



General Assembly

Seventieth session

Official Records

Distr.: General
22 October 2015

Original: English

Third Committee

Summary record of the 4th meeting

Held at Headquarters, New York, on Wednesday, 7 October 2015, at 3 p.m.

Chair: Ms. Kupradze (Vice-Chair) (Georgia)

Contents

Agenda item 28: Social development (*continued*)

- (a) Implementation of the outcome of the World Summit for Social Development and of the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly (*continued*)
- (b) Social development, including questions relating to the world social situation and to youth, ageing, disabled persons and the family (*continued*)
- (c) Follow-up to the International Year of Older Persons: Second World Assembly on Ageing (*continued*)

This record is subject to correction.

Corrections should be sent as soon as possible, under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned, to the Chief of the Documents Control Unit (srcorrections@un.org), and incorporated in a copy of the record.

Corrected records will be reissued electronically on the Official Document System of the United Nations (<http://documents.un.org/>).

15-17238 (E)



Please recycle The text "Please recycle" followed by a universal recycling symbol.



In the absence of Mr. Hilale (Morocco), Ms. Kupradze, Vice-Chair, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.

Agenda item 28: Social development (continued)

(a) Implementation of the outcome of the World Summit for Social Development and of the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly (continued) (A/70/173 and A/70/178)

(b) Social development, including questions relating to the world social situation and to youth, ageing, disabled persons and the family (continued) (A/70/61-E/2015/3, A/70/118, A/70/156 and A/70/179)

(c) Follow-up to the International Year of Older Persons: Second World Assembly on Ageing (continued) (A/70/185)

1. **Ms. Gebrekidan** (Eritrea) said that Eritrea strove to promote social justice by ensuring equitable access to basic social services and opportunity for all, irrespective of gender, creed, nationality, geographic location, age, physical condition or social status. Having achieved all of the health-related Millennium Development Goals, it remained committed to ensuring universal health care coverage and was working to provide all Eritreans with access to a primary health care facility within 5 km of their homes. Recognizing that it would be impossible to achieve socioeconomic transformation after decades of war without investing in human resource development, it was devoting over half of its limited annual budget to education; it had been able to achieve universal primary education, but much remained to be done. Eritrean young people had been involved in the formulation of an inclusive sustainable development agenda and would play a crucial role in the implementation of the post 2015 agenda. Unfortunately, a minority of educated Eritreans undertook dangerous journeys to migrate to countries with higher standards of living. Eritrea' was therefore seeking to create more economic opportunities and curb illegal migration, but its efforts were hindered by sanctions and by the occupation of Eritrean sovereign territory.

2. **Mr. Bondiuk** (Ukraine) said that in recent years, Ukraine had managed to reduce poverty, improve maternal health, almost halve child mortality and make progress in combating tuberculosis. It was also

working to improve the quality of education, promote gender equality and ensure environmental sustainability. However, his Government was currently facing serious challenges because it was confronting Russian aggression aimed at undermining the democratic European development chosen by the Ukrainian people. As a result of the Russian Federation's illegal annexation of Ukrainian Crimea and its aggression in the Donbas region, thousands of people had been killed, critical infrastructure had been destroyed, and Ukraine had lost about one fifth of its economic potential. The aggression had brought sudden poverty to roughly half a million internally displaced people and each day of war was costing Ukraine about \$5 million that could have been invested in social development. Despite the difficult economic situation, Ukraine was allocating funds from the State budget and mobilizing all available resources to facilitate the socioeconomic integration of its internally displaced persons.

3. Against the backdrop of the implementation of the European Union-Ukraine Association Agreement, Ukraine was striving to combat corruption, ensure equal opportunities and social justice, reform public health care, promote decent work and provide education for all, as well as to ensure food security, a sustainable energy supply and a healthy environment. Despite the enormous challenges of recession and military aggression, all social payments were being made on time. His Government planned to implement new programmes and projects to promote microeconomic stability, environmental balance and social development. It remained grateful to its partners and was firmly convinced that it could succeed in promoting sustainable development through peace, human rights and safeguarding the most vulnerable members of society.

4. **Mr. Spierings** (Australia), speaking as a youth delegate, said that earlier in 2015 he had travelled across Australia, consulting several thousand young Australians about the key issues and challenges facing them. They were concerned about drug and substance abuse, employment and career opportunities, racism and discrimination, mental health and gender equality, both in Australia and globally. Many had been the victims of racism and discrimination or had become trapped in drug or substance abuse in the absence of opportunities. Youth suicide was reaching epidemic proportions, particularly in indigenous communities,

and youth homelessness was growing. However, he had also witnessed resilience, determination and a drive to participate in social and political processes. High quality, relevant education, including grass-roots community education, could solve many seemingly intractable social problems and empower young people to become agents for social change and functioning members of society. Indeed, education was the foundation of a decent life and of a peaceful, tolerant and inclusive society.. The international community would therefore be unwise not to invest the huge sums needed each year to enable low and lower middle income countries to ensure universal access to pre-primary, primary and secondary education, in accordance with Goal 4 of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

5. **Ms. Rajapaksha** (Sri Lanka), speaking as a youth delegate, said that after decades of colonization, insurgencies, civil war and natural disasters, Sri Lanka consistently put young people at the heart of development. With free education at all levels, it had achieved universal primary and secondary school enrolment and youth literacy, although more than one third of young Sri Lankans did not continue beyond the secondary level for lack of money, which led to rising youth unemployment rates.. Her Government considered skills development essential not only for reducing youth unemployment, and but also for healing ethnic divisions, and it was working to make vocational training curriculums compatible with the requirements of domestic industry and the changing global economy. Although sexual and reproductive health services were available, 60 per cent of young Sri Lankans did not know where to find them. Only 5 per cent engaged directly in political activism. A mere 5 per cent of parliamentarians were women, although efforts were being made to address the need for more equal representation. Young people and adults must work together to achieve the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals.

6. **Mr. Panduwawala** (Sri Lanka), speaking as a youth delegate, said that his country had actively contributed to shaping the Sustainable Development Goals. Young people in their twenties would be approaching middle age by 2030, and if the Goals were not realized, they would be partly to blame. They should not become discouraged by the lack of space for civic engagement or social advocacy, but should take action; and should become social entrepreneurs, a skill

which they could master through volunteerism. However, the State must do its part to empower them by ensuring that they had the skills needed to find a job or start a business. Relatively inexpensive community-based projects to benefit youth would go a long way towards achieving sustainable development. His Government's new policy on strengthening reproductive education through school curriculums could help young people become more aware of gender issues, sexuality, sexually transmitted diseases and the effective use of contraceptives. In closing, he invited all Member States to join with Sri Lanka in celebrating World Youth Skills Day 2016.

7. **Ms. Zahir** (Maldives) said that Maldives had been the only country to achieve the Millennium Development Goals Plus in South Asia, well ahead of the 2015 deadline, while exploring a path of development that was suited to the national context. Her Government was committed to attaining the Sustainable Development Goals as well, Empowering young people was essential to the development of any country, but even more so in Maldives, where almost one half of the population was under 25 years of age. Accordingly, her Government gave special emphasis to youth skills development, job creation, entrepreneurship programmes and youth sports and offered free education for girls up to the higher secondary school level. Women enjoyed the same rights and freedoms as men under the Constitution of 2008, which was supplemented by laws guaranteeing them equal pay for equal work and protecting them from violence and sexual abuse. The Constitution also guaranteed equal rights and freedoms for persons with disabilities, and her Government was taking steps to provide protection and security for older persons. However, despite great progress in social development, Maldives would be unable to thrive or even survive without sustainable mechanisms to counter the effects of climate change.

8. **Ms. Byaje** (Rwanda) said that in the face of multiple global crises, conflicts and terrorism, it was vital to emphasize peacebuilding and peacemaking, so that the social development gains achieved thus far were not reversed. Rwanda had completely fulfilled all the MDGs ; to attain the Sustainable Development Goals, citizen ownership and involvement in every step of the planning and implementation process would be essential. Education was the key to achieving the objectives; Rwanda had reformed and harmonized

formal and non-formal education systems and curricula to ensure quality education and universal enrolment, retention and progression at all levels, and had succeeded in closing the gap of gender inequalities. It had made significant progress towards a more equitable model of development, combining sustained economic growth with poverty reduction and social inclusion. However, as a result of the civil war, several categories of the population, including older and disabled persons, young children, female-headed households and genocide survivors remained vulnerable. In accordance with its second mid-term strategy for economic development and poverty reduction, Rwanda was focusing on ensuring that older and disabled persons, as well as poor people, had health insurance. Programmes to eliminate extreme poverty had already helped to lift more than one million people out of poverty, and a recently launched programme targeting the most vulnerable groups aimed to eradicate extreme poverty among them by 2020. Given that more than 60 per cent of the population was under the age of 25, the second mid-term strategy also sought to boost youth employment. In the longer term, her Government aimed to transform Rwanda from a low-income, agriculture-based economy to a knowledge-based, service-oriented economy with middle-income status. It expected the private sector to take a major role in social development by undertaking large investments, either alone or in public-private partnerships.

9. **Mr. Elbahi** (Sudan) said that the global financial crisis, fluctuations in food prices, increased energy costs, climate change and security crises were putting social development at risk and impeding fulfilment of the commitments made in the Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action and at the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly. His delegation welcomed the recently adopted 2015 Agenda for Sustainable Development and called on the international community to redouble its efforts to achieve sustainable development.

10. In the Sudan, political stability was a prerequisite for social integration. The 2005 Constitution had laid the foundations for a multi-party system and established states endowed with independent legislative and executive powers. Under its comprehensive national dialogue initiative, his Government introduced mechanisms for dialogue and submission of complaints which facilitated exchanges

among representatives from all groups of Sudanese society, including armed groups. The initiative was expected to pave the way to stability and sustainable development for all by yielding a national consensus on the Sudan's political future.

11. His Government had enacted a comprehensive anti-poverty programme that focused on creating jobs, expanding education, eradicating illiteracy, providing medical care, supplying potable water, protecting the environment, establishing human settlements for vulnerable groups, expanding sanitation networks and ensuring food security. The Diwan al-Zakat social care agency had become a powerful tool for eradicating poverty and achieving social justice, entrenching solidarity and compassion in Sudanese society. The 2011 Darfur Peace Agreement had explicitly stipulated that the Darfur states would retain their zakat contributions and would receive zakat funds collected from other states by the central Government.

12. Donor countries should fulfil their assistance commitments and act to cancel the debts of developing countries unconditionally. Moreover, his delegation called for the lifting of unilateral sanctions imposed on some developing countries, as such sanctions stood in the way of sustainable development in the affected countries.

13. **Mr. Mwinyi** (United Republic of Tanzania) said his Government had established formal structures and institutions and decentralized governance to ensure the people's participation in policy formulation, implementation and monitoring. By devoting the lion's share of the budget to education, it had increased school enrolment almost fourfold over the preceding decade, but the quality of education continued to be hampered by a shortage of qualified teachers, materials and equipment, as well as inadequate infrastructure. In view of the critical importance of agriculture for full employment and poverty reduction in a predominantly agricultural economy, his Government was implementing a multi-stakeholder agricultural programme to remove barriers to increased productivity, agricultural value chain development and agricultural marketing, with the involvement of government at all levels, civil society, farmers' organizations and the private sector.

14. To improve the lives of older persons, who were expected to constitute 10 per cent of the population by 2050, his Government had developed a national ageing

policy, based on the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing, which, inter alia, exempted older persons from health care cost-sharing. It ran or coordinated old age homes throughout the country, provided free fast-track health care services for the elderly at many locations and had set up a number of pilot cash transfer programmes for older households. To assist disabled persons, it was providing technical and financial support to disabled persons' organizations and had developed regulations and guidelines to improve their access to education, health care and employment.

15. **Mr. Thammavongsa** (Lao People's Democratic Republic) said that his country attached great importance to social development, especially poverty eradication, education for all, health and employment. Under its five-year national socioeconomic development plans, the MDGs had been mainstreamed into national priorities and goals. As a result, the poverty rate had dropped from 48 per cent in 1990 to about 17 per cent in 2014, but much remained to be done. With a view to maintaining high annual growth and lifting more people out of poverty, his Government was broadening its economic activities at the national level, enhancing regional cooperation and strengthening private-sector job-creation capacity. In education, it had achieved universal enrolment at the primary level and had improved enrolment at the secondary and tertiary levels. With the economy diversifying away from agriculture into other sectors, it was promoting technical and vocational training to meet demands for skilled workers in the emerging sectors. As a party to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, it had begun implementing its provisions at the central and local levels.

16. **Ms. Al Rowairi** (Bahrain) said that the Bahraini Constitution guaranteed equal rights for all citizens, including persons with disabilities. One of the first States to sign the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, Bahrain was also a party to regional and international conventions on integrating persons with disabilities into society. Government measures adopted to that end included the provision, free of charge, of educational, medical and technical equipment needed for rehabilitation and the payment of a monthly stipend to persons with disabilities. Moreover, the Ministry of Labour had enacted a law on the employment of persons with disabilities in the public sector which provided, inter alia, that persons

whose disabilities had come about as a result of an injury in the work place should be rehired and compensated at the same salary rate by the institution in whose employ they had been injured.

17. The Ministry of Education worked to uphold the right of persons with disabilities to education in Government schools based on modern educational approaches that favoured the integration of persons with disabilities over isolation in specialized institutions. To that end, it provided specialists to monitor and follow up the care provided to students with disabilities. The Ministry of Health offered a series of health services for persons with disabilities, including home intervention programmes.

18. In its transition from an oil-based economy to a productive, diversified economy able to compete internationally, Bahrain would endeavour to equip every citizen with the means to realize his or her potential and live a secure life with dignity. In so doing, her Government's strategic development plan would be guided by principles of sustainability, competitiveness and equality.

19. **Ms. Rodriguez de Febres-Cordero** (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) said that exclusion and poverty were rooted in an unsustainable model of economic relationships that perpetuated structural inequalities and inequities, leading to the unfair distribution of global resources, violence and suffering. The goals of social development could not be achieved unless those relationships were profoundly transformed and unless States became the champions of the poor and the primary drivers of social change.

20. Venezuela had met all of the Millennium Development Goals by investing more than 60 per cent of its budget in social development. It had cut extreme poverty from 10 to 5 per cent over the past 15 years. Primary and secondary school enrolment approached 100 per cent, and illiteracy had been eliminated. Its university enrolment rate was one of the highest in the world. Its successful efforts to combat hunger and malnutrition had been recognized by the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations. Between 2013 and 2015, more than 600 million low-income Venezuelans had received free medical care, and since 2010, more 700,000 housing units had been built to replace substandard housing. More than three-quarters of older Venezuelans drew pensions. There were also initiatives in place to benefit young people.

Since ratifying the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in 2013, Venezuela had identified some 350,000 disabled persons and was providing them with specialized care.

21. **Ms. Soulama** (Burkina Faso) said that her Government was according priority to social development. In the wake of the October 2014 uprising that had brought it to power, it had adopted an emergency socioeconomic programme consistent with the country's Strategy for Accelerated Growth and Sustainable Development for 2011-2015. To assist vulnerable groups such as children, women, older adults and disabled people, it was implementing social measures to improve their living conditions and minimize the effects of food shortages, in accordance with the national social protection policy adopted in 2012. The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities had been domesticated, and her Government had adopted a national strategy on the protection and promotion of disabled persons and undertaken a general survey of disabled children and their needs. With respect to older persons, a multisectoral national study was underway and would form the basis of a strategy for promoting and protecting their rights; a bill on the protection and promotion of the rights of older persons was pending. To improve the living conditions of families, her Government had established sectoral policies which would be implemented with the technical and financial assistance of its development partners. Regarding young people under the age of 35, who constituted 80 per cent of the population, her Government had taken numerous and varied measures to address their education, vocational training and employment needs and held a yearly national youth forum, chaired by the President and attended by all the members of Government, in order to obtain information and guidance from young people on the problems affecting them. To address those problems, it was in the process of adopting a 2015-2024 national youth policy, as well as a national strategy for 2016-2025 to accelerate the elimination of child marriage.

22. **Mr. Zamora Rivas** (El Salvador) said that the challenges in the area of sustainable social development continued to be fighting poverty, closing the gaps between the developed and the developing countries and eliminating social inequalities. The international community must address those challenges, while respecting sovereignty, the principles

of common but differentiated responsibilities, and the vulnerabilities and problems of individual countries. Having historically underestimated poverty by defining it solely on the basis of the nutritional basket, El Salvador was developing a methodology for measuring the multiple dimensions of poverty that would allow it to address structural causes. Although certain groups, including women, persons with disabilities, older adults, indigenous people and migrants, were particularly vulnerable, poverty affected different people at different points in their lives, and thus efforts to combat it should take an all-encompassing approach. As the Secretary-General noted in his report on follow-up to the International Year of Older Persons and the Second World Assembly on Ageing (A/70/185), poverty was especially challenging at older ages, when options for escaping it were limited. It was vitally important to consider older people in implementing the sustainable development agenda, and further consideration should be given to drafting a convention on their rights.

23. Young people were also a priority for his country. Its national youth policy focused on youth as an at-risk group and as strategic actors in development, and emphasized helping them transition to adulthood, strengthening their social integration and civic participation and fostering a feeling of belonging. His Government thanked the countries that were helping it to achieve the critical goals of promoting social cohesion and mitigating the risk factors for juvenile violence and delinquency. It supported the idea of a plan of action to integrate volunteering in peace and development efforts and would be interested in working more closely with United Nations Volunteers.

24. **Ms. AlMuzaini** (Kuwait) said that social development-related goals accounted for the majority of the goals set forth in the recently adopted 2015 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Of those goals, eradicating poverty and hunger and achieving economic growth and full employment were of utmost importance. Social development gains would require an approach that placed the human being at the centre of development efforts and that ensured social protection within an integrated institutional framework to curb inequality.

25. Her Government's efforts to protect and support older persons included a 2007 law that imposed penalties on care providers for the aged who neglected their obligations. Kuwait's second five-year

development plan provided for 16 youth development projects, and youth centres throughout the country offered services to the young, including protection from terrorism and extremism. In addition, a law on public assistance extended aid to all Kuwaiti citizens in need, thus upholding their right to a life with dignity. The Kuwaiti Constitution attached great priority to the family, guaranteeing assistance to the aged, the ill and those unable to work. Kuwait called on the international community to redouble its efforts and assume shared responsibility to improve the quality of life of the peoples of the world and, in particular, to alleviate the suffering of the Palestinian people under occupation.

26. **Ms. Cedeño Rengifo** (Panama) said that her country had made great strides towards eradicating poverty, in large measure because of its social policies. However, many challenges remained, including grappling with marked inequalities and inequities and improving social indicators despite economic deceleration in the Latin American region. Young people's participation in development was essential. For the first time, the Panamanian delegation to the current session of the General Assembly included youth delegates, who had been selected on the basis of merit in a transparent, nationwide contest. Panama's first national disability survey had revealed that disabled persons constituted more than 10 per cent of the population and were often living in poor or extremely poor households. Her Government was endeavouring to promote and protect their rights through a variety of programmes. With respect to the family, it called on Member States to take concrete measures to prevent family violence and ensure the well-being of families. Older persons and ageing should be given greater visibility in social policies, as well as greater consideration in the context of the United Nations. Her Government remained committed to developing policies, strategies and programmes to create a more equitable, just and inclusive society.

27. **Mr. Harari** (Libya) said that the implementation of the outcomes of the Copenhagen Summit was contingent on curbing the negative effects of global crises and the emergence of such new challenges as population growth, unemployment, climate change, terrorism and conflicts. In that regard, there was a need to redouble international efforts to alleviate the many negative repercussions of the global financial and economic crisis on developing countries. His

delegation welcomed the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which placed social development at the top of development priorities.

28. Despite the great challenges his Government was facing, it was making efforts to improve the quality of life of all Libyans, promote the advancement and empowerment of women, create work opportunities for the young, develop their capacities through training programmes and provide them with adequate housing. Steps were also being taken to uphold the legal rights of and provide social protection to vulnerable groups, particularly older persons and persons with special needs, and to integrate them into development plans.

29. Libya had been at the forefront of global efforts to uphold the rights of persons with disabilities since the 1980s and had enacted domestic legislation to protect those rights. Moreover, training programmes for persons with disabilities aimed to equip them to gain adequate employment and participate in national development efforts. In building the new Libya, his Government hoped that the country would become a model of successful democracy and development.

30. **Mr. Tegoni** (Observer for the Sovereign Military Order of Malta) said that the Order had been active in the humanitarian sphere for over 900 years. It ran world-class hospitals, homes, programmes, services and projects for the poor and the sick, no matter what their circumstances or background. Its Global Fund for Forgotten People made about 40 grants a year in support of children, the elderly and the disabled. For the past 32 years, it had organized an international summer camp in Europe for disabled children, as well as annual national-level camps in a number of European countries and Lebanon. Since 1984, over 5,000 young adults and children with disabilities from all over the world had taken part. It directed numerous specialized centres for the elderly in Europe and the Americas and provided a variety of services to make life at home easier for them. For example, its adult day care centre in Kefraya, Lebanon allowed around 300 older Druze, Muslims and Christians to live independently as long as possible. The Order would continue to work to help those in need, in partnership with the United Nations community.

31. **Ms. Larrabee** (Observer for the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies) said that the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development would require a considerable

increase in resources, as well as the mobilization of more domestic resources, including volunteerism. The International Federation represented a network of 189 national societies and more than 17 million volunteers trained to deliver aid primarily in their own communities. Its local volunteers had been instrumental in responding to the Ebola crisis and continued to provide invaluable assistance in Syria. The International Federation's upcoming five-year plan translated its conviction that volunteerism could be a crucial means of social integration. Young people were already major beneficiaries and contributors in the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, and constituted about one half of the volunteer force; they received skills training and participated actively in the governance, management and leadership of their national societies. The International Federation was working in partnership with other organizations and United Nations agencies to better address the needs of disabled and older people in its programmes and structures.

32. Efforts were needed to ensure the safety and security of volunteers who were delivering humanitarian assistance; more research was needed to understand that issue and adapt accordingly. She called on Member States to work with all stakeholders to provide the resources and training and implement policies to ensure that volunteers could carry out their work without fear for their lives. More research was also needed to understand the impact of volunteers in development and humanitarian contexts.

33. **Ms. Mucavi** (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations) said that attaining the Sustainable Development Goals would require all stakeholders to play an active and equitable role in the formulation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of development strategies and programmes. It would also be important to empower disadvantaged stakeholders, including women, youth, older persons, persons with disabilities and indigenous people, and to take into account the important role of cooperatives, especially farmers' groups and producer organizations. The theme of the thirty-fifth World Food Day, would be "Social Protection and Agriculture: breaking the cycle of poverty. Reliable social protection schemes could help poor communities overcome financial constraints and manage risks that usually discouraged them from pursuing higher returns; they could contribute to an overall reduction of poverty,

empowering families and communities. Social protection systems had been critical to the progress achieved in reaching MDG 1 in a number of developing countries, many of which also enjoyed stable political conditions and economic growth. Social protection contributed directly to the reduction of poverty, hunger and malnutrition by promoting not only income security but also access to health care, education and better nutrition, which could open opportunities for employment. Yet, despite the relatively low cost involved, only a small percentage of the world's population enjoyed basic social protections.

34. **Mr. Cassidy** (International Labour Organization (ILO)) said that the Secretary-General's report on implementation of the outcome of the World Summit for Social Development (A/70/173) called for universal application of the core ILO labour standards and for further attention to be paid to turning informal labour into formal employment. In June 2015, ILO had adopted Recommendation No. 204 concerning the Transition from the Informal to the Formal Economy, the first ever international labour standard of its kind, and it stood ready to help Member States ratify the core conventions and create the conditions for decent employment to thrive.

35. Weak demand, investment and productivity threatened to turn slow economic growth and job creation into long-term problems. High unemployment and under-employment, coupled with stagnant wages, were major contributors to the weakness in global demand, which further discouraged private investment. To support inclusive growth and job creation, ILO recommended strengthening mechanisms such as minimum wages and collective bargaining in order to increase demand by raising personal income; enhancing job quality in terms of earnings, labour market security and working conditions; and boosting employment opportunities and outcomes for vulnerable groups, including women and youth, through such means as improving access to education, training and effective employment services.

36. The ILO report *Global Employment Trends for Youth 2015: scaling up investment in decent jobs for youth* showed that while global youth unemployment had stabilized at 13 per cent, 43 per cent of the global youth labour force was either unemployed or working but living in poverty. Young women still participated in the labour market at significantly lower rates than young men in most regions and were more likely to be

unemployed. In low-income countries, 31 per cent of young people had no educational qualifications at all. In developed countries, more young people were finding work, but often in jobs that did not meet their expectations, and many remained unemployed; those countries should invest in high quality education and training, so that young people's skills matched labour market demands. The hopes and dreams of the 600 million young people who would join the labour force before 2030 depended heavily on the efforts of Member States to promote decent work for all.

37. **Mr. Shulgin** (Russian Federation), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that the humanitarian crisis in southeast Ukraine was the result of targeted action by the Ukrainian authorities, including the deliberate, massive use of artillery and missiles to bomb housing and social infrastructure, causing civilian casualties. Notwithstanding recent claims that the ceasefire in the Lugansk and Donetsk People's Republics was being respected, the economic blockade imposed by Kiev was continuing, and was preventing people from receiving social benefits and pensions and impeding access to food, water and medicine, in breach of Ukraine's obligations under the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the European Convention on Human Rights. According to the Federal Migration Service of the Russian Federation, there were currently more than one million people from southeast Ukraine in Russian territory, and over the course of the year, their number had increased by 300,000. There were 324 temporary housing centres in the Russian Federation housing more than 18,000 people, including 5,500 children, who were provided with food, medicine and medical and psychological care. The Russian Federation regularly provided the Donetsk and Lugansk regions with humanitarian aid. Since August 2014, it had sent 40 humanitarian convoys carrying basic necessities, food and medicine, and had duly informed Kiev, and the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, in a timely fashion. The Ukrainian authorities had tried to twist the truth at all stages of the crisis; they should stop trying to shift blame and concentrate on achieving sustainable peace and overcoming the serious humanitarian consequences of the so-called counterterrorism operation against their own people.

38. **Mr. Yaremenko** (Ukraine), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that his country continued to

suffer aggression from a neighbour that was a member of the Security Council, a body which was responsible for maintaining peace. For decades that country had surrounded itself with hotspots and frozen conflicts, mindless of the suffering of ordinary people, who were being deprived of all hope for the future. He wished to remind the Committee that the Russian Federation had annexed Ukraine's Autonomous Republic of Crimea and had then denied doing so, openly deceiving the international community. It had unleashed a war in Donbas, sending in weapons, ammunition, personnel and technology; it was obvious that without such supplies, the people concerned would not be able to oppose the regular army of any State. Ukraine would continue to talk about the war being waged against it until the Russian Federation withdrew its troops from Ukrainian territory and stopped supporting terrorists and doing everything possible to destabilize his country.

The meeting rose at 5.10 p.m.