that the legitimate trade in diamonds will reduce poverty, provide for economic development and help achieve the Millennium Development Goals.

The Kimberley Process Certification Scheme also offers a precedent for the international community to address the link between natural-resource trade and the fuelling of conflict.

2008 has been a notable year for the Kimberley Process. We salute India's stewardship as Chair of the Kimberley Process in 2008, which led to the establishment of interim measures on non-compliance and the further encouragement of countries to comply with the minimum standards of the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme. Under Indian leadership, the Kimberley Process reaffirmed recent efforts to bolster internal controls over the diamond market by diamond-producing, trading and manufacturing countries.

We were pleased in 2008 to welcome Mexico as a participant and to recognize the resumption of rough diamond exports from the Republic of the Congo. We applaud Liberia's continued efforts to create an internal diamond monitoring system and to strengthen controls so that diamonds are now contributing to the country's economic development. 2008 has also been marked with Venezuela's decision to voluntarily separate for a period of two years while it develops a plan of action to implement Kimberley Process Certification Scheme minimum standards.

During this year, the Kimberley Process has also recognized continued efforts to control illicit diamond flows from Côte d'Ivoire. But there is more that has yet to be done in order to ensure that all diamonds will be conflict free. We would encourage Kimberley Process countries to redouble their efforts to intercept illicit diamond shipments from Zimbabwe. Those diamond shipments contribute to heightening both the political turmoil and humanitarian crisis in that country. One of the successful means to promote stability in diamond-producing countries is to foster Kimberley Process Certification Scheme controls at the same time that support for development opportunities in mining communities is provided.

The United States recognizes donor assistance for the effective implementation of the Kimberley Process and for development of commerce in both participating and candidate countries. We look forward to working closely with Namibia as it assumes the Chair and with Israel as it assumes the Vice-Chair of the Kimberley Process in 2009.

The millions of lives that have already been lost, together with the extensive devastation from diamond-

fuelled civil wars that have already occurred, make it imperative that the Kimberley Process continue to be supported and promoted, so that diamonds will no longer fuel conflict.

Mr. Gaspar Martins (Angola): Allow me to start by expressing our greatest appreciation to India, Chair of the Kimberley Process, for the very able manner in which it has conducted the affairs of the Process. We wish also to welcome the chairmanship of Namibia for 2009 and express our full willingness to cooperate with Namibia to ensure the success of its chairmanship.

The Kimberley Process Certification Scheme has been in place for five years. The campaign to stop the circulation of conflict diamonds has been successful for the most part, although there are still some challenges for African countries that produce alluvial and artisan diamonds, particularly countries emerging from conflict, whose post-conflict situations must continue to deserve our special attention until they consolidate their reconciliation and democratization processes.

African Governments continue to be committed to the objectives that guided the creation of the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme, which were to halt the flow of rough diamonds used by rebels to finance armed conflicts with the purpose of subverting legitimate governance. This commitment on their part has significantly contributed to the promotion of regional and international peace and security. The protection of the alluvial diamond production industry, on which several countries depend for the implementation of sustainable economic and social development programmes, will continue to be one of our most important priorities.

Angola is one of the 75 Governments currently represented in the Kimberley Process, where it has been providing its contribution in the various working groups that compose this process, in particular as Chair of the working group on artisan alluvial production. In this context, Angola has been encouraging African countries that produce artisan alluvial diamonds to constantly improve their internal controls through the recommendations foreseen in the 2005 Moscow declaration on internal controls over alluvial diamond production.

This year, the Angolan Government invited the non-governmental organization Partnership Africa Canada and the Diamonds for Development initiative,

through our Ministry of Geology and Mining, to work with the national entities that are involved in the Kimberley Process in Angola with a view to stimulating coordinated action focused on the normalization of artisan alluvial activities. Several seminars have been organized with the participation of local non-governmental organizations, with objectives such as considering small-scale mining and human rights and the relationships between greater society and small-scale artisan activities.

The current political and military situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo is of great concern, as that country is one of the major African diamond producers, with more than 80 per cent of its national production coming from small-scale artisan alluvial exploration. Efforts at the regional level, especially in the Great Lakes region and the Southern Africa Development Community area, and at the international level, through the United Nations, must prevent the war from assuming greater proportions, which could endanger that country's achievements in the context of the Kimberley Process.

Also, we hope that the elections in Côte d'Ivoire culminate in the conclusion of the reconciliation process and that that country will again benefit from lawful diamond production to serve the reconstruction of the economy.

Angola will continue to provide the necessary means to the working group on alluvial production so that the group can fulfil its obligations while also counting on the solidarity of international organizations and civil society in the search for alternative solutions that will improve internal controls in diamond-producing countries. The Government of the Republic of Angola will remain committed to the strengthening of the activity of the Association of Diamond-Producing Countries of Africa and to organizing the World Diamond Summit, which will take place in Luanda in November 2009 under the central theme of "The reputation of diamonds".

The Summit, which will be held for the first time in Angola, will seek to bring together distinguished members of diamond-producing countries and leading companies and specialists in the industry for a discussion around the concept "Diamonds: the commodity of many emotions". The Summit will also provide a transparent platform for interactive dialogue

on the technical and human aspects that characterize diamond mining activities around the world.

Angola has been a regular participant in the Kimberley Process and was one of the pioneers of its launching, as it has suffered the consequences of a war in which diamonds were used as the main source of funding. The launching and efficient application of the Kimberley Process has greatly contributed to ending the armed conflict in Angola. I would therefore once again like to use this occasion to express my country's commitment to working with all the relevant actors, in particular, other members of the Kimberley Process, countries that produce and import diamonds, private diamond companies and non-governmental organizations, to fight this scourge.

To conclude, I urge the Governments of the African diamond-producing countries, especially those with artisan, alluvial and small-scale production, to devote special attention in their national mining development plans and to their internal controls in order to eliminate the entrance or exit of diamonds not in compliance with their national legislation and with the standards of the Kimberley Process. In this connection, combating the traffic of diamonds, in particular transnational traffic, must constitute permanent action, not only by all countries affected by it, but also by the entire international community, through bilateral, subregional and regional cooperation, in order to eradicate this crime.

We have great appreciation for the leadership of India in the Kimberley Process during the mandate that has just ended, and we wish to salute Namibia once again for its election to the chairmanship of the Process for 2009.

Mrs. Ithete (Namibia): Namibia aligns itself with the statement delivered by the representative of Morocco on behalf of the African Group.

My delegation is pleased to support draft resolution A/63/L.52, under the agenda item entitled "The role of diamonds in fuelling conflict". By taking up this agenda item, the General Assembly once again recognizes the reality that the illegal trade in diamonds remains a crucial factor in prolonging conflicts in many parts of the world. The General Assembly is also making a clear statement that clean diamonds can contribute to prosperity and development in many of our countries.

Indeed, for many diamond-producing countries, especially in Africa, diamond mining is one of the main sectors contributing to the economy and is thus an important generator of export earnings and a catalyst for poverty alleviation and the provision of essential social services such as health care, education and the development of much-needed infrastructure including houses, schools, hospitals and roads.

From our own experience in Namibia, we owe our advances in development to the exploitation of mineral resources, especially diamonds, which account for more than 40 per cent of our export earnings, 10 per cent of gross domestic product and 7 per cent of Government revenue. Last year alone, Namibia produced diamonds worth approximately 4.6 billion Namibia dollars.

Namibia, therefore, attaches great importance to the Kimberley Process. We believe that the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme not only sets benchmarks in the regulatory process and management of the diamond trade, but it also guarantees transparency in marketing our diamonds and provides a valuable platform for cooperation among participants in the Kimberley Process.

As a participant in the Kimberley Process, Namibia has put in place a robust and comprehensive regulatory regime in order to protect the integrity of its diamond industry from conflict diamonds. In addition, a number of Government agencies, including the Diamonds Inspectorate in the Ministry of Mines and Energy and the Protected Resources Unit of the Namibia Police, have been established and are specifically charged with protecting our diamonds from smuggling and other illicit activities. In this way, Namibia is contributing to international efforts aimed at curbing the flow of conflict diamonds and ensuring international peace and security.

In conclusion, my delegation wishes to thank India for the leadership it has provided as Chair of the Kimberley Process this year. As incoming Chair, Namibia looks forward to a year of close cooperation.

Mr. McNee (Canada): It is my honour to speak today on behalf of Australia, New Zealand and Canada — the CANZ delegations.

Let me begin by congratulating India on its successful tenure as Chair of the Kimberley Process over the past year. Important improvements to the

Process have been made under India's stewardship, including the endorsement of interim measures to address serious instances of non-compliance and further systematization of the work of the Kimberley Process through the development of transparent rules and procedures. Canada would also like to extend a warm welcome to Mexico as the forty-ninth participant in the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme.

Let me also take this opportunity to welcome Namibia as the incoming Kimberley Process Chair, and to congratulate Israel on having been selected as Vice-Chair for 2009. We very much look forward to working with these delegations as, together, we continue to advance the implementation of the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme in the coming year.

The CANZ delegations remain fully supportive of the Kimberley Process, which continues to increase accountability, transparency and effective governance of the trade in rough diamonds, and which has had tremendous success in preventing conflict diamonds from entering the legitimate diamond market.

The CANZ delegations welcomes the progress that Ghana has continued to make in improving its system of internal controls over rough diamonds. We commend the constructive and transparent manner in which Ghana has engaged in the Kimberley Process and express our admiration for the commitment Ghana has shown to completing reforms to its internal controls. The CANZ delegations recognize that, in doing so, Ghana is making an important contribution to ensuring that illicit diamonds do not enter the legitimate diamond trade, and, as such, represents a model to be emulated.

Canada also welcomes plans by the Ivorian Government to re-establish control over diamond-producing areas in that country and looks forward to the lifting of rough diamond sanctions on Côte d'Ivoire when circumstances permit. This year, the Kimberley Process and the United Nations participated in a joint field mission to Côte d'Ivoire. Canada looks forward to continued collaboration between the Kimberley Process and the United Nations on this issue.

The CANZ delegations note with satisfaction that a resolution was achieved regarding Venezuela's status within the Kimberley Process. We support the continued engagement of the Kimberley Process with Venezuela, in an effort to bring that country into

compliance with the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme's minimum requirements.

These positive developments notwithstanding, there are reasons for concern. There are numerous reports that have recently emerged regarding illicit diamond mining in Zimbabwe. The CANZ delegations note the danger of these exports tainting international diamond markets both within and outside of the control of the Kimberley Process. We urge all Kimberley Process participants to enhance their own vigilance with regard to the implementation of Kimberley Process minimum requirements, as controlling the illicit flow of diamonds is a shared responsibility of all.

The CANZ delegations recognize the valuable role the non-governmental observers have played in monitoring the implementation of Kimberley Process minimum requirements and note with satisfaction that the number of civil society organizations participating in the Kimberley Process is expanding, especially from the global South. We welcome the important contributions that these organizations have made to the credibility and transparency of the Process, and we encourage all participants to continue to work constructively with these organizations.

(spoke in French)

The Kimberley Process is making a major contribution in breaking the link between rough diamonds and armed conflict, and stands as a living testament to what can be achieved through the honest partnership of Governments, the United Nations, civil society and the private sector. It is — and will remain — an important tool for our ongoing efforts to prevent conflict. Nonetheless, it is clear that much work remains for the international community in this area.

In celebrating the sixtieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, it is timely to recall that the Kimberley Process was created in the spirit of ending the role that diamonds can play in fuelling conflict and human rights abuses. While the Kimberley Process focuses on stopping the trade in conflict diamonds that are used by rebel movements, it is imperative that the international community be vigilant in monitoring for human rights abuses related to the production of and trade in diamonds, and States should work together to end these practices. We must not let diamonds linked to human rights abuses enter the international diamond market and place at risk an

industry that is of great importance to many of our economies.

We look forward to strengthening and deepening the implementation and enforcement of the Certification Scheme in the months ahead.

Mrs. Eilon Shahar (Israel): Israel would like to recognize and extend our sincere appreciation to India for its leadership of the Kimberley Process during the current year.

More than 60 years after the founders of the United Nations declared that the international community had an obligation to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war, conflicts and violence have become more complex and multidimensional. In our ongoing efforts to counteract these increasingly multifaceted conflicts, we must continue to confront the resources and funding that fuel such violence. Our efforts to eradicate blood diamonds remain a work in progress. We have achieved some notable successes, but more remains to be done.

Israel is proud to have been the first country to adopt the Kimberley Process. We issued our very first Kimberley certificate in 2003 and, since then, we have engaged in a vigorous process to ensure that all diamonds bought, sold or transferred through Israel are conflict-free.

This year, Israel welcomed a delegation representing the Kimberley Process to review Israel's compliance with all relevant Kimberley Process mechanisms. At the conclusion of the visit, the head of the delegation noted Israel's commitment to the Kimberley Process principles and added that Israel's system of spot checks and overall organization was "worthy of emulation in other Kimberley Process countries".

Israel would like to express its gratitude to the sixth Plenary of the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme that recently met in New Delhi to elect Israel as Vice-Chair of the Kimberley Process. We welcome the selection of Namibia as Chair of the Process, and we look forward to working together. In a spirit of mutual cooperation and collaboration, it is Israel's goal to strengthen the Kimberley Process and to increase its effectiveness, especially with regard to non-compliant countries.

Israel continues to support all relevant United Nations sanctions pertaining to conflict diamonds, as

these efforts, combined with those of the Kimberley Process States, help diminish the number of conflict diamonds that enter the world diamond trade. This must be a joint effort on the part of the international community. We must ensure that diamonds are not used to fuel conflict.

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

Before we proceed further, I should like to consult the Assembly with a view to proceeding immediately to consider the draft resolution contained in document A/63/L.52, as orally corrected. In that connection, since the draft resolution was circulated only this morning, it would be necessary to waive the relevant provision of rule 78 of the rules of procedure, which reads as follows:

"As a general rule, no proposal shall be discussed or put to the vote at any meeting of the General Assembly unless copies of it have been circulated to all delegations not later than the day preceding the meeting".

Unless I hear any objection, I will take it that the Assembly agrees with that proposal.

It was so decided.

The Acting President: The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/63/L.52, 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", as orally corrected.

Before proceeding to take action on the draft resolution, I should like to announce that, since the introduction of draft resolution A/63/L.52, the following countries have become sponsors: Armenia, Australia, Botswana, Brazil, Canada, Guyana, Japan, New Zealand, the Philippines, the Russian Federation, Thailand, Ukraine and the United States of America.

May I take it that the General Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/63/L.52, as orally corrected?

Draft resolution A/63/L.52, as orally corrected, was adopted (resolution 63/134).

The Acting President: Before giving the floor to delegations wishing to speak in explanation of position on the resolution just adopted, may I remind

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

Mrs. Eilon Shahar (Israel): We would first like to thank the Indian delegation very much for its leadership and for the very constructive way in which it conducted the deliberations on the resolution we have just adopted. Israel fully supports the Kimberley Process and is committed to it. In fact, Israel, as I stated just a few minutes ago, was the first country to adopt the Kimberley Process. However, it is regrettable that we were not able to join in sponsoring the resolution today.

We have witnessed a disturbing and provocative act of politicization. It is the established practice, when it comes to resolutions on this item, to welcome the selection of the Chair and the Vice-Chair of the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme, and we see no need to deviate from that established practice. It is because of the worldview of several countries — Iran, Syria and Libya — that that practice was changed. For that reason, we did not sponsor the resolution.

Mr. Hallak (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): The General Assembly has just adopted a resolution 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”. The primary objective of the resolution, in our view, was to prevent the illicit diamond trade from playing a role in escalating conflicts in diamond-producing countries, on the basis of the principles of the Kimberley Process and to prevent the illicit exploitation of peoples’ natural resources, especially through transnational activities, which deprive such countries of their natural wealth.

In this respect, our delegation joined the consensus as an expression of gratitude to the leadership of the Kimberley Process for this year for its significant role in implementing the objectives of the Kimberley Process, and specifically for that reason. In support of the efforts of our brothers on the African continent to combat the illicit diamond trade, we decided not to insist on submitting the entire draft resolution to a vote, and will merely express our reservation on the content of operative paragraph 20 of the resolution, because we believe that having selected Israel as Vice-Chair of the Kimberley Process for 2009

is a misreading of the noble objective that I mentioned at the beginning of my statement.

It is a well-known fact that most Israeli diamond merchants, who are reserve officers in the Israeli army, are exploiting the diamond trade in Africa and elsewhere to carry out destructive transactions, sell arms, foment domestic turmoil and disturbances in some States and finance armed conflicts and recruit children to fight in them. All of this helps to fuel and escalate conflict and adversely influence international peace and security.

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

May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 11?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 14

Zone of peace and cooperation of the South Atlantic

Report of the Secretary-General (A/63/525)

Mr. Gaspar Martins (Angola): My delegation is taking the floor in its capacity as Chairman of the Zone of Peace and Cooperation of the South Atlantic, on behalf of the Zone’s 24 members: Angola, Argentina, Benin, Brazil, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Congo, Côte d’Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Namibia, Nigeria, Senegal, Sao Tome and Principe, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Togo and Uruguay.

I would like to underline that the contribution by Angola referred to in part II of the report (A/63/525) was made on behalf of the 24 members of the Zone following a decision of its Permanent Committee and that it reflects our common position in this collective effort.

I should like to begin, Sir, by reiterating our satisfaction with the way in which you have been conducting the work of the Assembly this morning. My delegation also thanks the Secretary-General for the submission of his report, as well as for following up on the implementation of resolution 41/11, on the Zone.

The members of the Zone are particularly grateful to the delegation of Colombia, the Department of

Public Information, the Office of Legal Affairs, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the United Nations Office in Geneva and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime for their contributions to this report and for their interest in the issues of the Zone.

The report (A/63/525) before the General Assembly today is, per se, eloquent on how the zone is making gradual but steady significant qualitative changes by creating basic conditions for a fully operational mechanism for South-South cooperation in which a wide range of partners can find their place. We are particularly pleased to see how those changes are being noticed and taken into account by our partners, as the replies from various bodies mentioned in the report clearly refer to the implementation of the Luanda Plan of Action and the Luanda Final Declaration. In effect, the adoption of the Luanda Plan of Action as a framework for concrete action was a turning point in the revitalization of the zone.

We are thankful to all partners for the actions that they have been carrying out in the various countries located within the zone of peace and cooperation of the South Atlantic. However, we would welcome as a desirable development the regular exchange of information regarding the activities that partners have developed within the zone. Such exchanges could be carried out and coordinated through the zone's chairmanship.

For our part, while stressing that it is important that we cooperate among ourselves, maximizing the use of our internal capacities and resources, members of the zone will spare no effort in involving relevant partners in the attainment of our objectives, including by seeking their expertise with a view to the successful holding of the meetings of the ad hoc working groups mentioned in paragraph 8 of the present report.

The Office of Legal Affairs was instrumental in the holding of meetings of experts on the law of the sea in two member States of the zone — in Brazzaville, Republic of the Congo, in 1990, and in Montevideo, Uruguay, in 1991. We would welcome the continuation of such coordinated action. Another useful example would be utilizing the zone to address the issue of drug trafficking, as its membership comprises countries in South America and Africa with coasts on the Atlantic Ocean, a transit route used by dealers to transport illicit drugs.

We fully appreciate the positive developments in the field of peacebuilding, including in the zone member States Sierra Leone and Guinea-Bissau, which are on the agenda of the Peacebuilding Commission. Other members, such as Liberia, Guinea and Côte d'Ivoire, have benefited from the assistance of the Peacebuilding Fund.

Mr. Parlog (Republic of Moldova), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The issues of peace, security and development are interrelated and inseparable; they also require a suitable international environment. The members of the zone are therefore concerned over the negative developments in the world economy and the persistence of conflicts. In that connection, we are deeply concerned at the situation prevailing in some parts of Africa, including in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, a member of the zone. We hope that no effort will be spared in overcoming that complex situation, including combating the illicit exploitation of that country's natural resources. In addition, we are alarmed by the conflict in Somalia and the consequent scourge of piracy, which has increased pressure on the Atlantic Ocean route. It is necessary to decisively fight the practice of piracy and, more important, to find a solution to the long-lasting Somali conflict.

The zone of peace and cooperation of the South Atlantic was established as a mechanism to contribute to the strengthening of international peace and security and the promotion of the principles and purposes of the United Nations, in which we fully believe. The members of the zone are therefore determined to promote the noble objectives of peace, security and development as rights to be exercised by all.

The Acting President: The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 14.

Agenda item 42

Sport for peace and development

Report of the Secretary-General (A/63/466)

Draft resolution (A/63/L.51)

The Acting President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to the representative of Switzerland, who will introduce draft resolution A/63/L.51.

Mr. Maurer (Switzerland) (*spoke in French*): I have the honour to present, on behalf of Chile and Switzerland, draft resolution A/63/L.51.

Switzerland and Chile thank the Secretary-General for his report (A/63/466) and the United Nations Office of Sport for Development and Peace for its excellent work. The report presents an impressive catalogue of initiatives undertaken or supported by Member States and United Nations bodies. It also shows what can be accomplished when all actors pull together.

That is why I should like to emphasize the commitment and resolve of the sponsors of the draft resolution. We see sport as an effective and constructive tool not only for the promotion of peace and development, but also for the gradual creation of an atmosphere of tolerance, dialogue and respect, which are essential elements in these turbulent times.

More than 30 countries are currently sponsors of the draft resolution, which remains open for sponsorship.

Sport is about fairness in competition and individual excellence in teamwork. That is what sport teaches us, and it also applies to United Nations activities. Thus, in terms of achieving the Millennium Development Goals, we are past half-time and have fallen far behind. The current financial crisis is making it even more difficult to mobilize resources for development and peace. It is only by acting as one united team in which all do their level best that we will be able to cross the finish line as winners in 2015.

Sport contributes in two ways to the Millennium Development Goals. First, when practised wisely, sport has proved to be an effective tool for attaining the objectives of education, health, development and peace. Secondly, the world of sport — with its athletes, its national and international federations, its clubs and its industry — has always actively supported and encouraged efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. It would be unforgivable if we did not take full advantage of that support.

Chile and Switzerland have the honour to introduce today the draft resolution on “Sport as a means to promote education, health, development and peace”, contained in document A/63/L.51.

In its preambular paragraphs, the draft resolution takes note of the many programmes and initiatives

covered in the Secretary-General’s report and recognizes the need for greater coordination of efforts at the international level. Furthermore, the draft resolution emphasizes the positive impact of mass sports events such as the 2008 Olympic and Paralympic Games in Beijing or the International Federation of Association Football Under-20 Women’s World Cup that just ended in Chile. These three events, among many others, represent valuable contributions to the international promotion of sport and physical education.

The draft resolution also refers to the particularly important body of work accomplished by the Sport for Development and Peace International Working Group. The Working Group has vigorously promoted sport for development and peace, and has brought together 50 States, 10 United Nations agencies, programmes and funds, as well as numerous intergovernmental bodies, sports federations and civil society organizations. It has delivered a comprehensive framework to better integrate sport into States’ national and international development strategies and issued in Beijing its final report containing recommendations addressed to Governments. Copies of that report are available just outside of this Hall.

We welcome the Secretary-General’s decision to incorporate the Sport for Development and Peace International Working Group into the United Nations system under the leadership of the Special Adviser. Indeed, in our view, there is no better body than the Secretariat to take on the important responsibility of working with Member States on the implementation of national policies that promote sport for education, health, development and peace.

The other operational paragraphs of the draft resolution spell out a range of measures aimed at strengthening sport for development and peace at the national and international levels. In particular, the draft resolution welcomes the Secretary-General’s decision to renew the mandate of the Special Adviser and to establish a United Nations Office on Sport for Development and Peace as a policy and communications platform. It invites all relevant actors to cooperate with the Office, as provided in the Action Plan contained in the Secretary-General’s report in document A/61/373.

The Special Adviser and his Office are not a luxury but a necessity. The Office has played a paramount role in raising awareness of sport for peace

and development within the United Nations system, garnering support from Member States, and providing a global point of reference, leadership and inspiration to grassroots activities. We are confident that the Special Adviser and his Office will continue to ensure a system-wide and coherent approach to sport within the United Nations system.

In conclusion, I would like to stress that the draft resolution proposes not only the creation of resources and infrastructure for sport, but also the far more ambitious aspiration to create what we might call a global culture of sport and physical education. That culture should incorporate young people, adults and the elderly, as well as athletes with disabilities, women and men, and the people of developed and developing countries in order to contribute to a healthier, less violent and more tolerant world.

Mr. Chabi (Morocco): The African Group has taken note with great satisfaction of the report of the Secretary-General entitled "Sport for development and peace: building on the foundations" (A/63/466), which was submitted to the present session of the General Assembly pursuant to resolution 62/271 and which addresses the progress made at the national, regional and international levels in encouraging policies and best practices in the field of sport for development and peace.

The successive reports submitted by the Secretary-General on the issue of sport as a vector of development and peace demonstrate that the international community is starting to invest in sport as a medium for attaining some of the most critical Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Partnerships between Member States, the United Nations and civil society have allowed sport to become perceived as a cost-effective tool for advancing human development. In this regard, the African Group would like to pay tribute to the remarkable work of the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Sport for Development and Peace, Mr. Wilfried Lemke, who has risen to the challenge of advocating and promoting the efforts of the United Nations system in making sport a tool for development and peace by forging partnerships across the different sectors of society.

Sport as a concept is perpetually relevant to all facets of human life. As an instrument, it can serve to promote peace, dialogue, reconciliation, solidarity and the search for peaceful and diplomatic solutions to

conflicts. Sport is also an integral part of human development and well-being, both individual and collective. Its contribution to development, capacity-building, unity and bringing people closer has been evidenced on many occasions. Through competition, sport promotes high moral values, such as tolerance and respect for the adversary through a disciplined approach. In this regard, the specificity of sport derives from the spirit of healthy competition, which provides a channel through which people of different religious, cultural, racial and political backgrounds can interact and enhance their respect for one another.

The report of the Secretary-General demonstrates how sport has the potential to have a positive impact on the attainment of the MDGs and peace by raising awareness and promoting the values of cooperation and mutual understanding.

Sport can be a powerful tool for social inclusion, integration and equal opportunity. Therefore, sport for development and peace strategies need to be explicitly incorporated into national and international development plans and policies. That being said, the challenge that remains is creating effective coordination between the efforts of the Sport for Development and Peace International Working Group, the United Nations system and sports organizations. The latter should develop common strategies to promote the principle of sports for all. In this regard, some Member States have developed successful national sport for peace and development strategies. Our wish is to see these countries exchange their experiences through a forum like the Group of Friends that is co-chaired by Switzerland and Tunisia.

The African Group would like to commend China for its successful organization of the XXIX summer Olympic Games and the XIII Paralympic Games. The success of China, as the first developing country ever to host such a large-scale event, is a cause for pride and encouragement for other developing countries to hold world sports events. We have no doubt that through such events, sport transcends the barriers of language, politics and religion, and stimulates the body, mind and spirit of athletes who feel part of the global community.

We welcome the multifaceted partnerships and initiatives that allow the mobilization of Member States, United Nations funds, programmes and specialized agencies. Our hope is to see such

partnerships expanded under the guidance and lead of the United Nations Office of Sport for Development. While we welcome the inclusion of this Office into the United Nations system, we call for additional investment in the Trust Fund that was recently set up in order to sustain the structure's activities.

Dialogue and encounter through sports hold great potential in the area of peacebuilding and conflict prevention. The United Nations Office of Sport for Development and Peace has conducted a certain number of activities in a number of African countries. We look forward to seeing a greater consolidation of its activity.

On the African continent, a special effort needs to be made by the United Nations on partnerships to further promote sport for peace and development. The richness of Africa is its youth, and the continent strives to channel its extraordinary energies through creativity, education and common understanding. If children are the future, then sport can be the medium to instil positive values in them and give them a future.

While we recognize that sport alone cannot resolve complex economic and social challenges, it nevertheless has the power to promote ethos-building among the youth of all our countries. One way to attract young people is to invite sports celebrities to serve as spokespersons and goodwill ambassadors so as to help foster the positive values of sport and the achievement of development goals.

Through its strong mobilization power and its appeal, sport is a human right. The African Group remains convinced that sport is a life initiation that guarantees capacity-building of the individual to the benefit of the sustainable peace of his or her community and country.

Mr. Zhang Yesui (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): The Chinese delegation wishes to thank the Secretary-General for his report entitled "Sport for development and peace: building on the foundations" (A/63/466), which provides a comprehensive assessment of the various programmes and initiatives in that regard carried out by United Nations Member States, funds, programmes, specialized agencies and other partners over the past year, as well as a full account of the major contributions made by the XXIX Olympiad and the XIII Paralympic Games, both held in Beijing, to the promotion of peace and development and the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals

(MDGs). The Chinese delegation wishes to express its appreciation in that regard. We welcome the Secretary-General's appointment of Mr. Wilfried Lemke as his Special Adviser on Sport for Development and Peace and appreciate the good work that he has done since assuming his duties.

From 8 August to 17 September 2008, China had the honour to host both the XXIX Olympiad and the XIII Paralympic Games. It was the first time that China had hosted the Olympic Games. Together, the Chinese people and people from many other countries experienced the exciting moments of the Olympic competitions; witnessed the splendour and long history of Chinese culture; felt the openness and harmony of a modern China; carried on the Olympic spirit of unity, friendship and peace and the Paralympic spirit of self-respect, self-confidence, self-reliance and self-improvement; and wrote a new and splendid chapter of the Olympic Games.

For that, we wish to thank all States Members of the United Nations. With their support, the General Assembly, at its sixty-second session, adopted by consensus a resolution sponsored by China and 186 other Member States on observing the Olympic Truce. The resolution reaffirmed the determination of Member States to promote cooperation and resolve differences through sport; provided valuable opportunities to initiate dialogue and build mutual trust in regions of conflict; and created conditions for the promotion of development, education and health care through sport. We wish to thank the relevant international organizations, Governments and peoples. With the support of members of the Assembly, the Beijing Olympic torch relay completed its tour of 19 cities in 19 countries on the five continents outside China, spreading and perpetuating the Olympic spirit.

We wish to thank the leaders of many countries and international organizations who, despite their busy schedules, took the time to come in person to Beijing to attend the opening or closing ceremonies of the Olympic Games or the Paralympic Games, to support or participate in the Beijing Olympics and to cheer on the athletes.

We wish to thank the 16,000 athletes of the Olympic Games and the 4,000 athletes of the Paralympic Games. Upholding the Olympic spirit, they strove to be swifter, higher and stronger; gave perfect expression to transcendence, equality and integration;

demonstrated excellent competitive skills and good sportsmanship; and achieved remarkable results, breaking 38 world records, 85 Olympic records, 279 parathletic world records and 339 Paralympic records.

We wish to thank the tens of thousands of wonderful volunteers who came from China and from all over the world. It is they who, with their smiles and their excellent volunteer service, ensured the smooth running of the Olympic Games and the normal functioning of the cities involved, creating a miracle in the history of the Olympic Games and giving a powerful impetus to the development of volunteerism in China.

We wish to thank the many construction workers from all over China. Beginning in 2001, when Beijing won the bid to host the Olympic Games, they worked around the clock with great diligence and built a host of beautiful architectural masterpieces, exemplified by the Bird's Nest and the Water Cube, which not only embody the characteristics of our time but also have a national flavour, thus providing excellent stadiums, gymnasiums and athlete villages for the Beijing Olympic Games.

The Beijing Olympic Games gave a big boost to the development of popular sports activities in China. The Chinese Government carried out an outreach programme on knowledge about the Olympic Games for more than 400 million adolescents. It was by far the largest programme ever carried out in the history of China to disseminate and popularize sports knowledge.

The Beijing Olympic Games was also a perfect expression of the integration of the purposes and principles of the United Nations with the Olympic ideals. In order to promote and publicize the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, which recently came into effect, the Chinese Government had a memorial wall built in the square of the Paralympic Village. It was the first time in the history of the Paralympic Games that a memorial wall had been built that centred on the theme of a United Nations convention. Chinese leaders, Paralympic athletes and leaders of organizations for persons with disabilities from 147 countries and various regions attended the wall unveiling ceremony and jointly appealed to the international community to be more committed to the promotion and protection of persons with disabilities and to support the Convention with concrete action.

Sport is an important way to improve people's health and to enhance both the physical fitness and the quality of life of a nation's population. The Chinese Government attaches great importance to and brings into full play the major role of sport in facilitating the fuller development of the human person, in promoting economic and social progress and in achieving the MDGs. We support using sport as a means to promote education, health and gender equality and to guarantee the rights of persons with disabilities and environmental protection. The Chinese Government supports the Special Adviser of the Secretary-General on Sport for Development and Peace and the relevant bodies in continuing to play active roles in integrating sport into development cooperation in various fields.

The Beijing Olympic Games have come to an end, but the task of carrying forward the spirit of sport and promoting peace and development remains a long-term challenge. The Chinese Government will continue to integrate sport into its national economic and social development strategies, accelerate the building of sports facilities and infrastructure and improve the system of public fitness facilities so as to provide more and better public sports facilities and services to our people and enable them to enjoy the good health and the benefits of development brought about by sport.

Mrs. Picco (Monaco) (*spoke in French*): While the report of the Secretary-General submitted for our consideration (A/63/466) is subtitled "building on the foundations", the Secretary-General has taken decisions in recent months that go beyond merely consolidating achievements, because they effectively make sport a means to achieve the Millennium Development Goals and an element of peacebuilding.

The General Assembly is preparing to adopt a draft resolution that is substantial, as it welcomes the Secretary-General's decision to incorporate, under the leadership of his Special Adviser, the Sport for Development and Peace International Working Group within the United Nations Office of Sport for Development and Peace.

I would like to take advantage of this opportunity to pay tribute to the work of Mr. Adolf Ogi, the Secretary-General's first Special Adviser, and to his successor, Mr. Wilfried Lemke, who can count on the support of the authorities of Monaco.

Sport for development is one of the main focuses of international cooperation activities of the

Principality of Monaco. In addition to the partnership with UNDP for the “Humanist sport at the service of youth development in cities” programme for 2008 to 2010, Monaco supports Centre Yeelen Olympique, a sports centre and school in Bamako, Mali, which offers future professional football players academic or vocational training. Monaco also supports a Toreball field construction project in Madagascar for a specialized school for blind children.

In the context of major sports events, we are seeking to further promote sport for peace and development. I would mention in this regard the annual football match between the Monaco team and the Formula One drivers team to benefit the Monaco chapter of the World Association of Children’s Friends and the “No Finish Line” relay race, organized by Junior Chamber Monaco on Universal Children’s Day.

Sport contributes to the development of individuals and communities, but it is also a factor for post-conflict reconciliation and peacebuilding. The second international Peace and Sport forum, under the leadership of His Serene Highness Prince Albert II of Monaco, has just concluded in Monaco. Peace and Sport is an organization created in Monaco by Joël Bouzou, an Olympic medallist and world champion of the modern pentathlon. The organization is supported by Governments, international sports governance bodies, international organizations, major international private companies and international champions and creates synergies among the various stakeholders for two types of activities: an international annual forum and “Projets sur zone”, which are projects for concrete action in crisis areas around the world, whether in post-conflict situations or in situations of extreme poverty or social instability.

Approximately 300 political and sport decision makers, representing more than 50 countries and five continents, spent three days at a meeting in Monaco to boost synergies among the group of institutions and individuals who are in a position to undertake efforts to mitigate tensions and the consequences of conflict or even prevent them, through sport.

Educating young people on the values of sport is an essential element for changing mindsets and promoting a lasting culture of peace, but we also think that political decision makers need to realize that sport is a tool for effective social inclusion and a way of bringing communities together.

The Peace and Sport organization will establish in 2009 a resource centre and an information and exchange network to boost the coordination of projects, make better use of resources, improve the effectiveness of efforts on the ground and make such efforts more permanent.

The forum’s participants have also decided to mobilize the organizers of large-scale sports events to contribute to actions undertaken to promote peace through sport, as the draft resolution advocates. The Peace and Sport Awards were awarded during this forum. In particular, for the first time, the prize for peace and sport picture of the year was awarded. It depicted the historic handshake between the Turkish President, Mr. Abdullah Gül, and the Armenian President, Mr. Serzh Sargsyan, on 6 September 2008 in Yerevan, Armenia, on the occasion of the football World Cup qualifier between the Turkish and Armenian teams, which ended 18 years of diplomatic silence.

The Olympic Games in Beijing were the first since the International Convention against Doping in Sport, adopted under the auspices of UNESCO, came into force. The biggest testing programme of all time was undertaken at the Games. More than 4,770 anti-doping tests were carried out. But above all, the Games were able to show, starting with the wonderful opening ceremony, everything that sport as the universal language represents everything we should prize and defend: talent, work, honesty, inclusion, discipline, fair play, confidence, team spirit, surpassing oneself and fraternity.

Mr. Fluss (Israel): I want to thank the President of the General Assembly for convening this important debate. We also wish to thank the Secretary-General and his staff for his report (A/63/466) and its specific reference to the Peace Players International programme in our region.

To many, sports serve merely as exercise. But in a global context, sports serve as a common language that can foster international friendship and harmony. In a spirit of healthy competition, people from diverse backgrounds, religions, cultures and races can join together in a common cause and a shared experience. A competitive sporting experience between people transcends our differences and reminds us that, as human beings, we have far more that binds us together than that draws us apart. Such an idea is enshrined in dusty football fields as well as in the international

Olympic stage. In the words of the charter of the Olympic Games, sports and friendly competition can serve to create a peaceful society, concerned with the preservation of human dignity.

In our own region, we have tried to harness the spirit of sports to forge relationships and build bridges between peoples and cultures. Israel has an active network of organizations that seek to use the medium of sports to promote peace and coexistence.

The Peres Centre for Peace, a non-governmental organization, is one of the most active organizations that promote peace through sports. Its ground-breaking programmes have been lauded by the international community as an important way to bring young Israelis and Palestinians together to learn from one another and develop cross-cultural ties. The Peres Centre's twin peace and sports schools bring Israelis and Palestinians together for sports training and competition along with peace education activities.

This year, Israelis came together with Palestinians from the West Bank and Gaza Strip to play football and basketball. To some, this may have looked like an ordinary sports event. But these games and additional education programmes served to transcend political, cultural and religious divides.

As these programmes have proven to be a successful way to foster a culture of peace, they have expanded their scope and reach. Participants now publish a bilingual newspaper in Hebrew and Arabic to ensure that current and former participants remain connected to their teammates and to the values they learned together.

On a governmental level, Israel's international development programme, MASHAV, also uses sports as a tool for development and peace. MASHAV offers technical cooperation programmes in these areas, which have been shown to be effective and productive tools to promote peace and development. The Israeli Government remains committed to these programmes.

All of these governmental and non-governmental successes should serve as examples of what we can achieve through sports. Through positive engagement, we are bridging divides and solving problems that had seemed intractable.

Unfortunately, not all sporting events can be carried out in the same positive spirit. Though it is a painful part of our history, it is also worth remembering

what happened at the 1972 Olympic Games in Munich, when gunmen from the terrorist group Black September broke into the Olympic Village, disguised as athletes, and killed 11 Israeli athletes, coaches and referees. The reverberations of this abhorrent and monstrous act of terrorism are still felt in Israel — and around the world, for that matter — to this very day.

In this regard, Israel was pleased by this year's Olympic Games in Beijing, which featured a striking example of the values of sports as an ideal means of stimulating body, mind and spirit and, in turn, overcoming barriers of language, politics and religion. The abuse of sports and international competition for political means is an affront to the very ethos and virtues of the Olympic tradition.

Many conflicts and development challenges can seem intractable. We must find new and dynamic ways of confronting difficulties and of building bridges between people.

The use of sports to promote a culture of peace and development can be an effective way to build peace from the ground up and foster momentum for development. Yet sports alone cannot foster enduring peace. Supporting factors, such as an interest in peace among different groups, media involvement, strong civil society participation and dedication by sport organizations, are needed for sport to be an effective vehicle of peace.

Israel strongly supports this concept and calls on the nations of the world to use the opportunities provided by sports to foster peace and development and to continue strengthening the supporting factors to ensure the widest participation. Israel pledges itself to fully support this endeavour.

Mr. Rohde (Germany): I should like, first, to underline that it is an honour for my Government to be among the sponsors of draft resolution A/63/L.51, entitled "Sport as a means to promote education, health, development and peace". I should also like to take this opportunity to pay tribute to the remarkable work achieved by the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Sport for Development and Peace, Wilfried Lemke.

As a sponsor of the draft resolution, Germany recognizes the importance of sport as a means for mutual understanding and dialogue between peoples. Sporting activities connect us and can help to

overcome barriers, such as cultural, linguistic and other differences. They play a valuable role in bringing people from different backgrounds together and can contribute to promoting social cohesiveness and rapprochement between cultures.

Sport programmes can also foster social inclusion within cultures by overcoming discrimination against and social marginalization of women and disabled persons. The participation of girls and women in sporting activities can help to promote their self-confident participation in social life and to form their leadership potential.

Furthermore, sport can be conducive to the attainment of the entire spectrum of internationally agreed development goals. Sport thus constitutes an appropriate complementary element to advance the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.

As experience has shown, sport programmes can also be supportive of internal political stabilization and social integration after periods of conflict. They can, for example, play a major role in the rehabilitation and reintegration of child soldiers and other young people involved in conflict activities.

The Federal German Government therefore strongly supports the General Assembly's engagement in the promotion of sport as a means for development and peace. It provides the United Nations Special Adviser on Sport for Peace and Development and financially supports his Office through the United Nations Trust Fund for Sport for Development and Peace. Germany will continue to strongly support the office in 2009.

Ms. Aitimova (Kazakhstan): At the outset, I should like, on behalf of Kazakhstan, to express my appreciation to the Secretary-General for the report contained in document A/63/466, entitled "Sport for development and peace: building on the foundations", which lays out a comprehensive picture of the progress achieved to date at the national, regional and international levels in the realization of strategies and programmes in the field of sport for development and peace. The focus of the report on the new opportunities revealed since the Games of the XXIX Olympiad and the XIII Paralympic Games in Beijing rightly stresses that the Games hosted by China were the first ever held in a developing country, encouraging further improvements which expand far beyond sport itself and

thus contribute to attainment of the Millennium Development Goals.

We also highly commend the solemn appeal of the President of the General Assembly to all Member States to observe the Olympic Truce during the 2008 Summer Games in Beijing, as reflected in General Assembly decision 62/550. We call upon the international community to observe the Olympic Truce in the future, in accordance with that appeal.

Taking account of the ongoing development of physical training and sport in Kazakhstan, my Government has developed a relevant draft law as one of the development measures soon to be authorized by parliament. At the national level, this law will secure and protect the rights of the people of Kazakhstan to equal access to physical training and sport. It will create a system of legal guarantees and necessary conditions for the development of mass sports, preparation of sport reserves and training of the national teams by stipulating relations, rights and duties of and among individuals and sport-related legal entities.

Kazakhstan has established the concepts and goal-oriented complex programmes for athletes to practice in preparation for the XXX Summer Olympic Games, to be held in London in 2012, as well as the XVI Summer Asian Games, to be held in Guangzhou in 2010.

In observance of the UNESCO Convention against Doping in Sport, the Government of Kazakhstan is currently considering, including at special meetings of the Expert Council on Kazakhstan's cooperation with international organizations, the relevant law for ratification of the Convention.

We would like to note in particular the use of sport as an instrument for development and peace, as demonstrated by all countries during the XXIX Summer Olympic Games in Beijing. For the first time ever, the Olympic torch relay was escorted, as part of the ceremony, through the streets of Almaty, Kazakhstan. This event was of note not only for athletes of my country but for the entire nation, which was proud to pass on the torch to others.

With regard to the Paralympic Games, it is noteworthy that Kazakhstan has been paying increasing attention to the use of sports in the process of the

rehabilitation of disabled persons. Besides creating necessary conditions for persons with disabilities and holding mass sporting events and other forums for them throughout the country, the Republic of Kazakhstan is at present in the process of signing the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and its Optional Protocol. For the purpose of encouraging more involvement in sport through financial and other incentives for disabled athletes, my Government provided remuneration for those athletes who took first to sixth place in any sport at the Beijing Paralympic Games.

In addition, my Government is undertaking measures that contribute to the attainment of greater achievement not only in professional but also mass sport. Such measures include the creation of favourable legal conditions for the development and operation of non-profit organizations which work, based on sport interests, to unite communities, regardless of their differences, or which use sports in policy promotion or for educational or physical and mental health rehabilitation purposes. One of the major considerable benefits of sport is its effectiveness as a tool for inspiring young people, igniting patriotic ideals and promoting values of equity, tolerance, peace, respect for rules and the concept of hard work, true competitiveness and fair play.

In 2011, Kazakhstan will host the VII Asian Winter Games and is currently undertaking direct measures to be ready for this important sport event. The Ministry of Tourism and Sport of my country has already held negotiations with leading world architects to allocate land for the construction of sports facilities. The preliminary state budget estimates for hosting the Games amount to \$1 billion.

My delegation believes that the positive dynamics of United Nations efforts to integrate sport for development and peace will be further enhanced by awareness-raising and advocacy aimed at more comprehensive development practices. That can be achieved through strengthened cooperation and concerted efforts by Member States to establish a global framework for the role of sport in promoting development and peace.

Mr. Stone (Australia): Australia is committed to the principles of sport for development and peace and to the role that the United Nations can play in furthering those principles. We welcome the report of

the Secretary-General on that subject (A/63/466) which is before the Assembly this morning. We also welcome the Secretary-General's decision to renew the mandate of the Special Adviser on Sport for Development and Peace and his appointment of Mr. Wilfried Lemke to carry out that role. We look forward to working closely with Mr. Lemke in order to share our experiences and help identify best practices in sport-for-development programmes.

We would like to thank Switzerland and Chile for facilitating the draft resolution before us today (A/63/L.51). Australia is pleased to be a sponsor of the draft resolution.

By supporting sports-based activities in developing countries, Australia is providing opportunities for young men and women to develop skills in leadership, teamwork, self-discipline and respect for themselves and others, as well as providing a positive outlet for their energies. The Australian Sports Outreach Programme supports major programmes in seven countries and provides grants for smaller activities in more than 40 countries in Africa, the Caribbean, Asia and the Pacific. The Programme aims to increase the capacity of partners, such as local authorities and communities, to plan and conduct sport-based activities that contribute to addressing locally identified development priorities. In Vanuatu, for example, 1,200 youth leaders are being trained to deliver village-based sports programmes under the guidance of traditional leaders.

Earlier this year, the Governments of Papua New Guinea and Australia announced a partnership, the Papua New Guinea-Australia Sport for Development Initiative, to assist the Papua New Guinea Sports Foundation in leading, managing and delivering programmes in support of Papua New Guinea Government policies. Australia has committed funding to the programme until 2016.

With the expansion of our programmes, Australia has established a dedicated sport-for-development adviser position within our international aid agency, the Australian Agency for International Development. Australia also has a number of programmes to address the involvement of women and girls in sport-related activities. These include the Sport Leadership Grants for Women, which provide opportunities for training and skills development to enable women to take on leadership and decision-making roles in sport.

Sport is integral to Australia's way of life, to our view of ourselves and to how we are viewed by the rest of the world. It helps build the social cohesion that binds families, communities, regions and the nation, and it forges ties between nations. We remain committed to using sport as a valuable agent for development and peace around the world.

Ms. Wilson (Jamaica): I thank the Assembly for its indulgence in giving me the pleasure and honour to speak on behalf of my Government on agenda item 42, "Sport for peace and development". This is a pleasant yet humbling task for me, as it comes in the wake of outstanding performances in the track and field events of the XXIX Olympiad, held in Beijing earlier this year, by athletes from Jamaica and the Caribbean region.

Our island has nurtured a tradition of sports and sportsmanship — a tradition that every Jamaican is proud to identify with today. We cannot forget the audacity of the bobsleigh team from our tropical shores, which, against all odds, qualified for the 1988 Winter Olympics. We recall the determination of our national football team, the Reggae Boyz, which rose from virtual obscurity to qualify in 1998 for the prestigious Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) World Cup football tournament in France. Our athletes have consistently maintained world-class status at regional and international competitive games. And, more recently, Usain Bolt thundered down the track in Beijing like a bolt of lightning, capturing the hearts and the imagination of sporting and non-sporting enthusiasts alike.

The Beijing experience served to endorse something of which our country, our people and our Government were already convinced: sport can be very big for individuals, for communities and for our nation. Sport generates important values such as team spirit, discipline, solidarity, tolerance and fair play. It also promotes the active contributions of individuals to society and so helps to foster responsible citizenship and civic pride. Those are values that are at the core of the pursuit and attainment of peace and development.

The Government of Jamaica is therefore committed to further exploring and harnessing the possibilities of the contributions that sport can make as we seek to achieve economic and social development for our people.

It is in that context that we place on record our appreciation for the comprehensive report of the Secretary-General contained in document A/63/466, which reviews the programmes and initiatives implemented by Member States, United Nations funds, programmes and specialized agencies and other partners, using sport as a tool for development and peace.

In particular, Jamaica supports the view expressed in the report by the Sport for Development and Peace International Working Group, which recognizes that, while well-designed programmes promoting sport for development and peace hold significant potential for helping to drive the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals and related development goals, sport alone cannot ensure peace or solve complex social problems. We concur with the Working Group that sport should instead be positioned as a highly effective tool in a broader toolkit of development practices and should be applied in a holistic and integrated manner with other interventions and programmes to achieve optimal results.

With that in mind, the Government of Jamaica has undertaken a number of initiatives at the national level to implement initiatives to promote sport for development and peace in keeping with General Assembly resolutions on the issue, including last year's resolution 62/271. It is also on that basis that Jamaica decided to sponsor the current draft resolution, circulated as document A/63/L.51.

Jamaica is committed, for example, to the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women through sport. Traditionally, many of our elite athletes have been women, who are acknowledged and celebrated by our country. As I say this, I think of Merlene Ottey, Deon Hemmings, Veronica Campbell-Brown and Shelly-Ann Fraser, to name only a few. I am pleased to inform the Assembly that the final draft of our gender policy is now in place. With final approval and implementation by the Cabinet, the policy will further reinforce the ideals of gender equality in sport, among other things.

One of the principal strategies adopted by the Government through the Institute of Sports is the promotion and development of sports in schools. One of its primary roles is to promote sports in order to unearth talents in primary, secondary and tertiary educational institutions through its network of sports

personnel across Jamaica. Sports development therefore plays a significant role in the educational development of Jamaica's young population.

Sport plays a significant role in development cooperation. Many of the deliberations on development strategies and assistance in bilateral treaties or with multilateral agencies feature some action in support of cooperation in sports. Consequently, Jamaica has concluded bilateral agreements with a sport component that are currently being implemented, and others are being negotiated. Through those bilateral arrangements, we have shared our national experiences, best practices and financial, technical and logistical resources for the development of sports programmes. We intend to continue our engagement with international partners on this important development issue.

As I speak, the ministry in my capital with responsibility for sports is quite close to completing the first draft of what is intended to be a dynamic and effective sports policy for Jamaica. The Government has also announced its intention to include a process in which all our people will make their contribution to the policy. As we in Jamaica say, the intention is to have wide-ranging consultations in every "nook and cranny" of Jamaica, in recognition of the significance and the role of sports in bolstering economic and social development.

As we are all aware, there is international pressure everywhere to deal with the challenges of doping in sports. All over the world, countries are being called upon to treat doping in sports as a matter of national security and priority. In this regard, Jamaica has established an Anti-Doping Commission in an effort to implement the International Convention against Doping in Sport. Jamaica is also party to various international instruments that either focus on sports or contain a sports component.

Sports development has provided ordinary Jamaicans in recent times with exciting opportunities for self-definition. We cannot help but feel a spontaneous outpouring of patriotism and pride as we all define ourselves through each and every wonderful

achievement of our sportswomen and men. Only four months ago, that feeling surged in all Jamaicans at home and abroad when our team left Beijing with a record number of world records, a record number of Olympic records and a record number of medals. We define ourselves in moments like those, and we are reminded of the prowess and resilience of the Jamaican character.

Jamaica is committed to a renewed focus on sports as an element of national definition and transformation, as recreation and leisure, as a vehicle for peace, as a tool for education and health and in terms of the economic benefits to be derived from it. We look at sports in the context of reengaging communities and as a tool of the social transformation process. In this regard, our Government aims to provide opportunities for our people to re-create themselves through community sports. The Government has therefore pledged to build more sporting and recreational facilities island-wide, so that our people can, at the end of a day, simply have fun.

Through the work of our Social Development Commission, we are putting in place programmes to unearth and develop talent at all levels. We are committed, through the school and community sports programmes, to make sports and recreation an integral part of the healthy Jamaican lifestyle programme. We all know that sport builds character, helps us in time management, reduces conflict and contributes to healthy relationships and friendships. Sport is a school for life.

It is truly astounding that a tiny island like Jamaica can remain at the forefront of athletics at all levels. We hope to maintain the tradition of our notable sportsmen and women, inspired by our early pioneers, Herbert McKinley and Arthur Wint, a tradition which spawned the success of more recent athletes such as Donald Quarrie, Burt Cameron, Grace Jackson, Asafa Powell and Usain Bolt, as we seek to fulfil our international obligation in keeping with the United Nations mandate on sport for peace and development.

The meeting rose at 1.20 p.m.