

Humanitarian and special economic assistance

In 2009, the United Nations, through the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), continued to mobilize and coordinate humanitarian assistance. During the year, consolidated inter-agency and flash appeals were launched for Afghanistan, Burkina Faso, the Central African Republic, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, El Salvador, Indonesia, Iraq, Kenya, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Madagascar, Namibia, the Occupied Palestinian Territory, Pakistan, the Philippines, Somalia, Sri Lanka, the Sudan, Uganda, West Africa, Yemen and Zimbabwe. OCHA received contributions for natural disaster assistance worth \$311 million.

The Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Haiti continued to develop long-term programmes of support for the country, and former United States President William Clinton was named as the United Nations Special Envoy for Haiti. In other development activities, the General Assembly adopted resolutions in support of the New Partnership for Africa's Development and the rehabilitation and economic development of the Semipalatinsk region of Kazakhstan.

Efforts continued to implement the Hyogo Declaration and the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005–2015, the 10-year plan for reducing disaster risks adopted at the World Conference on Disaster Reduction in 2005. The second session of the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction was convened in June. The General Assembly designated 13 October the International Day for Disaster Reduction.

During the year, the Economic and Social Council considered ways to strengthen UN humanitarian assistance coordination by implementing improved humanitarian response at all levels. Implementation of the humanitarian reform agenda advanced with the launch of the cluster approach in 13 additional countries. The Central Emergency Response Fund continued to allow for the rapid provision of assistance to populations affected by sudden-onset disasters and underfunded emergencies.

Humanitarian assistance

Coordination

Humanitarian affairs segment of the Economic and Social Council

The humanitarian affairs segment of the Economic and Social Council (20–22 July) [A/64/3/Rev.1] consid-

ered, in accordance with Council **decision 2009/207**, the theme “Strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian assistance: present challenges and their impact on the future”. It also convened panels on respecting and implementing guiding principles of humanitarian assistance at the operational level: assisting the affected populations; and on addressing the impact of current global challenges and trends on the effective delivery of humanitarian assistance. On 26 March, the Council decided to hold an informal event on 17 July to discuss transition from relief to development (**decision 2009/209**).

The Council considered the Secretary-General's May report [A/64/84-E/2009/87] on strengthening the coordination of UN emergency humanitarian assistance, submitted in response to General Assembly resolutions 46/182 [YUN 1991, p. 421] and 63/139 [YUN 2008, p. 996] and Council resolution 2008/36 [ibid., p. 993]. The report summarized humanitarian trends and challenges of disasters associated with natural hazards and complex emergencies; examined progress in coordinating humanitarian assistance; and analysed the themes of the Council's humanitarian affairs segment (see above). The analysis discussed challenges to humanitarian action, such as safety and security of humanitarian personnel; the increasing number of actors involved in humanitarian assistance; distinguishing between humanitarian and military or political actors; balancing coherence in UN operations and principled humanitarian action; and gaining access to people in need. It also explored how climate change, extreme poverty, the food and financial crises, water and energy scarcity, migration, population growth, urbanization, terrorism and health pandemics impacted humanitarian needs, as well as how those challenges would shape the environment in which humanitarian actors would have to operate.

In 2008, the Centre for the Research on the Epidemiology of Disasters reported 321 disasters associated with natural hazards. While the number of disasters decreased on average, their severity increased. During the reporting period, natural disasters, such as floods, cyclones, earthquakes and droughts, continued to trigger humanitarian emergencies, causing over 235,000 deaths and affecting more than 211 million people. The number of deaths was three times the average for 2000–2007 due to Cyclone Nargis [YUN 2008, p. 421] and the Sichuan earthquake [ibid., p. 1149]. As at the time of the report, the humanitarian consolidated

appeal process had requested \$8.6 billion to provide 30 million people with life-saving assistance for 2009, an increase of almost 23 per cent from 2008 requirements. Complex emergencies such as the humanitarian operation in Darfur, ongoing drought and food insecurity in Afghanistan and Somalia, fighting in Sri Lanka, the sustained closure of Gaza, and limited or no access to safe water and sanitation in Zimbabwe, affected tens of millions of people. In addition, internal and cross-border movements of people constituted major concerns. Although the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) reported a decrease in the global number of refugees from 11.4 million in 2007 to 10.5 million by the end of 2008—attributed to repatriation operations in Afghanistan, Burundi and the Sudan—some 26 million people were internally displaced due to conflict, insecurity and persecution, while millions were displaced owing to natural hazards.

On progress in the coordination of humanitarian assistance, the cluster approach [YUN 2006, p. 1057] was implemented in 13 additional countries, bringing the number of countries where the approach was implemented to 24. Other topics addressed included, enhanced humanitarian coordination: the resident and humanitarian coordinator system; predictability of response and humanitarian financing; equity and accountability of response and enhancing needs assessments; strengthening and expanding partnerships; the White Helmets (see p. 890); and strengthening capacities to support survivors of gender-based violence. In that regard, the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) Gender Standby Capacity project deployed 29 advisers to 18 humanitarian crises. The Secretary-General concluded with a series of recommendations for consideration by States, non-State actors, humanitarian organizations and the UN system.

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL ACTION

On 22 July [meeting 32], the Economic and Social Council adopted resolution **2009/3** [E/2009/SR.32], without vote [agenda item 5].

Strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations

The Economic and Social Council,

Reaffirming General Assembly resolution 46/182 of 19 December 1991 and the guiding principles contained in the annex thereto, and recalling other relevant resolutions of the Assembly and relevant resolutions and agreed conclusions of the Economic and Social Council,

Recalling its decision to consider the theme “Strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian assistance: present challenges and their impact on the future” at the humanitarian affairs segment of its substantive session of 2009,

Recalling also its decision to convene two panels, on “Respecting and implementing guiding principles of

humanitarian assistance at the operational level: assisting the affected populations” and “Addressing the impact of current global challenges and trends on the effective delivery of humanitarian assistance”, and its decision to hold an informal event entitled “Economic and Social Council event to discuss transition from relief to development”,

Expressing grave concern at the increase in the number of people affected by humanitarian emergencies, including those associated with natural hazards and complex emergencies, at the increased impact of natural disasters and at the displacement resulting from humanitarian emergencies,

Reaffirming the need for all actors engaged in the provision of humanitarian assistance in situations of complex emergencies and natural disasters to promote and fully respect the principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence,

Reiterating the need to mainstream a gender perspective into humanitarian assistance in a comprehensive and consistent manner,

Expressing deep concern at the increasing challenges posed to Member States and the United Nations humanitarian response capacity by the consequences of natural disasters, including the impact of climate change, and by the humanitarian implications of the current global food crisis,

Acknowledging that the current financial and economic crisis has the potential to increase the need for resources for humanitarian assistance in developing countries,

Condemning the increasing number of attacks and other acts of violence against humanitarian personnel, facilities, assets and supplies, and expressing deep concern about the negative implications of such acts for the provision of humanitarian assistance to affected populations,

Noting with grave concern that violence, including gender-based violence, particularly sexual violence, and violence against children, continues to be deliberately directed against civilian populations in many emergency situations,

Recognizing that building and strengthening national and local preparedness and response capacity is critical to a more predictable and effective response,

Recognizing also the clear relationship between emergency relief, rehabilitation and development, and reaffirming that, in order to ensure a smooth transition from relief to rehabilitation and development, emergency assistance must be provided in ways that will be supportive of recovery and long-term development and that emergency measures should be seen as a step towards sustainable development,

Noting the contribution, as appropriate, of relevant regional and subregional organizations in the provision of humanitarian assistance within their region at the request of the affected State,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General;
2. *Encourages* Member States to create and strengthen an enabling environment for the capacity-building of national and local authorities, national societies of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, and national and local non-governmental and community-based organizations in providing timely humanitarian assistance, and encourages the international community, the relevant entities of the United Nations system and other relevant institutions and organizations to support national authorities in their capacity-building programmes, including through technical cooperation and long-term partnerships based on

recognition of their important role in providing humanitarian assistance;

3. *Stresses* that the United Nations system should make efforts to enhance existing humanitarian capacities, knowledge and institutions, including, as appropriate, through the transfer of technology and expertise to developing countries, and encourages the international community to support efforts of Member States aimed at strengthening their capacity to prepare for and respond to disasters;

4. *Notes with appreciation* the second session of the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction, held in Geneva from 16 to 19 June 2009, urges Member States to develop, update and strengthen disaster preparedness and risk reduction measures at all levels, in accordance with the Hyogo Framework for Action, in particular priority 5 thereof, taking into account their own circumstances and capacities and in coordination with relevant actors, as appropriate, and encourages the international community and relevant United Nations entities to give increased priority to supporting national and local efforts in this regard;

5. *Encourages* Member States and, where applicable, relevant regional organizations to strengthen operational and legal frameworks for international disaster relief, taking into account, as appropriate, the Guidelines for the Domestic Facilitation and Regulation of International Disaster Relief and Initial Recovery Assistance, adopted at the thirtieth International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent, held in Geneva from 26 to 30 November 2007;

6. *Encourages* efforts to enhance cooperation and coordination between United Nations humanitarian entities, other relevant humanitarian organizations and donor countries and the affected State, with a view to planning and delivering emergency humanitarian assistance in ways that are supportive of early recovery as well as sustainable rehabilitation and reconstruction efforts;

7. *Also encourages* efforts to provide education in emergencies, including in order to contribute to a smooth transition from relief to development;

8. *Requests* the Emergency Relief Coordinator to continue his efforts to strengthen the coordination of humanitarian assistance, and encourages relevant United Nations organizations and other relevant intergovernmental organizations, as well as other humanitarian and development actors, to continue to work with the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs of the Secretariat to enhance the coordination, effectiveness and efficiency of humanitarian assistance;

9. *Encourages* United Nations humanitarian organizations, while strengthening the coordination of humanitarian assistance in the field, to continue to work in close coordination with national Governments, taking into account the primary role of the affected State in the initiation, organization, coordination and implementation of such assistance within its territory;

10. *Welcomes* the continued efforts to strengthen the humanitarian response capacity in order to provide a timely, predictable, coordinated and accountable response to humanitarian needs, and requests the Secretary-General to continue efforts in this regard, in consultation with Member States, including by strengthening the support provided to and improving the identification, selection and training of United Nations resident/humanitarian co-

ordinators and by improving coordination mechanisms for the provision of humanitarian assistance at the field level;

11. *Urges* all actors engaged in the provision of humanitarian assistance to fully commit to and duly respect the guiding principles contained in the annex to General Assembly resolution 46/182, including the principles of humanity, neutrality and impartiality, as well as the guiding principle of independence, as recognized by the Assembly in its resolution 58/114 of 17 December 2003;

12. *Calls upon* all States and parties in complex humanitarian emergencies, in particular in armed conflict and in post-conflict situations, in countries in which humanitarian personnel are operating, in conformity with the relevant provisions of international law and national laws, to cooperate fully with the United Nations and other humanitarian agencies and organizations and to ensure the safe and unhindered access of humanitarian personnel, as well as delivery of supplies and equipment, in order to allow such personnel to efficiently perform their task of assisting affected civilian populations, including refugees and internally displaced persons;

13. *Calls upon* all parties to armed conflict to comply with their obligations under international humanitarian law, human rights law and refugee law;

14. *Calls upon* all States and parties to comply fully with the provisions of international humanitarian law, including all the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, in particular the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, in order to protect and assist civilians in occupied territories, and in this regard urges the international community and the relevant organizations of the United Nations system to strengthen humanitarian assistance to civilians in such situations;

15. *Recognizes* the benefits of engagement and coordination with relevant humanitarian actors to the effectiveness of humanitarian response, and encourages the United Nations to continue to pursue efforts to strengthen partnerships at the global level with the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, relevant humanitarian non-governmental organizations and other participants in the Inter-Agency Standing Committee;

16. *Urges* Member States to continue to take the steps necessary to ensure the safety and security of humanitarian personnel, premises, facilities, equipment, vehicles and supplies located within their borders and in other territories under their effective control, recognizes the need for appropriate collaboration between humanitarian actors and the relevant authorities of the affected State in matters related to the safety and security of humanitarian personnel, requests the Secretary-General to expedite his efforts to enhance the safety and security of personnel involved in United Nations humanitarian operations, and urges Member States to ensure that perpetrators of crimes committed against humanitarian personnel on their territory or on other territories under their effective control do not operate with impunity and are brought to justice, as provided for by national laws and by obligations under international law;

17. *Encourages* Member States, as well as relevant regional and international organizations, in accordance with their specific mandates, to support adaptation to the effects of climate change and to strengthen disaster risk reduction and early warning systems in order to minimize the

humanitarian consequences of natural disasters, including the impact of climate change, takes note of the *2009 Global Assessment Report on Disaster Risk Reduction: Risk and poverty in a changing climate—Invest today for a safer tomorrow*, and encourages relevant entities to continue their research on the humanitarian implications of natural disasters;

18. *Emphasizes* the fundamentally civilian character of humanitarian assistance, and, in situations where military capacity and assets are used to support the implementation of humanitarian assistance, reaffirms the need for their use to be undertaken with the consent of the affected State and in conformity with international law, including international humanitarian law, as well as principles for the provision of humanitarian assistance;

19. *Requests* Member States, relevant United Nations organizations and other relevant actors to ensure that all aspects of humanitarian response address the specific needs of women, girls, men and boys, including through improved collection, analysis and reporting of sex- and age-disaggregated data, taking into account, inter alia, information provided by States;

20. *Urges* Member States to continue to prevent, investigate and prosecute acts of gender-based violence, including sexual violence, in humanitarian emergencies, calls upon Member States and relevant organizations to strengthen support services to victims of such violence, and calls for a more effective response in this regard;

21. *Encourages* Member States, the private sector and other relevant entities to make contributions and to consider increasing and diversifying their contributions to humanitarian funding mechanisms, including consolidated and flash appeals, the Central Emergency Response Fund and other funds, on the basis of and in proportion to assessed needs, as a means of ensuring flexible, predictable, timely, needs-based and, where possible, multi-year, non-earmarked and additional resources to meet global humanitarian challenges, encourages donors to adhere to the Principles and Good Practice of Humanitarian Donorship, and reiterates that contributions for humanitarian assistance should not be to the detriment of resources made available for international cooperation for development;

22. *Notes* that the current global financial and economic crisis has the potential to affect the ability of developing countries to respond to humanitarian emergencies, and stresses the need to take measures to ensure adequate resources for international cooperation in the provision of humanitarian assistance;

23. *Calls upon* United Nations humanitarian organizations, in consultation with Member States, as appropriate, to strengthen the evidence base for humanitarian assistance by further developing common mechanisms to improve the quality, transparency and reliability of humanitarian needs assessments, to assess their performance in providing assistance and to ensure the most effective use of humanitarian resources by these organizations;

24. *Requests* the Secretary-General to reflect the progress made in the implementation of and follow-up to the present resolution in his next report to the Economic and Social Council and to the General Assembly on the strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations.

Humanitarian reform agenda

In 2009, OCHA continued to build on the humanitarian reform process initiated in 2005 [YUN 2005, p. 991] and remained at the forefront of strengthening the predictability and accountability of the international humanitarian system, both at the policy and operational level. The OCHA 2007–2009 strategic framework focused on striving to ensure a better coordinated, more equitably supported international humanitarian response system. The cluster approach, a key element in humanitarian reform, had been applied in 36 countries and continued to be adapted and improved, based on continuous learning within the humanitarian system. During the year, OCHA rolled out the approach in six countries, as well as the Occupied Palestinian Territory, and managed the inter-agency evaluation of Phase II of the Cluster Approach (see below). OCHA also established a new system to ensure that the results and recommendations of evaluations, reviews and audits were addressed, as formalized in the 2009 evaluation policy.

In other developments, the Roster Management Programme, the primary mechanism for regular field recruitment, was introduced; two new surge mechanisms to help fill the gap between short-term deployments and longer-term staffing solutions through regular recruitment were developed; and the first phase of consolidating OCHA's web presence into a new OCHA portal was completed. OCHA also initiated an inter-agency review of protection from sexual exploitation and abuse, released the "Occasional Policy Paper: Global Challenges and their Impact on International Humanitarian Action"—a detailed analysis providing background for developing OCHA's strategic framework for 2010–2013, and, in order to advocate international humanitarian law and principles, played a major role in launching the first World Humanitarian Day in August. Efforts by OCHA also resulted in the establishment of an informal Security Council Expert Group on the Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict. By year's end, owing to OCHA briefings to the Expert Group, Council members were receiving more detailed analysis and information on protection-related issues. Meanwhile, the OCHA strategic framework for 2010–2013 was developed over the course of the year and encompassed multi-year strategies detailing risks, milestones and a path to achieving the ends stated by 2013.

Global Cluster Approach Evaluation. Following the 2005 Humanitarian Response Review [YUN 2005, p. 991], IASC established the "cluster leadership approach" as a mechanism to improve humanitarian response effectiveness and to strengthen partnerships among all humanitarian actors [YUN 2006, p. 1057]. The first of a two-phase evaluation of the approach took place in 2007 [YUN 2007, p. 915] and phase II,

based on a 2008 framework [YUN 2008, p. 996], was under way in 2009. In other activities, IASC clarified key terminology and reinforced the dual responsibility of cluster lead agencies to represent both their own agency and the clusters they lead in meetings at the country and global level.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY ACTION

On 7 December [meeting 60], the General Assembly adopted **resolution 64/76** [draft: A/64L.32 & Add.1] without vote [agenda item 70 (a)].

Strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations

The General Assembly,

Reaffirming its resolution 46/182 of 19 December 1991 and the guiding principles contained in the annex thereto, other relevant General Assembly and Economic and Social Council resolutions and agreed conclusions of the Council,

Noting the reports of the Secretary-General on the strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations and on the Central Emergency Response Fund,

Reaffirming the principles of neutrality, humanity, impartiality and independence for the provision of humanitarian assistance,

Deeply concerned about the humanitarian impact of such global challenges as the global financial and economic crisis and the ongoing food crisis, including their effect on the increasing vulnerability of populations and their negative impact on the effective delivery of humanitarian assistance,

Emphasizing the need to mobilize adequate, predictable, timely and flexible resources for humanitarian assistance based on and in proportion to assessed needs, with a view to ensuring fuller coverage of the needs in all sectors and across humanitarian emergencies, and recognizing, in this regard, the achievements of the Central Emergency Response Fund,

Reiterating the need for Member States, relevant United Nations organizations and other relevant actors to mainstream a gender perspective into humanitarian assistance, including by addressing the specific needs of women, girls, boys and men in a comprehensive and consistent manner,

Expressing its deep concern at the increasing challenges faced by Member States and the United Nations humanitarian response capacity as a result of the consequences of natural disasters, including the impact of climate change, and reaffirming the importance of implementing the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005–2015: Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters, inter alia, by providing adequate resources for disaster risk reduction, including disaster preparedness,

Recognizing that building national and local preparedness and response capacity is critical to a more predictable and effective response,

Emphasizing that enhancing international cooperation on emergency humanitarian assistance is essential, and reaffirming its resolution 63/141 of 11 December 2008 on international cooperation on humanitarian assistance in the field of natural disasters,

Condemning the increasing number of deliberate violent attacks against humanitarian personnel and facilities and the negative implications for the provision of humanitarian assistance to populations in need,

Recognizing the high numbers of persons affected by humanitarian emergencies, including internally displaced persons, and welcoming, in this regard, the adoption on 22 October 2009 of the African Union Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa, which marks a significant step towards strengthening the national and regional normative framework for the protection of and assistance to internally displaced persons in Africa,

Recognizing also that 2009 marks the sixtieth anniversary of the Geneva Conventions of 1949, which include a vital legal framework for the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, including the provision of humanitarian assistance,

Noting with grave concern that violence, including gender-based violence, particularly sexual violence, and violence against children, continues to be deliberately directed against civilian populations in many emergency situations,

Noting with appreciation the efforts made by the United Nations to improve humanitarian response, including by strengthening humanitarian response capacities, improving humanitarian coordination, enhancing predictable and adequate funding and strengthening the accountability of all stakeholders, and recognizing the importance of strengthening emergency administrative procedures and funding to allow for an effective response to emergencies,

Recognizing that in strengthening the coordination of humanitarian assistance in the field, United Nations organizations should continue to work in close coordination with national Governments,

1. *Welcomes* the outcome of the twelfth humanitarian affairs segment of the Economic and Social Council at its substantive session of 2009;

2. *Requests* the Emergency Relief Coordinator to continue his efforts to strengthen the coordination of humanitarian assistance, and calls upon relevant United Nations organizations and other relevant intergovernmental organizations, as well as other humanitarian and development actors, to continue to work with the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs of the Secretariat to enhance the coordination, effectiveness and efficiency of humanitarian assistance;

3. *Calls upon* the relevant organizations of the United Nations system and, as appropriate, other relevant humanitarian actors to continue efforts to improve the humanitarian response to natural and man-made disasters and complex emergencies by further strengthening humanitarian response capacities at all levels, by continuing to strengthen the coordination of humanitarian assistance at the field level, including with national authorities of the affected State, as appropriate, and by further enhancing transparency, performance and accountability;

4. *Recognizes* the benefits of engagement and coordination with relevant humanitarian actors to the effectiveness of humanitarian response, and encourages the United Nations to continue to pursue efforts to strengthen partnerships at the global level with the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, relevant humanitarian non-

governmental organizations and other participants in the Inter-Agency Standing Committee;

5. *Requests* the Secretary-General to strengthen the support provided to United Nations resident/humanitarian coordinators and to United Nations country teams, including by providing necessary training, identifying resources and improving the identification of and the selection process for United Nations resident/humanitarian coordinators;

6. *Reaffirms* the importance of implementing the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005–2015: Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters, takes note with appreciation of the “2009 Global Assessment Report on Disaster Risk Reduction” and the outcome of the second session of the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction, held in Geneva from 16 to 19 June 2009, and looks forward to the midterm review of the Hyogo Framework for Action in 2010;

7. *Calls upon* Member States and the international community to increase resources for disaster risk reduction measures, including in the areas of preparedness for effective response and contingency planning;

8. *Urges* Member States, the United Nations and other relevant organizations to take further steps to provide a co-ordinated emergency response to the food and nutrition needs of affected populations, while aiming to ensure that such steps are supportive of national strategies and programmes aimed at improving food security;

9. *Encourages* the international community, including relevant United Nations organizations and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, to support efforts of Member States aimed at strengthening their capacity to prepare for and respond to disasters and to support efforts, as appropriate, to strengthen systems for identifying and monitoring disaster risk, including vulnerability and natural hazards;

10. *Recognizes* the importance of the work of international and, as appropriate, regional organizations in supporting State efforts to improve international cooperation in disaster response, and encourages Member States and, where applicable, regional organizations to strengthen operational and legal frameworks for international disaster relief, taking into account, as appropriate, the Guidelines for the Domestic Facilitation and Regulation of International Disaster Relief and Initial Recovery Assistance, adopted at the Thirtieth International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent, held in Geneva from 26 to 30 November 2007;

11. *Encourages* States to create an enabling environment for the capacity-building of local authorities and of national and local non-governmental and community-based organizations in order to ensure better preparedness in providing timely, effective and predictable humanitarian assistance, and encourages the United Nations and humanitarian organizations to provide support to such efforts, including, as appropriate, through the transfer of technology and expertise to developing countries and through support to programmes aimed at enhancing the coordination capacities of affected States;

12. *Encourages* efforts to enhance cooperation and coordination between United Nations humanitarian entities, other relevant humanitarian organizations and donor

countries and the affected State, with a view to planning and delivering emergency humanitarian assistance in ways that are supportive of early recovery as well as of sustainable rehabilitation and reconstruction efforts;

13. *Requests* the Secretary-General, in consultation with the affected countries and relevant humanitarian and development actors, to carry out an assessment of steps taken by the United Nations and relevant partners to support efforts to strengthen local, national and regional humanitarian response capacity and to include his findings as well as recommendations for enhancing United Nations support in this regard in his report to the General Assembly at its sixty-fifth session;

14. *Encourages* efforts to provide education in emergencies, including in order to contribute to a smooth transition from relief to development;

15. *Calls upon* relevant United Nations organizations to support the improvement of the consolidated appeals process, inter alia by engaging in the preparation of needs analyses and common humanitarian action plans, including through a better analysis of gender-related allocations, in order to further the development of the process as an instrument for United Nations strategic planning and prioritization, and by involving other relevant humanitarian organizations in the process, while reiterating that consolidated appeals are prepared in consultation with affected States;

16. *Requests* Member States, relevant humanitarian organizations of the United Nations system and other relevant humanitarian actors to ensure that all aspects of humanitarian response, including disaster preparedness and needs assessment, take into account the specific needs of the affected population, recognizing that giving appropriate consideration to, inter alia, gender, age and disability is part of a comprehensive and effective humanitarian response;

17. *Calls upon* United Nations humanitarian organizations, in consultation with Member States, as appropriate, to strengthen the evidence base for humanitarian assistance by further developing common mechanisms to improve the quality, transparency and reliability of, and make further progress towards, common humanitarian needs assessments, to assess their performance in assistance and to ensure the most effective use of humanitarian resources by these organizations;

18. *Calls upon* donors to provide adequate, timely, predictable and flexible resources based on and in proportion to assessed needs, including for underfunded emergencies, and to continue to support diverse humanitarian funding channels, and encourages efforts to adhere to the Principles and Good Practice of Humanitarian Donorship;

19. *Welcomes* the important achievements of the Central Emergency Response Fund in ensuring a more timely and predictable response to humanitarian emergencies, and stresses the importance of continuing to improve the functioning of the Fund in order to ensure that resources are used in the most efficient, effective and transparent manner possible;

20. *Calls upon* all Member States and invites the private sector and all concerned individuals and institutions to consider increasing their voluntary contributions to the Central Emergency Response Fund, and emphasizes that

contributions should be additional to current commitments to humanitarian programming and should not be to the detriment of resources made available for international cooperation for development;

21. *Reiterates* that the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs should benefit from adequate and more predictable funding;

22. *Reaffirms* the obligation of all States and parties to an armed conflict to protect civilians in armed conflicts in accordance with international humanitarian law, and invites States to promote a culture of protection, taking into account the particular needs of women, children, older persons and persons with disabilities;

23. *Calls upon* States to adopt preventive measures and effective responses to acts of violence committed against civilian populations in armed conflicts and to ensure that those responsible are promptly brought to justice, in accordance with national law and their obligations under international law;

24. *Urges* all Member States to address gender-based violence in humanitarian emergencies and to ensure that their laws and institutions are adequate to prevent, promptly investigate and prosecute acts of gender-based violence, and calls upon States, the United Nations and all relevant humanitarian organizations to improve coordination, harmonize response and strengthen capacity, with a view to reducing such violence, and in support services to victims of such violence;

25. *Recognizes* the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement as an important international framework for the protection of internally displaced persons, encourages Member States and humanitarian agencies to continue to work together, in collaboration with host communities, in endeavours to provide a more predictable response to the needs of internally displaced persons, and in this regard calls for continued and enhanced international support, upon request, for capacity-building efforts of States;

26. *Calls upon* all States and parties in complex humanitarian emergencies, in particular in armed conflict and in post-conflict situations, in countries in which humanitarian personnel are operating, in conformity with the relevant provisions of international law and national laws, to cooperate fully with the United Nations and other humanitarian agencies and organizations and to ensure the safe and unhindered access of humanitarian personnel, as well as delivery of supplies and equipment, in order to allow such personnel to efficiently perform their task of assisting affected civilian populations, including refugees and internally displaced persons;

27. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report on action taken by the Secretariat to develop and apply special emergency rules and procedures to ensure the quick disbursement of emergency funds, the expeditious procurement of emergency supplies and equipment and the rapid recruitment of staff in order to improve the overall response to humanitarian emergencies;

28. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its sixty-fifth session, through the Economic and Social Council at its substantive session of 2010, on progress made in strengthening the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations and to submit a report to the Assembly on the detailed use of the Central Emergency Response Fund.

UN and other humanitarian personnel

In response to Assembly resolution 63/138 [YUN 2008, p. 1611], the Secretary-General, in an August report [A/64/336], provided updates on the safety and security of humanitarian and UN personnel over the preceding year and on the efforts by the UN Department of Safety and Security to implement that resolution. He expressed concern over the increased number of security incidents against humanitarian and UN personnel and was disturbed by the trend of politically or criminally motivated targeting of humanitarian workers, which was most evident in Haiti, Somalia and the Sudan. He noted that the humanitarian community had embraced the Saving Lives Together framework for the United Nations and NGO/international organization/intergovernmental organization security collaboration and called on States to support that security initiative.

The Assembly, in **resolution 64/77** of 7 December, called on Governments and parties in complex humanitarian emergencies to cooperate fully with the United Nations and other humanitarian agencies and organizations and to ensure the safe and unhindered access of humanitarian personnel (see p. 1459).

Resource mobilization

Central Emergency Response Fund

In 2009, the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF), formerly known as the Central Emergency Revolving Fund [YUN 2006, p. 1061], a cash-flow mechanism for the initial phase of humanitarian emergencies established in 1992 [YUN 1992, p. 584], continued to allow for the rapid provision of assistance to populations affected by sudden-onset disasters and underfunded emergencies. The Fund was upgraded by General Assembly resolution 60/124 [YUN 2005, p. 991] to include a grant element, targeted at \$450 million, to ensure the availability of immediate resources to address humanitarian crises. The loan element of the Fund continued to operate as a distinct and separately managed revolving fund with a target of \$50 million. The 16-member CERF Advisory Group, established to provide the Secretary-General with policy guidance and advice on the use and impact of the Fund, met in April and November. In 2009, donors contributed \$401.7 million to the Fund, and as of 31 December, \$397.4 million in CERF funds had been allocated to support relief operations in 50 countries and the Occupied Palestinian Territory.

Report of Secretary-General. In his August report on CERF [A/64/327] covering the period from 1 July 2008 to 30 June 2009, the Secretary-General indicated that \$374.3 million was allocated from the Fund to implement 475 humanitarian projects in 50

countries/territories. That amount was comprised of \$274.5 million through the rapid response window and \$99.8 million through the underfunded window. Fourteen humanitarian agencies received funds directly from the Fund to address emergency needs and many projects were carried out in partnership with non-governmental organizations (NGOs). A breakdown of the rapid response grants indicated that projects in response to protracted conflict-related emergencies (including services for refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs) received the highest allocations at \$113.9 million, followed by natural disaster-related allocations of \$84.2 million and global-food-crisis allocations of \$72.4 million. Sub-Saharan Africa received the highest percentage of funding (57.4 per cent), while Asia and the Caucasus, Latin America and the Caribbean, and the Middle East received respectively, 26.1 per cent, 9.0 per cent and 7.5 per cent. The Fund's loan mechanism remained available as a cash flow instrument when funds expected from donors had not been received, yet no formal requests for loans were submitted during the reporting period. Disbursements were made for two loans approved prior to the reporting period totalling \$30 million for World Food Programme (WFP) projects in Ethiopia and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. On the grant component of the Fund, \$428.8 million was committed to humanitarian projects in 2008, while \$194.6 million was committed in the first half of 2009.

As recommended in the two-year evaluation of CERF [YUN 2008, p. 998], the Fund secretariat, together with humanitarian agency partners, was carrying out a review of the underfunded window processes, which would result in updated guidelines for allocating funds and improvements in the management of the allocation process. A management response matrix—prepared in November 2008 in response to the 37 strategic and operational recommendations from the evaluation to serve as a road map for work that needed to be completed before the next evaluation of the Fund in 2011—was updated and circulated in April 2009. The matrix detailed the response and action to be taken for each of the evaluation's recommendations. Of the recommendations made, 22 had been accepted, 8 partially accepted, 1 rejected, and 6 were pending. The Fund secretariat was also leading an inter-agency process to revise the Secretary-General's Bulletin on the establishment and operation of CERF, which would refine the operational guidance on the use, management and administration of the Fund. The Secretary-General concluded that the Fund continued to be an essential part of the multilateral humanitarian financial architecture and that the Fund secretariat had continued to improve its operations, financial management and reporting. He also reminded States of the \$450 million annual

funding goal set by the General Assembly and the need to maintain support for a diversity of humanitarian funding tools.

Advisory Group meetings. At its April meeting [A/63/910], the CERF Advisory Group noted that the Fund governing document [ST/SGB/2006/10] needed to be revised in order to implement some of the recommendations of the two-year evaluation (see above) and that the revision of the Fund's Life-Saving Criteria would be finalized by year's end. It discussed steps taken by the secretariat to develop the CERF Performance and Accountability Framework and asked the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and the Emergency Relief Coordinator to devise and implement a complete Framework before the end of the year. Noting that NGOs continued to have concerns related to the slow disbursement of sub-grants from agencies receiving CERF funds, the Advisory Group stressed that an essential element of effective response was ensuring predictable, timely and cost-efficient funding arrangements between the United Nations and NGO implementing partners. The meeting also marked the Advisory Group's first opportunity to discuss directly with the Controller issues related to the administration of the Fund, including ways to use the 3 per cent programme support cost towards the direct administration of the Fund, as well as assurances of the Controller's imminent approval of the draft interim umbrella letter of understanding, which would constitute a standard agreement between the Emergency Relief Coordinator and each humanitarian agency.

In November [A/64/558], the Group continued discussions on: use and management of the Fund in 2009; development of a performance and accountability framework; definition of the Fund's "life-saving criteria"; review of the Fund's underfunded window; partnerships with NGOs; and administrative issues. Progress had been made to finalize the revised Secretary-General's Bulletin on CERF and on the umbrella letter of understanding. In that regard, the Advisory Group requested that steps be taken to ensure that the bulletin would enter into force by 1 January 2010 and that the umbrella letter of understanding would be finalized as soon as possible thereafter. The Group also agreed to revisions to its terms of reference, including an expansion to 18 full members each serving a single three-year term.

Consolidated appeals

The consolidated appeals process, an inclusive and coordinated programme cycle for analysing context, assessing needs and planning prioritized humanitarian response, was the humanitarian sector's main strategic planning and programming tool. In 2009,

the United Nations and its humanitarian partners issued consolidated and flash appeals seeking \$9.8 billion in assistance to Afghanistan, Burkina Faso, the Central African Republic, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, El Salvador, Indonesia, Iraq, Kenya, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Madagascar, Namibia, the Occupied Palestinian Territory, Pakistan, the Philippines, Somalia, Sri Lanka, the Sudan, Uganda, the West Africa sub-region (Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Togo), Yemen and Zimbabwe.

The latest available data indicated that 71 per cent (\$7.0 billion) of requirements had been met.

White Helmets

In response to General Assembly resolution 61/220 [YUN 2006, p. 1062], the Secretary-General provided, in a May report [A/64/84-E/2009/87] on the coordination of UN humanitarian assistance, an update on the "White Helmets" initiative, as well as suggested measures to enhance its integration into the work of the UN system. The White Helmets initiative was established by Argentina in 1993 and adopted by the Assembly in 1994 [YUN 1994, p. 827] to promote pre-identified standby and trained teams of volunteers from various national volunteer corps to support relief, rehabilitation, reconstruction and development activities. Measures to strengthen its support to UN response efforts included, among others, the conduct of a joint assessment mission by the White Helmets Commission and WFP following floods in Beni, Bolivia in 2007 [YUN 2007, p. 957], and a WFP-hosted two-day seminar with the White Helmets on WFP operational modalities in 2008. It was agreed during the 2008 meeting that the White Helmets would initiate a proposal for community-level cooperation in the areas of common interest such as supply chain and storage management, distribution and needs assessment. The Secretary-General observed that with enhanced coordination with the international humanitarian system, the White Helmets could provide an interesting model for regional and local volunteer organizations responding to disasters. In that connection, he encouraged the White Helmets initiative to enhance coordination and explore mechanisms to share best practices on disaster response and preparedness with other regional organizations in disaster-prone areas.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY ACTION

On 7 December [meeting 60], the General Assembly adopted **resolution 64/75** [draft: A/64/L.31 & Add.1] without vote [agenda item 70 (a)].

Participation of volunteers, "White Helmets", in the activities of the United Nations in the field of humanitarian relief, rehabilitation and technical cooperation for development

The General Assembly,

Reaffirming its resolutions 50/19 of 28 November 1995, 52/171 of 16 December 1997, 54/98 of 8 December 1999, 56/102 of 14 December 2001, 58/118 of 17 December 2003 and 61/220 of 20 December 2006,

Reaffirming also its resolutions 46/182 of 19 December 1991, 47/168 of 22 December 1992, 48/57 of 14 December 1993, 49/139 A and B of 20 December 1994, 50/57 of 12 December 1995 and 51/194 of 17 December 1996 and Economic and Social Council resolutions 1995/56 of 28 July 1995 and 1996/33 of 25 July 1996,

Emphasizing the need for coordination between relief and development activities in the context of humanitarian emergencies, taking into account the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the United Nations Millennium Declaration,

Recognizing the importance of mobilizing the scientific and technical know-how of the international community as a way of mitigating the effects of disasters, bearing in mind the positive impact of technology transfer to developing countries in this field,

Recognizing also the responsibility of the United Nations system in the promotion of international cooperation to prevent and mitigate disasters, to provide assistance and to coordinate relief and prevention measures, highlighting the leading role of the Secretary-General in this regard,

Recognizing further that the international community, in addressing the growing magnitude and complexity of man-made and natural disasters and chronic situations characterized by hunger, malnutrition and poverty, must rely not only on the formulation of a well-coordinated global response within the framework of the United Nations but also on the promotion of a smooth transition from relief to rehabilitation, reconstruction and development,

Recognizing the effort made by the White Helmets model in helping to involve stricken populations or those at risk in the tasks of planning, training, mobilizing and providing an immediate response in disaster situations,

Recognizing also the need to integrate a gender perspective in the design and implementation of all phases of disaster management,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General, in particular section IV.C, on the strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations, prepared pursuant to its resolution 46/182 and submitted in response to resolutions 63/139 of 11 December 2008 and 61/220;

2. *Recognizes* the effort being made by the White Helmets initiative to strengthen national and regional agreements aimed at facilitating coordination between the United Nations system and trained standby national volunteer corps, in accordance with accepted United Nations procedures, through the United Nations Volunteers and other agencies of the system;

3. *Notes* the emphasis placed on the development of mechanisms to facilitate the local management of humanitarian emergencies, through the organization and

participatory involvement and empowerment of affected communities and the training of the members of local volunteer corps;

4. *Also notes* the importance of the international efforts being made by the White Helmets initiative to strengthen the comprehensive regional mechanisms for managing prevention and response activities in emergency and disaster situations, in particular its model for setting up regional networks of focal points, with a view to linkage with other international structures;

5. *Recognizes* that the White Helmets initiative can play an important role in the promotion, diffusion and implementation of the decisions contained in the United Nations Millennium Declaration, and invites Member States in a position to do so to consider means to ensure the integration of the White Helmets initiative into their programme activities and to make financial resources available to the Special Voluntary Fund of the United Nations Volunteers;

6. *Takes note* of the efforts made by the World Food Programme and the White Helmets to coordinate integration mechanisms that allow for joint action within the framework of food security, on the basis of their general agreements of 1998;

7. *Encourages* operational partners of the United Nations system, in particular the United Nations Volunteers and the World Health Organization, in providing psychosocial support to the disaster-affected population in emergency and disaster situations, to draw, as appropriate, on the voluntary expertise of the White Helmets, which has been successfully tested;

8. *Encourages* the White Helmets to continue enhancing coordination with the international humanitarian system and to explore mechanisms for sharing best practices on disaster response and preparedness with other regional organizations in disaster-prone areas, in an effort to improve the coordination of humanitarian assistance provided by the United Nations in emergency situations;

9. *Invites* the Secretary-General, on the basis of the experience acquired, to continue considering the use of the White Helmets initiative as a resource suitable for preventing and mitigating the effects of humanitarian disaster situations;

10. *Also invites* the Secretary-General, on the basis of the extensive international work experience acquired by the White Helmets, as recognized by the General Assembly since the adoption of its resolution 49/139 B, the first resolution on the White Helmets initiative, and in view of the success of coordinated actions carried out with, inter alia, the United Nations Children's Fund, the World Food Programme, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs of the Secretariat, the United Nations Development Programme and the United Nations Volunteers, to suggest measures to enhance the integration of the White Helmets initiative into the work of the United Nations system and to report thereon to the Assembly at its sixty-seventh session in a separate section of the annual report on the strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations.

Mine clearance

In response to General Assembly resolution 62/99 [YUN 2007, p. 919], the Secretary-General, in an August report [A/64/287], described the achievements of the United Nations Mine Action Team (UNMAT) since his previous report in 2007 [YUN 2007, p. 919]. The Team's activities were guided by the four strategic objectives identified in the UNMAT Strategy for 2006–2010: reduce death and injury by at least 50 per cent; mitigate the risk to community livelihoods and expand freedom of movement for at least 80 per cent of the most seriously affected communities; integrate mine-action needs into national development and reconstruction plans and budgets in at least 15 countries; and assist the development of national institutions to manage the landmine/explosive remnants of war threat and at the same time prepare for residual capacity in at least 15 countries. On progress achieved, the report indicated that while the number of casualties globally had decreased significantly since 2007, the residual threat of mines, the threat of new mines and the increased use of improvised explosive devices in a few areas remained a concern. Surveys of suspected areas conducted in 13 countries and territories revealed that the number of cleared communities, the kilometres of roads cleared and area of land released for productive use had substantially increased. In addition, the United Nations had assisted 26 countries and territories in integrating mine action into their national development plans and budgets and 15 countries in developing national institutions and strategies for successful transition to national management responsibility. The report also noted the opening for signature in December 2008 of the Convention on Cluster Munitions [YUN 2008, p. 623] and indicated that on the occasion of the tenth anniversary of the entry into force of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention (March 2009) (see p. 553), over 41 million landmines had been destroyed.

The Secretary-General observed that as UNMAT neared the completion of its five-year strategy and considered priorities and benchmarks for its 2011–2015 Strategy, significant challenges remained, including emerging ones, such as the risks posed to UN peace operations by landmines and by improvised explosive devices that had been abandoned, stockpiled or failed to function. He urged UNMAT, Member States, and the mine-action community to remain committed to the remaining work and made recommendations for their consideration.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY ACTION

On 10 December [meeting 62], the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the Fourth (Special Political and Decolonization) Committee [A/64/402], adopted **resolution 64/84** without vote [agenda item 28].

Assistance in mine action

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 62/99 of 17 December 2007 and all its previous resolutions on assistance in mine clearance and on assistance in mine action, all adopted without a vote,

Recalling also all relevant treaties and conventions and their review processes,

Noting with appreciation the extent to which the International Day for Mine Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action has been commemorated worldwide,

Reaffirming its deep concern at the tremendous humanitarian and development problems caused by the presence of mines and explosive remnants of war, which have serious and lasting social and economic consequences for the populations of countries affected by them,

Bearing in mind the serious threat that mines and explosive remnants of war pose to the safety, health and lives of local civilian populations, as well as of personnel participating in humanitarian, peacekeeping, rehabilitation and mine-clearance programmes and operations,

Deeply alarmed by the number of mines that continue to be laid each year as well as the presence of a decreasing but still very large number of, and area of square kilometres infested by, mines and explosive remnants of war as a result of armed conflicts, and therefore remaining convinced of the necessity and urgency of strengthening mine-action efforts by the international community with a view to eliminating the threat of landmines and explosive remnants of war to civilians as soon as possible,

Recognizing that, in addition to the primary role of States, the United Nations has a significant role to play in the field of assistance in mine action through the United Nations Mine Action Team, including the United Nations Mine Action Service, and considering mine action to be an important and integrated component of United Nations humanitarian and development activities, as well as noting the integration of mine action in numerous United Nations peacekeeping operations,

Recognizing also the valuable mine-action efforts of national and international mine-action practitioners, including United Nations personnel and peacekeepers, enabling local communities to resume normal lives and reclaim their livelihoods by regaining access to previously contaminated lands,

Stressing the pressing need to urge non-State actors to halt immediately and unconditionally new deployments of mines and other associated explosive devices,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General;

2. *Calls for*, in particular, the continuation of the efforts of States, with the assistance of the United Nations and relevant organizations involved in mine action, as appropriate, to foster the establishment and development of national mine-action capacities in countries in which mines and explosive remnants of war constitute a serious threat to the safety, health and lives of the local civilian population or an impediment to social and economic development efforts at the national and local levels;

3. *Urges* all States, in particular those that have the capacity to do so, as well as the United Nations system and other relevant organizations and institutions involved in mine action, to support mine-affected States and territories, as appropriate, by providing:

(a) Assistance to countries affected by mines and explosive remnants of war for the establishment and development of national mine-action capacities, including, where appropriate, in the fulfilment of the relevant international obligations of those countries;

(b) Support for national programmes, where appropriate, in cooperation with the relevant bodies of the United Nations system and relevant regional, governmental and non-governmental organizations, to reduce the risks posed by landmines and explosive remnants of war, taking into consideration the different needs of women, girls, boys and men;

(c) Reliable, predictable and timely contributions for mine-action activities, including through national mine-action efforts and mine-action programmes of non-governmental organizations, including those relating to victim assistance and mine-risk education, especially at the local level, as well as through relevant national, regional and global trust funds, including the Voluntary Trust Fund for Assistance in Mine Action;

(d) Necessary information and technical, financial and material assistance to locate, remove, destroy and otherwise render ineffective minefields, mines, booby traps, other devices and explosive remnants of war, in accordance with international law, as soon as possible;

(e) Technological assistance (i) to countries affected by mines and explosive remnants of war; and (ii) to promote user-oriented scientific research on and development of mine-action techniques and technology that are effective, sustainable, appropriate and environmentally sound;

4. *Encourages* efforts to conduct all mine-action activities in accordance with the International Mine Action Standards (IMAS) or IMAS-compliant national standards, and emphasizes the importance of using an information management system, such as the Information Management System for Mine Action, to help facilitate mine-action activities;

5. *Urges* all mine-affected States, pursuant to applicable international law, to identify all areas, as appropriate, under their jurisdiction or control containing mines and other explosive remnants of war in the most efficient manner possible and to employ land release techniques, including non-technical survey, technical survey and clearance when appropriate;

6. *Encourages* mine-affected States, with support from relevant development partners as appropriate, to proactively mainstream mine action and victim assistance requirements into development plans and processes to ensure that development priorities include mine action and that mine action is predictably funded;

7. *Encourages* all relevant multilateral, regional and national programmes and bodies to include activities related to mine action, including clearance, in their humanitarian, rehabilitation, reconstruction and development assistance activities, where appropriate, bearing in mind the need to ensure national and local ownership, sustainability and capacity-building, as well as to include a gender and age-appropriate perspective in all aspects of such activities;

8. *Encourages* Member States, as appropriate, and relevant organizations involved in mine action to continue efforts to ensure that mine-action programmes are gender-

and age-sensitive, so that women, girls, boys and men can benefit equally from them, and encourages the participation of all stakeholders in the programming of mine action;

9. *Stresses* the importance of cooperation and coordination in mine action, and emphasizes the primary responsibility of national authorities in that regard, also stresses the supporting role of the United Nations and other relevant organizations in that regard, and underlines the need for a comprehensive and independent evaluation of the scope, organization, effectiveness and approach of the work of the United Nations in mine action;

10. *Recognizes* the importance of explicitly incorporating references to mine action, when appropriate, in ceasefire and peace agreements in light of the potential that mine action can have as a peace and confidence-building measure in post-conflict situations among parties concerned;

11. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its sixty-sixth session a report on the implementation of the present resolution and on follow-up to previous resolutions on assistance in mine clearance and on assistance in mine action, including on relevant United Nations policies and activities;

12. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its sixty-sixth session the item entitled "Assistance in mine action".

Humanitarian activities

Africa

Angola

In October, following a large-scale expulsion of irregular Congolese migrants from Angola's diamond mining areas in the northeast by the Angolan Government, an estimated 54,000 Angolans were expelled from the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The majority of the expelled resided in the border province of Bas-Congo. In the space of a few days, some 38,647 people arrived in the Angolan province of Zaire, 10,223 in Uige, and 2,638 in Cabinda. Many people were forced to leave without any notice, leaving behind their possessions and identity documents, and in a number of cases, were separated from their families. The Angolan Government provided assistance, including temporary shelter, food and medical services. It also carried out a basic registration of the expelled, gathering information on their identity, places of origin and family background. At the request of the Government, the UN and humanitarian organizations provided relief items to affected populations in Zaire province: non-food items, water and sanitation supplies and equipment, emergency medical kits, education materials and supplies, construction kits, tarpaulins and a truck. UNHCR also dispatched tents and blankets to Uige province.

The six-month response plan for the period 1 October 2009 to 31 March 2010 required \$5.2 million and would focus on the provision of technical assistance to the Government and targeted provision of humanita-

rian assistance in gap sectors, jointly identified with the Government, in reception and transit centres.

Central African Republic

The UN Consolidated Inter-Agency Appeal for the Central African Republic in 2009 sought \$100.4 million, of which 73 per cent (\$73.3 million) was received.

While progress had been made over the previous year, the peace process in the Central African Republic remained fragile and limited. Nearly half of the IDPs, some 85,000 people, had returned to their villages only to find their houses destroyed and their fields overgrown. Another 209,000 Central Africans displaced in the country and in neighbouring Cameroon, Chad and Darfur, were afraid to return home. Displacement continued as renewed fighting between a militant group and Government forces in the northwest, as well as attacks by armed bandits across the north and incursions by the Ugandan Lord's Resistance Army rebel group in the southeast, forced more people away from their villages. Political conflict, banditry, the destruction of schools, health centres and houses, and forced displacement further exacerbated an already dire humanitarian situation. Meanwhile, basic health indicators in the Central African Republic were among the worst on the continent. The humanitarian aid strategy was limited to areas directly affected by conflict and violence: the seven northern prefectures and the far southeast. The four sectors identified as priorities were health; water, sanitation and hygiene; protection; and early recovery. An initial appeal sought \$116.2 million for 105 projects. In July, humanitarian partners issued a revised strategy to continue assisting and protecting hundreds of thousands of people who had been affected by violence.

Chad

The UN Consolidated Inter-Agency Appeal for Chad in 2009 sought \$400.6 million, of which 91 per cent (\$365.9 million) was received.

Thanks to the funding, the humanitarian aid community in Chad was able to continue providing vital assistance to Sudanese and Central African refugees, to Chadian IDPs, and to members of the host population most affected by the presence of refugees and IDPs in the east and south-east of the country. That assistance contributed to the survival of more than half a million people. It was achieved in restricted humanitarian space, and in a complex and difficult security environment in which attacks and banditry had increased. Although the security situation remained fragile, in the absence of any large-scale fight-

ing in Chad in 2009, the aid community agreed that the situation in Chad was predominately one of assistance to the various populations and that the acute emergency phase (in the sense of rapid worsening) was over. Humanitarian action would continue to focus on emergency relief needs, while emphasizing self-sufficiency and developing local capacities of people in Chad affected by the internal crisis and instability in the subregion. No new internal displacements had been reported since the beginning of the year. Between 20,000 and 25,000 people had returned home from 2008 to the end of 2009.

Côte d'Ivoire

The UN Consolidated Inter-Agency Appeal for Côte d'Ivoire, which sought \$36.7 million in 2009, received 37 per cent (\$13.7 million) of the requirement.

Following the signature of the Ouagadougou Agreement in March 2007 [YUN 2007, p. 174], Côte d'Ivoire entered a post-conflict phase, which led to positive changes in the socio-economic sector during the political transition period, including new commitments towards the country made by financial institutions. Nonetheless, those developments had not completely halted the degradation of social conditions resulting from five years of crisis. Although an estimated 78,000 out of 120,000 IDPs had voluntarily returned to their origins in the western part of the country as at 31 May 2009, land disputes and an overall weak social fabric posed a threat to the sustained pace of return of the remaining IDPs. Response to the high malnutrition rate continued to be a critical need in the north of the country. Assistance had reached 10,000 malnourished children under five years of age and mothers. Collecting data on malnutrition was identified as a priority in order to allow for better-targeted actions in the second half of the year. Humanitarian partners in Côte d'Ivoire agreed that the transitional context required responses that were more anchored in recovery and development objectives and coordination frameworks had been adapted to meet that new reality.

Democratic Republic of the Congo

The Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) was the scene of one of the worst humanitarian crises in the world. In 2009, despite positive signs of political progress and the improvement of relations between the DRC and neighbouring countries, the continued fighting in the east between the Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and rebel groups had serious impact on humanitarian activities. The year was also marked by aggravated attacks by the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), which resulted in frequent looting and serious abuses against civilians.

In addition, harassment and attacks against humanitarian workers were on the rise, particularly in North Kivu.

However, thanks to the efforts of humanitarian actors, many positive results were achieved, including: more than 1 million people gained access to drinking water; some 55,000 schoolchildren were back in school; about 1.3 million people became reachable due to the rebuilding of bridges and roads and the introduction of flights; support was sent to more than 600 nutritional centres; the social and economic reintegration of over 12,000 people was accomplished; food rations to 2.8 million people and non-food item kits to 280,000 people were distributed; support was provided to more than 6,700 victims of sexual violence; and 80 per cent vaccine coverage of measles and diphtheria/pertussis/tetanus (DPT) in accessible areas were distributed.

The revised Humanitarian Action Plan for the Democratic Republic of the Congo sought \$946.3 million, of which 65 per cent (\$617.9 million) was received.

Kenya

In 2009, a number of factors—including poor short rains, rising food and commodity prices, reduced cereal production and livestock diseases—converged to increase food insecurity among vulnerable populations in Kenya, leading the President to declare an emergency on 16 January and launch an appeal for assistance. The short rains assessment revealed that 3.5 million people required emergency food assistance. Meanwhile, ongoing violence and insecurity in Somalia had prompted an increase in refugees entering Kenya, with more than 50,000 refugees entering the country in 2009. In March, the 2009 Emergency Humanitarian Response Plan for Kenya was revised to respond to existing and emerging needs, which represented a 48 per cent increase.

Thanks to the funding, 2.2 million people in the arid and semi-arid lands received food assistance. More than 420,000 schoolchildren in coastal districts received emergency school feeding. More than 100,000 people in the 2008 post-election violence affected areas received basic needs assistance, including improved access to safe water and food assistance. In addition, 20,000 IDP shelters had been constructed. Health sector partners responded to cholera outbreaks in 38 districts in five provinces and kala azar outbreaks in three districts of the Rift Valley and north-eastern provinces. As of July 2009, approximately 51,300 children under five had been admitted into supplementary feeding programmes and 8,400 into therapeutic feeding programmes. That represented a significant increase from the previous year, during

which 7,400 children were admitted in therapeutic feeding programmes for the whole of 2008.

The Plan, which sought \$581.1 million for 2009, received 84 per cent (\$490.3 million) of the requirements. In June, further revisions to the Plan reduced the requirements to \$576 million.

Somalia

The UN Consolidated Inter-Agency Appeal for Somalia for 2009, which sought \$851.8 million, received 66 per cent (\$559.1 million) of the requirements.

Protracted conflict, economic collapse, and drought conditions continued to drive the humanitarian crisis in Somalia in 2009, resulting in increased population displacement, greater urban vulnerability and widespread acute malnutrition. The overall food security situation continued to deteriorate, with 43 per cent of the population (3.2 million people) remaining in need of humanitarian and livelihood assistance. While the *Gu* rains, which normally ran from March to June, had started in many parts of the country, they were insufficient to alleviate the water shortages in some areas. The global economic downturn also affected the country; remittances estimated at one billion dollars per year declined by 25 per cent owing to the global recession and increased unemployment among the Somali diaspora. Due to operational constraints, such as growing insecurity, targeting of humanitarian workers, and limited funding, the humanitarian community had prioritized emergency relief activities over medium- and long-term humanitarian programming. The four response objectives remained valid: provide humanitarian assistance to 3.2 million people in crisis, including 820,000 people in humanitarian emergency who would be targeted for life-saving assistance; increase community and local capacity to protect social and economic assets in emergencies; deliver an integrated minimum package of basic social services based on geographic specific priorities and target groups; and strengthen the protective environment of civilians. The initial appeal requirements were decreased by \$70 million owing mainly to the withdrawal of a key food aid organization.

Sudan

The UN Consolidated Inter-Agency Appeal for the Sudan sought \$2.1 billion, of which 70 per cent (\$1.5 billion) was received, making Sudan the largest humanitarian operation in the world.

Events in early 2009 changed the operational environment for humanitarian actors in the Sudan. Key aspects of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement—the census, disarmament, demobilization and rehabilitation, and the Interim Abyei Administration—

advanced the movement towards recovery. However, each of those benchmarks had been offset by continued challenges. Insecurity and conflict caused displacement as well as protection and human rights concerns in Darfur, southern Sudan and the “Three Areas” (Abyei, Blue Nile, South Kordofan). In addition, the loss of Sudanese and international NGOs in March altered the humanitarian community’s ability to implement programmes. During the first half of the year, the United Nations and NGOs provided 104,500 metric tonnes of food assistance; supplied chlorinated water to more than 1 million people; and maintained health facilities and serviced nearly 1.3 million outpatients. Despite those efforts, chronic gaps and concerns for strategic and sustainable solutions became more pressing. By August, 4 million people had received critical food assistance—including basic cereals, pulses, oil, sugar and salt while 800,000 households had received seed and tool kits and technical training on increasing yields. More than 21,000 severely malnourished children had been admitted to feeding programmes in northern Sudan and 18,600 in southern Sudan by October; and the mass distribution of vitamin A supplements to over 7 million children and mass de-worming campaigns were carried out in northern Sudan, reaching 5.1 million children. Gross enrolment in basic education rose to 73.2 per cent, a 3.3 per cent increase over 2008, although large numbers of children remained out of school.

Communication. On 19 June [S/2009/318], the Sudan transmitted to the Security Council a joint press advisory on the second meeting of the strengthened High-level Committee on humanitarian affairs (Khartoum, 17 June). The meeting built on the dialogue established at the first meeting on 7 May between the Government and the humanitarian community. The Committee approved terms of reference towards a predictable, less bureaucratic and more accountable and efficient aid system in Darfur.

Uganda

The UN Consolidated Inter-Agency Appeal for Uganda sought \$247 million in 2009, of which 76 per cent (\$188.2 million) was received.

In 2009, recovery was emerging as the main requirement in Uganda, yet humanitarian needs remained in danger of not being met due to poor funding. With some 1.6 million people across the Acholi, Karamoja and Teso sub-regions requiring humanitarian assistance, some aid organizations, particularly in Teso, were considering closing operations as funding was not forthcoming. Continuing stability in the country prompted the majority of IDPs to leave the camps in Acholi. Population movements out of IDP camps, where access to water and sanitation facilities

had been good, had not been matched by increased provision of services in return sites. Latrine coverage in return areas in northern Uganda was less than 30 per cent, while access to improved water sources averaged only 30 per cent. The outbreak of hepatitis E that had killed 160 people and infected more than 10,000 since 2007 continued to spread and the threat of epidemic outbreaks of other diseases remained high. In Karamoja, humanitarian response provided food assistance to over 80 per cent of food-insecure individuals. Animal diseases imperilled the region's main source of livelihood; sustained funding for vaccinations was required to bring outbreaks under control. Over half of the food security sector funding had gone toward food assistance, even though agricultural interventions to expand land access and use were critical to ensuring food security in the Acholi and Teso sub-regions. In June, priorities identified for the remainder of the Appeal included boosting food and livelihood security; enhancing access to water and sanitation in areas of return; increasing immunization coverage and disease surveillance and response; and facilitating return and functional capacity of displaced schools.

West Africa

The UN Consolidated Inter-Agency Appeal for the West Africa subregion, which sought \$404.2 million in 2009 to assist beneficiaries in Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Mauritania, the Niger, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Togo, received 64 per cent (\$259.7 million) of requirements.

During the year, West Africa experienced humanitarian emergencies arising from a range of vulnerabilities. By mid-May, the region had suffered a meningitis epidemic that affected some 67,000 persons, killing 3,000, and a measles outbreak with 35,000 reported cases that killed 250 people. The epidemics showed the vulnerability of the population, as well as the lack of preparedness and capacity to respond to rapid onset, or to medium- to large-scale emergencies. At the same time, high food commodity prices affected the region and impacted already high rates of malnutrition. On the political front, a number of countries had achieved a measure of peace and stability, yet still struggled with the longer-term effects of past conflicts and instability. Military coups d'état (Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Mauritania), constitutional changes to extend presidential mandates (Niger), and social unrest or uncertainty surrounding political elections were worrying indications of the potential for a deterioration in regional stability. The four priority areas agreed by the humanitarian community—food security and nutrition; health; protection and population movements; and water, sanitation

and hygiene—would continue to be the core of humanitarian action in the region. A fifth priority area, comprising coordination, information management and support services, would continue to ensure a principled humanitarian response and the provision of support and services to all humanitarian actors. The mid-year review of the Appeal included 14 new projects, as well as revisions of existing projects, and resulted in an 8.5 per cent increase in requirements, mainly due to increased food and nutrition needs.

Zimbabwe

The UN Consolidated Inter-Agency Appeal for Zimbabwe sought \$722.2 million in 2009, of which 63 per cent (\$456.4 million) was received.

During the year, the humanitarian situation in Zimbabwe deteriorated sharply. A country-wide cholera outbreak and increase in food insecurity exacerbated the socio-economic environment of hyper-inflation and led to the collapse of basic social services. The humanitarian response contained the cholera outbreak, provided food and agricultural assistance to vulnerable populations, and supported vital social services including health, water and education, in the face of operational difficulties. Despite those efforts, as of May, 6 million people had limited or no access to safe water and sanitation; 600,000 families needed key agricultural inputs for the 2009–2010 planting season; and 1.3 million people were living with HIV/AIDS. The decline of the water and sanitation, health, education, and protection sectors was one of the main reasons the cholera outbreak had spread uncontrollably and claimed over 4,200 lives. There was concern that, unless conditions changed, outbreaks of water-borne diseases at the onset of the next rainy season could lead to new cholera cases and increased humanitarian needs. A revision of the appeal resulted in the inclusion of projects that supported population stabilization and emergency recovery and risk reduction, such as the repair to basic infrastructure and payment of incentives to health workers and teachers. Other appeal objectives included saving and preventing loss of lives; supporting the restoration of livelihoods; preventing the depletion of productive household assets; and strengthening the institutional capacity at the local level of coordinating and implementing essential recovery activities.

Asia

Afghanistan

The humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan was characterized by some 235,000 IDPs, 7.4 million food-insecure people (31 per cent of the population), 400,000 persons seriously affected by natural disasters annually and 2.6 million registered Afghan refugees in the

region. Many parts of the country were inaccessible for humanitarian actors, who continued to be affected by intimidation and kidnappings of national staff, which surged in April 2009. Since 2007, security had deteriorated, particularly in the southern and eastern regions. Insecurity was linked to the movement of insurgents into those provinces, the ongoing lack of development and weak government institutions. The conflict-based humanitarian needs were compounded by the chronic vulnerability of much of Afghanistan's population. Flooding in the north of the country had affected more than 22,000 households, and drought from the previous two years had affected the lives of 70 per cent of the population in remote rural areas. The objectives of the 2009 Humanitarian Action Plan remained valid: provide relief to those affected by conflict and disasters; mitigate food insecurity and treat malnutrition; monitor and advocate for the protection of civilians and respect for the law; improve preparedness for disasters and disease outbreaks; and improve humanitarian access and response. The Plan, which was revised at the mid-year review to include new and re-prioritized projects, sought \$664.9 million, of which 76 per cent (\$507.7 million) was received.

Iraq

The UN Consolidated Inter-Agency Appeal for Iraq and the Region sought \$650.2 million in 2009, of which 67 per cent (\$433 million) of the requirement was received.

Although Iraq was moving toward transition, with rates of violence down by 75 per cent since mid-2007, food insecurity at 25 per cent of the 2005 figures, and 21,000 IDP families returning home between June and September 2008, the situation in 2009 remained fragile. That included continued attacks against civilians; many underlying conflicts and grievances unresolved; and hundreds of thousands of Iraqi families inside and outside the country struggling with acute poverty, displacement and the continuing effects of conflict. In some areas, availability of water, sanitation, and health care was far below national averages. The 2009 Appeal for Iraq and the Region supplemented the Government response, addressing immediate humanitarian needs, contributing to stabilization and promoting recovery, not only within Iraq, but for 1.7 million Iraqi refugees in seven countries across the Middle East. It was presented in two pillars: one coordinated by Iraq's Humanitarian Coordinator, reflecting needs inside the country; and the other coordinated by UNHCR, addressing the needs of Iraqi refugees in the region. Countries hosting the largest number of Iraqi refugees (Syria, Jordan, Lebanon) assisted nearly 300,000 registered refugees. In Iraq, UN operations shifted towards addressing the needs of vulnerable groups including not only IDPs and re-

turnees but also female-headed households, particularly Iraq's widows, children and adolescents. New projects on returnees' protection and shelter requirements added at the mid-year review increased first pillar requirements by 61 per cent (\$308.8 million).

Nepal

In 2009, significant humanitarian needs remained in Nepal due to a combination of national and global factors: a particularly severe winter drought, ongoing civil and political tensions, chronic underlying vulnerabilities, and susceptibility to sudden-onset natural disasters, compounded by the global financial, fuel, and food crises. Food insecurity was widespread, with more than 40 per cent of the population undernourished. In December 2008, 2.7 million people were identified as requiring urgent food assistance and a joint Government of Nepal and UN assessment undertaken in May 2009 identified an additional 707,000 individuals requiring food assistance due to drought-induced failure of winter crops and high food prices. Meanwhile, political issues remained unresolved—a crisis resulted in the resignation of Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal on 4 May, terminating the nine-month-old Government. A coalition government was being established. Nepal was also faced with prolonged disruptions in the movement of goods due to intermittent unrest in Terai-Madhes, daily electricity cuts lasting up to 16 hours, and deteriorating labour relations. At the mid-year review, the Humanitarian Country Team agreed that the three priorities set at the beginning of the year were still valid: response, preparedness and partnership. Priority was given to projects for food assistance and disaster preparedness activities. Consequently, the 2009 Nepal Humanitarian Transition Appeal was revised upwards to \$145 million from the original \$115 million, which represented increases attributed to the addition of 12 new and revised projects, mainly to cover additional food security needs.

Pakistan

In April, insecurity in Pakistan's North West Frontier Province (NWFP) and Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) intensified, leading to mass forced displacement of the civilian population. Since mid-2008, some 577,167 people had fled their homes in NWFP, including FATA, and by the end of April 2009, the insecurity in the southern Malakand Division had led to further displacement of 1.2 million people and an estimated total of 1.8 million displaced people. Prior to the deterioration of the situation, the humanitarian community had been providing protection and assistance to 577,000 IDPs, the majority of whom were accommodated with host families,

while the rest received shelter, food, water, sanitation and hygiene and other services, including non-food items, in the 11 IDP camps established across NWFP. The scale of the new displacement demanded an increased humanitarian response from the Government and necessitated a further revision of the Pakistan Humanitarian Response Plan (PHRP) [YUN 2008, p. 1005]. Reports indicated that the insecurity had resulted in significant civilian casualties, restricted freedom of movement and devastated civilian infrastructure. Rapid needs assessment and immediate response would be implemented as soon as access permitted.

The UN appeal for the revised PHRP sought \$680.1 million in 2009, of which 77 per cent (\$525.8 million) was received.

Occupied Palestinian Territory

The UN Consolidated Inter-Agency Appeal for the Occupied Palestinian Territory, which sought \$804.5 million in 2009, received 79 per cent (\$636.6 million) of the requirements.

The year 2009 witnessed one of the most violent periods experienced by Palestinian civilians since the beginning of Israel's occupation in 1967 [YUN 1967, p. 174]. Following an escalation of violence since November 2008—including incursions and air strikes by Israeli forces and rockets fired into Israel by Palestinian armed factions—Israeli forces, on 27 December, conducted a 23-day military operation in the Gaza Strip (see p. 434). Some 1,326 Palestinians were killed and 5,450 injured. The conflict resulted in the destruction of homes, livelihoods and infrastructure, and debilitated basic services throughout the Gaza strip, compounding the humanitarian situation arising from the 18-month closure of Gaza to all but the most essential commodities. Some 14,800 homes were destroyed or damaged and nearly 51,000 people were displaced in shelters. Five months after the military operation, access to essential goods remained severely restricted, hindering humanitarian response. Some 32,000 Gazans still had no or limited access to clean water. Early recovery had not begun on the damaged infrastructure due to Israel's ban on imports of building materials and supplies. In July, humanitarian needs in all sectors were reassessed. The Humanitarian Country Team developed a normative framework for the provision of humanitarian assistance to Gaza providing guidelines for all actors to follow to allow the unhindered and impartial delivery of humanitarian assistance.

Sri Lanka

In 2009, the humanitarian situation in Sri Lanka changed significantly. The Government advance into remaining rebel-held territory in the northern Vanni

region continued until 18 May, when the Government announced the end of combat operations, concluding the 26-year long conflict with the separatist movement of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam. Over 230,000 people fled during the final month of the conflict, joining another 65,000 IDPs who had fled from the conflict area between the end of 2008 and mid-April 2009. The capacities of the Government and humanitarian aid agencies were strained, particularly in the Vavuniya District, where nearly 262,000 IDPs were being accommodated. The Government provided resources such as land clearing, drainage, electricity, and water supply to assist the displaced populations accommodated in IDP camps in Jaffna, Trincomalee and Vavuniya. UN agencies and NGOs provided basic assistance and monitored needs and gaps in IDP sites. The Humanitarian Country Team compiled a summary of emergency priorities to address IDP needs from May to July, which sought to clarify the nature and scale of the response within the framework of Sri Lanka's 2009 Common Humanitarian Action Plan and identified projects totalling \$52 million. That exercise fed into the mid-year review process and enabled humanitarian partners to review needs and update response plans. The updated Plan included projects to assist up to 100,000 IDPs to return to their places of origin before year's end and to support economic recovery, infrastructure and agriculture, and mine action activities. Consequently, the revised Plan sought \$270.1 million for 185 projects, of which 74 per cent (\$200.7 million) was received.

Syrian Arab Republic

In 2009, drought continued to affect a population in Syria that was already suffering from the impact of previous drought spells. Syrian Government and UN assessment missions indicated that some 1.3 million inhabitants of eastern Syria had been affected by the disaster, out of which 803,000 had lost almost all their livelihoods and faced extreme hardship. Up to 80 per cent of those severely affected lived on a diet consisting of bread and sugared tea, covering only 50 per cent of both caloric and protein requirements. Communities inhabiting the drought-affected areas suffered from acute water shortage as many wells and rivers had dried up. Meanwhile, poor nutrition, heat, and dust storms had a detrimental effect on the health of those populations. One of the most visible effects of the drought had been an increase in the already substantial migration out of the affected areas since the previous year. A combination of actions—food and agriculture assistance, supplemented by water and health interventions, and measures aimed at increasing drought resilience—was required to allow affected populations to remain in their villages and restart agriculture production in October 2009. Assis-

tance would need to continue until mid-2010, when new crops were expected to improve food security. The Syria Drought Response Plan was developed to supplement and enhance Government assistance. Through the Plan, seven agencies sought \$52.9 million to work with Governmental partners and targeted communities in addressing emergency humanitarian needs and mitigating further impact on some 38,000 families (300,000 people) considered the most vulnerable for a period of 12 months.

Special economic assistance

African economic recovery and development

New Partnership for Africa's Development

The General Assembly, by resolution 57/7 [YUN 2002, p. 910], endorsed the Secretary-General's recommendation [ibid., p. 909] that the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), adopted in 2001 by the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity [YUN 2001, p. 900], should be the framework within which the international community should concentrate its efforts for Africa's development. During 2009, efforts continued to focus on UN and international support for NEPAD and its implementation.

Implementation and support for NEPAD

Report of Secretary-General (March).

In response to a request of the Committee for Programme and Coordination (CPC) [YUN 2005, p. 1004], the Secretary-General in March submitted a report [E/AC.51/2009/7] on UN system support for NEPAD since May 2008. The report was organized around nine thematic clusters corresponding to the Partnership's priorities and strategies: infrastructure development; governance; peace and security; agriculture, food security and rural development; industry, trade and market access; environment, population and urbanization; social and human development; science and technology; and communications, advocacy and outreach. In addition, three selected policy issues in the implementation of NEPAD were examined: strengthening of the cluster system and impact of UN system support; support for the mobilization of financial resources for NEPAD implementation; and cross-cutting issues, such as the global economic and financial crisis, food and nutrition, governance, HIV/AIDS and public health, environmental sustainability and higher education. The report also identified challenges and constraints faced by the UN system

in supporting the African Union (AU) and the NEPAD programme.

The Secretary-General observed that the report coincided with the eighth anniversary of the adoption of NEPAD and that it was timely for UN system entities to develop an outcome-oriented monitoring approach whereby they could assess the impact of their support in the implementation of the NEPAD programme. He made recommendations for, among others, a specific monitoring and evaluation framework to be operationalized within the framework of the regional coordination mechanism; clusters to prepare and submit their business plans to be consolidated into one regional coordination plan; and UN system organizations to continue to collaborate closely with the AU Commission in support of AU priorities.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY ACTION

On 31 March [meeting 78], the General Assembly adopted **resolution 63/267** [draft: A/63/L.60/Rev.1 & Add.1] without vote [agenda item 57 (a)].

New Partnership for Africa's Development: progress in implementation and international support

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 57/2 of 16 September 2002 on the United Nations Declaration on the New Partnership for Africa's Development,

Recalling also its resolution 57/7 of 4 November 2002 on the final review and appraisal of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s and support for the New Partnership for Africa's Development and resolutions 58/233 of 23 December 2003, 59/254 of 23 December 2004, 60/222 of 23 December 2005, 61/229 of 22 December 2006 and 62/179 of 19 December 2007 entitled "New Partnership for Africa's Development: progress in implementation and international support",

Recalling further the 2005 World Summit Outcome, including the recognition of the need to address the special needs of Africa, and recalling its resolution 60/265 of 30 June 2006,

Recalling the political declaration on Africa's development needs, adopted at the high-level meeting on Africa's development needs on 22 September 2008,

1. *Takes note* of the sixth consolidated report of the Secretary-General;

2. *Reaffirms its commitment* to the full implementation of the political declaration on Africa's development needs, as reaffirmed also in the Doha Declaration on Financing for Development, adopted as the outcome document of the Follow-up International Conference on Financing for Development to Review the Implementation of the Monterrey Consensus, held in Doha from 29 November to 2 December 2008;

3. *Reaffirms its full support* for the implementation of the New Partnership for Africa's Development;

4. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit a comprehensive report on the implementation of the present resolution to the General Assembly at its sixty-fourth session on

the basis of inputs from Governments, organizations of the United Nations system and other stakeholders in the New Partnership.

CPC action. CPC, at its forty-ninth session (8 June–2 July) [A/64/16], welcomed the Secretary-General's report on NEPAD (see above) and the political declaration on Africa's development needs adopted during the 2008 high-level meeting of the Assembly by resolution 63/1 [YUN 2008, p. 1009]. The Committee recommended the urgent filling of the post of the Special Adviser on Africa and that the Special Adviser closely monitor the development and social effects of the financial crisis and its impact on the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in Africa. CPC also requested the Secretary-General to emphasize mitigation of the impacts of the crisis on African countries when ensuring better coordination among UN system organizations.

Report of Secretary-General (July). In response to Assembly resolution 63/267 (see above), the Secretary-General submitted, in July, the seventh consolidated report [A/64/204] on progress achieved to implement and support NEPAD, which highlighted action taken by African countries and organizations in the implementation in NEPAD; the response of the international community in building on the momentum of international support for Africa's development; and support provided by the UN system in NEPAD implementation, ranging from advocacy and institutional support to technical assistance and capacity-building. Given the need for a comprehensive long-term infrastructural development plan for the continent, the AU Commission, NEPAD and the African Development Bank (AfDB) initiated the Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa, a framework that would focus on translating sectoral policies into development action plans for the energy, transport, water and sanitation, and information and communications technology (ICT) sectors. Efforts were under way to determine the successful bidder to undertake the Programme study, which was expected to be completed by the end of 2010. The AU Commission, in collaboration with the NEPAD secretariat and AfDB, had also launched a number of quick-win infrastructure projects, such as the development of regional hydropower projects in response to the energy crisis, and projects concerning transcontinental transport infrastructure, including the missing links in the Trans-African Highway corridors. In other developments, the NEPAD e-Africa Commission was coordinating the development of the NEPAD ICT broadband infrastructure network in two segments: the Uhurunet submarine cable and the Umojanet terrestrial network. Uhurunet, which would provide for the connection of all coastal and island countries in Africa, was expected to become opera-

tional in 2010. A detailed feasibility study of part of Umojanet which would cover terrestrial networks in Eastern and Southern Africa was completed in April 2009.

The report also discussed the activities of the Regional Consultation Mechanism of UN entities and organizations working in Africa in support of AU and NEPAD, as well as progress achieved with the Millennium Villages Project and the peer review process. In that regard, some 30 countries had acceded to the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) as of July 2009. The Secretary-General concluded that progress had been achieved in implementing the NEPAD projects, moving the APRM process forward, and achieving the 10.2 per cent rise in net global official development assistance (ODA) from members of the Development Assistance Committee, which totalled \$119.8 billion in 2008. However, the main challenge was for African countries to ensure that the financial crisis, combined with the latent food and energy crisis, did not reverse the progress achieved. He called on international development partners to take action to mitigate the socio-economic impact of the crisis and help African countries recover ground in their progress towards the implementation of NEPAD and the MDGs. He further urged those partners to take steps to successfully conclude the Doha Round of trade negotiations.

Follow-up to high-level meeting on Africa's development needs

In follow-up to the high-level meeting convened by the Assembly on Africa's development needs in 2008 [YUN 2008, p. 1009] and pursuant to Assembly resolution 63/1 [ibid.], the Secretary-General submitted a July report [A/64/208] on Africa's development needs: state of implementation of various commitments, challenges and the way forward. The report assessed the impact on development of three crises that were engulfing Africa: the financial and economic, the food, and the climate change and energy crises. It also identified other development challenges, such as the increased number of armed conflicts; the brain drain; the health, human and economic impact of HIV/AIDS; the growth of urban areas; and governance, which in some States was marked by personalized rule and corruption.

On commitments and the state of implementation, the Secretary-General reported that the turn of the millennium had heralded a new phase in Africa's development, characterized by bolder commitments, more rigorous monitoring, and the willingness of African States and institutions to take full responsibility over the helm. Africa's economy was estimated to have expanded 5.7 per cent in 2008—the first time in 45 years that growth had exceeded

5 per cent for five successive years. Political and economic reforms had led to better economic management and an improved business environment. However, due to the financial and economic crisis, the pace of growth had slowed and was projected to reach only 2.8 per cent in 2009, lower than the 7 per cent average rate estimated for achieving the MDGs. The World Bank's *Global Monitoring Report 2009* indicated that 386 million people in sub-Saharan Africa were living below the poverty line of \$1.25 per day, a slight increase from 382.7 million in 2008. Progress in trade liberalization and economic diversification had led exports to increase from \$159 billion in 2000 to \$424 billion in 2007. On education, many African Governments had increased the priority of basic education, and primary enrolment in sub-Saharan Africa had grown from 60 per cent in 2000 to 71 per cent in 2007. Nonetheless, it was projected that the target of achieving universal primary enrolment by 2015 would be missed. On health-related issues, limited progress was made with regard to the 2001 Abuja Declaration [YUN 2001, p. 1133] on HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and other related infectious diseases; only 6 countries had met the commitment of allocating 15 per cent of their national budgets to health. Despite some improvement, deaths of under-five children remained high in 2007, totalling 145 deaths per 1,000 children in sub-Saharan Africa and 35 per 1,000 in northern Africa. On gender, African leaders made notable progress with the adoption of the African Union Gender Policy and its 10-year implementation plan.

The Secretary-General observed that the three crises affecting the continent occurred at an inopportune time—when African economies were growing steadily—and should be assessed jointly rather than individually. In 2008, Africa took a step back in important key areas such as economic growth, agricultural development and poverty eradication, as well as many other human development indicators. He made recommendations on addressing the world financial and economic crisis, the food crisis, climate change, as well as official development assistance, governance, poverty and cooperation in the areas of aid, trade, development finance and debt sustainability.

On 24 December, the General Assembly decided that the agenda item on “NEPAD: progress in implementation and international support” would remain for consideration during its resumed sixty-fourth (2010) session (**decision 64/549**).

Social dimensions of NEPAD

The Commission for Social Development, at its forty-seventh session (New York, 22 February 2008 and 4–13 February 2009) [E/2009/26], recommended to the Economic and Social Council for adoption

a resolution on the social dimensions of NEPAD. In resolution 2009/20 (see below), the Council requested the Commission to continue to give prominence to and raise awareness of the social dimensions of NEPAD. It also requested the Secretary-General to submit a report on the subject to the Commission's forty-eighth (2010) session.

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL ACTION

On 30 July [meeting 44], the Economic and Social Council, on the recommendation of the Commission for Social Development [E/2009/26], adopted **resolution 2009/20** without vote [agenda item 14 (c)].

Social dimensions of the New Partnership for Africa's Development

The Economic and Social Council,

Recalling the outcomes of the World Summit for Social Development, held in Copenhagen from 6 to 12 March 1995, and the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly, entitled “World Summit for Social Development and beyond: achieving social development for all in a globalizing world”, held in Geneva from 26 June to 1 July 2000,

Reaffirming the United Nations Millennium Declaration of 8 September 2000, the United Nations Declaration on the New Partnership for Africa's Development of 16 September 2002 and General Assembly resolution 57/7 of 4 November 2002 entitled “Final review and appraisal of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s and support for the New Partnership for Africa's Development”,

Noting the conclusions of the African Union Extraordinary Summit on Employment and Poverty Alleviation in Africa, held in Ouagadougou on 8 and 9 September 2004,

Recognizing the commitments to address the special needs of Africa made at the 2005 World Summit and reaffirmed in the political declaration adopted at the high-level meeting on Africa's development needs, held at United Nations Headquarters on 22 September 2008,

Remaining concerned that Africa is the only continent currently not on track to achieve any of the goals set out in the United Nations Millennium Declaration by 2015, and in this regard emphasizing that concerted efforts and continued support are required to fulfil the commitments to address the special needs of Africa,

Expressing deep concern that attainment of the social development objectives may be hindered by the financial crisis, as well as by challenges brought about by the ongoing food and energy crisis,

Recognizing that capacity-building, knowledge-sharing and best practices are essential for the successful implementation of the New Partnership for Africa's Development, and recognizing also the need for continued support from the international community,

Bearing in mind that African countries have primary responsibility for their own economic and social development, that the role of national policies and development strategies cannot be overemphasized and that the devel-

opment efforts of such countries need to be supported by an enabling international economic environment, and in this regard recalling the support given by the International Conference on Financing for Development to the New Partnership,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General;
2. *Welcomes* the progress made by African countries in fulfilling their commitments in the implementation of the New Partnership for Africa's Development to deepen democracy, human rights, good governance and sound economic management, and encourages African countries, with the participation of stakeholders, including civil society and the private sector, to intensify their efforts in this regard by developing and strengthening institutions for governance and by creating an environment conducive to attracting foreign direct investment for the development of the region;

3. *Also welcomes* the good progress that has been made in implementing the African Peer Review Mechanism, as reflected, in particular, by the number of countries that have signed up to participate in the Mechanism, the completion of the peer review process and the progress in implementing the recommendations of those reviews in some countries and the completion of the self-assessment process, the hosting of country support missions and the launching of the national preparatory process for the peer review in others, and urges African States that have not yet done so to join the Mechanism, as a matter of priority, and to strengthen the peer review process so as to ensure its efficient performance;

4. *Welcomes in particular* the organization of the first session of the African Union Conference of Ministers in charge of Social Development, held in Windhoek from 27 to 31 October 2008, and recalls in this regard the African Common Position on Social Integration and the Social Policy Framework for Africa, both of which have been endorsed by Africa's Heads of State;

5. *Welcomes* the efforts made by African countries and regional and subregional organizations, including the African Union, to mainstream a gender perspective and the empowerment of women in the implementation of the New Partnership, including through the implementation of the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa;

6. *Emphasizes* that the African Union and the regional economic communities have a critical role to play in the implementation of the New Partnership, and in this regard encourages African countries, with the assistance of their development partners, to increase and coordinate effectively their support for enhancing the capacities of those institutions and to promote regional cooperation and social and economic integration in Africa;

7. *Also emphasizes* that progress in the implementation of the New Partnership depends also on a favourable national and international environment for Africa's growth and development, including measures to promote a policy environment conducive to private sector development and entrepreneurship;

8. *Further emphasizes* that democracy, respect for all human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the right to development, transparent and accountable governance and administration in all sectors of society

and effective participation by civil society, including non-governmental organizations, in particular community-based organizations, and the private sector are among the indispensable foundations for the realization of social and people-centred sustainable development;

9. *Emphasizes* that the increasingly unacceptable levels of poverty and social exclusion faced by most African countries require a comprehensive approach to the development and implementation of social and economic policies, inter alia, to reduce poverty, to promote economic activity, growth and sustainable development, to ensure employment creation and decent work for all, to promote education and health and to enhance social inclusion, political stability, democracy and good governance and the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms, so as to ensure the achievement of Africa's social and economic objectives;

10. *Recognizes* that, while social development is primarily the responsibility of Governments, international cooperation and assistance are essential for the full achievement of that goal;

11. *Also recognizes* the contribution made by Member States to the implementation of the New Partnership in the context of South-South cooperation, and encourages the international community, including the international financial institutions, to support the efforts of African countries, including through trilateral cooperation;

12. *Welcomes* the various important initiatives undertaken by Africa's development partners in recent years, and in this regard emphasizes the importance of coordinating such initiatives on Africa by ensuring effective implementation of existing commitments in the context of such initiatives;

13. *Urges* continuous support for measures to address the challenges of poverty eradication and sustainable development in Africa, with a special emphasis on the Millennium Development Goals related to health, education, poverty and hunger, including, as appropriate, debt relief, improved market access, support for the private sector and entrepreneurship, enhanced official development assistance, increased foreign direct investment and technology transfer on mutually agreed terms, enhanced economic empowerment of women, the promotion of social protection systems and the conclusion of the current round of negotiations of the World Trade Organization;

14. *Recognizes* that the implementation of the commitments made by Governments during the First United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (1997–2006) has fallen short of expectations, and welcomes the proclamation of the Second Decade (2008–2017) by the General Assembly in its resolution 62/205 of 19 December 2007 in order to support, in an efficient and coordinated manner, the internationally agreed development goals related to poverty eradication, including the Millennium Development Goals;

15. *Encourages* all development partners to implement the principles of aid effectiveness recalled in the Doha Declaration on Financing for Development, adopted by the Follow-up International Conference on Financing for Development to Review the Implementation of the Monterrey Consensus on 2 December 2008;

16. *Recognizes* the need for national Governments and the international community to make continued efforts to increase the flow of new and additional resources

for financing for development from all sources, public and private, domestic and foreign, to support the development of African countries;

17. *Welcomes* the efforts by development partners to align their financial and technical support to Africa more closely with the priorities of the New Partnership, as reflected in national poverty reduction strategies or in similar strategies, and encourages development partners to increase their efforts in this regard;

18. *Acknowledges* the activities of the Bretton Woods institutions and the African Development Bank in African countries, and invites those institutions to continue to support the implementation of the priorities and objectives of the New Partnership;

19. *Notes* the growing collaboration among the entities of the United Nations system in support of the New Partnership, and requests the Secretary-General to promote greater coherence in the work of the United Nations system in support of the New Partnership, on the basis of the agreed clusters;

20. *Emphasizes* the importance for the communication, advocacy and outreach cluster to continue to muster international support for the New Partnership and to urge the United Nations system to demonstrate more evidence of cross-sectoral synergies in order to promote a comprehensive approach regarding successive phases of planning and implementation of social development programmes in Africa;

21. *Requests* the United Nations system to continue to provide assistance to the African Union, the secretariat of the New Partnership and African countries in developing projects and programmes within the scope of the priorities of the New Partnership;

22. *Invites* the Secretary-General, as a follow-up to the 2005 World Summit, to urge the organizations and bodies of the United Nations system to assist African countries in implementing quick-impact initiatives based on their national development priorities and strategies to enable them to achieve the Millennium Development Goals, and in this respect acknowledges recent commitments by some donor countries;

23. *Requests* the Secretary-General to continue to take measures to strengthen the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa, and requests the Office to collaborate with the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat and to include the social dimensions of the New Partnership in its comprehensive reports to the General Assembly at its sixty-fourth session;

24. *Requests* the Commission for Social Development to discuss in its annual programme of work those regional programmes that promote social development so as to enable all regions to share experiences and best practices, with the agreement of the countries concerned, and in this regard requests that the programmes of work of the Commission include priority areas of the New Partnership, as appropriate;

25. *Decides* that the Commission for Social Development should continue to give prominence to and raise awareness of the social dimensions of the New Partnership at its forty-eighth session;

26. *Requests* the Secretary-General, in collaboration with the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa, while also taking into consideration General Assembly resolution

62/179 of 19 December 2007 entitled “New Partnership for Africa’s Development: progress in implementation and international support”, to submit to the Commission for Social Development at its forty-eighth session a report on the social dimensions of the New Partnership.

Report of Secretary-General. In response to Council resolution 2009/20 (see above), the Secretary-General submitted a December report [E/CN.5/2010/3] on the social dimensions of NEPAD, which assessed the impact on social development of the converging global crises that had affected both developed and developing countries: the food and energy crises of 2007–2008, the existing global financial and economic crisis, and ongoing climate change. The Secretary-General observed that the gains achieved as a result of improved economic performance were likely to be lost, undoing advances made over the past decade. In addition, the lack of public social safety nets in Africa to offset the negative impact of a global recession would compound the situation, with the working poor and other vulnerable groups bearing the brunt of the global crises. Consequently, it was likely that African economies would experience decelerated growth, high unemployment and poverty rates, and diminished prospects for achieving NEPAD goals and other internationally agreed development goals, including the MDGs. The report concluded with recommendations for consideration by African countries and their development partners, including that proven initiatives in health, gender, sustainable agriculture, energy and infrastructure, and education, such as the Education for All-Fast Track Initiative, be scaled up and fully funded.

African countries emerging from conflict

On 23 July [E/2009/SR.34], the Chairman of the Organizational Committee of the Peacebuilding Commission addressed the Economic and Social Council on the question of ad hoc advisory groups on African countries emerging from conflict. He stressed the importance of cooperation between the Commission and the Council and the need to find ways to improve coordination of assistance to countries emerging from a conflict from the start. In the four countries on its agenda, namely Burundi (see p. 142), Guinea-Bissau (see p. 224), the Central African Republic (see p. 151) and Sierra Leone (see p. 211), the Commission continued to promote better coordination in order to maximize the impact of peacebuilding measures and to facilitate the channelling of resources. He briefed the Council on post-conflict recovery in those countries and said that five other African countries (Comoros, Côte d’Ivoire, Guinea, Liberia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo) had been declared eligible to benefit from the Peacebuilding Fund (see p. 47).

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL ACTION

On 31 July [meeting 45], the Economic and Social Council adopted **resolution 2009/32** [draft: E/2009/L.33/Rev.1] without vote [agenda item 7 (f)].

African countries emerging from conflict

The Economic and Social Council,

Recalling its resolution 2008/30 of 25 July 2008,

1. *Expresses its appreciation* to the Chair of the Organizational Committee of the Peacebuilding Commission for providing insights and information on post-conflict recovery, on the basis of the engagement of the Commission with the countries on its agenda, and urges the Commission to continue to strengthen its support for peacebuilding processes in the African countries placed on its agenda;

2. *Invites* the Chair of the Organizational Committee of the Peacebuilding Commission to continue to inform the Economic and Social Council about best practices, particularly lessons learned from its experiences, that are relevant for addressing the economic and social challenges of peacebuilding in other African countries emerging from conflict;

3. *Invites* the Peacebuilding Commission to strengthen its cooperation with the Council, including through enhanced dialogue between the Council and the Chairs of the Commission's country-specific configurations;

4. *Decides* to consider the matter at its substantive session of 2010 under the agenda item entitled "African countries emerging from conflict".

Other economic assistance**Haiti**

In response to Economic and Social Council resolution 2008/10 [YUN 2008, p. 1021], the Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Haiti reported in June [E/2009/105] on the Group's visit to Haiti from 4 to 7 May, the third conference on Haiti's economic and social development (Washington, D.C., 14 April), national ownership of development strategies, the strengthening of State institutions, the risks of donor impatience and fatigue and the challenges facing the country. The Group indicated that the appointment of Prime Minister Michèle Duvivier Pierre-Louis in September 2008 [YUN 2008, p. 337] and the return to stability allowed the Group to resume its practice of visiting the country and meeting with Haitian authorities, key civil society representatives and international development partners. The Group witnessed progress in various areas, particularly in the security and rule of law sectors. In addition, since the beginning of 2009, Haiti had received a high level of international attention and commitments of support: a joint visit by the UN Secretary-General and former United States President William Clinton; visits from high-level officials from partner countries; and the visit of the Security Council in March (see p. 319). Subsequently, President Clinton was named as the United Nations Special Envoy for Haiti. At the Washington, D.C.

donor conference in April, more than \$378 million was pledged for the Government's plan for economic recovery and rehabilitation.

The Group also observed that the weakness of State institutions constituted a major obstacle to development. In the field of education, in 2002–2003, some 2.8 million persons (39 per cent of the population) had never attended school and only 18 per cent of children were educated in the public sector. The maternal mortality rate remained high (630 per 100,000 live births) due to the State's inability to provide access to basic health-care services. On security and stability, lack of equipment jeopardized progress made in the recruitment and training of the Haitian National Police. As a result of those institutional weaknesses, the share of development assistance that was spent through State institutions remained very low as donors did not have sufficient indications of improvement in the area of governance. Regarding the main areas for international assistance, the Group stressed the double challenges of providing immediate support to the population, including through rapid job creation and foreign investments, and the need to continue in-depth support to communities, including in rural areas, and called for simultaneous action in those directions. The report concluded with nine recommendations addressed to the Haitian authorities and their international partners to enhance the impact of development assistance.

Communications. On 10 April [E/2009/52], Mexico transmitted to the Secretary-General the statement by the States members of the Rio Group and of the Caribbean Community entitled "Towards a new paradigm of cooperation", issued on 8 April in preparation for the Conference on the Economic and Social Development of Haiti (Washington, D.C., 14 April).

In letters to the Economic and Social Council dated 20 March [E/2009/49] and 1 October [E/2009/117], Peru and El Salvador, respectively, expressed the wish to join the Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Haiti and requested a positive decision by the Council. By **decision 2009/211** of 20 April and **decision 2009/267** of 15 December, the Council decided to appoint, respectively, Peru and El Salvador as additional members.

(For more information on Haiti see p. 318.)

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL ACTION

On 23 July [meeting 34], the Economic and Social Council adopted **resolution 2009/4** [draft: E/2009/L.13] without vote [agenda item 7 (d)].

Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Haiti

The Economic and Social Council,

Recalling its resolutions 2004/52 of 23 July 2004, 2005/46 of 27 July 2005, 2006/10 of 26 July 2006,

2007/13 of 25 July 2007 and 2008/10 of 23 July 2008 and its decisions 2004/322 of 11 November 2004 and 2009/211 of 20 April 2009,

1. *Takes note with appreciation* of the report of the Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Haiti and the recommendations contained therein;

2. *Notes* the political and economic evolution of the situation, and welcomes the support provided by the international community to this process;

3. *Also notes* the progress made towards the reform of rule-of-law institutions;

4. *Commends* the ongoing implementation of the growth and poverty reduction strategy paper by the authorities of Haiti, and looks forward to continued support from donors and other partners, including the United Nations system and the Bretton Woods institutions, in connection with the implementation of that strategy;

5. *Notes* the progress made by the Government of Haiti in terms of gender equality, and also notes the importance of gender equality as a necessary dimension of any strategy for development;

6. *Expresses its deep concern* over the particularly adverse effects of the 2008 hurricanes on Haiti, and encourages the international community to continue providing support for the short and long-term needs of Haiti for recovery;

7. *Welcomes* the nomination of a United Nations Special Envoy for Haiti, as well as the third conference on Haiti's economic and social development, held in Washington, D.C., on 14 April 2009 under the auspices of the Inter-American Development Bank, and looks forward to the timely and effective implementation of pledges made at that conference;

8. *Recognizes* the need for effective and continued co-ordination between the Government of Haiti and donors, as well as a standing mechanism for consultation with the main non-governmental organizations active in Haiti;

9. *Decides* to extend the mandate of the Advisory Group until the substantive session of 2010 of the Economic and Social Council, with the purpose of following closely and providing advice on Haiti's long-term development strategy to promote socio-economic recovery and stability, with particular attention to the need to ensure coherence and sustainability in international support for Haiti, on the basis of long-term national development priorities and building upon the Interim Cooperation Framework and the growth and poverty reduction strategy paper, and stressing the need to avoid overlap and duplication with respect to existing mechanisms;

10. *Expresses its satisfaction* to the Secretary-General for the support provided to the Advisory Group, and requests him to continue to support the activities of the Group adequately and from within existing resources;

11. *Requests* the Advisory Group, in accomplishing its mandate, to continue to cooperate with the Secretary-General and his Special Representative and Head of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti, the United Nations Special Envoy for Haiti, the United Nations Development Group, relevant United Nations funds and programmes, the specialized agencies, the Bretton Woods institutions, regional organizations and institutions, including the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, the Organization of American States and

the Caribbean Community, the Inter-American Development Bank and other major stakeholders;

12. *Also requests* the Advisory Group to submit a report on its work, with recommendations, as appropriate, to the Economic and Social Council for its consideration at its substantive session of 2010.

Kazakhstan

In 2009, the General Assembly continued its consideration of special economic assistance to individual countries or regions, including the Secretary-General's 2008 report [YUN 2008, p. 1021] on international cooperation and coordination for the human and ecological rehabilitation and economic development of the Semipalatinsk region of Kazakhstan, a former nuclear test site also referred to as the Semipalatinsk Polygon. The report indicated that despite actions undertaken by the Government of Kazakhstan, the UN system and the international community since the adoption of resolution 60/216 in 2005 [YUN 2005, p. 1013], those efforts had not been sufficient to mitigate the suffering caused by years of nuclear testing. The Secretary-General recommended the organization of a conference with the participation of international and national partners to review the work that had been accomplished and set future priorities. During the year, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) convened the International Conference on Remediation of Land Contaminated by Radioactive Material Residues (Kazakhstan, 18–22 May 2009), which provided a forum for all parties involved in the remediation of radioactive contaminated sites to exchange ideas, review progress and developments since the 1999 IAEA international symposium on the topic, compare technologies and methods, and disseminate information and experience.

In resolution 63/279 (see below), the General Assembly took note of the Secretary-General's report, welcomed the IAEA conference and requested the Secretary-General to pursue a consultative process on modalities for mobilizing and coordinating the support to seek solutions to the problems and needs of the Semipalatinsk region.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY ACTION

On 24 April [meeting 81], the General Assembly adopted **resolution 63/279** [draft: A/63/L.67 & Add.1] without vote [agenda item 65 (b)].

International cooperation and coordination for the human and ecological rehabilitation and economic development of the Semipalatinsk region of Kazakhstan

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 52/169 M of 16 December 1997, 53/1 H of 16 November 1998, 55/44 of 27 November 2000,

57/101 of 25 November 2002 and 60/216 of 22 December 2005,

Taking note of the report of the Secretary-General, and the information contained therein on measures taken to address health, environmental, economic and humanitarian development problems and satisfy the needs of the Semipalatinsk region,

Recognizing that the Semipalatinsk nuclear testing ground, inherited by Kazakhstan and closed in 1991, remains a matter of serious concern for the people and Government of Kazakhstan with regard to the long-term nature of its consequences for the lives and health of the people, especially children and other vulnerable groups, as well as for the environment of the region,

Taking into consideration the results of the international conference on the problems of the Semipalatinsk region, held in Tokyo in 1999, which have promoted the effectiveness of the assistance provided to the population of the region,

Recognizing the important role of national development policies and strategies in the rehabilitation of the Semipalatinsk region, and taking note with satisfaction of the successful implementation of the Kazakhstan national programme entitled "Complex solution of the former Semipalatinsk nuclear test site problems for 2005–2007" and the elaboration of the new cycle of the programme for 2009–2011,

Recognizing also the challenges Kazakhstan faces in the rehabilitation of the Semipalatinsk region, in particular in the context of the efforts by the Government of Kazakhstan to ensure the effective and timely achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, in particular with regard to health care and environmental sustainability,

Recognizing further that the Government of Kazakhstan may call upon the United Nations Resident Coordinator in Kazakhstan to render assistance conducting consultations for establishing a multi-stakeholders' mechanism, with the participation of various government bodies, local governments, civil society, the donor community and international organizations, to improve governance and enable the more efficient use of resources allocated for the rehabilitation of the Semipalatinsk region, in particular regarding the areas of radiation safety, socio-economic development, health and environmental protection, and for the provision of information on risks to the population,

Expressing profound concern regarding the negative effects of nuclear testing on the sustainability of the ecosystem in the region and about the accumulation of radioactive substances in the soil, which result in wide-ranging and complex consequences that create humanitarian, environmental, social, economic and health problems,

Taking note of the need for the utilization of modern technologies in minimizing and mitigating radiological, health, socio-economic, psychological and environmental challenges in the Semipalatinsk region,

Taking into account the fact that a number of international programmes in the Semipalatinsk region have been completed since the closure of the nuclear testing ground, but serious social, economic and ecological problems continue to exist,

Expressing deep concern that the current efforts are not sufficient to alleviate the consequences of nuclear testing, and regarding the fact that only five of the thirty-eight projects identified by the international conference held in Tokyo in 1999 were implemented,

Emphasizing the importance of support by donor States and international development organizations for the efforts by Kazakhstan to improve the social, economic and environmental situation in the Semipalatinsk region, and in this regard stressing the need for the international community to continue to pay due attention to the rehabilitation of the Semipalatinsk region,

Emphasizing also the importance of the new development-oriented approach in tackling problems in the Semipalatinsk region in the medium and long term,

Stressing the importance of the commemoration, in 2011, of the twentieth anniversary of the closure of the Semipalatinsk nuclear test site,

Expressing appreciation to donor countries, especially Japan, United Nations agencies, in particular the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Children's Fund, the United Nations Population Fund, the International Atomic Energy Agency and the World Bank, and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and the Global Environment Facility for their contribution to the rehabilitation of the Semipalatinsk region,

1. *Welcomes and recognizes* the important role of the Government of Kazakhstan in providing domestic resources to help to meet the needs of the Semipalatinsk region, including for the implementation of the Kazakhstan national multi-year programme entitled "Complex solution of the former Semipalatinsk nuclear test site problems for 2005–2007";

2. *Calls upon* the international community, including all Member States, in particular donor States, and United Nations institutions to continue to support Kazakhstan in addressing the challenges of the rehabilitation of the Semipalatinsk region and its population, taking additional actions, including by facilitating the implementation of the Kazakhstan national programme on addressing the problems of the former Semipalatinsk nuclear testing ground in a comprehensive manner, and stresses the importance of regional cooperation in this regard;

3. *Urges* the international community to provide assistance to Kazakhstan in the formulation and implementation of special programmes and projects for the treatment and care of the affected population as well as in efforts to ensure economic growth and sustainable development in the Semipalatinsk region;

4. *Calls upon* Member States, relevant multilateral financial organizations and other entities of the international community, including academia and non-governmental organizations, to share their knowledge and experience in order to contribute to the human and ecological rehabilitation and economic development of the Semipalatinsk region;

5. *Welcomes* initiatives commemorating the closure of the former Semipalatinsk test site and the twentieth anniversary of the international anti-nuclear movement "Nevada-Semei", and the international conference of the International Atomic Energy Agency on the remediation of land contaminated by radioactive material residues, to be

held in 2009 in Kazakhstan, and invites the international community to participate in these events;

6. *Invites* Member States to observe, in 2011, the twentieth anniversary of the closure of the Semipalatinsk nuclear test site by conducting events and functions to provide to the international community information on the deteriorating consequences of nuclear testing on human health and the environment;

7. *Requests* the Secretary-General to continue his efforts in implementing relevant resolutions of the General Assembly and to encourage the donor community and international and regional organizations to fulfil their commitments declared at the Tokyo international conference;

8. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to pursue a consultative process, with the participation of interested States and relevant United Nations agencies, on modalities for mobilizing and coordinating the necessary support to seek appropriate solutions to the problems and needs of the Semipalatinsk region, including those prioritized in his report;

9. *Calls upon* the Secretary-General to continue his efforts to enhance world public awareness of the problems and needs of the Semipalatinsk region;

10. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its sixty-sixth session, under the item entitled "Sustainable development", on progress made in the implementation of the present resolution.

Third States affected by sanctions

In response to General Assembly resolution 63/127 [YUN 2008, p. 1476], the Secretary-General submitted an August report [A/64/225] that highlighted developments concerning Assembly and Economic and Social Council activities in the area of assistance to third States affected by the application of sanctions; arrangements in the Secretariat related to assistance to those States; and operational changes as a result of the shift in focus towards targeted sanctions in the procedures and working methods of the Security Council and its sanctions committees.

The Assembly took action with regard to the Secretary-General's report in **resolution 64/115** (see p. 1322).

Disaster response

In 2009, a reduced number of disasters associated with natural hazards, such as earthquakes, floods, cyclones and droughts, was recorded with some 328 disasters, spread across 111 countries, affecting 113 million people and causing more than 10,000 deaths. That number marked a significant divergence from the annual average of 392 disasters per year for the period 2000–2008. Experts attributed the reduced incidence of disasters to climate change variations, particularly the El Niño effect, leading to an unusually quiet

North Atlantic hurricane season in the Caribbean and drought in South Asia. Global temperatures were still predicted to continue to rise—globally, 2009 was warmer than the previous three years—increasing the likelihood of more frequent extreme weather events in the future. Globally, hydrometeorological hazards (hazards of an atmospheric, hydrological or oceanographic nature) caused 92 per cent of the disasters during the year. Floods were the most common type of disaster recorded with 147 events, followed by 84 storms and 30 landslides. Estimates of the economic costs of disasters in 2009 averaged between \$35 and \$50 billion. Despite high absolute financial losses in China, Europe and the United States, the relative economic impact of disasters was greatest in low- and middle-income countries.

The Horn of Africa continued to be in the grip of a severe and prolonged drought contributing to an acute need for humanitarian assistance and affecting food security. Devastating floods in several West African countries from June to October affected more than 770,000 people and killed 193. In Asia, two consecutive earthquakes in Indonesia affected 2.5 million people, causing 1,100 casualties, displacing 469,000 people and damaging 114,000 houses. Three consecutive typhoons struck the Philippines in September and October affecting over 10 million people, of whom an estimated 700,000 were displaced. In the Middle East, the north-eastern region of the Syrian Arab Republic experienced its third consecutive year of drought affecting 1.3 million people. In Latin America and the Caribbean, the combined effects of Hurricane Ida and a low pressure system off the Pacific coast led in November to unprecedented heavy rainfall in El Salvador, triggering severe flooding that affected more than 75,000 people and killed 198. Guatemala suffered from drought and food insecurity affecting some 136,000 families.

Human influenza. The United Nations continued to consider the issue of business continuity management [YUN 2008, p. 1551], including preparedness for a potential pandemic. By **resolution 63/268** of 7 April (see p. 1391) the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to ensure that lessons learned within the Secretariat for human influenza pandemic preparedness were taken into account as the work of business continuity management was implemented.

International cooperation

Report of Secretary-General. In response to General Assembly resolution 63/141 [YUN 2008, p. 1023], the Secretary-General, in an August report on international cooperation on humanitarian assistance in the field of natural disasters [A/64/331], provided an overview of disasters associated with natural hazards and highlighted emerging trends, their humanitarian

implications, key challenges and activities undertaken to strengthen disasters preparedness.

The report stated that global disaster risk was increasing and was highly concentrated in poorer countries with weaker governance. Rapid urbanization was exacerbating the vulnerability of urban dwellers to the impacts of disaster and climate change. More than 50 per cent of the world's population lived in urban areas and that figure was expected to rise to 60 per cent by 2030. The effects of disasters also magnified gender inequalities. Women represented the majority of deaths from natural disasters as they had less access to essential resources for disaster preparedness, mitigation and rehabilitation. Globally, natural disasters were also the greatest cause of internal displacement.

Key challenges in addressing disaster risk included global issues, such as extreme poverty, the food crisis, water and energy scarcity, forced displacement and migration, population growth, urbanization and pandemics, which were increasing the underlying vulnerability of communities, as well as climate change, which was increasing hazard intensity and frequency. Specific challenges facing humanitarian actors included adjusting their systems towards a greater focus on the multi-hazard environment, particularly climate change; on disaster preparedness; and on efforts to ensure an effective transition from relief to recovery. The Secretary-General concluded that within the changing humanitarian landscape, developing national and local capacities for humanitarian action, in terms of emergency preparedness, response and recovery, was fundamental to improving the overall delivery of humanitarian assistance. Enhancing capacity at local and national levels must be a priority in order to mitigate risks to population and to ensure the effectiveness of disaster preparedness, risk reduction and initial response operations. He encouraged Member States to underline the importance of early and multiyear commitments to the Central Emergency Response Fund (see p. 888) and other humanitarian financing mechanisms; strengthen support for humanitarian actors to enable them to cope with the increasing humanitarian burden associated with climate change; review and revise pandemic response plans, as well as take necessary preparedness measures to respond to pandemic influenza. The United Nations system and other humanitarian actors were encouraged to strengthen the ability to quickly and flexibly deploy humanitarian professionals to support Governments and country teams in the immediate aftermath of a disaster, as well as increase the level of human and financial resources provided to humanitarian and resident coordinators for leading and coordinating disaster preparedness and early recovery activities. Member States, the UN system and other humanitarian actors were also called upon to accelerate the implementa-

tion of the Hyogo Framework for Action [YUN 2005, p. 1016] and to place a strong emphasis on the promotion and strengthening of disaster preparedness activities at all levels.

UN-SPIDER programme. The Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (see p. 599) submitted a report [A/AC.105/955] on the 2009 activities of the United Nations Platform for Space-based Information for Disaster Management and Emergency Response (UN-SPIDER). On 10 December, in **resolution 64/86**, the Assembly endorsed the workplan for the 2010–2011 UN-SPIDER programme (see p. 599). It also welcomed the establishment of regional support offices in Iran, Nigeria and Romania and the co-operation agreement reached with the Asian Disaster Reduction Centre to support the implementation of the programme's activities.

On 24 December, the Assembly decided that the agenda item on strengthening the coordination of UN emergency humanitarian assistance would remain for consideration during its resumed sixty-fourth (2010) session (**decision 64/549**).

Disaster reduction

International Strategy for Disaster Reduction

In response to General Assembly resolution 63/216 [YUN 2008, p. 1027], the Secretary-General, in an August report [A/64/280], reviewed the implementation of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR), which was adopted by the programme forum of the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction (1990–2000) in 1999 [YUN 1999, p. 859] and endorsed by the Assembly in resolution 54/219 [ibid., p. 861]. It detailed efforts to implement the Hyogo Framework for Action, the 10-year plan for reducing disaster risks adopted at the World Conference on Disaster Reduction in 2005 [YUN 2005, p. 1015] and endorsed by the Assembly in resolution 60/195 [ibid., p. 1018]. The report indicated that globally, disaster risk was increasing substantially with regard to most hazards, with the risk of economic loss increasing much faster than the risk of mortality. The main driver of the trend was rapidly increasing exposure to risk. As countries developed, vulnerability decreased, but not fast enough to compensate for the increased exposure. The report called for urgent action to invest more in systematic implementation of the strategy and to address the driving factors of disaster: rural poverty and vulnerability, unplanned urban growth and declining ecosystems.

Although progress was made in implementing some aspects of the Hyogo Framework for Action, acceleration in implementation was required towards all Framework goals. At the national level, 88 countries had issued systematic reports on Framework

implementation and 120 Governments had designated focal points for implementation, follow-up and monitoring. At the regional level, progress was achieved through cooperation mechanisms, such as platforms networks and partnerships that catalysed increased action. At the international level, the United Nations Development Group finalized and disseminated guidelines on disaster risk reduction to UN country teams, while UNDP worked in 50 high-risk countries on enhancing disaster-risk reduction capacity. The international community also strove to invest systematically in disaster risk-reduction. Resource mobilization efforts of the Strategy contributed to increasing levels of voluntary contributions to the United Nations Trust Fund for Disaster Risk Reduction, which received income of \$28.9 million in 2008. Pledges to the Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery [YUN 2006, p. 1093] during 2007–2008 exceeded \$90 million. Annexed to the report was information on gains achieved in the five priority areas of the Hyogo Framework. The report also contained recommendations on accelerating implementation of the Framework at the national and international levels; ensuring climate change adaptation through disaster risk reduction; investing in disaster risk reduction, particularly by States in national budgets; securing the safety of schools and hospitals; commemorating the International Day for Disaster Risk Reduction (13 October) starting in 2010; and strengthening funding for the Strategy.

Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction.

The Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction, established as the successor to the Inter-Agency Task Force on Disaster Reduction to provide a regular global forum for advocacy, information-sharing and the coordination of action [YUN 2007, p. 949], held its second session (Geneva, 16–19 June), which was attended by some 1,688 participants, including 152 Governments, 137 UN system entities, international financial institutions, regional bodies, and scientific and academic communities. The Global Platform placed an emphasis on lessons learned and the development of guidance to implement risk reduction measures; recognized the need to set targets in specific areas such as safe schools and hospitals, water risks and municipal disaster recovery plans; and identified a drastic mismatch between resources required to address disaster risk and those available. It urged the massive scaling up of funding from national budgets and international sources. The Global Platform also called for action to integrate disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation efforts and to strengthen community-level action. The Global Platform proceedings [ISDR/2009/24] and outcomes, as well as other documents, including the Chair's summary, were available on the PreventionWeb site.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY ACTION

On 21 December [meeting 66], the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the Second (Economic and Financial) Committee [A/64/420/Add.3], adopted **resolution 64/200** without vote [agenda item 53 (c)].

International Strategy for Disaster Reduction

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 44/236 of 22 December 1989, 49/22A of 2 December 1994, 49/22 B of 20 December 1994, 53/185 of 15 December 1998, 54/219 of 22 December 1999, 56/195 of 21 December 2001, 57/256 of 20 December 2002, 58/214 of 23 December 2003, 59/231 of 22 December 2004, 60/195 of 22 December 2005, 61/198 of 20 December 2006, 62/192 of 19 December 2007 and 63/216 of 19 December 2008 and Economic and Social Council resolutions 1999/63 of 30 July 1999 and 2001/35 of 26 July 2001, and taking into consideration its resolution 57/270 B of 23 June 2003 on the integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic and social fields,

Recalling also the 2005 World Summit Outcome,

Reaffirming the Hyogo Declaration, the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005–2015: Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters and the common statement of the special session on the Indian Ocean disaster: risk reduction for a safer future, as adopted by the World Conference on Disaster Reduction,

Reaffirming also its role in providing policy guidance on the implementation of the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits,

Expressing its deep concern at the number and scale of natural disasters and their increasing impact in recent years, which have resulted in massive loss of life and long-term negative social, economic and environmental consequences for vulnerable societies throughout the world and hamper the achievement of their sustainable development, in particular in developing countries,

Expressing its deep concern also at the increasing challenges facing the disaster response and preparedness capacity of Member States and the United Nations system as a result of the combined impacts of current global challenges, including the global economic and financial crisis, climate change and the food crisis,

Emphasizing that disaster risk reduction, including the reduction of vulnerability to natural disasters, is an important cross-cutting element that contributes to the achievement of sustainable development,

Recognizing the clear relationship between sustainable development, poverty eradication, disaster risk reduction, disaster response and disaster recovery and the need to continue to deploy efforts in all these areas,

Recognizing also the urgent need to further develop and make use of the existing scientific and technical knowledge to build resilience to natural disasters, and emphasizing the need for developing countries to have access to appropriate, advanced, environmentally sound, cost-effective and easy-to-use technologies so as to seek more comprehensive solutions to disaster risk reduction and to effectively and efficiently strengthen their capabilities to cope with disaster risks,

Recognizing further that certain measures for disaster risk reduction in the context of the Hyogo Framework for Action can also support adaptation to climate change, and emphasizing the importance of strengthening the resilience of nations and communities to natural disasters through disaster risk reduction programmes,

Stressing the importance of advancing the implementation of the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development ("Johannesburg Plan of Implementation") and its relevant provisions on vulnerability, risk assessment and disaster management,

Recognizing the need to continue to develop an understanding of, and to address, socio-economic activities that exacerbate the vulnerability of societies to natural disasters and to build and further strengthen local authorities and community capabilities to reduce vulnerability to disasters,

Having considered the recommendation of the Secretary-General regarding General Assembly resolution 54/219,

Taking note with appreciation of the "Global Assessment Report on Disaster Risk Reduction" launched in Manama in May 2009,

Noting the World Disasters Report 2009: Focus on early warning, early action,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction;

2. *Recalls* that the commitments of the Hyogo Declaration and the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005–2015: Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters include the provision of assistance for developing countries that are prone to natural disasters and disaster-stricken States in the transition phase towards sustainable physical, social and economic recovery, for risk reduction activities in post-disaster recovery and for rehabilitation processes;

3. *Welcomes* the progress made in the implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action, and stresses the need for a more effective integration of disaster risk reduction into sustainable development policies, planning and programming, for the development and strengthening of institutions, mechanisms and capacities at the regional, national and local levels to build resilience to hazards, and for a systematic incorporation of risk reduction approaches into the implementation of emergency preparedness, response and recovery programmes and long-term development plans, as a means to achieve the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals;

4. *Calls upon* the international community to increase its efforts to fully implement the commitments of the Hyogo Declaration and the Hyogo Framework for Action;

5. *Invites* Member States, the United Nations system, international financial institutions, regional bodies and other international organizations, including the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, as well as civil society, including non-governmental organizations and volunteers, the private sector and the scientific community, to increase efforts to support, implement and follow up the Hyogo Framework for Action, and stresses the importance in this regard of the continued cooperation and coordination of stakeholders at all levels with respect to addressing effectively the impact of natural disasters;

6. *Calls upon* the United Nations system, and invites international financial institutions and regional and international organizations, to integrate the goals of, and take into full account, the Hyogo Framework for Action in their strategies and programmes, making use of existing coordination mechanisms, and to assist developing countries with those mechanisms to design and implement, as appropriate, disaster risk reduction measures with a sense of urgency;

7. *Also calls upon* the United Nations system, and invites the international financial institutions and regional banks and other regional and international organizations, to support, in a timely and sustained manner, the efforts led by disaster-stricken countries for disaster risk reduction in post-disaster recovery and rehabilitation processes;

8. *Recognizes* that each State has the primary responsibility for its own sustainable development and for taking effective measures to reduce disaster risk, including for the protection of people on its territory, infrastructure and other national assets from the impact of disasters, including the implementation of and follow-up to the Hyogo Framework for Action, and stresses the importance of international cooperation and partnerships to support those national efforts;

9. *Also recognizes* the efforts made by Member States to develop national and local capacities to implement the Hyogo Framework for Action, including through the establishment of national platforms for disaster reduction, and encourages Member States that have not done so to develop such capacities;

10. *Further recognizes* the importance of coordinating adaptation to climate change with relevant disaster risk reduction measures, invites Governments and relevant international organizations to integrate these considerations in a comprehensive manner into, inter alia, development plans and poverty eradication programmes and, in least developed countries, national adaptation programmes of action, and invites the international community to support the ongoing efforts of developing countries in this regard;

11. *Urges* Member States to continue to develop, update and strengthen disaster risk reduction, including preparedness measures, at all levels, in accordance with the Hyogo Framework for Action, taking into account their own circumstances and capacities and in coordination with relevant actors, as appropriate, and encourages the international community and relevant United Nations entities to give increased priority to supporting national and local efforts in this regard;

12. *Welcomes* the regional and subregional initiatives developed in order to achieve disaster risk reduction, and reiterates the need to further develop regional initiatives and risk reduction capacities of regional mechanisms where they exist and to strengthen them and encourage the use and sharing of all existing tools, and requests United Nations regional commissions, within their mandates, to support the efforts of Member States in this regard, in close coordination with implementing entities of the United Nations system;

13. *Encourages* the Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery, a partnership of the Strategy system managed by the World Bank, to continue to support the implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action;

14. *Encourages* the secretariat of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction to continue to develop, promote and improve methods for predictive multirisk assessments, including on the economics of disaster risk reduction and socioeconomic cost-benefit analysis of risk reduction actions at all levels;

15. *Calls upon* the international community to support the development and strengthening of institutions, mechanisms and capacities at all levels, in particular at the community level, that can systematically contribute to building resilience to hazards;

16. *Encourages* Member States to increase their commitment to the effective implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action, by strengthening their participation in the Strategy system, including national and regional platforms, thematic technical platforms and the midterm review process, as well as the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction;

17. *Notes with appreciation* the second session of the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction, on the theme “Disasters, poverty and vulnerability”, held in Geneva from 16 to 19 June 2009, as an important forum for Member States and other stakeholders to assess progress made in the implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action, enhance awareness of disaster risk reduction, share experiences and learn from good practices;

18. *Recognizes* the importance of integrating a gender perspective and empowering and engaging women in the design and implementation of all phases of disaster management, as well as in risk reduction strategies and programmes, and encourages the secretariat of the Strategy to continue to increase the promotion of gender mainstreaming and empowerment of women;

19. *Expresses its appreciation* to those countries that have provided financial support for the activities of the Strategy by making voluntary contributions to the United Nations Trust Fund for Disaster Reduction;

20. *Encourages* the international community to continue providing adequate voluntary financial contributions to the Trust Fund in the effort to ensure adequate support for the follow-up activities to the Hyogo Framework for Action, and encourages Member States to make multianual, unmarked contributions as early in the year as possible;

21. *Encourages* Governments, multilateral organizations, international and regional organizations, international and regional financial institutions, the private sector and civil society to systematically invest in disaster risk reduction with a view to implementing the objectives of the Strategy;

22. *Stresses* the importance of disaster risk reduction and subsequent increased responsibilities of the secretariat of the Strategy, and reiterates the request to the Secretary-General to explore all means of securing additional funding to ensure predictable and stable financial resources for the operation of the secretariat;

23. *Acknowledges* the importance of early warning systems, encourages Member States to integrate such systems into their national disaster risk reduction strategies and plans, and encourages all stakeholders to share good practices on early warning, using existing information-sharing mechanisms within the Strategy system;

24. *Stresses* the need to foster better understanding and knowledge of the causes of disasters, as well as to build and strengthen coping capacities through, inter alia, the transfer and exchange of experiences and technical knowledge, educational and training programmes for disaster risk reduction, access to relevant data and information, the strengthening of institutional arrangements and the promotion of community participation and ownership through community-based disaster risk management approaches;

25. *Emphasizes* the need for the international community to maintain its focus beyond emergency relief and to support medium- and long-term rehabilitation, reconstruction and risk reduction, and stresses the importance of implementing and adapting long-term programmes related to the eradication of poverty, sustainable development and disaster risk reduction management in the most vulnerable regions, particularly in developing countries prone to natural disasters;

26. *Stresses* the need to address risk reduction of and vulnerabilities to all natural hazards, including geological and hydrometeorological hazards, in a comprehensive manner;

27. *Takes note* of the global initiative of the Strategy to secure the safety of schools and hospitals, in particular by investing in actions to undertake national assessments of the safety of existing education and health facilities by 2011 and to develop and implement, as appropriate, concrete action plans for safer schools and hospitals by 2015, and encourages Member States to report on this on a voluntary basis;

28. *Decides* to designate 13 October as the date to commemorate the International Day for Disaster Reduction;

29. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its sixty-fifth session a report on the implementation of the present resolution, under the item entitled “Sustainable development”.

Natural disasters and vulnerability

In response to General Assembly resolution 63/216 [YUN 2008, p. 1027], the Secretary-General submitted an August report [A/64/280] on ISDR implementation, which included information on measures taken to reduce vulnerability to climate-related hazards. The ISDR secretariat continued to promote disaster risk reduction as an adaptation policy and to build close working relationships on the topic with the parties and the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change secretariat. Cooperation was also enhanced with the Inter-Agency Standing Committee on humanitarian aspects of climate change. In April, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change decided to produce a special report on managing the risk of extreme events to advance climate change adaptation, which would provide an authoritative basis of factual information on climate-related disaster risk and methodologies for reducing and managing risks. The second session of the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction also addressed climate change and reducing risks for all.

Regional meetings on partnerships. In a 24 February letter [A/63/747] to the Secretary-General, Canada and Mexico transmitted the report of the First Regional Meeting on Enhancing International Humanitarian Partnerships, held in September 2008 in Mexico on the initiative of the two countries and OCHA. The meeting was convened in light of the fact that the number of devastating natural disasters was on the increase and the region of Latin America and the Caribbean was the second most affected region. At the second regional meeting (Brazil, 2–4 September 2009), participating countries adopted the “Declaration of Florianopolis”, which established a regional virtual tool to make information available in an updated, effective and transparent manner, on requirements of countries affected by disasters and on international humanitarian assistance offered.

Disaster assistance

Burkina Faso

During 2009, several West African countries were affected by unrelenting rains causing the loss of human lives, and massive destruction of infrastructure including dwellings and harvests. In Burkina Faso, the rain on 1 September around the capital, Ouagadougou, was unprecedented. Some 263 millimetres fell in 12 hours—more than one-third of the annual total precipitation—causing severe flooding and widespread displacement. The Government reported that all five districts of Ouagadougou, with an estimated population of 1.3 million, had been severely affected. Eight people had died and it was estimated that 90,000 people were sheltering in temporary accommodation. The fire department reported that 50 per cent of the city’s territory had been affected. The Central University Hospital, as well as primary infrastructure such as bridges, roads, schools and agricultural land, suffered damage. Humanitarian organizations and the Government initiated a swift response in all accessible areas using in-country stocks. The overall humanitarian response was organized through the Humanitarian Country Team. On 2 September, the Government established a National Crisis Committee to improve the coordination of assistance. Priority humanitarian needs included support for food security and health; improvement of access to safe water, sanitation and hygiene; rehabilitation of basic shelter; rehabilitation of schools; and provision of non-food items.

The UN Flash Appeal for Burkina Faso, which sought \$18.4 million to address the needs of 150,000 people affected by flooding for six months, received 46 per cent (\$8.5 million) of requirements.

El Salvador

On 7 and 8 November, the combined effect of Hurricane Ida and a low-pressure system off the Pacific Coast led to heavy rainfall in El Salvador causing severe flooding and landslides in seven of the country’s 14 departments. In just a few hours, a total of 355 millimetres of rainfall was registered in the most adversely affected areas. On 8 November, the President of El Salvador decreed a national emergency and on 10 November the Government officially requested international assistance. As of 18 November, some 192 people had been reported dead, 80 people were missing, and around 15,000 people were being supported in emergency collective centres. Approximately 15,000 families (75,000 people) were in need of humanitarian assistance. The Government requested the deployment of a UN disaster assessment and coordination team to support national efforts in damage and needs assessment, and the coordination of international assistance. Initial international efforts focused on the provision of emergency aid to the affected population, especially those in collective centres. Urgent action was needed to locate, quantify and deliver humanitarian aid to the affected population outside the collective centres, mainly in areas of limited access. Immediate support was also needed to improve the management of the established collective centres and aid quality. The initial UN Flash Appeal sought \$13.1 million for a period of six months.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY ACTION

On 7 December [meeting 60], the General Assembly adopted **resolution 64/74** [draft: A/64/L.19 & Add.1] without vote [agenda item 70 (a)].

Humanitarian assistance, emergency relief and rehabilitation for El Salvador as a result of the devastating effects of Hurricane Ida

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 53/1 B of 5 October 1998, 53/1 C of 2 November 1998, 54/96 E of 15 December 1999, 58/117 of 17 December 2003, 59/212 of 20 December 2004, 59/231 and 59/233 of 22 December 2004 and 60/220 of 22 December 2005,

Reiterating the need for the United Nations system to respond to requests for assistance by Member States and for humanitarian assistance to be provided in accordance with the principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence,

Deeply regretting the loss of human life and the scores of victims caused by Hurricane Ida in El Salvador on 7 and 8 November 2009,

Conscious of the huge material losses sustained to crops, homes, basic infrastructure and tourist and other areas,

Acknowledging the efforts of the Government of El Salvador to protect the lives of its nationals and rapidly to assist the affected population,

Conscious that the Central American countries are vulnerable to cyclical weather patterns and prone to natural hazards owing to their geographical location and features, which impose additional challenges on their ability to achieve the Millennium Development Goals,

Noting the enormous effort, as well as the fullest coordinated support and solidarity of the international community, that will be required to rebuild the affected areas and to alleviate the grave situation wreaked by these natural hazards,

1. *Expresses its solidarity and support* to the Government and the people of El Salvador;

2. *Expresses its appreciation* to the members of the international community that have offered their support to the rescue and emergency assistance effort for the affected population;

3. *Appeals* to all Member States and all organs and bodies of the United Nations system, as well as international financial institutions and development agencies, to provide speedy support to the relief, rehabilitation and assistance effort for El Salvador;

4. *Calls upon* the international community to provide assistance in response to the United Nations flash appeal for El Salvador;

5. *Acknowledges* the efforts and progress made by El Salvador in strengthening its disaster-preparedness capacity, emphasizes the importance of investing in disaster risk reduction, and encourages the international community to continue to cooperate with the Government of El Salvador towards this end;

6. *Requests* the Secretary-General and all organs and bodies of the United Nations system, as well as international financial institutions and development agencies, to assist El Salvador, whenever possible, through continued effective humanitarian, technical and financial assistance that contributes to overcoming the emergency and achieving the rehabilitation and recovery of the economy and the affected population, in conformity with the priorities identified at the national level;

7. *Requests* the relevant organs and organizations of the United Nations system and other multilateral organizations to increase their support and assistance for strengthening the disaster-preparedness capacity of El Salvador;

8. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its sixty-fifth session on the implementation of the present resolution and on the progress made in the relief, rehabilitation and reconstruction effort for El Salvador under the sub-item entitled "Strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations".

Following a later assessment by the national authorities, the UN system and other humanitarian partners, the revised UN Flash Appeal for El Salvador sought \$14.5 million, of which 48 per cent (\$6.9 million) was received.

Indonesia

On 30 September, an earthquake measuring 7.6 degrees on the Richter Scale struck off the western Sumatra coast in Indonesia. The epicentre was 45

kilometres west-northwest of the port city of Padang, Sumatra (population of approximately 900,000 people). A second quake measuring 6.2 degrees occurred 22 minutes later, while a third 6.8 quake struck an inland area southeast of Padang the following morning. The cumulative impact of the earthquakes resulted in significant destruction. Three villages in the Padang Pariaman District were completely leveled and there was concern that most of their inhabitants had been buried under a subsequent landslide. As at 8 October, according to provincial authorities, the official death toll was placed at 739 people, with another 296 people missing and presumed dead, primarily in Padang Pariaman District. Some 2,219 people had been injured and damage to houses was widespread with 231,395 homes damaged, rendering an estimated 250,000 families homeless, and many too frightened to return home. A state of emergency was proclaimed for one month and coordinated international assistance was welcomed. The Government led the response to the emergency in the affected areas. At least 21 search and rescue teams from 14 countries completed assessments of 31 collapsed buildings in Padang in the first days after the disaster, as the Indonesian military's emergency response teams deployed heavy equipment and recovered trapped victims.

In close coordination with the Indonesian Government, and based on reports and assessments from official sources, the UN system and humanitarian partners prepared the humanitarian response plan. The Plan, which sought \$38 million for 90 days, received 42 per cent (\$15.9 million) of requirements.

Communication. On 5 October [A/64/485], Egypt, on behalf of the Coordinating Bureau of the Non-Aligned Movement, transmitted a statement to the Secretary-General by its Chair urging States, UN humanitarian entities and the international community to provide support to the Government of Indonesia, which was open to receiving international assistance in support of its efforts to address the humanitarian situation in the country.

Lao People's Democratic Republic

On 29 September, Typhoon Ketsana crossed into the southern provinces of the Lao People's Democratic Republic, causing devastation in Attapeu, Sekong, Saravan, Savannakhet, and Champassack Provinces, which included some of the poorest districts in the country, with high levels of food insecurity. Some 178,000 people were affected by the subsequent floods and landslides with an estimated 9,602 households displaced and 15 storm-related deaths reported. There was limited access to the majority of the flood-affected population living in mountainous and remote areas. The typhoon also destroyed food stocks and damaged crops, significantly reducing the upcoming harvest.

vest. Reported infrastructure damage included 1,848 houses destroyed or damaged. Health risks increased significantly owing to damaged water supply systems, contaminated water supplies and disrupted access to health care services. The threat of displaced unexploded ordnance exposed by the flood waters exacerbated the protection concerns of the flood-affected population. Supported by humanitarian agencies on the ground, government agencies responded swiftly, launching search and rescue operations and releasing emergency relief stocks. To support the Government's relief actions, the international humanitarian community launched a flash appeal for \$10.2 million. In November, the results of a joint assessment conducted by the Government, NGOs and UN partners indicated that further support was needed.

The revised UN Flash Appeal for the Lao People's Democratic Republic sought \$12.8 million to address the immediate needs of 180,674 people affected by Typhoon Ketsana for six months, of which 75 per cent (\$9.6 million) was received.

Madagascar

In April, the humanitarian situation in Madagascar was characterized by three concurrent crises: a period of political instability and violence since the beginning of the year that led to the ousting of President Marc Ravalomanana in March and the subsequent installation of a Transitional Authority; the drought that resulted in generalized food insecurity and severe child malnutrition in three regions in the south of the country; and the effects of cyclones and flooding along the eastern and south-western coasts, affecting over 114,000 people. UN-led assessments, which were conducted after an initial appeal was launched on 7 April, revealed that the most urgent humanitarian needs were in the drought-affected south. On the cyclones and flooding, the humanitarian response was largely covered through pre-positioned stocks and reallocation of funds from other programmes to meet the most urgent needs in the areas of water, sanitation and education. On food insecurity, the counter-season harvest in June had stabilized prices in local markets and enabled previously food-insecure areas to achieve self-sufficiency in the short term, although the respite was insufficient to enable families to meet basic needs during the traditional lean season from September through December. In addition, an estimated 7,000 children required nutritional support. Nonetheless, the country as a whole was benefiting from the year's good rice harvest.

The revised UN Flash Appeal for Madagascar, which was revised downwards by 37 per cent, sought \$22.3 million, of which 82 per cent (\$18.4 million) had been received. Activities under the appeal aimed to assist some 516,000 people, of which

276,000 had been affected by the drought; 140,000 beneficiaries in urban areas affected by the socio-political crisis; and 100,000 people affected by cyclone-related activities.

Namibia

In early 2009, the north-central and north-eastern regions of Namibia experienced torrential rains causing flooding along the country's northern borders. The water levels of the Cunene, Chobe, Zambezi and Kavango rivers increased significantly due to the combined effects of rain and water from tributaries in Angola and Zambia, affecting 350,000 people, causing 102 deaths and displacing over 13,500 persons. Six regions (Caprivi, Kavango, Oshana, Oshikoto, Ohangwena and Omusati), home to the majority of the rural poor, were worst affected. On 17 March, the President declared an emergency for the North-Central and North-Eastern part of Namibia and appealed for international assistance. The Government established relocation camps to host the displaced and distributed non-food items in the affected regions. Meanwhile, the number of affected and displaced populations continued to rise due to continued heavy rainfall upstream in Angola and Zambia and increasing river levels. April assessment reports from the Government and the international community indicated that an estimated 750,000 people were affected, including 54,000 people displaced. Further assessments were conducted in May, and by the end of June, the Government reported that 28,103 people were displaced in the Caprivi and Kavango regions, and residual humanitarian needs remained in the relocation camps.

The revised UN Flash Appeal for Namibia, which sought \$7.1 million to address residual humanitarian needs as identified by further assessments, received 32 per cent (\$2.3 million) of its target.

Philippines

On 26 September, Tropical Storm Ketsana swept across Manila and parts of Central Luzon, bringing months worth of rain in just 12 hours. On 3 October, Typhoon Parma made landfall in Northern Luzon with heavy rains over an area much larger than initially anticipated, only to be followed by Typhoon Mirinae on 31 October—the third typhoon within a period of just over a month. The Government requested the assistance of the international community in responding to the effects of Ketsana on 28 September, and on 19 October requested that the areas affected by Typhoon Parma be included in the revised flash appeal. In November, Government data and assessments by UN agencies and NGOs indicated that out of the 10 million people affected, some

4.2 million were in need. Of particular concern for humanitarian agencies were the estimated 1.7 million people still displaced or living in areas that remained flooded. Those areas were likely to remain flooded for another three or four months, resulting in serious health concerns. In addition, preliminary assessments by the country's Department of Agriculture and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations indicated that some 100,000 to 120,000 farming households (500,000 people) in Regions I, II, and III lost 100 per cent of their production and assets.

The UN revised Flash Appeal for the Philippines, which sought \$143.8 million to address the need of some 4.2 million people, received 44 per cent (\$62.9 million) of the requirements.

Communication. On 29 September [A/64/471], Egypt, on behalf of the Coordinating Bureau of the Non-Aligned Movement, transmitted a statement to the Secretary-General by its Chair urging UN humanitarian entities and the international community to provide support to the Government and people of the Philippines to address the urgent situation due to tropical storm Ketsana.

Tajikistan

In 2009, the organizations participating in the review of the Humanitarian Food Security Appeal for Tajikistan [YUN 2008, p. 1038] agreed that the situation in the country remained severe. Negative effects of the global economic and financial crises, combined with significant damage caused by natural disasters over the previous year, had undermined ongoing efforts to improve the humanitarian situation. In May, statistics indicated that in rural areas, severe food insecurity had decreased from 600,000 people in 2008 to 480,000 people in 2009, while moderate food insecurity had increased from 1.1 million people to 1.4 million. The main cause of the worsening situation of people suffering from moderate food insecurity was an increase in unemployment, which was affecting migrants abroad and local entrepreneurs. Meanwhile, the spring brought new losses from floods and mudflows that damaged 40,000 hectares of land in 40 out of 58 districts in the country, including 22,000 hectares of cotton and over 12,000 hectares of cereals, fruit

and vegetable gardens, and potato fields. The aim of the revised appeal, which sought \$39.9 million, was to provide a temporary safety net to the most vulnerable poor people in urban and rural areas through the provision of food and cash. In other efforts, the Tajikistan Humanitarian Partnership launched a \$1.5 million appeal to address the humanitarian needs of some 12,000 individuals that had been severely affected by floods and mud flows during the spring.

Yemen

In Yemen, following sporadic clashes between Al Houthi groups and the Yemeni Government in July, the situation in Sa'ada Governorate escalated into open hostilities on 12 August, forcing tens of thousands of people to flee for their safety and generating new displacement in northern Yemen. Until July, humanitarian agencies had been assisting some 95,000 people in Sa'ada Governorate affected by previous rounds of fighting. The renewed fighting led tens of thousands of people from Sa'ada and Amran Governorates to flee for the first time and forced many previously displaced people into a second displacement; an estimated 150,000 people were displaced. Humanitarian partners were also concerned with the threats to, and needs of, civilian populations remaining in areas of intensified fighting to which the humanitarian community had little or no access due to insecurity. Additionally, the crisis was unfolding in the context of significant vulnerability due to poverty, lack of investment in basic services, and the impact of repeated confrontations on people's coping mechanisms. In areas where access was possible, humanitarian agencies had responded swiftly. Using in-country stocks, partners had delivered relief items to displaced populations in Haradh (Hajjah Governorate) and Amran Governorate, and in Sa'ada town, when security conditions allowed.

The revised UN Flash Appeal for Yemen sought \$22.7 million to address the needs of a projected caseload of 175,000 IDPs, and up to 800,000 people indirectly affected by the conflict, including communities hosting IDPs and residents who had lost access to basic services such as food, water and health care. Of that amount, 88 per cent of the requirements (\$19.9 million) had been received.