



# General Assembly

## GA/EF/3390

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Sixty-eighth General Assembly  
Second Committee  
39<sup>th</sup> Meeting (PM)

### **SECOND COMMITTEE APPROVES 7 DRAFT RESOLUTIONS INCLUDING TEXT**

#### **ON REDUCING POST-HARVEST FOOD LOSSES, WASTE**

The General Assembly would stress the need to significantly reduce post-harvest and other food losses and waste throughout the food supply chain through increased promotion of appropriate harvesting practices, agro-food processing and appropriate facilities for the storage and packaging of food, according to one of seven draft resolutions that the Second Committee (Economic and Financial) approved today.

Approved by a recorded vote of 138 in favour to 1 against (Bolivia), with 34 abstentions, the draft would have the Assembly urge Member States, relevant United Nations organizations and other stakeholders to strengthen efforts to improve the development of sustainable agricultural technologies and their transfer and dissemination to developing countries — under mutually agreed terms — to developing countries, especially those least developed.

By other terms of that text — titled, “Agricultural technology for development” — the Assembly would call upon stakeholders to mainstream gender into agricultural policies and projects and focus on closing the gender gap to achieve equal access for women to labour-saving technologies, agricultural technology information and know-how, equipment, and decision-making forums. It would also underline the importance of the sustainable use and management of water resources to increase and ensure agricultural productivity.

Taking up other draft resolutions under its sustainable development cluster of agenda items, the Committee approved, without a vote, a draft resolution titled “Sustainable tourism and sustainable development in Central America”. By its terms the General Assembly would stress the need to promote further the development of sustainable tourism, in particular through the consumption of sustainable tourism products and services, and to strengthen the development of ecotourism, building on the implementation of the declaration of 2012 as the Year of Sustainable Tourism in Central America, while maintaining the culture and environmental integrity of indigenous and local communities.

By other terms, the text would stress the need for enhanced support for sustainable tourism activities and relevant capacity-building in developing countries. It would also recognize the need to support sustainable tourism activities and capacity-building efforts that promoted environmental awareness, conserved and protected the environment, respected wildlife, flora, biodiversity, ecosystems and cultural diversity and improved the livelihoods of local communities.

The Committee then approved, once again without a vote, a draft text titled “World Wildlife Day”, by which terms the General Assembly would decide to designate 3 March as World Wildlife Day and invite all Member States and relevant actors to observe and raise awareness of that day. It would also stress the cost of all activities that may arise from the implementation of the present resolution should be met from voluntary contributions.

Under its agenda item on globalization and interdependence, the Committee approved, without a vote, a draft resolution titled “Role of the United Nations in promoting development in the context of globalization and interdependence”. By its terms, it would have the General Assembly reiterate the need for inclusive, transparent and effective multilateral approaches to managing global challenges, and in that regard reaffirm the central role of the United Nations system in ongoing efforts to find common solutions to such challenges. By other terms, it would recognize the central role of a strengthened global partnership for development, based on lessons learned in the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals, to support a universal global development agenda beyond 2015.

Also under the globalization and interdependence cluster, the Committee approved, without a vote, a draft text titled "Science, technology and innovation for development", by which terms the General Assembly would reaffirm its commitment to assist developing countries in their efforts to promote and develop national strategies for human resources in science, technology and innovation. By other terms it would call upon Member States, the United Nations development system and other stakeholders to continue to support measures to improve the level of participation of scientists and engineers from developing countries in international collaborative research, science, technology and innovation projects.

By other terms, it would also reiterate its call for continued collaboration between United Nations entities and other international organizations, civil society and the private sector in implementing the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society, with a view to putting the potential of information and communications technologies at the service of development.

Next, the Committee approved a draft text titled "International Year of Light and Light-based Technologies, 2015", by which terms it would have the General Assembly proclaim 2015 the International Year of Light and Light-based Technologies. By other terms, it would stress that the costs of all activities that may arise from the implementation of the present resolution above and beyond activities currently within the mandate of the lead agency should be met from voluntary contributions, including from the private sector.

Under its cluster of eradication of poverty and other development issues, the Committee approved, without a vote, a draft text titled "Women in development". By its terms the General Assembly would urge all Member States to undertake a gender analysis of national labour laws and standards and to establish gender-sensitive policies and guidelines for employment practices, including for transnational corporations, with particular attention to export-processing zones. It would also express deep concern that maternal health remains an area constrained by some of the largest health inequities in the world, and over the uneven progress in improving child and maternal health, and in that context calls upon States to implement their commitments to preventing and reducing child and maternal mortality and morbidity.

It would also stress the importance of developing national strategies for the promotion of sustainable and productive entrepreneurial activities, and encourages Governments to create a climate that is conducive to increasing the number of women entrepreneurs and the size of their businesses by giving them equal access to financial instruments, providing them with training and advisory services in business, administration and information and communications technology, facilitating networking and information-sharing.

It would also stress the importance of improving the collection, analysis and dissemination of data disaggregated by sex and age and of developing gender indicators that are specific and relevant with respect to supporting policymaking and national systems for monitoring and reporting on progress and impact.

The Committee also heard the introduction of a draft resolution titled "Sustainable Mountain Development", by which terms the General Assembly would stress the special vulnerability of people living in usually remote mountain environments, often with limited access to health, education and economic systems and particularly at risk because of the negative impact of extreme natural phenomena.

Speaking today were representatives of Peru, Malaysia, United States, Panama, Israel, Saudi Arabia (on behalf of the Arab Group), Syria, Japan, Sri Lanka, Iran, Fiji (on behalf of the "Group of 77" developing countries and China), Mexico, Ireland, and Romania.

An observer for the State of Palestine also spoke.

A Representative of Israel and an observer for the State of Palestine exercised the right of reply.

The Second Committee will meet again to take action on outstanding resolutions on a date to be announced.

#### Background

The Second Committee (Economic and Financial) met this afternoon to take action on several draft resolutions addressing sustainable development, globalization and interdependence, and eradication of poverty.

#### Action on Drafts

Taking up sustainable development, a draft titled "Sustainable mountain development" (document A/C.2/68/L.31/Rev.1) was introduced to the Committee.

The representative of Peru introduced the draft resolution and announced further co-sponsors.

The Committee then took up a draft resolution titled "World Wildlife Day" (document A/C.2/68/L.48).

The representative of Malaysia said he was confident that with the resolution, wildlife issues had been given due attention from all delegations.

The Committee then approved the text without a vote, withdrawing the previous version (document A/C.2/68/L.23).

After approval of the draft resolution, the delegate of the United States said her country appreciated the attention World Wildlife Day would garner and was thankful negotiations on the draft resolution were productive. Her country looked forward to celebrating World Wildlife Day.

Continuing with sustainable development issues, the Committee took up a draft resolution titled "Sustainable tourism and sustainable development in Central America" (document A/C.2/68/L.30).

The representative of Panama said that the draft resolution was regional in its focus and noted editorial changes in the document.

The draft resolution was approved without a vote, as orally revised.

A draft resolution titled "Agriculture technology for development" (document A/C.2/68/L.38 Rev.1) was then put before the Committee.

Since the document was only submitted this morning, the relevant provision of rule 120 of the rules and procedure of the General Assembly was waived.

The representative of Israel noted editorial changes in the document and thanked the delegations that took part in the negotiations.

A recorded vote on the resolution was requested by the delegation of Saudi Arabia on behalf of the Arab Group.

The representative of Saudi Arabia, speaking on behalf of the Arab Group, said there was no reason to present the draft resolution as its content had been covered by a resolution previously submitted by the G77 and China. The resolution did not take into account the needs of developing countries; including technology transfer requirements, financing and the elimination of obstacles created by agricultural commodities. There were many resolutions that requested Israel to refrain from its practices of occupation which were ignored by the occupying Power.

Israel should not manipulate the United Nations in such a fashion by attempting to hide their policies that had undermined agricultural efforts in the occupied territories since 1967, he said. Numerous United Nations reports described those practices and measures that went against moral rules and negatively impacted the living conditions of the inhabitants of the occupied territories. Israel's practices that included the destruction of farmland, the construction of a separation wall and the creation of obstacles that prevented Palestinians from accessing natural resources, demonstrated Israel's lack of commitment to agriculture for development. The Arab Group believed Israel only pretended to be interested in the sector, while their real objective was to destroy all agricultural activities in the occupied territories.

The representative of Syria said that Israel ignored the comprehensive draft resolution previously submitted by the Group of 77 and China. Instead, the Israeli delegation chose to submit another draft resolution, which diluted the focus of earlier commitments. The United Nations had approved a number of resolutions that emphasized that Israel should not continue with its practices of occupation, yet the country chose to ignore such resolutions.

Israel continued to take more of Syria's agricultural land and deprived them of scarce water resources, he said. Israel allocated very small areas to the Syrians in the Golan, while allocating large quantities of water at reduced prices to Israeli settlers. Such practices were racist and inhumane. Syria called on all Member States to consider the real objectives behind the submission of the draft resolution as an attempt by the occupying Power to improve its image and spread its propaganda.

The Committee then approved the text, as orally corrected, by a recorded vote of 138 in favour to 1 against (Bolivia), with 34 abstentions.

The representative of Israel said that today's resolution was about improving the lives and livelihoods of millions across the developing world. "Agriculture is about more than simply producing food, fibres and fuels, it's about helping communities flourish," he said. From China to Nigeria, more than one billion people worked in agriculture — making it the world's second-largest source of employment. Yet, far too many farmers "don't taste the fruit of financial fortune". Most of the 1.4 billion living in extreme poverty were in rural areas and depended on

agriculture for their livelihoods. Those struggling farmers had been trapped in a cycle of poverty, but given the right conditions they could break free and unleash a sustainable agricultural revolution.

A growing global population required technology to produce and preserve more food, he stressed. Today's resolution would support farmers' ingenuity, imagination and innovation and would provide them with the technology to progress from poverty to prosperity. Women comprised the majority of the agricultural workforce in many developing countries. As a result of persistent discrimination, female farmers have inferior seeds, fewer fertilizers and tools. "No business in any country can make healthy margins by marginalizing half the population," he said. By investing in female farmers, it was possible to increase crop yields by 30 per cent and feed an additional 150 million each year. It was also crucial to address the struggle of rural youth.

Few countries could benefit more from agricultural technology than the Arab world, where "people are hungry for change and thirsty for progress", he said. Yet, the Arab governments were stubbornly determined to put politics before people. The focus must be on people having the training, tools, and opportunities they needed to support their families and their communities. Developing countries held in their hands the seeds of the future, he said.

The representative of Saudi Arabia, exercising the right of reply, said that he was impressed with the rhetoric from the delegate of Israel. Those who had the ability to understand it would recognize that the statements were weak and had no objectives. Saudi Arabia was a prosperous State and the Government there was characterized by full stability. The country was developing in all fields and would never use technology provided by Israel, but instead worked with its Arab brothers.

Turning to globalization and interdependence, the Committee took up a draft resolution titled "Role of the United Nations in promoting development in the context of globalization and interdependence" (document A/C.2/68/L.50).

The representative of Japan expressed his appreciation to the delegations for their work during the negotiations.

The Committee then approved the draft resolution without a vote, withdrawing the earlier version (document A/C.2/68/L.17).

The representative of Sri Lanka thanked all those involved in the negotiations following the approval of the draft resolution.

The Committee then took up a draft resolution titled "Science, technology and innovation for development" (document A/C.2/68/L.49).

The representative of Iran expressed his appreciation for the productive consultations that resulted in the draft text.

The Committee then approved the draft resolution without a vote and an earlier version (document A/C.2/68/L.11) was withdrawn.

The representative of Sri Lanka thanked the facilitator for his hard work during the negotiations.

The representative of Fiji said that the draft resolution was of crucial importance to the developing world. The growth of science and technology offered immense opportunities for sustainable development, which was a priority issue for developing countries. The representative thanked the facilitator for his professionalism during the negotiations, as well as the delegations from the European Union and the United States.

The Committee then took action on a draft resolution titled "International Year of Light and Light-based Technologies, 2015" (document A/C.2/68/L.13/Rev.1).

Since the document was only submitted this morning, the relevant provision of rule 120 of the rules and procedure of the General Assembly was waived.

The representative of Mexico thanked those who took part in the negotiations that had taken place over several months. The initiative aimed to create a lasting alliance for the benefit of all. The draft resolution looked to bring together the areas of health, agriculture, food security, education, astronomy, archaeology, and culture, amongst others. She noted there would be editorial revisions to the Spanish version of the draft resolution provided at a later date.

The draft resolution was then approved without a vote.

In a final act, the Committee took up the draft resolution titled "Women in development" (document A/C.2/68/L.51).

Since the document was only submitted this morning, the relevant provision of rule 120 of the rules and procedure of the General Assembly was waived.

The representative of Ireland thanked those who had participated in the consultation, as well as the attention paid toward reaching a constructive text.

The representative of Romania extended her thanks to the facilitator, as well as the delegates for their hard work.

The resolution was approved without a vote, with the earlier version (document A/C.2/68/L.7) withdrawn.

The representative of Saudi Arabia, speaking on behalf of his country and Kuwait, said women need to be involved in all facets of development. He thanked the facilitator for his work during the negotiations, but expressed reservations with the reference in the resolution to the equality between men and women with regard to inheritances.

The representative of the United States said her country supported the role of women and their due consideration with regard to policy initiatives. She stressed that there were concerns about the right to development and that any related discussion needed to focus on aspects of development that pertained to human rights. The United States regretted that the resolution did not reference some of the important issues related to women's reproductive health rights.

The Committee then took up agenda item 135 on programme planning, allocated to the Second Committee to review the recommendations contained in the report of the Committee for Programme and Coordination. The Committee decided that the item would remain open until the Committee ends its work on 6 December, should there be a need for the Committee to be seized of any issues under it.

The Chair then gave the floor to an observer for the State of Palestine to make a statement with regard to the draft resolution titled "Agricultural technology for development" submitted by Israel and previously approved by the Committee. He said that Palestinian farmers were deprived from reaching their lands and waters as a result of the continued Israeli occupation. The draft resolution submitted by Israel did not have any financial implications, but it had moral implications.

Exercising his right of reply, the representative of Israel said that taking cheap shots seemed to be the Palestinian delegation's favourite sport. He said it was convenient that in his remarks the Palestinian representative failed to mention human rights abuses in the West Bank and similar violations in Gaza by the Hamas terrorist organization. It was unfortunate that the Palestinian delegation continued to politicize the discussion.

The observer for the State of Palestine said that Israel, the occupying Power, would shoulder full responsibility for its practices and violations of international laws. The representative of Israel must understand that the Palestinian people would never hesitate or surrender to their lies and occupation. The occupying Power would pay, sooner or later, the price of exploiting natural resources and its violations of United Nations resolutions.

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