



# General Assembly Meetings Coverage

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Sixty-third General Assembly  
Plenary  
67<sup>th</sup> & 68<sup>th</sup> Meetings (AM & PM)

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**ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE, CRIMINAL ACCOUNTABILITY OF UN OFFICIALS ON MISSION AMONG  
ISSUES, AS GENERAL ASSEMBLY ADOPTS 18 TEXTS RECOMMENDED BY LEGAL COMMITTEE**

**Also Adopts 10 Texts on Wide Range of Issues, including Conflict Diamonds,  
Sport for Peace, Relief Assistance, Millennium Summit, Regional Organizations**

The General Assembly today decided that the ad hoc committee working on establishment of a new two-tiered system of justice for the United Nations should reconvene in April and continue work on the outstanding legal aspects of the issue, by the terms of one of 18 texts recommended by its Sixth Committee (Legal) and adopted without a vote.

In addition to acting on the Legal Committee recommendations, the Assembly adopted by consensus 10 other resolutions related to diamonds, sport for peace and development, strengthening the United Nations' coordination of humanitarian and disaster relief assistance, follow-up to the outcome of the Millennium Summit, and cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations.

By the text on the new system of justice -- one of two decisions and 16 resolutions recommended by the Committee -- the Ad Hoc Committee on the Administration of Justice will meet from 20 to 24 April 2009, taking into account the results of the deliberations of the Fifth Committee (Administrative and Budgetary) and the Legal Committee, previous decisions of the Assembly, as well as further decisions taken during the sixty-third session prior to the meeting of the Ad Hoc Committee.

The Committee will report on its work to the Assembly's sixty-fourth session. As noted in this year's Committee report, the new formal administration of justice mechanism will consist of a two-tiered system composed of a United Nations Appeals Tribunal and a Dispute Tribunal, the draft statutes for which have already been elaborated. A reform of the Ombudsman's Office for a more effective informal address of grievances is also part of the new system.

By another text, on criminal accountability of United Nations officials and experts on mission, the Assembly strongly urged States to take appropriate measures to ensure that crimes did not go unpunished and that perpetrators were brought to justice. States were encouraged to cooperate with each other and with the United Nations in the exchange of information and in investigations. Stronger training measures on standards of conduct will also be instituted within the United Nations system.

Three resolutions adopted today came from the Committee's debate over the annual report of the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL). By one, the Assembly commended the Commission for adopting a

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**Legislative Guide on Secured Transactions and for completing a Convention on contracts for the international carriage of goods wholly or partly by sea. By another text, the Assembly recommended that States use the Legislative Guide in revising or adopting national legislation on secured transactions. By the third, the Assembly adopted the Convention and authorized a signing ceremony to be held in Rotterdam, Netherlands, from 21 to 23 September. Further, the articles on "carriage of goods" will be known as the "Rotterdam" Rules.**

The week-long debate on the report of the International Law Commission this year yielded two resolutions. By one, the Assembly recognized the Commission's work with regard to readings of draft articles on the "law of transboundary aquifers" under the topic of "shared natural resources", and on "effects of armed conflicts on treaties". Attention was drawn to the need for Governments to provide the Commission with views on the topics of "reservations to treaties", "responsibility of international organizations" and "protection of persons in the event of disasters". Resolution II in the report was an amendment to the first resolution. By it, the Secretary-General is requested to submit options on support of the work of the special rapporteurs concerned with the topics before the Commission.

The other Legal Committee texts adopted by the Assembly today concerned: articles elaborated on the nationality of natural persons in relation to the succession of States; measures to enhance the protection, security and safety of diplomatic and consular missions and representatives; the status of the protocols additional to the 1949 Geneva Conventions relating to the protection of victims of armed conflict; the Special Committee on the Charter; the relationship between the Legal Committee and the new Rule of Law Coordination and Resource Group, supported by the Rule of Law Unit within the Secretary-General's Office; measures to eliminate international terrorism and the continued work of the Ad Hoc Committee aimed at elaborating a comprehensive convention on international terrorism (29 June to 2 July 2009); and the Host Country Committee's report. The Assembly also took note of the Committee's programme planning report.

Also on the recommendation of the Legal Committee, the Assembly granted observer status in its work to three organizations: the International Fund for Saving the Aral Sea, a regional mechanism to resolve the crisis of the deterioration of the Aral Sea Basin; the 51-member South Centre, established to promote South-South solidarity; and the Costa Rica-based University of Peace, an international institution for postgraduate studies in training for peace.

The representatives of Syria and India spoke in explanation of position on the Legal Committee recommendations.

In other action, the Assembly held a debate on the role of diamonds in conflict, and adopted a consensus resolution as orally amended on "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".

By that text, the Assembly welcomed that the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme could help ensure the effective implementation of Security Council resolutions containing sanctions on the trade in conflict diamonds, and called for full implementation of existing Council measures targeting the illicit trade in rough diamonds. Stressing that the widest possible participation in the Scheme

was essential, the Assembly welcomed the admission this year of Mexico into the Process and resumption of the rough diamond trade by the Republic of Congo.

Further by the text, the Assembly welcomed guidelines endorsed by the New Delhi plenary meeting, recommending interim measures for serious non-compliance with Kimberley Process minimum requirements. It also encouraged diamond trading and manufacturing centres to carry out effective enforcement measures, including those set out in the guidance on internal controls for participants.

In other action, the Assembly adopted by consensus a resolution on "Sport as a means to promote education, health, development and peace", by which it encouraged the use of sport as a vehicle to foster development and strengthen education; prevent disease; empower girls and women; and facilitate conflict prevention and peacebuilding. It also invited States to provide voluntary contributions to the United Nations Office on Sport for Development and Peace, and the Sport for Development and Peace International Working Group.

The Assembly also adopted without a vote six resolutions related to the strengthening the coordination of humanitarian and disaster assistance of the United Nations, including special economic assistance.

By a resolution on "Humanitarian assistance and reconstruction of Liberia", the Assembly renewed its invitation to States to provide assistance to Liberia to create an enabling environment for promoting peace, socio-economic development and regional security. It further urged the Government to create an environment conducive to promoting the reintegration of refugees and upholding human rights and the rule of law.

By a text on "Strengthening emergency relief, rehabilitation, reconstruction and prevention in the aftermath of the Indian Ocean tsunami disaster", the Assembly called on States to fully implement the Hyogo Declaration and the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015, particularly those commitments related to assistance for developing countries that are prone to natural disasters.

A resolution on "Safety and security of humanitarian personnel and protection of United Nations personnel" had the Assembly call on States to fully comply with their obligations under international humanitarian law, while another on "Strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations" designated 19 August as World Humanitarian Day to honour all humanitarian personnel, including those who had died in the cause of duty.

Also without a vote, the Assembly adopted a resolution on "Assistance to the Palestinian people", and adopted, as orally revised, a text on "International cooperation on humanitarian assistance in the field of natural disasters, from relief to development".

Under its agenda item on the follow-up to the outcome of the Millennium Summit, the Assembly adopted by consensus a text on the "Legal empowerment of the poor and eradication of poverty", by which it stressed the importance of sharing best national practices in that area and requested the Secretary-General to submit a report on the matter at the sixty-fourth session.

Finally, under its agenda item on cooperation between the United Nations and regional and other organizations, the Assembly adopted a text entitled "Cooperation

between the United Nations and the Community of Portuguese-Speaking Countries", by which it expressed satisfaction with the strengthened cooperation between that Community and United Nations specialized agencies. It also encouraged the Secretary-General and the Community's Executive Secretary to initiate consultations with a view to considering the establishment of a formal cooperation agreement.

The representative of India introduced the resolution on the role of diamonds in conflict. Speaking on that issue before action were the representatives of Morocco (on behalf of the African Group), France (on behalf of the European Union), Russian Federation, Botswana, United States, Angola, Namibia, Canada (also on behalf of Australia and New Zealand) and Israel. Speaking after action was the representative of Israel.

The representative of Angola introduced the Secretary-General's report on the Zone of peace and cooperation of the South Atlantic (on behalf of the Zone's 24 members).

The representative of Switzerland introduced the report and draft resolution on sport for peace and development (also on behalf of Chile). Also speaking on that issue were the representatives of Morocco (on behalf of the African Group), China, Monaco, Israel, Germany, Kazakhstan, Australia and Jamaica. Speaking in explanation of position on that topic was the representative of Syria.

Under agenda item 65 on strengthening the coordination of humanitarian and disaster relief assistance, the representative of Indonesia introduced the draft resolution on "strengthening emergency relief, rehabilitation, reconstruction and prevention in the aftermath of the Indian Ocean tsunami disaster".

The representative of Liberia introduced the draft resolution on "humanitarian assistance and reconstruction of Liberia".

The representative of France, on behalf of the European Union, introduced the draft resolution on "safety and security of humanitarian personnel and protection of United Nations personnel" and that on "Assistance to the Palestinian people".

The representative of Sweden introduced the draft resolution on "strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations", while the representative of Antigua and Barbuda (on behalf of the "Group of 77" developing countries and China) introduced the text on "International cooperation on humanitarian assistance in the field of natural disasters, from relief to development".

Speaking in explanation of position before action on the resolutions under agenda item 65 were the representatives of Brazil, United States, France (on behalf of the European Union), Switzerland and Canada. Speaking in explanation of position after action were the representatives of Pakistan, Singapore, Syria and Costa Rica. The representatives of Colombia and Mexico made general statements after action.

The representative of the Observer Mission of Palestine also spoke.

The General Assembly will reconvene at a time and date to be announced.

### Background

The General Assembly met today to take up the reports of its Sixth Committee (Legal), as well as to take up other matters relating to conflict diamonds, the South Atlantic region, sport for peace, humanitarian assistance, follow-up to the Millennium Summit and cooperation with the Community of Portuguese Countries.

### Reports of the Sixth Committee (Legal)

A report on nationality of natural persons in relation to the succession of States (document A/63/436) contains one resolution adopted by the Committee without a vote on 14 November. The resolution would have the Assembly reiterate its invitation to Governments to take into account the provisions of the articles dealing with issues of nationality of natural persons in relation to the succession of States. It would encourage States to elaborate legal instruments relating to the matter at the regional and subregional levels and would invite Governments to submit comments on the advisability of elaborating a legal instrument on the question. The item would be included in the provisional agenda of the Assembly's sixty-sixth session.

The single resolution contained in the report on the Criminal Accountability of United Nations officials and experts on mission (document A/63/437) was also adopted on 14 November without a vote. The text would have the General Assembly express its appreciation for the work done by the Ad Hoc Committee and the Sixth Committee's Working Group on the matter and would strongly urge States to take appropriate measures to ensure these crimes did not go unpunished and that perpetrators were brought to justice. In that regard, the Assembly would encourage all States to cooperate with each other and the United Nations in the exchange of information and in facilitating investigations of crimes committed by these individuals, in accordance with their domestic laws and applicable United Nations rules and regulations. In particular, the Assembly would encourage States to assist each other with obtaining and using evidence to move forward the criminal investigations and prosecutions of serious crimes and to protect victims and witnesses.

Further by the draft, the Assembly would request the Secretariat to ensure that Member States were made aware of the high standard of conduct and behavior persons serving as officials and experts on mission were expected to meet. Accordingly, the Assembly would urge the Secretary-General to strengthen existing training on United Nations standards of conduct, including through pre-deployment and in-mission induction training. It would also decide that a Sixth Committee Working Group continue to consider the report of the Group of Legal Experts during its sixty-fourth session.

Finally, by the draft, the Assembly would request the Secretary-General to bring credible allegations to the attention of States against whose nationals allegations were being made and to ask those States to indicate the status of their efforts to investigate and prosecute serious crimes. It would request the United Nations to take appropriate measures to facilitate the use of information and material for those proceedings and would encourage the Organization to restore the credibility and reputation of such officials and experts on mission, without intimidating or retaliating against them. The Assembly would request the Secretary-General, in his report, to include information on the number and types of credible allegations and any actions taken by the United Nations and Member

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States against them. It would decide to include the item in the agenda of its sixty-fourth session.

The report on the annual report of the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL) on the work of its forty-fifth session (document A/63/438) contains three resolutions, all adopted without a vote on 14 November. Resolution I on the UNCITRAL report would have the Assembly take note of the Commission's report, and would commend it for completing and adopting its Legislative Guide on Secured Transactions. The Assembly would also commend the completion and approval of a convention on contracts for the international carriage of goods wholly or partly by sea. The Commission's progress in its other work would be welcomed, including that related to procurement and insolvency, as well as its decision to undertake further work in the area of electronic commerce and commercial fraud. The Assembly would encourage the Commission to complete its work on arbitration so that the revised rules may be considered at the Commission's next session.

By the draft, the Assembly would also endorse the Commission's initiatives as the core legal body in the field of international trade law, and would reaffirm the Commission's work related to providing technical assistance to developing countries. It would express appreciation for contributions to the trust fund providing travel assistance to developing countries, and would decide to continue considering the granting of travel assistance to the least developed countries. The Assembly would welcome the review of the Commission's working methods, its role in promoting the rule of law and its proposed strategic framework for 2010-2011, along with its review in the area of harmonizing, modernizing and unifying international trade law.

Finally, by the draft, the Assembly would recall its resolution on partnerships between the Commission and non-State sectors, in particular the private sector, and would stress the importance of bringing into effect the conventions emanating from the Commission work for the global unification and harmonization of international trade law. It would take note of the conference celebrating the fiftieth anniversary of the "New York Convention" on arbitral awards.

Resolution II on the Legislative Guide on Secured Transactions would have the Assembly recommend that all States give the Guide favourable consideration in revising or adopting national legislation. It would also recommend that States become parties to the Convention on Assignment of Receivables in International Trade, whose principles were reflected in the Guide.

By Resolution III on the Convention on Contracts for the International Carriage of Goods Wholly or Partly by Sea, the Assembly would adopt the Convention and authorize the holding of a ceremony for the opening of the instrument for signature from 21 to 23 September 2009 in Rotterdam, Netherlands. The Assembly would also recommend that the Convention rules be known as the Rotterdam Rules. An annex to the report contains the text of the Convention.

The Committee's report on the annual Report of the International Law Commission on the work of its sixtieth session (document A/63/439) contains two resolutions, both adopted on 14 November. By Resolution I, the Assembly would take note of the Commission's report and express its appreciation for the completion of the second reading of draft articles on the "law of transboundary

aquifers" under the topic of "shared natural resources" and for the completion of the first reading of draft articles on "effects of armed conflicts on treaties". The Assembly would draw the attention of Governments to the importance of providing the Commission with views on "reservations to treaties"; "responsibility of international organizations"; and "protection of persons in the event of disasters". The Assembly would also invite views on practice with regard to "reservations to treaties" and to "protection of persons in the event of disasters". Comments and observations on "effects of armed conflicts on treaties" should be submitted to the Commission by 1 January 2010.

Further, the Assembly would take note of the Commission's decision to include the topics "treaties in time" and "The Most-Favoured-Nation Clause" in its programme of work, taking note also of the decision that the Commission's next session shall be held in Geneva from 4 May to 5 June and from 6 July to 7 August 2009. The Assembly would welcome the enhanced dialogue between the Commission and the Legal Committee, stressing the desirability of further enhancing dialogue through informal consultations. Also noted would be the commemorative meeting held in Geneva on 19 and 20 May 2008 for the Commission's fiftieth anniversary, while States and legal organizations would be commended for organizing national or regional events on the Commission's work. Continued and enhanced cooperation between the Commission and other legal bodies would be encouraged, as would the Commission's engagement with humanitarian actors with regard to its work on protection of persons in natural disasters. An expected meeting of the Commission with legal advisers would also be noted.

Finally, by the draft, the Assembly would reaffirm the indispensable role of the Legal Affairs Codification Division in the Commission's work. Contributions to the Yearbook trust fund to address the backlog would be invited. The hope would be expressed that the International Law Seminar would continue to be held and an appeal would be put out for States to contribute to the Trust Fund to afford an opportunity for developing country participation in the Seminar.

By Resolution II, the Assembly would take note of a report on the law of transboundary aquifers, and would welcome the conclusion of the work of the International Law Commission on the matter and its adoption of the draft articles and detailed commentary on the subject. Further, the Assembly would express appreciation to the Commission for its continuing contribution to the codification and progressive development of international law and to the International Hydrological Programme of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and to other relevant organizations for their scientific and technical assistance rendered to the Commission.

Finally, by the draft, the Assembly would take note of the draft articles annexed to the resolution, and would commend them to the attention of Governments without prejudice to the question of their future adoption or other appropriate action. It would encourage concerned States to make appropriate bilateral or regional arrangements for proper management of their transboundary aquifers and would decide to include the item in the provisional agenda of the Assembly's sixty-sixth session.

A report on the status of the Protocols Additional to the Geneva Convention of 1949 and relating to the protection of victims of armed conflict (document A/63/440) contains one resolution, approved without a vote on 14 November, by which the Assembly would welcome the universal acceptance of the Geneva

Conventions of 1949 and would note the trend towards wide acceptance of the two Additional Protocols of 1977. It would call on State parties to the Conventions to consider becoming parties to the Additional Protocols at the earliest possible date and to ensure their wide dissemination and full implementation. In particular, it would urge States to make use of the services of the International Humanitarian Fact-Finding Commission and to become party to the Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict, its two protocols and other relevant treaties.

Further by the draft, the Assembly would note with appreciation the adoption of the resolution on "preserving human life and dignity in armed conflict" by the International Committee of the Red Cross and Red Crescent (ICRC) and affirm the necessity to make the implementation of international humanitarian law more effective. In that regard, it would welcome ICRC efforts to support States with implementing international humanitarian law by increasing the number of national bodies working on the implementation, promoting its incorporation into national law and promoting the exchange of information between Governments. Furthermore, the Assembly would call on States to consider becoming parties to the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Finally, by the draft, the Assembly would request the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its sixty-fifth session a report on the status of the Additional Protocols relating to the protection of victims of armed conflicts, as well as on measures taken to strengthen the existing body of international humanitarian law. It would decide to include the item in the agenda of its sixty-fifth session.

The single resolution in a report on effective measures to enhance the protection, security and safety of diplomatic and consular missions and representatives (document A/63/441) was also approved without a vote on 14 November. It would have the Assembly strongly condemn recent acts of violence against diplomatic and consular missions and representatives of international intergovernmental organizations. It would urge States to strictly observe, implement and enforce applicable principles and rules of international law governing diplomatic relations and to take appropriate measures to prevent any abuse of diplomatic or consular privileges and immunities, in particular serious abuses, including those involving acts of violence. States would be called upon to become parties to relevant instruments and to make use of the means available for settling disputes peacefully.

Further by the resolution, the Assembly would request States to report to the Secretary-General any serious violations of this nature and also to report on measures taken to bring offenders to justice. The Secretary-General would also be requested to send to the General Assembly, at its sixty-fifth session, a report containing information on State ratification and accession to relevant instruments and a summary of reports received and views expressed by States on the matter.

By a resolution in the report of the Special Committee on the Charter of the United Nations and on the Strengthening of the Role of the Organization (document A/63/442), again approved without a vote on 14 November, the Assembly would decide that the Special Committee would next meet from 17 to 25 February 2009 to continue consideration of proposals on international peace and security. In particular, the Assembly would request that the Special Committee continue to consider, on a priority basis, the Russian Federation's paper entitled "basic conditions and

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standard criteria for introducing and implementing sanctions", the provisions of the Charter related to assistance to third States affected by sanctions and ways of improving its working methods and enhancing its efficiency. It would also request the Special Committee to keep the question of the peaceful settlement of disputes on its agenda and to consider proposals that had arisen from decisions of the Assembly's 2005 High-Level Plenary meeting.

Further, the Assembly would invite the Special Committee to continue to identify new subjects for consideration at its 2009 session and to submit a report on its work to the General Assembly at its sixty-fourth session. It would also recognize the importance of the International Court of Justice in adjudicating disputes among States.

Finally, by the draft, the Assembly would commend the Secretary-General for the progress made in the preparation of studies of the *Repertory of Practice of United Nations Organs* and would note with appreciation the contributions made by Member States to the trust fund for updating the *Repertoire*, as well as the trust fund for the elimination of the backlog of the *Repertory*. In that regard, it would reiterate its call for voluntary contributions to these trust funds and would call on the Secretary-General to ensure the two publications were updated and made available electronically in all respective languages. It would call on the Secretary-General to report on both publications at the Assembly's next session and to brief the Special Committee on information related to assistance to third States affected by sanctions.

A draft in a report on the rule of law at the national and international levels (document A/63/443) was approved without a vote on 14 November. It would have the Assembly reaffirm its own role in encouraging the progressive development of international law and its codification. It would stress the importance of adhering to the rule of law at the national level and to the strengthening of the ability of States to implement international obligations by enhancing technical assistance and capacity-building. It would call for greater coordination and coherence of the United Nations system and of donors and for greater evaluation of the effectiveness of such activities. Further, the United Nations system would be called upon to address aspects of the rule of law, recognizing the importance of rule of law to virtually all areas of the Organization's engagement.

In particular, the Assembly would express full support for the Rule of Law Coordination and Resource Group, established last year and supported by the Rule of Law Unit, within the Secretary-General's Office and under the leadership of the Deputy Secretary-General. Charged with ensuring rule of law coordination and coherence within existing mandates, the Group's activities would be reported annually by the Secretary-General. The International Court of Justice and the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law would be invited to comment on how they were promoting the rule of law. Interaction with Member States would be encouraged, as would a speedy consideration of the Secretary-General's report on resource requirements.

Meanwhile, the "rule of law at the national and international levels" would be included in the Assembly's agenda for the next session and the Legal Committee's consideration of the subject would focus on designated sub-topics. Thus, during the Assembly's sixty-fourth session, the Committee would consider the promotion of the rule of law at the international level and comments could focus on such aspects as the role of rule of law in strengthening the international

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system and the role of the United Nations in the peaceful settlement of disputes. In the sixty-fifth session, when the focus was on State laws and practices in implementing international law, the Committee could consider domestic implementation of international law, capacity-building and mechanisms for evaluating the effectiveness of assistance. In the sixty-sixth session, the focus would be on the rule of law and transitional justice in conflict and post-conflict situations. Elements to consider include the combating of immunity, the role of transitional justice and accountability mechanisms, and informal justice systems. The sub-topics would be considered without prejudice to the consideration of the item as a whole.

A report on measures to eliminate international terrorism (document A/63/444) contains one draft resolution approved without a vote on 14 November. It would have the Assembly strongly condemn all acts, methods and practices of terrorism in all its forms as criminal and unjustifiable. It would call upon States, United Nations and relevant organizations to implement the United Nations Global Terrorism Strategy as well as the resolution on the first biennial review of the Strategy. States would be called on to adopt further measures, in accordance with the United Nations Charter and international law, to prevent terrorism and strengthen international cooperation towards combating it. The Assembly would urge States to intensify the exchange of information on terrorism and to refrain from financing, encouraging, providing training or otherwise supporting terrorist activities. In particular, States would be encouraged to ensure those who provide or collect funds to benefit terrorist acts were appropriately punished.

Further, by the draft, the Assembly would remind States of obligations under relevant international instruments to ensure that perpetrators of terrorist acts were brought to justice and would urge them to become party to relevant conventions and protocols concerning terrorism. Those instruments would include the 2005 Protocols to the Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against the Safety of Maritime Navigation and the Protocol for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against the Safety of Fixed Platforms Located on the Continental Shelf. The Assembly would call on States to enact necessary domestic legislation to implement the provisions of these instruments.

States would also be called on to implement the Declaration on Measures to Eliminate International Terrorism and the Declaration to supplement it. It would urge States and the Secretary-General to make the best use of existing United Nations institutions to prevent international terrorism. The Terrorism Prevention Branch of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, in particular, would be requested to enhance the Organization's ability to prevent terrorism, as well as its ability to assist States with becoming parties to and implementing relevant conventions and protocols.

Finally, by the draft, the Assembly would welcome the Secretariat's efforts to prepare the third edition of *International Instruments related to the Prevention and Suppression of International Terrorism* in official languages and would invite regional intergovernmental organizations to submit to the Secretary-General information on the measures they have adopted to eliminate terrorism, as well as on intergovernmental meetings held by those organizations. Noting the progress made towards the elaboration of the draft comprehensive convention on international terrorism, it would decide that the Ad Hoc Committee should continue to elaborate the convention on an expedited basis by convening from 29 June to 2

July 2009 to continue its work. In that regard, the Secretary-General would be requested to provide the Ad Hoc Committee with facilities for this work. In the event that an instrument was elaborated, the Ad Hoc Committee would be requested to report to the General Assembly at its current session and would request the Ad Hoc Committee to report on the implementation of its mandate at the Assembly's following session. The item would be included in the provisional agenda of the Assembly's sixty-fourth session.

A report related to the Committee's contribution to the revitalization of the Assembly contains a single decision on the provisional programme of work for the Assembly's sixty-fourth session (document A/63/445). Approved without a vote on 14 November, the resolution would have the Assembly approve the Committee's proposed programme of work for the Assembly's next session.

The Committee's report related to programme planning (document A/63/450) states that on 14 November, the Committee had considered information provided by the Committee for Programme and Coordination concerning legal affairs for the 2008-2009 biennial programme period. Consideration of the item was concluded on that day without action taken.

A report on the administration of justice at the United Nations (document A/63/451) contains a draft decision adopted without a vote on 14 November. It would have the General Assembly decide that the Ad Hoc Committee on the Administration of Justice shall continue its work on outstanding legal aspects of the new two-tiered administrative justice system for the United Nations that is to take effect as of 1 January. In finalizing the draft statutes of the Dispute and Appeals Tribunals, the deliberations of the Fifth Committee (Administrative and Budgetary) and of the Sixth Committee (Legal) would be taken into account, as would previous Assembly decisions involving the matter. The Assembly would also decide to include the item in the provisional agenda of its sixty-fourth session.

A report on the Host Country report (document A/63/452) contains one resolution approved without a vote on 14 November. By it, the Assembly would remain seized of the fact that missions have reported experiencing problems with the Parking Programme, with a view towards ensuring proper implementation. The Assembly would ask the host country to consider removing travel restrictions from some missions. It would also anticipate the host country's enhancement of efforts towards timely issuance of visas, also taking note of delegation requests to shorten the time frame for issuance of the visas, since the current time frame posed difficulties for the full-fledged participation of States in meetings.

Finally, the Assembly would affirm the importance of the Committee being in a position to fulfil its mandate and meet on short notice to deal with urgent and important matters relating to relations between the United Nations and the host country. In that connection, the relevant United Nations components would be asked to give priority to the Committee for necessary meetings.

A report on granting observer status to the South Centre (document A/63/453) contains one resolution adopted without a vote on 5 November. By it, the Assembly would grant observer status in its work to the 51-member intergovernmental organization aimed at promoting South-South solidarity.

Also adopted without a vote on 14 November was one resolution in a report on observer status for the International Fund for Saving the Aral Sea (document

A/63/454) in the work of the General Assembly. By the text, the Assembly would invite the international regional mechanism to participate in its work as an observer. A letter by Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan had transmitted an explanatory memorandum stating that the purpose of the mechanism was to reverse the deterioration of the Aral Sea Basin through international cooperative projects and programmes.

A report on observer status for the University of Peace (document A/63/455) also contains a single resolution. By it, the Assembly would grant observer status in its work to the specialized international institution dedicated to postgraduate studies in training for peace. Located in San Jose, Costa Rica, the University has a special relationship with the United Nations system in that its Council consists of high-level United Nations representatives. Its charter also anticipates close ties with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in the area of education.

#### Plenary Documents

For the General Assembly's consideration of the role of diamonds in fuelling conflict, it has before it a letter dated 20 November 2008 from the Permanent Representative of India to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (document A/63/560), in which he transmits the 2008 Kimberley Process report. The report covers developments since the 13 November 2007 report of the European Commission to the 6 November 2008 New Delhi Plenary. The communiqué from that meeting is attached in Annex I.

The Kimberley Process is a joint government, industry and civil society initiative to prevent the flow of conflict diamonds into legitimate international trade. The Kimberley Process Certification Scheme is implemented through national laws by establishing a system of internal controls designed to eliminate conflict diamonds from shipments of rough diamonds imported into and exported from a country. It is open to all countries willing and able to fulfil its requirements.

During 2008, Mexico joined the Kimberley Process, while the Republic of Congo resumed trade in rough diamonds, the report notes. As of 6 November, there were 49 participants representing 75 countries, including the European Commission as a single participant representing 27 members of the European Union. Countries including Algeria, Bahrain, Burkina Faso, Cameroon and the Philippines were among those expressing interest to join.

Among its activities, the Kimberley Process Chair team visited Venezuela, which separated from the Process for two years, to help establish communication channels, the report states. Peer review visits, annual reporting by participants and quarterly statistical submissions are used to monitor implementation of the Scheme.

The Kimberley Process continued to monitor the situation in Côte d'Ivoire, which has an estimated production capacity of 114,000 to 188,500 carats per year. A United Nations-Kimberley Process mission in April confirmed the link between diamond mining and Ivorian conflict to the extent that diamonds seemed to be controlled and "taxed" by elements of the Forces nouvelles. Security Council resolution 1842 (2008) determined that the situation continued to pose a threat to international peace.

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In addition, the Kimberley Process continued its engagement with Ghana, where an Update Review Mission, conducted by experts from Canada and the European Commission's diplomatic missions, concluded that the country had made significant progress in addressing weaknesses in internal controls. In other areas, the Kimberley Process was working to finalize its foot printing exercise with West African participants, and footprints had been prepared for Cote d'Ivoire, Zimbabwe and Togo.

Regarding other matters, the report states that the Kimberley Process was working to establish greater cooperation on enforcement in issues such as fake certificates and handling of suspicious shipments. Namibia, Vice-Chair for 2008, will succeed India as Chair with effect from 1 January 2009, with Israel as Vice-Chair.

For its consideration of the zone of peace and cooperation in the South Atlantic, the Assembly has before it the Secretary-General's report on the zone of peace and cooperation of the South Atlantic (document A/63/525), which contains replies from Governments, as well as United Nations organizations and bodies, regarding their assistance to States members of the zone in their joint efforts to implement the Luanda Plan of Action (A/61/1019, annex I). The Angolan and Colombian Governments submitted replies, as did the United Nations Department of Public Information; Office of Legal Affairs, Food and Agriculture Organization; United Nations Office at Geneva and the Office on Drugs and Crime.

For its consideration of sport for peace and development, the Assembly has before it the Secretary-General's report on sport for development and peace: building on the foundations (document A/63/466), which summarizes the steps undertaken during the second of a three-year road map to carry out such programmes. It particularly looks at measures implemented within the framework of the Games of the XXIX Olympiad and the XIII Paralympic Games in Beijing and the contribution that sport can make to achieving the Millennium Development Goals.

Requested by the General Assembly in resolution 62/271, the report was meant to review the resolution's implementation and progress made at national, regional and international levels to encourage policies and best practices concerning sport for development and peace. The second year of the Action Plan shows that support was required from the Sport for Development and Peace International Working Group to help Governments carry out their policy recommendations.

Looking ahead, the report said that sports celebrities should continue to be encouraged to serve as spokespersons and goodwill ambassadors to help foster the positive values of sport and the achievement of development goals. It also urged Member States that had not yet done so to ratify the International Convention against Doping in Sport.

By a related resolution before the Assembly entitled sport as a means to promote education, health, development and peace (document A/63/L.51), it would encourage the use of sport to foster development; prevent disease and promote health; empower girls and women; foster the inclusion of persons with disabilities and facilitate conflict prevention and peacebuilding. Urging States that have not yet done so to consider acceding to the Convention on the Rights of the Child, it would also invite the global community to provide voluntary contributions to the United Nations Office of Sport for Development and Peace.

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Additional documents were expected to be introduced in the Assembly.

Action on Sixth Committee (Legal) Drafts

MARCO RAKOVEC (Slovenia), Committee Rapporteur, introduced the Committee's reports in sequence. He then said international law was the foundation on which the Charter was based and the Committee had been called upon over the years to play a role in the Assembly's work involving codification and progressive development of international law. The resolutions adopted by the Committee this year continued to enhance the Organization's effectiveness in three priority areas: the promotion of justice and international law; drug control, crime prevention and the combating of international terrorism; and with regard to organizational matters.

He said Hamid Al Bayati (Iraq) had provided commendable leadership in the Committee's work as Chairman. The Bureau had rendered the support needed for the success of the session. The contributions of delegates had been invaluable. Some of the resolutions that were to be adopted by the Assembly today required specific actions by States. It was hoped that those actions would be taken within the next months.

The Assembly then took up the report on nationality of natural persons in relation to the succession of States (document A/63/436). The resolution contained in the report was adopted without a vote.

Next to be taken up was the report on Criminal Accountability of United Nations officials and experts on mission (document A/63/437). The resolution contained in the report was adopted without a vote.

The Committee's report on the report of the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL) (document A/63/438) was next taken up with the three resolutions contained in it. Resolution I on the report was adopted without a vote, as was resolution II on the Legislative Guide on Secured Transactions and resolution III on the Convention on Contracts for the International Carriage of Goods Wholly or Partly by Sea.

The Committee's report on the Report of the International Law Commission (document A/63/439) was taken up with two resolutions in it. Resolution I on the report was adopted without a vote. Resolution II, a report on the law of transboundary aquifers, was adopted without a vote.

The next report taken up was on the status of the Protocols Additional to the 1949 Geneva Convention and relating to the protection of victims of armed conflict (document A/63/440). The resolution contained in it was adopted without a vote.

Speaking in explanation of position after action, the representative of Syria said he had gone along with consensus on the resolution. However, his country's reservation with regard to the paragraph referring to the entry into force of the Protocols was still in effect.

A report then was taken up on effective measures to enhance the protection, security and safety of diplomatic and consular missions and representatives (document A/63/441). The resolution contained in it was adopted without a vote.

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The Legal Committee's report on the report of the Special Committee on the Charter of the United Nations and on the Strengthening of the Role of the Organization (document A/63/442) was next taken up. The resolution contained in it was adopted without a vote.

The report on the rule of law at the national and international levels (document A/63/443) was taken up and the resolution in it was adopted without a vote.

A report on measures to eliminate international terrorism (document A/63/444) was taken up.

In explanation of position before action, the representative of India said recent events had demonstrated the urgency of action on the matter of terrorism. India would go along with consensus, but would reserve the right to introduce further measures on the matter.

The representative of Syria said his country had also gone along with the consensus, despite its reservation to the preambular paragraph relating to the listing of organizations.

The resolution was then adopted without a vote.

The Committee's report on its provisional programme of work (document A/63/445) for the Assembly's next session was taken up. The resolution contained in the report was adopted without a vote.

The Assembly then took up the report on programme planning (document A/63/450) and took note of it.

The report on the administration of justice at the United Nations (document A/63/451) was taken up. The draft decision contained in it was adopted without a vote.

The Committee's report on the Host Country report (document A/63/452) was taken up and the resolution in it was adopted without a vote.

Finally, the reports on observer status for the South Centre (document A/63/453), the International Fund for Saving the Aral Sea (document A/63/454) and the University of Peace (document A/63/455) were taken up and the single resolution contained in each was adopted without a vote.

#### Introduction of Kimberley Process report and draft resolution A/63/L.52

NIRUPAM SEN (India), speaking as Chair of the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme for 2008, presented the report on the Process for the year. The illicit trade in rough diamonds financed devastating armed conflicts and negatively impacted the legitimate international diamond trade. Efforts to address that problem must focus on all parts of the supply chain, including processing, trading and consumer purchasing.

It was in that context that the Kimberley Process had proved "remarkably successful" in breaking the link between conflict and the illicit diamond trade.

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That success had resulted in an increased legitimate diamond trade, and diamonds' emergence as a vehicle of economic progress and means to confront development challenges. The inclusiveness of the Process was key to its success, he explained, noting that Mexico had joined in 2008, and approval was given for the Republic of Congo to resume trading in rough diamonds. During the year, the Process completed its work for finalizing the diamond production profiles for Côte d'Ivoire, the Marange diamond fields of Zimbabwe, and Togo, and further deepened its engagement with the United Nations.

Turning next to the related draft resolution A/63/L.52, he said the text expressed satisfaction at the Kimberley Process's continued development of transparent and uniform rules and procedures. It welcomed the guidelines endorsed by the New Delhi Plenary, recommending interim measures to address serious non-compliance with minimum requirements. It also highlighted the development perspective of the Kimberley Process, by acknowledging that the diamond sector was an important catalyst for achieving poverty reduction and meeting the requirements of the Millennium Development Goals in producing countries. He concluded by noting corrections to the text in operative paragraph 13.

MOHAMMED LOULICHKI (Morocco) speaking on behalf of the African Group, said that before the introduction of the Kimberley Process in 2000, the illicit trade in diamonds had fuelled some of the most devastating conflicts on the African continent. In addition to financing conflicts, the trade in rough diamonds had also negatively impacted the legal worldwide trade in diamonds. He noted that the constant attention and mobilization of the international community against that illegal trade had been vital to the success of the Kimberley Process. Indeed, the Process was an innovative and useful mechanism that tackled the problem of rough diamonds not only at the level of extraction, but also in the areas of processing and trading. The Certification Scheme had been particularly effective in validating and regulating the production of rough diamonds and their trade.

Thanks to the Kimberley Process, conflict diamonds today represented less than 1 per cent of the international diamond trade, as opposed to more than 15 per cent during the 1990s, he said. Diamonds were one of the major natural resources with which the African continent had been endowed. The active involvement of African countries in the Kimberley Process stood as a testament to Africa's wiliness to use those resources to help benefit the socio-economic well-being of Africans, as well as for building and rehabilitating infrastructure that was critical for broader development. He highlighted the efforts of Angola, which had two years ago created the African Diamond Producing Countries Association, with the objective of coordinating policies and strategies for sustained and durable development of the continent's diamond industry. Finally, he stressed the importance of continuing and expanding technical assistance provided by donor countries, and bolstering regional-level cooperation to stem the illicit trade in diamonds.

PHILIPPE DELACROIX (France), speaking on behalf of the European Union, which participated in the Kimberley Process as a single member, noted the conclusion of India's chairmanship. His delegation was pleased that the Certification Scheme had developed as an effective tool for combating the scourge in conflict diamonds. Its credibility depended on the effective implementation of its participants, and there had been significant progress in that regard.

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The Kimberley Process's redoubling of efforts had resulted in seizures of illicit diamonds, and demonstrated its impact. Moreover, the Kimberley Process had been strengthened by the launch of the second round of review visits in important manufacturing centres, including Israel. The European Union, as chair of the monitoring working group, welcomed the continued commitment of participants, and was fully committed to that exercise. It would receive a review visit in February 2009. The Union was proud to support Mexico's accession in 2008, and the decision in Venezuela showed that communication was possible with a country that was having difficulty with certification implementation. It was not in participants' interests to politicize issues in the Process during the Assembly's consideration of the item.

Turning to draft resolution A/63/L.52, he said it did not accurately reflect discussions taken in New Delhi, or take into account the situation in all countries. He regretted that there was no reference to challenges faced by Zimbabwe in implementing the Process, and no positive statement regarding the election of the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Process. He welcomed selection of Namibia as Chair and Israel as Vice-Chair for 2009. Despite his reservations about the negotiation process for the resolution, he hoped the text would be adopted by consensus.

ALEXANDER ALIMOV (Russian Federation) said that his delegation had an overall positive assessment of the Kimberley Process and welcomed the work carried out over the past year under India's presidency. His delegation also welcomed the efforts of the Kimberley Process to engage more effectively with the Security Council and other United Nations organs. That had been part of an overall effort to increase participation in the Process. The Russian Federation looked forward to the participation of all States that were involved in some way with the trade in diamonds in the Process. Overall, the Russian Federation believed that it was necessary to continue to develop transparent and uniform rules and procedures. It also thanked the delegations who had participated in the negotiations on the relevant draft resolution before the Assembly. The consensus adoption of the text would go a long way towards bolstering international support for the Kimberley Process.

TAPIWA MONGWA (Botswana) said the widest possible participation in the Kimberley Process was essential for effective implementation, monitoring and compliance of the requirements of the resolution on the role of diamonds in fuelling conflict, and in that respect Botswana was pleased that the Process continued to grow in its size and scope, thus reaffirming its importance, relevance and its contribution to international peace and security.

Botswana remained confident that through that initiative the devastating impact of conflicts fuelled by the trade in conflict diamonds would continue to be reduced, she said. In that way, those in affected countries would no longer be afflicted by the curse of natural resources that had brought suffering and despair, but instead enjoy fundamental human rights of peace, safety and security. In that regard, she noted with satisfaction that, as a result of the invaluable work of the Kimberley Process, today, more than ever before, diamonds had become a major source of financing for social progression and economic development in many more countries, especially in Africa.

Further, she was optimistic that, in the near future, Member States would focus more on the role of diamonds in preventing conflict, or more aptly,

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"Diamonds for Development". Botswana attached great importance to that issue, because diamonds were the mainstay of the country's economy and, to a very great extent, accounted for its socio-economic accomplishment, she added.

Ms. HALPERN (United States) said her Government was pleased to sponsor the draft resolution on the role of diamonds on fuelling conflict. The unique, multifaceted approach which Governments, the diamond industry and civil society had available to achieve that goal must be encouraged, to ensure greater effectiveness. Moreover, the multifaceted partnership had the potential to provide for economic development and the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.

The Certification Scheme offered a precedent for addressing the link between the natural resource trade and the fuelling of conflict. Indeed, 2008 had been a notable year for the Process. India's chairmanship had led to interim measures on non-compliance, and reaffirmation of efforts to bolster internal controls by diamond-producing countries.

The United States was pleased to welcome Mexico as a participant, and recognize rough diamond exports from the Republic of Congo. The year had been marked with Venezuela's decision to voluntarily separate from the Process, while it developed a plan of action to ensure minimum standards. She also recognized attempts to control illicit diamond flows from Côte d'Ivoire, and encouraged Process countries to redouble efforts to intercept illicit diamond shipments from Zimbabwe. The United States looked forward to working closely with Namibia, as it assumed the Chair, and Israel, as it assumed Vice-Chair. The number of lives lost from diamond-fuelled civil wars made it imperative to support and promote the Kimberley Process.

ISMAEL GASPAS MARTINS (Angola) said the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme had been operating for the past five years. The broader campaign to stop the circulation of conflict diamonds had been largely successful, although African countries that produced alluvial and artisanal diamonds, especially those countries emerging from armed conflict, still faced some challenges. He said that African Governments remained committed to the objectives of the Kimberley Process, and that commitment had significantly contributed to the promotion of regional and international peace and security. The protection of the lawful diamond industry, on which several countries depended for the implementation of sustainable development programmes, would continue to be one of the top priorities for African Governments and leaders.

Continuing, he said that Angola was among the 75 Governments currently represented in the Kimberley Process. Among others activities, Angola had been encouraging African countries that produce artisan and alluvial diamonds to constantly improve their internal controls through the recommendations foreseen in the 2005 Moscow Declaration. In addition, earlier this year, Angola had invited non-governmental organizations Partnership Africa-Canada and the Diamonds for Development Initiative to work with national entities through the Ministry of Geology and Mining with a view to simulating coordinated actions focused on the normalization of alluvial diamond activity. Finally, he urged the Governments of African diamond-producing countries, especially those alluvial and small-scale producers, to devote particular attention to the internal controls in their national mining development plans, as a way to eliminate production that was not

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in compliance with national legislation and the objectives of the Kimberley Process.

FRIEDA NANGULA ITETHE (Namibia) underlined the fact that, from its own experience, Namibia owed its developmental advances to the exploitation of mineral resources, especially diamonds, which accounted for more than 40 per cent of the country's export earnings, 10 per cent of its gross domestic product (GDP) and 7 per cent of government revenue. The country, therefore, attached great importance to the Kimberley Process, and believed that the Process Certification Scheme not only set benchmarks in the regulatory process and management of the diamond trade, but it also guaranteed transparency in marketing its diamonds and provided a valuable platform for cooperation among participants of that Process.

As a participant in the Kimberley Process, Namibia had put in place a robust and comprehensive regulatory regime in order to project the integrity of its diamond industry from conflict diamonds, she said. Additionally, 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, had been established and were specifically charged with protecting the country's diamonds from smuggling and other illicit activities. In that way, she believed Namibia was contributing to international efforts aimed at curbing the flow of conflict diamonds, and ensuring international peace and security.

JOHN MCNEE (Canada), also speaking on behalf of Australia and New Zealand, said that he remained fully supportive of the Kimberley Process, which continued to increase accountability, transparency and effective governance of the trade in rough diamonds, and which had had tremendous success in preventing conflict diamonds from entering the legitimate market. He welcomed continued progress in Ghana in improving its system of internal controls over rough diamonds and commended the constructive and transparent manner in which that country had engaged in the Kimberley Process. In doing so, Ghana represented a model to be emulated. He would also like to congratulate the Ghanaian people for the peaceful and orderly manner in which the presidential and legislative elections had been conducted on 7 December. He also welcomed plans by the Ivorian Government to re-establish control over diamond-producing areas and looked forward to the lifting of rough diamond sanctions on Côte d'Ivoire, once circumstances permitted. He also noted with satisfaction that a resolution had been achieved regarding Venezuela's status within the Kimberley Process.

Positive developments notwithstanding, there were reasons for concern, he continued. There were numerous recent reports regarding illicit diamond mining in Zimbabwe, and he noted the danger of those exports tainting international diamond markets. He urged all Kimberley Process participants to enhance their vigilance with regard to the implementation of the Process minimum requirements, as controlling the illicit flow of diamonds was a shared responsibility among all. He also recognized the valuable role of non-governmental observers in monitoring the implementation of those requirements. The number of civil society organizations participating in the Kimberley Process was expanding, especially from the global south. He welcomed important contributions that those organizations had made to the credibility and transparency of the Process.

The Kimberley Process was making a major contribution in breaking the link between rough diamonds and armed conflict, and stood as a living testament to what could be achieved through an honest partnership of governments, the United

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Nations, civil society and the private sector, he said. Nonetheless, it was clear that much work remained to be done. In celebrating the sixtieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, it was timely to recall that the Kimberley Process had been created in the spirit of ending the role that diamonds could play in fuelling conflict and human rights abuses. While the Process focused on stopping the trade in conflict diamonds that were used by rebel movements, it was imperative that the international community be vigilant in monitoring for human rights abuses related to the production of, and trade in, diamonds, and work together to end those 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," he said.

MEIRAV EILON SHAHAR (Israel) said that in the international community's ongoing efforts to counteract increasingly multifaceted and complex conflicts, it must also tackle the resources and funding that fuelled such violence. "Our efforts to eradicate blood diamonds remain a work in progress. We have achieved some notable successes, but much remains to be done," she said. Continuing, she said that Israel was proud to have been the first country to adopt the Kimberley Process. It had issued its very first Kimberley certificate in 2003 and, since then, it had engaged in a vigorous process to ensure that all diamonds bought, sold, or transferred through Israel were "conflict free".

She said that, this year, Israel had welcomed a seven-member delegation representing the Kimberley Process to review its compliance with relevant mechanisms. At the conclusion of the visit, the head of that delegation had praised Israel's commitment to the principles and objectives of the Process, and had noted particularly that Israel's system of "spot checks" was worthy of emulation in other Kimberley Process countries. Finally, she said that, while Israel would continue to support the Process, effectively halting the spread of blood diamonds was a joint international effort.

The Assembly then adopted without vote a resolution on 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 (document A/63/L.52).

Speaking after action, the representative of Israel said that her delegation supported the Kimberley Process and was committed to it. While Israel welcomed the efforts of India's chairmanship of the negotiations on the text, it was regrettable that her delegation could not co-sponsor it. Israel had taken that position because it had witnessed "disturbing and provocative acts" during the elaboration of the resolution. When the Assembly considers the text annually, its traditional practice had been to welcome the incoming President and Vice-Chairs of the Kimberley Process, but because of the world view of certain States -- Iran, Syria and Libya, in this instance -- that practice had been changed this year.

#### Zone of Peace and Cooperation of the South Atlantic

ISMAEL GASPAR MARTINS (Angola), speaking on behalf of 24 members of the Zone of Peace and Cooperation of the South Atlantic, said that the report before the Assembly was eloquent on how the Zone was making gradual, but steady, qualitative changes by creating the basic conditions for a fully operational mechanism of South-South cooperation, where a wide range of partners could find their space. He was particularly pleased to see those changes noticed and taken into account by

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various partners: the replies from different bodies contained in the report clearly referred to the implementation of the Luanda Plan of Action and Political Declaration. The adoption of the Plan of Action, as a framework for concrete actions, had been a turning point towards the revitalization of the Zone.

Expressing gratitude to all the partners for the actions carried out in different countries within the Zone of Peace and Cooperation, he said that its members would welcome a regular exchange of information on the activities that partners developed within the space of the Zone. Such exchange could be coordinated through the Zone's chairmanship. On their part, while stressing the importance of cooperation among themselves, by maximizing the use of internal capacities and resources, members of the Zone would spare no effort to involve relevant partners in the materialization of their objectives, including by seeking their expertise for the successful holding of the meetings of the Ad Hoc Working Groups mentioned in paragraph 8 of the report. The United Nations Office of Legal Affairs had been instrumental in holding experts meetings on the Law of the Sea in the Republic of Congo and Uruguay, and he would welcome the continuation of that sort of coordinated action. Another useful example would be employing the Zone to address the issue of drug trafficking, as its membership comprised countries from South America and Africa that rested on a transit route used by dealers to transport drugs.

Continuing, he expressed appreciation for positive developments in the field of peacebuilding, including in Member States of the Zone, including Sierra Leone and Guinea-Bissau, which were on the agenda of the Peacebuilding Commission. Other members, including Liberia, Guinea and Côte d'Ivoire, had also benefited from the Peacebuilding Fund. With questions of peace and security closely linked to those of development, members of the Zone were concerned over the negative developments in the world economy and the persistence of conflicts. In that connection, they were deeply concerned with the situation in some parts of Africa, including the Democratic Republic of the Congo, a member of the Zone. He hoped that no effort would be spared in overcoming that complex situation, including by combating the illicit exploitation of natural resources. He was also alarmed by the conflict in Somalia and the scourge of piracy that had increased pressure on the Atlantic Ocean route. It was necessary to decisively fight the practice of piracy and, more importantly, find a solution to the long-lasting Somali conflict.

The Zone of Peace and Cooperation in the South Atlantic had been established as a mechanism to contribute to international peace and security and the promotion of the principles and purposes of the United Nations, he said in conclusion. The members of the Zone were determined to promote the noble objectives of peace, security and development as rights to be exercised by all.

#### Sport for Development and Peace

PETER MAURER (Switzerland) introduced the draft resolution on sport as a means to promote education, education, health, development and peace, on behalf of his country and Chile, noting that "sport is about competition in fairness and individual excellence in teamwork". Moreover, sport contributed to the Millennium Development Goals in that it was an effective vehicle to achieve education, health development and peace objectives. Sport, which included athletes, national sports federations and the sporting goods manufacturing industry, also showed support for the Goals.

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The draft resolution made note of the "manifold" programmes and initiatives reviewed in the Secretary-General's report, he said. It acknowledged the positive impact of mass sports, such as the 2008 Olympic and Paralympic Games, and made reference to the important work done by the Sport for Development and Peace International Working Group. Welcoming the decision to incorporate the Working Group into the United Nations under the leadership of the Special Adviser, he said there was no better place than the Secretariat to take on the responsibility. The draft proposed to build resources and infrastructure for sport, and also aimed at something more ambitious: to create a "global culture of sport and physical education".

MOHAMMED LOULICHKI (Morocco), speaking on behalf of the African Group, said his delegation noted with great satisfaction the Secretary-General's report on "Sport for Development and Peace". That survey of worldwide efforts to encourage policies and best practices in the area of sport for peace demonstrated that the international community had begun investing in sports as a way to reach some of the most critical Millennium Development Goals. Further, the partnerships between Member States had allowed sport to be perceived as a cost-effective tool to advance human development. He stressed that, indeed, sport was an integral part of human development and, through healthy competition, sport also promoted high moral values, such as tolerance, discipline and respect for adversaries.

The Secretary-General's report also demonstrated how sport had the potential to influence attainment of the internationally-agreed development goals by raising awareness and promoting cooperation and mutual understanding. He said that the African Group commended China for its successful organization of the twenty-ninth Summer Olympic Games and thirteenth Paralympic Games. China's success, as the first developing country to host such a large scale event, was a point of pride and would motivate other developing countries to host such gatherings. As for Africa, he said that the United Nations must dedicate specific initiatives and efforts to further promote sport for peace and development. The richness of the continent was its youth, and it was striving to channel young peoples' extraordinary energy by promoting creativity, education and common understanding.

ZHANG YESUI (China) recalled that China had held the twenty-ninth Olympic Games and thirteenth Paralympic Games from 8 August to 17 September 2008, marking the first time the country had been the host. Together, the Chinese people and people from various countries witnessed the splendour of Chinese culture, and felt the openness of modern China. Thanking international organizations, country leaders, and the some 20,000 athletes in the Games and Paralympic Games, among others, he said the Games provided a big boost to the development of popular sports activities in China.

Indeed, the Government had undertaken an outreach programme to more than 400 million adolescents, by far the largest ever carried out, on the dissemination of sports knowledge, he said. The Games were a perfect expression of the integration of United Nations principles with the Olympic ideals. To promote the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the Government had built a memorial wall in the Paralympic Village. He attached great importance to the role of sports in facilitating human development and achieving the Millennium Development Goals. While the Games had ended, the task of carrying forward sports' contribution to peace and development remained a long-term challenge. His Government would continue to integrate sports into its national economic and social development strategies.

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ISABELLE F. PICCO (Monaco) said that development through sport was one of her country's main development activities. Monaco was supporting a project in Madagascar for sports at a special school for blind children. It was also supporting several other projects in Africa and elsewhere.

If sport contributed to the development of individuals and communities, it was also a factor in reconciliation and post-conflict peace consolidation, she explained. The Peace and Sport Organization, created by world pentathlon champion Joël Bouzou, aimed to boost synergies between Governments and sports agencies, especially schools and education facilities. It also held an annual international forum. Some 330 people representing more than 50 countries on five continents had gathered for three days in Monaco to take part in sports activities to relieve tensions and heal conflicts. In 2009, the organization would put in place a resource centre and a network to exchange information to improve actions on the ground.

She noted that the Olympic Games in Beijing, China, were the first since the entry into force of the International Convention against Doping in Sport, adopted under the aegis of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). Her Government would continue its efforts and urge further regional, national and international cooperation in the area of sport for peace and development. In closing, she called for better -- and broader -- coordination of efforts, and a better use of resources.

ILAN FLUSS (Israel) said sports served as a common language that could foster international friendship and harmony. The competitive sporting experience transcended differences, reminding people that there was more that bound them together than drew them apart. In the region, Israel had worked to harness that spirit to forge relationships between peoples and cultures. The groundbreaking programmes of the Peres Centre for Peace had been lauded as important for bringing young Israelis and Palestinians together to develop cross-cultural ties. Such programmes had been successful in fostering a culture of peace. In addition, Israel's international development agency, MASHAV, used sports as a tool for development and peace -- its technical cooperation programmes in that area had been effective in the promotion of peace and development.

Recalling the terrorist events of the 1972 Olympic Games in Munich, Germany, which led to the deaths of 11 Israeli athletes, coaches and referees, he said Israel was pleased that this year's Olympic Games were a striking example of the value of sports for stimulating body, mind and spirit. The abuse of sport for political means was an affront to the ethos of the Olympic tradition. As many conflicts could seem intractable, he urged finding new ways for confronting difficulties and building bridges between people. Sports could be an effective way to build peace from the ground up and foster momentum for development. Yet, sports alone could not foster enduring peace. Supporting factors -- including an interest in peace among different groups, media involvement and strong civil society -- were needed.

ROBERT ROHDE (Germany) said sports activities brought people together and helped overcome cultural, linguistic and other barriers. Sports played a valuable role in contributing to social cohesiveness and rapprochement between cultures and peoples. Moreover, at national and community levels, sport programmes could foster social inclusion and help overcome discrimination against, and marginalization of, women and disabled persons. Participation by women and girls

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in sporting events helped promote more confident participation in social life and helped bolster their leadership potential.

He went on to say that sports could help promote achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals. Sport programmes could also support internal political stabilization and social integration after periods of conflict. By example, he said such programmes could play a major role in the rehabilitation and reintegration of child soldiers and other youths. Germany strongly supported the Assembly's engagement in global sports for development and peace initiatives and, to that end, would strongly support the Office of the United Nations Special Adviser on the issue in 2009.

BYRGANYM AITIMOVA (Kazakhstan) said that, in the near future, the Parliament of her country was expected to authorize a draft law that would secure and protect the rights of the people of Kazakhstan to equal access to physical training and sport, and create a system of legal guarantees and necessary conditions for the development of mass sports, as well as preparation of the sport reserve and training of national teams. Her country had established the concepts and programmes for athletes in preparation to the London Summer Olympic Games in 2012 and the Guangzhou Summer Asian Games in 2010. The Government was currently considering a law for the ratification of the UNESCO Convention against Doping in Sport.

Continuing, she stressed the use of sport as an instrument for development and peace, as demonstrated by all countries during the Olympic Games in Beijing. For the first time ever, the Olympic torch relay had been escorted within the ceremony in the streets of Almaty, Kazakhstan. The event had been noticed not only by the country's athletes, but the entire nation. She also outlined the country's efforts to increase attention to sports in the process of rehabilitation of disabled persons, saying that Kazakhstan was signing the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons and Disabilities and its Optional Protocol today. To encourage increased involvement of persons with disabilities, her Government had provided awards for people taking from first to sixth place in any sports at the Beijing Paralympic Games. The country was also making efforts to promote mass sports. One of the major benefits of sports was their effectiveness as a tool for inspiring the youth, igniting patriotic ideals and promoting the values of equity, tolerance and peace, as well as respect for rules and concepts of hard work, true competitiveness and fair play.

In 2011, Kazakhstan would host the VII Asian Winter Games, she said. The country was making preparations for that important event. The Ministry of Tourism and Sport of Kazakhstan had already conducted negotiations with leading world architects to define land lots for the construction of sports facilities. Preliminary budget calculations for hosting the Games amounted to \$1 billion. Her delegation considered that the positive dynamics of the United Nations work in integrating sport for development and peace would be further enhanced through awareness-raising advocacy for the realization of broader development practices. That could be achieved through the strengthened cooperation and concerted efforts of Member States in forming a global framework on the role of sport for development and peace.

PETER STONE (Australia) said that, by supporting sports-based activities in developing countries, Australia was providing opportunities for young men and women to develop skills in leadership and teamwork. The Australian Sports

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Outreach Programme supported programmes in seven countries, and provided grants for smaller activities in more than 40 African nations. Earlier this year, the Papua New Guinea and Australian Governments announced an initiative to assist the Papua New Guinea Sports Foundation to lead, manage and deliver programmes in support of Papua New Guinea Government policies. Australia had committed funding for it until 2016.

Continuing, he said Australia had established a sport-for-development adviser position within its international aid agency, and had various programmes to address the involvement of women and girls in sports, including the Sport Leadership Grants for Women, which provided leadership training and skills development. "Sport is integral to Australia's way of life", he said. As such, the country remained committed to using sport as a valuable agent for development and peace around the world.

ANDREA L.M. WILSON (Jamaica) said her island had nurtured a tradition of sports and sportsmanship, recalling the Jamaican bobsleigh team that qualified for the 1988 Winter Olympics "against all odds" and, more recently, when "Usain thundered down the track in Beijing like a bolt of lightning". The recent "Beijing experience" endorsed what Jamaicans knew: that sports could be very big for individuals, communities and the country. It fostered responsible citizenship and civic pride, and, as such, Jamaica wished to explore harnessing sports' contribution, as it sought to achieve economic and social development for Jamaicans. Her Government supported the view that sport had the potential to drive the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals, and that it should be positioned as a highly effective tool in a broader toolkit of development practices.

Detailing national initiatives, which included those to empower women and promote sports in schools, she noted that Jamaica also had concluded bilateral agreements to share best practices. Her Government was close to completing the first draft of what was intended to be a "dynamic" sports policy, and had announced plans to include a process whereby Jamaicans would make contributions to the policy. Jamaica had established an anti-doping commission in an effort to implement the International Convention against Doping in Sports. Looking to sports to re-engage communities in a process of social transformation, Jamaica had pledged to build more sporting facilities island-wide. In closing, she said Jamaica hoped to maintain the tradition of its notable sportsmen and women as it sought to fulfil its obligation, in keeping with the United Nations mandate on sports for peace and development.

Before the Assembly concluded its consideration of matters related to "sport for peace and development", the representative of Syria took the floor to make a statement in explanation of position on the resolution adopted earlier on the role of diamonds in fuelling conflict. The primary objective of the text had been to prevent the illicit diamond trade from escalating conflicts in Africa, and curb the exploitation of those resources, in line with the objectives and principles of the Kimberley Process, as well as the exploitation of natural resources.

To that end, he said that Syria had joined the consensus, as it supported the Kimberley Process and those that had led the initiative for the past year. Syria also supported the efforts of "African brothers" as they tackled the illicit trade in diamonds. Syria had decided not to put the resolution to a vote, but would express its reservations about operative paragraph 20, because it believed

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that selecting Israel as a Vice-Chair of the Kimberley Process in the coming year was a misreading of the noble objectives of that initiative. Indeed, it was well known to all that Israeli diamond merchants who were themselves reserve officers in the Israeli Army were actually exploiting the diamond trade in Africa and elsewhere. The actions of those operatives promoted destruction and devastation in Africa and throughout the Middle East. Those merchants also recruited children to participate in the conflicts they fomented. All such actions were threats to international peace and security, he added.

#### Introduction and Action on Draft Resolutions

The General Assembly adopted without a vote the draft resolution on sport for peace and development (document A/63/L.51), by which it encouraged the use of sport as a vehicle to foster development and strengthen education; prevent disease; empower girls and women; and facilitate conflict prevention and peacebuilding. It invited States and international sport organizations to assist developing countries, notably the least developed countries, in their capacity-building efforts in sport by providing best practices, and financial, technical and logistical resources. It also invited the international community to provide voluntary contributions to the United Nations Office on Sport for Development and Peace, and the Sport for Development and Peace International Working Group.

Turning to strengthening the coordination of humanitarian and disaster-relief assistance, ADIYATWIDI ADIWOSO ASMADY (Indonesia) introduced a draft resolution on strengthening emergency relief, rehabilitation, reconstruction and prevention in the aftermath of the Indian Ocean tsunami disaster (document A/63/L.47). The 2004 tsunami ranked among the unprecedented natural disasters in recorded history, having claimed more than 260,000 lives. On behalf of the tsunami-affected countries, she expressed her deepest gratitude to the Assembly for its continued support. For those countries, the priority was on rebuilding damaged area, and she thus urged the strengthening of partnerships to support medium- and long-term needs.

The resolution emphasized key actions, she said, notably enhancing prevention, risk reduction and humanitarian assistance measures through the sharing of lessons. It also focused on improving legal and institutional frameworks for disaster management, and making functional tsunami early-warning systems. It also called for continued international support for tsunami-affected countries, as such efforts were being mainstreamed into long-term development assistance projects and programmes.

Introducing a draft resolution on humanitarian assistance and reconstruction of Liberia (document A/63/L.45), FAMATTA ROSE OSODE (Liberia) said the text, which had been updated to take into consideration new developments, had always signified the important solidarity of the Assembly with the people of Liberia in their determination to overcome the effects of conflict and dictatorship, and press ahead with peaceful and sustainable socio-economic development. Briefly highlighting some of the elements of the draft and making a few technical corrections to the text, she said that her delegation had made a point of including a paragraph on national reconciliation as one of the key areas of peacebuilding in the country. It had also been keen to ensure that the Assembly strongly condemned all forms of gender-based violence, including sexual violence committed against civilians, in particular women and children.

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She went on to say that the legacy of rape and other forms of sexual violence that had been so pervasive during the conflict years continued to reverberate today, with rape remaining the most frequently committed serious crime in post-war Liberia. Against such a backdrop, a national campaign against rape had been launched and, in June, a joint four-year Government/United Nations programme to prevent and respond to rape and gender-based violence had been signed. Continuing, she said Liberia had made steady progress during the past year in meeting its reconstruction and reform objectives. The Government's Poverty Reduction Strategy had been finalized and was strongly endorsed at the Liberia Poverty Reduction Forum held in Berlin in June, as reflected in paragraph 5 of the text. New paragraph 6 strongly encouraged the international community to translate the tremendous goodwill expressed at Berlin into tangible resources and support for Liberia's national reconstruction agenda.

JEAN-MAURICE RIPERT (France), speaking on behalf of the European Union, introduced a draft resolution on "safety and security of humanitarian personnel and protection of United Nations personnel" (document A/63/L.48). He said that, while relief workers and United Nations personnel provided life-saving assistance to populations in distress, their own security was under threat and "getting worse". The increase in the number of deliberate attacks against relief workers was worrisome, and he called for the international community to give the issue its full attention.

Thanking all delegations for their active participation during the negotiations on the draft, he said the text underlined three main imperatives to reinforce the safety and security of humanitarian personnel and United Nations personnel: the need for full respect of international obligations by all; the necessity of more effective coordination among all actors; and the need to strengthen the normative framework for protecting United Nations and associated personnel.

The text reiterated that the safety and security of such personnel were a fundamental condition for the safe and unhindered access to populations in need and required relevant actors to ensure their statements supported a favourable environment for the safety and security of humanitarian personnel. It also reaffirmed the need to ensure protection for locally-recruited personnel and requested the Secretary-General to keep under review relevant United Nations policy, operational and administrative arrangements that could contribute to providing adequate safety for locally-recruited personnel.

Introducing next a draft resolution on "assistance to the Palestinian people" (document A/63/L.50), he said the European Union reaffirmed its commitment to the Palestinian people. The sustained support of international donors, working in collaboration with the parties, was essential to improving Palestinian social and economic infrastructures and meeting the needs of the Palestinian people. He said that the International Donor's Conference for the Palestinian State, which had been held in Paris in December 2007, had been an important milestone in the political process set in motion at Annapolis, as it had given the international community a unique opportunity to support the economic and financial development of a future viable Palestinian State. The Conference had generated some \$7.7 billion in pledges.

He went on to say that the European Union remained determined to lend its support to the ongoing negotiations between the parties and was ready to work closely with the Palestinian Authority, the diplomatic Quartet and regional

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partners to contribute to the recovery of the Palestinian economy, as well as to the well-being, safety and security of the people in the region. The European Union also highlighted the decisive role being played by Quartet Representative Tony Blair and commended the work he had achieved to date, and encouraged him to continue his efforts. He said that the European Union remained concerned about the humanitarian situation of the Palestinian people, particularly those in the Gaza Strip, and requested that the barriers be removed so that there was free access to goods and basic services, in particular of a humanitarian nature, but also those which could help facilitate genuine economic recovery.

PER ÖRNEÛS (Sweden), introducing the draft resolution on the strengthening of coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations (document A/63/L.49), said the draft reaffirmed the United Nations' unique role in humanitarian emergencies. While national and international emergency response capacity had strengthened through the years, challenges remained and, as such, the humanitarian system must have adequate and timely resources to respond.

Noting that the independent review of the Central Emergency Response Fund showed it had become a valuable tool to ensure a more predictable response to emergencies, he said this year's draft called on States to consider increasing their contributions to it. It also expressed deep concern for the consequences of natural disasters, and encouraged provision of adequate resources for disaster-risk reduction. Also expressing deep concern at the humanitarian challenges related to the global food crisis, the draft noted with grave concern that gender-based violence was deliberately directed against civilians in many emergency situations.

Finally, the text condemned the growing number of deliberate violent attacks against humanitarian personnel, he said. In that context, 19 August had been designated as World Humanitarian Day to increase public awareness about humanitarian assistance worldwide. The draft reaffirmed the principles of neutrality, humanity, impartiality and independence in providing humanitarian assistance, and called on Governments -- and parties in complex humanitarian emergencies -- to cooperate fully with the United Nations.

Introducing a draft resolution on strengthening the coordination of humanitarian disaster relief and assistance of the United Nations, including economic assistance (document A/63/53), AQEELAH AKBAR (Antigua and Barbuda), speaking on behalf of the "Group of 77" developing countries and China, said that, for many countries, a single natural disaster could result in a massive loss of life and property and could set back development by decades. While there was no substitute for effective national efforts to minimize the impact of such disasters, a national response alone might be inadequate. The draft before the Assembly emphasized that States must cooperate to find collective solutions to the challenges that disasters presented, and to promote a more responsive, prompt, fair and needs-based humanitarian assistance system.

She said the United Nations system and the wider international community had a unique role to play in assisting developing countries to enhance their existing humanitarian capacities, knowledge and institutions, among others, by promoting access to and transfer of new technology, funding and expertise. Such assistance would help developing countries strengthen readiness, including through the development and maintenance of early-warning systems; to rapidly respond to natural disasters; and address long-term challenges during the post-recovery period. She also said that the co-sponsors of the text were convinced of the need

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for continuing international engagement during the post-disaster period, for restoring livelihoods, building resilience and reducing vulnerability. They also believed that the text before the Assembly reflected that common understanding among all partners, in that regard.

#### Explanation of Position and Action

The representative of Brazil, speaking on draft resolution A/63/L.49, said the Assembly was deciding to establish 19 August as World Humanitarian Day, marking past events in which 22 people were killed in an unprecedented attack of a United Nations assistance mission in the field. Among those killed was United Nations Envoy in Iraq Sergio de Mello, who was a symbol of commitment to the humanitarian cause and United Nations ideals. The Day would pay tribute to all humanitarian workers and United Nations and associated personnel who worked in the humanitarian cause, including those who had lost their lives doing so. He was encouraged that this Day would pass on to future generations the importance of ensuring that all should be able to live in peace, security and dignity.

The representative of the United States, speaking on resolution A/63/L.53, said his delegation was disappointed by the introduction at a late date of revised language into the draft, after delegations had reached an agreement that was based on open negotiations. The United States appreciated the importance of the General Assembly's humanitarian resolutions addressing communities negatively impacted by disaster, and agreed on the need to agree to them by consensus, but openness and transparency had been lacking in the final stage of negotiations. The United States would not oppose the resolution, but would not be able to co-sponsor it, as it had planned, due to shortcomings in the process.

The representative of France, speaking on behalf of the European Union on resolution A/63/L.53, regretted the introduction of last-minute amendments to the draft after it had been finalized. He recalled that States had made major concessions during negotiations, and he regretted that some States had gone back on their positions. The text was not the one that had been agreed and, as such, France would not be a co-sponsor on it. France would join consensus for the adoption of the draft, and urged transparency in the future.

The representative of Switzerland, speaking on resolution A/63/L.53, was disappointed at the latest changes made to the resolution. It was an important achievement that the Assembly could adopt a resolution by consensus. That approach could work only if negotiations were undertaken with a clear understanding of procedure. Regrettably, that had not been the case here. The introduction of those changes had put various countries in a difficult position, and was not consistent with rule 78 of General Assembly's rules of procedure. It was for the sake of consensus only that her country did not oppose the adoption of the resolution.

The representative of Canada, speaking on the draft resolution on international cooperation on humanitarian assistance in the field of natural disasters, from relief to development, said her country had participated constructively in negotiations, but was disappointed that language had been reopened at a late stage. Limited flexibility had been shown towards taking on broad concerns expressed by Canada and others. The proposed study in one of the draft's operative paragraphs could place an undue burden on the United Nations. Despite those concerns, she fully supported United Nations-led efforts to

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strengthen coordination of humanitarian efforts and, as such, would join consensus on the draft.

#### Action

The Assembly adopted by consensus resolution A/63/L.45 on humanitarian assistance and reconstruction of Liberia, by which it renewed its invitation to all States and intergovernmental organizations to provide assistance to Liberia to facilitate the creation of an enabling environment for promoting peace, socio-economic development and regional security.

The Assembly adopted the draft resolution on strengthening emergency relief, rehabilitation, reconstruction and prevention in the aftermath of the Indian Ocean tsunami disaster (document A/63/L.47), by which it emphasized the need for development of stronger institutions and capacities at regional, national and local levels. It called on States to fully implement the Hyogo Declaration and the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015.

The Assembly next adopted by consensus a draft resolution on safety and security of humanitarian personnel and protection of United Nations personnel (document A/63/L.48).

The Assembly then adopted by consensus a draft resolution on strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations (document A/63/L.49).

Also without a vote, the Assembly adopted a draft resolution on assistance to the Palestinian people (document A/63/L.50).

It also adopted by consensus, as orally revised, a draft resolution on international cooperation on humanitarian assistance in the field of natural disasters, from relief to development (document A/63/L.53).

After action on the texts, the representative of Pakistan, speaking in explanation of position on joining consensus on the resolution on "safety and security of humanitarian personnel and the protection of United Nations personnel", said that his Government was taking all necessary steps to ensure the safety and protection of such personnel across Pakistan and remained determined to take all preventive steps to that end. The Government had allotted an adequately-sized piece of land to the United Nations in Islamabad in the highly secure Diplomatic Enclave eight years ago. In its discussions with concerned parties, Pakistan had been stressing the need for the consolidation of the different United Nations offices currently scattered throughout Islamabad in one secure location.

He said Pakistan had been given to understand that the United Nations Inter-Agency Task Force on Common Premises had yet to allocate resources for that purpose. It went without saying that security considerations should not be secondary to procedural and financial considerations. He added that the adoption of the resolution emphasized the need for a proactive role by Governments and the United Nations in ensuring the safety and protection of humanitarian personnel. "We would like to place on record that the Government of Pakistan is taking all possible measures in this regard and expects the concerned agencies of the United Nations to expedite the matter", he said.

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Also speaking in explanation of position, Singapore's representative said that his delegation placed great importance on ensuring the safety and security of United Nations and other humanitarian personnel. In the wake of the attack on the Organization's premises in Algiers, Singapore had followed closely the audit and accountability procedures to review the responsibility for key individuals and offices associated with the incident, including the work of what had become known as the "Brahimi panel". That panel's work and subsequent report had led to the establishment of the Zacklin panel.

He said that panel had ultimately issued a report to the Secretary-General and released an executive summary to the public. Although not the full report, the Zacklin survey had been thorough and had revealed startling and disturbing facts, including a host of lapses, as well as the lack of supervision and training and lack of judgement and performance standards. Such issues had a direct bearing on the text adopted by the Assembly. His delegation had proposed references to the two panels in the resolution, and while that suggestion had received wide support, it had nonetheless been opposed by a few delegations. Those that had opposed the inclusion of specific mention of the panels and their output had stated that such a mention would prejudice the ongoing work and would be tantamount to interfering with ongoing investigations.

He said that it had not been Singapore's intention to pronounce on the Zacklin panel's findings, but merely to note its existence and the nature of its work. Given the gravity of the incident and the publicity surrounding both panels' establishment, Singapore felt it would be remiss of the Assembly not to mention them. Singapore noted that the text, as it stood, did contain a generic mention of the Brahimi panel, but reiterated its concern that the other expert group had not been cited. With that in mind, Singapore would emphasize its understanding that all references in the resolution to "accountability" refer to both the Brahimi and Zacklin reports. Singapore also expected the Secretary-General to continue his duties in the area of follow-up and reporting.

The representative of Syria said that her delegation had joined consensus on the draft on the safety and security of humanitarian personnel, especially since the text fell within the framework of strengthening United Nations humanitarian assistance. Syria believed that ensuring the safety of such personnel guaranteed the successful carrying out of their duties. Specifically to the resolution just adopted, she said that Syria understood the call on States to comply fully with their obligations under international humanitarian law, including as provided by the Geneva Convention of 1949, in order to respect and protect all humanitarian personnel in "territories subject to their jurisdiction" to also include occupied territories.

Turning to the resolutions on "strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations" and on "international cooperation on humanitarian assistance in the field of natural disasters, from relief to development", she said that Syria was disturbed that such vital issues did not enjoy full agreement among the membership. Some Western countries had rejected the inclusion of language on foreign occupation.

She said, however, that Syria had requested such language be included to recognize the current humanitarian crisis and ongoing suffering of the unarmed Palestinian people due to Israel's blockade. Syria's simple request had been made in an effort to ensure respect for the purposes and principles of the Charter.

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States had been requested to live up to the principles of the Organization to help provide humanitarian relief and assistance to the Palestinian people, who faced the daily inhuman practices of Israel. The stance of some delegations had spotlighted the practice in the Organization of double standards regarding certain issues.

Also speaking in explanation of position, the representative of Costa Rica said his delegation had joined the consensus on the resolution on strengthening humanitarian assistance in the field of disaster relief and hoped it would continue to bolster the Organization's joint work with all players involved in providing such assistance. Costa Rica believed that safe, rapid and unhindered access, as well as safe and secure conditions for persons and groups providing such, was essential to carrying out that important work. Costa Rica was aware of the sensitivities and complexities surrounding the issue, but the main concern should be to provide assistance to victims and the safety of personnel attempting to reach vulnerable populations.

The representative of Colombia, speaking in a general statement on draft resolution A/63/L.49, said the text included issues to which Colombia gave special importance, including recognition of the United Nations' role in providing adequate humanitarian assistance. The effective use of resources was among the issues recognized in the draft. Further, Colombia viewed positively the Central Emergency Response Fund's activities, and fully supported it. Indeed, it reaffirmed that humanitarian assistance must be part of the reconstruction of a country's social fabric.

Turning to draft A/63/L.48, he said the text reiterated the importance of ensuring cooperation among humanitarian players, donors and affected States. The text included recommendations on the safety of humanitarian personnel. Colombia was a co-sponsor of the draft and committed to policy of democratic security.

In that connection, he said that, on 6 December, the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) attacked a medical mission organized by municipal authorities. In that attack, a hospital psychologist was among those killed. Others were seriously injured. That vile attack had seriously violated international humanitarian law. Colombia reported the events to the Organization of American States (OAS), which condemned the attack. Colombia would continue to promote actions defined by the United Nations to strengthen the humanitarian response to emergencies. The country also positively recognized cooperation with the international community, including donor organizations.

The representative of Mexico, also speaking in a general statement, supported the draft resolutions on strengthening the United Nations' coordination of humanitarian assistance, and was a co-sponsor of some of the drafts. On resolution A/63/L.49, he stressed the importance of maintaining consensus, and was concerned at restrictive interpretations. Those who saw humanitarian assistance as overshadowing sovereignty shattered the pillars on which assistance was supported. Mexico would continue to work for the assistance of victims of complex emergencies, natural disasters and other events. He said Mexico also shared the spirit of resolution of A/63/L.53, adding that it was important to make greater commitments linked to prevention. Mexico would continue to work along those lines.

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The Observer of Palestine, speaking on resolution A/63/L.50, thanked France for its efforts to reach consensus on the draft. Through its adoption, States had reaffirmed their commitment to Palestinians and the realization of their inalienable rights. For six decades, such assistance had been key to ensuring Palestinians' existence, and had, time and again, reaffirmed their right to live a life of dignity. It also was a clear political message to stand by the principles of international law.

After adoption of the resolution on "legal empowerment of the poor and eradication of poverty", the representative of Turkey said that, due to a technical error, his delegation had been included among the co-sponsors of a resolution on "promoting development through the reduction of armed violence", adopted under the same agenda item by the Assembly in November. Inclusion of Turkey's name on the co-sponsors' list was the result of a technical mistake that had been kindly corrected by the Secretariat. He said that Turkey did not intend to co-sponsor the text. It was not a signatory to the Geneva Declaration and its decision to co-sponsor the resolution did not in any way reflect support for that Declaration.

The Assembly next heard the introduction of a draft resolution on cooperation between the United Nations and the Community of Portuguese-Speaking Countries (document A/63/L.41), by MORALES CABRAL (Portugal). On behalf of the member States of the Community, he said this year the draft stressed the progress made in cooperation between that organization, the United Nations system and other bodies and programmes, particularly the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, UNESCO and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), among others. Such cooperation agreements had been central tools for the exchange of experiences, implementation of programmes and development of partnerships aimed at promoting cultural diversity, combating desertification, combating child labour and promoting decent work.

He went on to say that the Community had been engaged with the United Nations in efforts to ensure the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. Further, Portuguese-speaking States were committed to promoting international peace and security, as well as to the protection and promotion of human rights. The draft before the Assembly noted the outcome of the Seventh Conference of the Heads of State of the Portuguese-speaking countries, where a political commitment had been reached regarding the importance of promoting the Portuguese language in the international community, namely, in the international and regional organizations and United Nations system. He encouraged the Community Executive Secretariat and the United Nations Secretariat to initiate discussions towards establishment of formal cooperation agreement between both organizations.

The Assembly then adopted that text without a vote.

Just before the close of the meeting, the representative of China said that his delegation attached great importance to co-sponsorship as a signal of solidarity with the subjects under consideration. China had, therefore, expressed a willingness to co-sponsor the resolutions L.45 and L.47. China's representative had stopped by the Office of General Assembly Affairs and had attempted to sign the list of co-sponsors for those resolutions. However, it was a great pity that his country's support for the texts had not been recognized today. China, therefore, would like to ask whether its co-sponsorship could be reflected and the mistake could be corrected.

A representative of the Secretariat said that, unfortunately, there was no evidence that the drafts had been supported by China.

The meeting was adjourned.

In response, China's representative said that his delegation did not fully agree with that explanation. Yesterday afternoon, he had been in the General Assembly Affairs Office on the 29<sup>th</sup> floor. At that time, the two persons assigned to listing co-sponsors had not been present. He had, however, spoken with a woman named "Donna" who had asked him to write down the resolutions China wished to co-sponsor and to provide his name and contact information. As of today, he had not received any information whether co-sponsorship was invalid or whether more information had been required. He reiterated that his delegation attached great importance to the issue and hoped the Secretariat would be able to avail itself of available means to correct the matter.

Assembly Vice-President MICHEL TOMMO MONTHE (Cameroon) said that the fact that he had closed the meeting did not mean that China's question would not be addressed. He told the delegate that his point was well taken and clarification would be forthcoming.

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