



**Governing Council
of the United Nations
Environment Programme**

Distr.: General
4 January 2005

English only



**Twenty-third session of the Governing Council/
Global Ministerial Environment Forum**

Nairobi, 21–25 February 2005

Item 5 of the provisional agenda*

**Outcomes of intergovernmental meetings of relevance to
the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum**

**Issues arising from the resolutions of the General Assembly at its
fifty-ninth session calling for action by or of relevance to the work
programme of the United Nations Environment Programme**

Note by the Executive Director

The Executive Director has the honour to provide, the annex to the present note, which the Governing Council is to consider as a subsidiary body of the General Assembly. The annex provides information on issues arising from resolutions adopted at the fifty-ninth regular session of the General Assembly which specifically call for action by, or are of relevance to, the work programme of the United Nations Environment Programme. The annex is being circulated without formal editing.

* UNEP/GC.23/1.

Annex

Resolutions calling for action by or of direct relevance to UNEP

1. The General Assembly adopted resolution 59/226, entitled, '**Report of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) on its eighth special session**', on 22 December 2004. In the preambular paragraphs of the resolution, the Assembly reaffirmed the role of UNEP as the principal body within the United Nations (UN) system in the field of environment, which should take into account, within its mandate, the sustainable development needs of developing countries as well as countries with economies in transition. It recalled the provisions of the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) on the full implementation of the outcomes of the decision on international environmental governance. It reiterated the need to ensure that capacity-building and technology support to developing countries, as well as countries with economies in transition, in environment-related fields, remain important components of the work of UNEP, and noted in this regard the ongoing work of the High-level Open-ended Intergovernmental Working Group to prepare an intergovernmental strategic plan for technology support and capacity-building. It also recalled that the Governing Council and the relevant bodies of the UN system were encouraged to submit their comments, in a timely manner, on the important but complex issue of establishing universal membership of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum, including its legal, political, institutional, financial and system-wide implications, in order to contribute to the report of the Secretary-General to be submitted to the General Assembly for consideration before its sixtieth session.
2. The Assembly took note of the report of UNEP's Governing Council on its eighth special session and the decisions contained therein, and the report of the Secretary-General submitted pursuant to its resolutions 57/251 and 58/209. The Assembly noted that the Governing Council discussed all components of the recommendations on international environmental governance, and would continue discussions at its twenty-third session. It called upon all countries to further engage in the negotiations for an intergovernmental strategic plan for technology support and capacity-building with a view to its adoption at the twenty-third session of the Governing Council in February 2005.
3. The Assembly noted the differences in the views expressed so far on the important but complex issue of establishing universal membership for the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum and the upcoming consideration of this question at the Council's twenty-third session; and encouraged Member States, the Governing Council and the relevant bodies of the UN system that have not yet done so to submit their comments on the matter to the secretariat, including with regard to legal, political, institutional, financial and system-wide implications, as contributions to the report of the Secretary-General. The Secretary-General was requested to submit a report incorporating those views to the Assembly at its sixty-first session.
4. The Assembly emphasized the need for UNEP, within its mandate, to further contribute to sustainable development programmes, the implementation of Agenda 21 and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation at all levels and to the work of the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD), bearing in mind CSD's mandate.
5. The Assembly also emphasized the need to further enhance coordination and cooperation among the relevant UN organizations in the promotion of the environmental dimension of sustainable development, and in this respect welcomed the continued participation of the UNEP in the United Nations Development Group (UNDG). It further called upon UNEP to continue to contribute, within its mandate and as a member of the Inter-Agency Task Force, to the preparations for the International Meeting to Review the Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States (SIDS), to be held in Mauritius from 10 to 14 January 2005.
6. The Assembly noted the decision of the Governing Council to discuss at its twenty-third session issues related to domestic, industrial and hazardous waste management, in particular regarding capacity-building and technology support, and, in that context, to consider innovative ways of mobilizing financial resources from all appropriate sources to support the efforts of developing countries and countries with economies in transition in this area. It also noted the decision to review at its twenty-third session the implementation of the conclusions and recommendations contained in the report of the intergovernmental consultation on the strengthening of the scientific base of UNEP.

7. Finally, the Assembly reiterated the need for stable, adequate and predictable financial resources for UNEP and, in accordance with Assembly resolution 2997 (XXVII) of 15 December 1972, underlined the need to consider the adequate reflection of all administrative and management costs of the Environment Programme in the context of the UN regular budget. It welcomed progress made in the implementation of the provisions of section III.B. of the appendix to decision SS.VII/1 of the Governing Council on strengthening the role and financial situation of UNEP, including the significant broadening of the donor base and increasing total contributions to the Environment Fund, and, in this regard, noted that the Governing Council will review the implementation of those provisions at its twenty-third session. It further requested the Secretary-General to keep the resource needs of UNEP and the United Nations Office at Nairobi under review so as to permit the delivery, in an effective manner, of necessary services to the Environment Programme and the other UN organs and organizations in Nairobi.

8. By its resolution 59/227 of 22 December 2002, on the **Implementation of Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 and the outcomes of the World Summit on Sustainable Development**, the General Assembly reaffirmed the continuing need to ensure a balance between economic development, social development and environmental protection as interdependent and mutually reinforcing pillars of sustainable development; and that eradicating poverty, changing unsustainable patterns of production and consumption and protecting and managing the natural resource base of economic and social development are overarching objectives of and essential requirements for sustainable development. It also reiterated that sustainable development is a key element of the overarching framework for UN activities, in particular for achieving the internationally agreed development goals, including those in the UN Millennium Declaration and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation.

9. The Assembly called upon Governments, all relevant international and regional organizations, the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), the UN funds and programmes, the regional commissions and specialized agencies, the international financial institutions, the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and other intergovernmental organizations, in accordance with their respective mandates, as well as major groups, to take action to ensure the effective implementation of and follow-up to the commitments, programmes and time-bound targets adopted at WSSD and encouraged them to report on concrete progress in that regard. It further called for the implementation of the commitments, programmes and time-bound targets adopted at the Summit and, to that end, for the fulfilment of the provisions relating to the means of implementation, as contained in the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation.

10. The Assembly took note with interest of the establishment of the Advisory Board on Water and Sanitation by the Secretary-General, and looked forward to its contribution to the mobilization of efforts and resources towards the implementation of the commitments, goals and targets agreed upon in these areas. It requested the Secretary-General, in reporting to CSD at its thirteenth session to submit thematic reports on each of the three issues contained in the thematic cluster of issues on water, sanitation and human settlements, taking into account their inter-linkages, while addressing the cross-cutting issues identified by the Commission at its eleventh session. It further stressed the importance of the success of the Commission at its thirteenth session in: taking policy decisions on practical measures and options to expedite implementation in the thematic cluster of issues on water, sanitation and human settlements; and mobilizing further action by all implementation actors to overcome obstacles and constraints in the implementation of Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation.

11. The Assembly took note of the Secretary-General's report on inter-agency cooperation and requested continued efforts to strengthen system-wide cooperation and coordination for the implementation of Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, and to report on such inter-agency cooperation and coordination activities and their terms of reference to ECOSOC in 2005. It also noted the convening of the second international expert meeting on a ten year framework of programmes for sustainable consumption and production, to be held in Costa Rica in September 2005, and urged Member States to consider further support for those activities.

12. The Assembly adopted resolution 59/24 entitled ‘Oceans and the law of the sea’ on 17 November 2004. In the preambular paragraphs, the Assembly recalled its decision to establish a regular process under the UN for global reporting and assessment of the state of the marine environment as recommended by WSSD, and reiterated concern at the adverse impacts on the marine environment and biodiversity, in particular on vulnerable marine ecosystems, including corals, of human activities.

13. The operative part of the resolution contains seventeen sections, including one on ‘capacity-building’, in which the Assembly, *inter alia*, called for the continued strengthening of capacity-building activities, in particular in developing countries, in the field of marine scientific research by training the necessary skilled personnel, providing the necessary equipment, facilities and vessels and transferring environmentally sound technologies.

14. In a section on the ‘marine environment, marine resources, marine biodiversity and the protection of vulnerable marine ecosystems’, the Assembly, *inter alia*, called upon States to continue to prioritize action on marine pollution from land-based sources as part of their national sustainable development strategies and programmes, and to advance the implementation of the Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities (GPA) and the Montreal Declaration on the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities. The Assembly also welcomed the continued work of States, UNEP and regional organizations in the implementation of the GPA, and encouraged increased emphasis on the link between freshwater, the coastal zone and marine resources in the implementation of international development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration and of the time-bound targets in the WSSD Plan of Implementation in particular the target on sanitation.

15. The Assembly further decided to establish an Ad Hoc Open-ended Informal Working Group to study issues relating to the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity beyond areas of national jurisdiction, to: (a) Survey the past and present activities of the UN and other relevant international organizations with regard to the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity beyond areas of national jurisdiction; (b) Examine the scientific, technical, economic, legal, environmental, socioeconomic and other aspects of these issues; (c) Identify key issues and questions where more detailed background studies would facilitate consideration by States of these issues; and (d) Indicate, where appropriate, possible options and approaches to promote international cooperation and coordination for the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity. The Secretary-General was requested to report on these issues to the sixtieth session of the General Assembly.

16. In a section on the ‘regular process for global reporting and assessment of the state of the marine environment, including socio-economic aspects’ (the ‘regular process’), the Assembly took note of the report on the International Workshop on the regular process, including its draft conclusions. The Assembly recognized the urgent need to initiate a start-up phase, the “Assessment of Assessments”, as a preparatory stage towards the establishment of the regular process. The Secretary-General was requested to convene the second International Workshop on the regular process, from 13 to 15 June 2005, with representatives from States, relevant organizations, agencies and programmes of the UN system, other competent intergovernmental organizations and relevant non-governmental organizations (NGOs), to consider issues including the scope of the process and a task force to initiate the start-up phase, the “Assessment of Assessments”. He was requested to report on progress relating to establishment of the regular process at the Assembly’s sixtieth session.

17. In a section on ‘regional cooperation’, the Assembly emphasized the importance of regional organizations and arrangements for cooperation and coordination in integrated oceans management, and, where there are separate regional structures for different aspects of oceans management, such as environmental protection and conservation of marine ecosystems, fisheries management, navigation, scientific research and maritime delimitation, called for those different structures to work together for optimal cooperation and coordination.

18. In a section devoted to ‘inter-agency coordination and cooperation’, the Assembly noted the establishment of the Oceans and Coastal Areas Network (UNOceans), urged the close and continuous involvement in UN-Oceans of all relevant UN programmes, funds and the specialized agencies and other organizations of the UN system and the participation of international financial institutions, relevant intergovernmental and other organizations, as well as the Authority and the secretariats of multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs). The Assembly requested the Secretary-General to bring the resolution to the attention of heads of intergovernmental organizations, the specialized agencies and

funds and programmes of the UN engaged in activities relating to ocean affairs and the law of the sea, and underlined the importance of their constructive and timely input for the report of the Secretary-General and of their participation in relevant meetings and processes. Organizations were invited to take specific account of the resolution in their programmes and activities. The Assembly also encouraged the sponsoring organizations of the Joint Group of Experts on the Scientific Aspects of Marine Environmental Protection to continue to support and provide the necessary assistance to the process of restructuring the Group of Experts.

19. In a related resolution entitled **‘Sustainable fisheries, including through the 1995 Agreement for the Implementation of the Provisions of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea of 10 December 1982 relating to the Conservation and Management of Straddling Fish Stocks and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks, and related instruments’** (59/25) adopted on 17 November 2004, the Assembly recognized that the interrelationship between ocean activities, such as shipping and fishing, and environmental issues needs further consideration. The Assembly noted with satisfaction the activities of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN (FAO), in cooperation with relevant UN agencies and programmes, in particular UNEP and the GEF, aimed at promoting the reduction of by-catch and discards in fisheries activities. The Assembly also encouraged States to develop ocean policies and mechanisms on integrated management, including at the sub-regional and regional levels, and also including assistance to developing States in accomplishing these objectives, as well as by promoting improved cooperation between regional fisheries management organizations and other regional entities, such as UNEP’s regional seas programmes and conventions.

20. The Assembly further called upon States, FAO, the International Maritime Organization (IMO), UNEP, in particular its Regional Seas programme, regional and sub-regional fisheries management organizations and arrangements and other appropriate intergovernmental organizations that have not yet done so to take action to address the issue of lost or abandoned fishing gear and related marine debris, including through the collection of data on gear loss, economic costs to fisheries and other sectors, and the impact on marine ecosystems. The Assembly also requested the Secretary-General, in his next report concerning fisheries, to include information on the actions taken by these organizations in this regard.

21. The Assembly noted that 2005 will mark the ten-year anniversary of the adoption of the GPA, and urged all States to implement the GPA and to accelerate activity to safeguard the marine ecosystem, including fish stocks, against pollution and physical degradation. It called upon States, FAO and other specialized agencies of the UN, sub-regional and regional fisheries management organizations and arrangements, where appropriate, and other appropriate intergovernmental bodies, to cooperate in achieving sustainable aquaculture, including through information exchange, developing equivalent standards on such issues as aquatic animal health and human health and safety concerns, assessing the potential positive and negative impacts of aquaculture, including socio-economics, on the marine and coastal environment, including biodiversity, and adopting methods and techniques to minimize and mitigate adverse effects.

22. In a section in the same resolution devoted to capacity-building, the Assembly invited States and relevant intergovernmental organizations to develop projects, programmes and partnerships with relevant stakeholders and mobilize resources for the effective implementation of the outcome of the African Process for the Protection and Development of the Marine and Coastal Environment, and to consider the inclusion of fisheries components in this work.

23. In another related resolution (59/230), entitled, **‘Promoting an integrated management approach to the Caribbean Sea area in the context of sustainable development’**, adopted on 22 December, the General Assembly recognized the Caribbean Environment Outlook process currently being undertaken by UNEP, and welcomed the support being provided by UNEP’s Caribbean Environment Programme towards its implementation. The Assembly encouraged the further promotion of an integrated management approach to the Caribbean Sea area in the context of sustainable development, in accordance with the recommendations contained in resolution 54/225, as well as the provisions of Agenda 21, the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of SIDS, the outcome of the twenty-second special session of the General Assembly, the Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development, the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation and the work of the CSD, and in conformity with relevant international law, including the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea.

24. The Assembly also encouraged the continued efforts of the Caribbean countries to develop further an integrated management approach to the Caribbean Sea area in the context of sustainable development and, in this regard, to continue to develop regional cooperation in the management of their ocean affairs in the context of sustainable development, in order to address such issues as land-based pollution, pollution from ships, physical impacts on coral reefs and the diversity and dynamic interaction of, and competition among, socio-economic activities for the use of the coastal areas and the marine environment and their resources. It called upon States to continue to prioritize action on marine pollution from land-based sources as part of their national sustainable development strategies and programmes, in an integrated and inclusive manner, and also calls upon them to advance the implementation of the GPA and the Montreal Declaration on the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities. It also called upon States, taking into consideration the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), to develop national, regional and international programmes for halting the loss of marine biodiversity in the Caribbean Sea, in particular fragile ecosystems, such as coral reefs.

25. In resolution 59/236 of 22 December 2004 dealing with the '**Convention on Biological Diversity**', the General Assembly, recalled WSSD's commitments to pursue a more efficient and coherent implementation of the three objectives of the Convention and the achievement by 2010 of a significant reduction in the current rate of loss of biological diversity, which will require action at all levels, including the implementation of national biodiversity strategies and action plans and the provision of new and additional financial and technical resources to developing countries. The Assembly took note of the entry into force of the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, the objectives of which are the conservation and sustainable use of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture and the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising from their use, in harmony with the CBD, for sustainable agriculture and food security.

26. The Assembly also noted progress made at the first meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP) to the Convention serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety in establishing an operational framework for the implementation of the Protocol and reiterated that the effective implementation of the Protocol will require the full support of parties and relevant international organizations, in particular with regard to the provision of assistance to developing countries as well as countries with economies in transition in capacity-building for biosafety.

27. The Assembly took note of the work of the liaison group of the secretariats and offices of the relevant subsidiary bodies of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa (UNCCD), and the CBD, and encouraged continuing cooperation in order to promote complementarities among the secretariats, while respecting their independent legal status. It also stressed the importance of harmonizing the reporting requirements of the biodiversity-related conventions while respecting their independent legal status. The same paragraph appears in the resolutions dealing with the climate change (59/234) and desertification (59/235). The Assembly invited the Executive Secretary of the Convention to continue reporting to the General Assembly on the ongoing work regarding the Convention, including its Cartagena Protocol.

28. On 10 December 2004, the General Assembly adopted resolution 59/114 on the '**Effects of Atomic Radiation**', in which it, conscious of the continuing need to examine and compile information about atomic and ionizing radiation and to analyse its effects on mankind and the environment, commended the UN Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation for the valuable contribution it has been making and requested UNEP to continue providing support for the effective conduct of the work of the Scientific Committee and for the dissemination of its findings to the General Assembly, the scientific community and the public. It also urged UNEP to review and strengthen the present funding of the Scientific Committee, pursuant to paragraph 6 of resolution 58/88, so that the Committee can discharge the responsibilities and mandate entrusted to it by the General Assembly.

29. In its resolution 59/4, adopted on 22 October 2004 entitled, '**Cooperation between the United Nations and the Economic Cooperation Organization**', the General Assembly noted with satisfaction the adoption of the Tehran Declaration on Environmental Cooperation among member States of the Economic Cooperation Organization and the Plan of Action for Cooperation among the member States of the Economic Cooperation Organization on the Environment (2003-2007) in December 2002, and the revision of the Plan of Action by the member States at the first meeting of the Working Group on the Environment, held in Ankara on 7 and 8 April 2004. It also noted with satisfaction the adoption by UNEP of decision 22/14 of 7 February 2003 on the role of the Programme in strengthening regional

activities and cooperation in the Economic Cooperation Organization region at the twenty-second session of the UNEP Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum, and welcomed the signing of the memorandum of understanding on cooperation in the field of environment between the Economic Cooperation Organization and UNEP in Tehran on 18 August 2004. It also welcomed the growing cooperation between the Economic Cooperation Organization, the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific and the UNEP in the field of the environment, and encouraged their active collaboration with the Economic Cooperation Organization. The Assembly also took note of the decision to hold ministerial meetings in the areas of transport and communications, energy/petroleum, environment, agriculture and information technology in 2004 and 2005.

Other resolutions of higher relevance to UNEP

30. In its resolution 59/235 of 22 December 2004 on the **‘Implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, particularly in Africa’**, (UNCCD) the General Assembly, emphasized the need for the provision of adequate resources for the focal area of land degradation, primarily desertification and deforestation, of the GEF. The Assembly invited the GEF to strengthen the focal area of land degradation, primarily desertification and deforestation; and the donor community to increase its support to the Convention with a view to bringing greater international attention to bear on the issue of land degradation and desertification, which will contribute to the improvement of the sustainable development of drylands and the global environment. The Assembly urged UN funds and programmes, the Bretton Woods institutions, the donor countries and other development agencies to integrate actions in support of the Convention into their strategies to support the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the UN Millennium Declaration. The Assembly also took note of the ongoing work of the liaison group of the secretariats and offices of the relevant subsidiary bodies of UNFCCC, UNCCD, and CBD, and encouraged continuing cooperation in order to promote complementarities among the secretariats, while respecting their independent legal status.

31. By resolution 59/234 of 22 December 2004 dealing with the **‘Protection of global climate for present and future generations of mankind’**, the Assembly, remaining deeply concerned that all countries, in particular developing countries, face increased risks from the negative impacts of climate change, inter alia, called upon States to work cooperatively towards achieving the ultimate objective of the UNFCCC; and noted that States that have ratified the Kyoto Protocol welcome its ratification by the Russian Federation, which satisfies the requirements for the Kyoto Protocol to enter into force. The Assembly also noted with interest the preparations undertaken for the implementation of the flexible mechanisms established by the Kyoto Protocol, as well as the work of the liaison group of the secretariats and officers of the relevant subsidiary bodies of UNFCCC, UNCCD, and CBD, and encouraged cooperation to promote complementarities among the three secretariats while respecting their independent legal status.

32. In a resolution (59/231) on the **‘International Strategy for Disaster Reduction’** (ISDR), adopted on 22 December 2004, the Assembly, expressing its deep concern at the number and scale of natural disasters and their increasing impact within 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, in particular in developing countries, welcomed the work of the ongoing preparatory process for the World Conference on Disaster Reduction, which is to be held in Kobe, Hyogo, Japan, from 18 to 22 January 2005. It reiterated its invitation to Member States, all UN bodies and the specialized agencies and other relevant intergovernmental agencies and organizations, in particular the members of the Inter-Agency Task Force for Disaster Reduction, to participate actively in the World Conference. It also stressed the importance of close cooperation and coordination between the relevant institutions, in particular within the UN system and with other relevant international organizations, in both the preparation of and follow-up to the World Conference, within their mandate and taking into account their comparative advantages and the need to avoid any duplication of work.

33. The Assembly recognized the importance of linking disaster risk management with regional frameworks, as appropriate, such as with the New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD), to address issues of poverty eradication and sustainable development. It also stressed the importance of identifying, assessing and managing risks prior to the occurrence of disasters, for which it is necessary to combine the efforts at all levels of the development, humanitarian, scientific and environmental communities, as well as the importance of integrating disaster reduction, as appropriate, into development plans and poverty eradication programmes. It further stressed 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, access to relevant data and information and the strengthening of institutional arrangements. The Assembly recognized the importance of early warning as an essential element of disaster reduction, and recommended the implementation of the outcome of the Second International Conference on Early Warning, held in Bonn, Germany, in October 2003, and took note of further work done in this regard, including the establishment of the Platform for the Promotion of Early Warning in Bonn.

34. The Assembly requested the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs, in his capacity as Chairman of the Inter-Agency Task Force for Disaster Reduction, to continue reviewing annually the work carried out by its working groups in order to ensure their effective contribution to the attainment of the objectives of the Strategy, and requested the Secretary-General to submit to the Assembly at its sixtieth session a report on the implementation of the present resolution, in particular on the outcome of the World Conference on Disaster Reduction.

35. In a related resolution (59/233) adopted on 22 December 2004, on ‘**Natural disasters and vulnerability**’, the General Assembly noting that the global environment continues to suffer degradation, adding to economic and social vulnerabilities, in particular in developing countries, recognized that the impact of natural disasters upon vulnerable countries is, among others, a significant obstacle to the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the UN Millennium Declaration, in particular those relating to poverty eradication and environmental sustainability. The Assembly also expressed deep concern at the recent increases in the frequency and intensity of extreme weather events and associated natural disasters in some regions of the world and their substantial economic, social and environmental impacts, in particular upon developing countries in those regions.

36. The Assembly stressed the need to develop and implement risk-reduction strategies, including disaster preparedness, mitigation and early warning systems at all levels, and to integrate them, where appropriate, into national development plans, in particular through the implementation of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction, so as to enhance the resilience of populations to disasters and reduce risks to them, their livelihoods, the social and economic infrastructure and environmental resources. It stressed the importance for the World Conference on Disaster Reduction to conclude the review of the Yokohama Strategy and its plan of action, with a view to updating the guiding framework on disaster reduction for the twenty-first century, and identify specific activities aimed at ensuring the implementation of relevant provisions of WSSD’s Plan of Implementation on vulnerability, risk assessment and disaster management.

37. The Assembly also encouraged the Inter-Agency Task Force for Disaster Reduction to continue to enhance the coordination of activities to promote disaster reduction and to make available to the relevant UN entities information on options for natural disaster reduction, including severe natural hazards and extreme weather related disasters and vulnerabilities. It stressed the importance of close cooperation and coordination among Governments, the UN system, other organizations, regional organizations, NGOs and other partners as appropriate, taking into account the need for the development of disaster management strategies, including the effective establishment of early warning systems, where appropriate, while taking advantage of all available resources and expertise for that purpose. The Assembly further encouraged the Conference of the Parties to the UNFCCC and the parties to the Kyoto Protocol to continue to address the adverse effects of climate change, especially in developing countries that are particularly vulnerable, in accordance with the provisions of the Convention, and encouraged the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) to continue to assess the adverse effects of climate change on the socio-economic and natural disaster reduction systems of developing countries.

38. In another related resolution (59/232 of 22 December 2004) on ‘**International cooperation to reduce the impact of the El Niño phenomenon**’ the Assembly took note of the section in the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction on, “International cooperation to reduce the impact of the El Niño phenomenon”, and called upon the Secretary-General and the relevant UN organs, funds and programmes, in particular those taking part in the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction, to adopt, as appropriate, the necessary measures to support the development of the International Centre for the Study of the El Niño Phenomenon in Ecuador. The Assembly underscored the importance of maintaining the El Niño/Southern Oscillation observation system, continuing research into extreme weather events, improving forecasting skills and

developing appropriate policies for reducing the impact of the El Niño phenomenon and other extreme weather events and emphasized the need further to develop and strengthen these institutional capacities in all countries, in particular in developing countries.

39. On 20 December 2004, the Assembly also adopted a related resolution (59/212) entitled **‘International cooperation on humanitarian assistance in the field of natural disasters, from relief to development’**, in which it stressed that national authorities need to enhance the resilience of populations to disasters through, *inter alia*, implementation of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction so as to reduce risks to people, their livelihoods, the social and economic infrastructure and environmental resources. Taking into account the outcome of the Second International Conference on Early Warning, held in Bonn, in October 2003, under the auspices of the UN, and welcoming the efforts undertaken in preparation for the World Conference on Disaster Reduction, to be held in Kobe, Hyogo, Japan, from 18 to 22 January 2005, the Assembly underlined the importance of this conference in the promotion of new efforts in the field of disaster risk reduction. It also expressed its deep concern at the number and scale of natural disasters and their increasing impact, resulting in massive losses of life and property worldwide, in particular in vulnerable societies lacking adequate capacity to mitigate effectively the long-term negative social, economic and environmental consequences of natural disasters. It also reaffirmed that disaster risk analysis and vulnerability reduction form an integral part of humanitarian assistance, poverty eradication and sustainable development strategies and need to be considered in the development plans of all vulnerable countries and communities, including, where appropriate, in plans relating to post-disaster recovery and the transition from relief to development. It affirmed that within such preventive strategies, disaster preparedness and early warning systems must be further strengthened at the country and regional levels, *inter alia*, through better coordination among relevant UN bodies and cooperation with Governments of affected countries and regional organizations with the aim of maximizing the effectiveness of natural disaster response and reducing the impact of natural disasters, particularly in developing countries. It further emphasized the importance of enhanced international cooperation, including through the UN and regional organizations, to assist developing countries in their efforts to build local and national capacities and to effectively and efficiently predict, prepare for and respond to natural disasters.

40. By its resolution 59/228 on **‘Activities undertaken during the International Year of Freshwater, 2003, preparations for the International Decade for Action, “Water for Life”, 2005-2015, and further efforts to achieve the sustainable development of water resources’**, adopted on 22 December 2004, the Assembly, emphasized that water is critical for sustainable development, including environmental integrity and the eradication of poverty and hunger, and is indispensable for human health and well-being, and reaffirmed the internationally agreed development goals on water and sanitation, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration, and stated its determination to achieve the goal to halve, by 2015, the proportion of people who are unable to reach or to afford safe drinking water, and the goals set out in the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation to halve the proportion of people without access to basic sanitation as well as develop integrated water resources management and water efficiency plans by 2005, with support to developing countries.

41. The Assembly welcomed the activities related to freshwater undertaken by the Member States, the UN Secretariat and the organizations of the UN system, *inter alia* through inter-agency work as well as contributions from major groups, for the observance of the International Year of Freshwater, 2003; and encouraged Member States, the Secretariat, organizations of the UN system and major groups to continue their efforts to achieve the internationally agreed water-related goals contained in Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21, the Millennium Declaration and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation. It also welcomed the work of the twelfth session of CSD, and looked forward to the upcoming thirteenth session of the Commission on the thematic cluster of issues on water, sanitation and human settlements.

42. The Assembly called upon the relevant UN bodies, the specialized agencies, regional commissions and other organizations of the UN system to step up their efforts to deliver a coordinated response in order to make the International Decade for Action, “Water for Life”, 2005-2015, a decade of delivering promises through the use of existing resources and voluntary funds. It also noted with interest the partnership initiatives on water and sanitation undertaken within the framework of the WSSD process and its follow-up and in accordance with the criteria and guidelines adopted by CSD at its eleventh session.

43. By its resolution 59/229 on the **‘Further implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States’**, adopted on 22 December 2004, the General Assembly, recalled its decision, in resolution 58/213 B, to convene the International Meeting to Review the Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of SIDS from 10 to 14 January 2005, and requested the Secretary-General to submit to the Assembly at its fifty-ninth session the report of the meeting.

44. By its resolution 59/250 of 22 December 2004, entitled, **‘Triennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system’**, the General Assembly, reiterating the importance of the development of national capacities to eradicate poverty and pursue sustained economic growth and sustainable development as a central goal of the development cooperation of the UN system, emphasized that the operational activities for development should be valued and assessed on the basis of their impact on the recipient countries as contributions to enhance their capacity to pursue poverty eradication, sustained economic growth and sustainable development.

45. The Assembly requested the organizations of the UN system to continue their efforts to respond to national development plans, policies and priorities, which constitute the only viable frame of reference for programming their operational activities at the country level, and to pursue full integration of the operational activities for development at the country-level with national planning and programming, under the leadership of national Governments, at all stages of the process, while ensuring the full involvement of all relevant stakeholders at the national level.

46. The Assembly invited the governing bodies of all organizations of the UN development system to address systematically the funding of their operational activities and to explore, within the context of their multi-year planning and related financial frameworks, where appropriate, additional sources of financial support and alternative funding modalities so as to secure, on a predictable, continuous and sustained basis, the critical mass of resources required to ensure adequate functioning and pursuit of long-term development objectives.

47. The Assembly urged all organizations of the UN development system to intensify inter-agency information-sharing at the system-wide level on good practices and experiences gained, results achieved, benchmarks and indicators, monitoring and evaluation criteria concerning their capacity-building activities. It encouraged all organizations of the UN development system to include reporting on their capacity-building activities in their annual reports to their respective governing bodies. It also requested the UN System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB) to analyse the capacity development efforts of the UN development system and to make recommendations on measures necessary to enhance their effectiveness, including through the improvement of the assessment and measurement of results.

48. The Assembly noted the progress achieved in the area of simplification and harmonization, with the assistance of the UNDG, and called upon the funds, programmes and the specialized agencies of the UN system to continue to implement the simplification and harmonization agenda by taking further steps to enhance and ensure the sustainability of that process.

49. The Assembly further called upon the UN development system to foster an inclusive approach in promoting inter-agency collaboration, both at the country and headquarters levels, and requested the UN CEB, in collaboration with the UNDG, to take the necessary steps to secure a more participatory involvement of the UN development system in the country-level operations and their coordination mechanisms, including through promotion, decentralization, the delegation of authority and multi-year programming, which will facilitate their participation in country-level coordination mechanisms. The Assembly stressed the importance of the common country assessment as the common analytical tool of the UN system at the country level, including the specialized agencies, the regional commissions and other UN agencies with no country representation or limited country-level presence, which should contribute their accumulated analytical and normative experience so as to enable the use of all capacities available within the UN system. It welcomed the improvements in the selection process and training of the resident coordinators, and urged the members of the Executive Committee of UNDG, in full consultation with the members of the Development Group, to develop a procedure for the common assessment of the performance of resident coordinators by all members of the UN country teams.

50. The Assembly further stressed the need for all organizations of the UN development system to implement their global, regional and country-level activities in accordance with their mandates and the priorities of the recipient countries, and urged their governing bodies to ensure that the activities, responsibilities and operational strategies of each fund and programme are consistent with their mandates and the overall policy guidance set forth by the General Assembly and the ECOSOC and to report on these issues within the context of the annual reports submitted to the Council. It requested the Secretary-General to include an assessment of these issues in the report on the triennial comprehensive policy review prepared for the sixty-second session of the General Assembly. The Assembly urged organizations and bodies of the UN system to mainstream, in their programmes and through their country-level activities and country offices, modalities to support South-South cooperation that would promote identification and dissemination of best practices, promote indigenous knowledge, know-how and technology in the South and facilitate networking among experts and institutions in developing countries.

Further resolutions of relevance to UNEP's work programme

51. By its resolution 59.247 of 22 December 2004, entitled, '**Implementation of the first United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (1997-2006)**', the Assembly, underlining the priority and urgency given by the heads of State and Government to the eradication of poverty, as expressed in the Monterrey Consensus of the International Conference on Financing for Development and in the outcomes of WSSD, reiterated that eradicating poverty is the greatest global challenge facing the world today and an indispensable requirement for sustainable development, in particular for developing countries. It reaffirmed that the eradication of poverty should be addressed in an integrated way, as set out in WSSD's Plan of Implementation, taking into account the importance of the need for the empowerment of women and sectoral strategies in such areas as education, the development of human resources, health, human settlements, rural, local and community development, productive employment, population, environment and natural resources, water and sanitation, agriculture, food security, energy and migration and the specific needs of disadvantaged and vulnerable groups in such a way as to increase opportunities and choices for people living in poverty and to enable them to build and to strengthen their assets so as to achieve development, security and stability.

52. The Assembly also reaffirmed that poverty eradication, changing unsustainable patterns of production and consumption and protecting and managing the natural resource base of economic and social development are overarching objectives of, and essential requirements for, sustainable development. It further reaffirmed its support for NEPAD, and invited the UN system, to continue to support the implementation of the Partnership, the primary objective of which is to eradicate poverty and promote sustainable development on the basis of African ownership and leadership and enhanced partnerships with the international community. It also stressed the vulnerabilities of SIDS, reiterating the importance of international support for the full implementation of the Barbados Programme of Action and supporting the holding of the International Meeting to Review the Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of SIDS in Mauritius in January 2005.

53. The Assembly further called for the full implementation of 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 UN conferences and summits in the economic and social fields, which provide a comprehensive basis for the follow-up to the outcomes of those conferences and summits and contribute to the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration, in particular the eradication of poverty, and stressed the importance of the 2005 high-level event to be held at the commencement of the sixtieth session of the General Assembly.

54. In a resolution on the '**Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries**', (59/244) of 22 December 2004, the General Assembly, reiterated its request to the Secretary-General to ensure at the secretariat level the full mobilization and coordination of all parts of the UN system to facilitate coordinated implementation as well as coherence in the follow-up and monitoring of the Programme of Action at the national, regional, subregional and global levels, and in this context requested the Secretary-General to engage the UNDG's team leaders, consistent with their respective mandates, in the coordinated implementation of activities of the Brussels Programme of Action.

55. In its resolution 59/168 of 20 December 2004 entitled, **‘Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and full implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly’**, the Assembly, called upon Governments, the relevant entities of the UN system, within their respective mandates, and all relevant actors of civil society, including NGOs, to continue to take effective action to achieve the full and effective implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session. The Assembly emphasized that the full and effective implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the promotion of gender equality and of women’s empowerment and participation, together with the mainstreaming of a gender perspective, are among the essential elements for advancing the implementation of the Millennium Declaration, with a view, in particular, to achieving the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration and the outcomes of UN summits, conferences and special sessions. It requested the Secretary-General to highlight the contribution of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action to the implementation of the Millennium Declaration and to integrate gender perspectives in his preparations, including reports, for the review of the Millennium Declaration. The Assembly affirmed that, in order to ensure the effective implementation of the strategic objectives of the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session, the UN system should continue to promote an active and visible policy of mainstreaming gender perspectives, including through the maintenance of gender units, focal points and gender specialists, and with the active support of all UN bodies.

56. In resolution 59/239 of 22 December 2004, entitled **‘Implementation of the outcome of the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) and strengthening of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat)’**, the Assembly, noting the commitment to integrate urban planning and management in relation to housing, transport, employment opportunities, environmental conditions and community facilities, and further noting the commitment to promote, where appropriate, the upgrading of informal settlements and urban slums as an expedient measure and pragmatic solution to the urban shelter deficit, *inter alia*, invited Governments to continue to promote linkages between urban and rural areas in line with the Habitat Agenda, which recognized that cities and rural areas are interdependent economically, socially and environmentally.

57. By its resolution 59/220 on the **‘World Summit on the Information Society’**, adopted on 22 December 2004, the Assembly, *inter alia*, urged Member States, relevant UN bodies, and other intergovernmental organizations, NGOs, civil society and the private sector to contribute actively to the implementation of the outcome of the Geneva phase and to the preparatory process of the Tunis phase of the Summit and to the Summit itself, to ensure its overall success.

58. In its resolution 59/138 of 10 December 2004, entitled **‘Cooperation between the United Nations and the Caribbean Community’**, the Assembly recognized the importance of adopting an integrated management approach to the Caribbean Sea area in the context of sustainable development, and noted that WSSD considered the specific issues and problems facing SIDS, and that a special meeting to review the implementation of the Barbados Programme of Action, will be convened in Mauritius in January 2005. The Assembly urged the specialized agencies and other organizations and programmes of the UN system to cooperate with the Secretary-General of the UN and the Secretary-General of the Caribbean Community in order to initiate, maintain and increase consultations and programmes with the Caribbean Community and its associated institutions in the attainment of their objectives, with special attention to the areas and issues identified at the third general meeting, as set out in the report of the Secretary-General, as well as in resolutions 54/225, 55/203, 55/2 and S-26/2 and the decision of the WSSD on the sustainable development of SIDS.

59. On 22 December the Assembly adopted resolution 59/238 entitled, **‘Rendering assistance to poor mountain countries to overcome obstacles in socio-economic and ecological areas’**, in which, recalling chapter 13 of Agenda 21 and all relevant paragraphs of the WSSD Plan of Implementation, in particular paragraph 42 thereof, as the overall policy frameworks for sustainable development in mountain regions, decided to consider the sub-item “Rendering assistance to poor mountain countries to overcome obstacles in socio-economic and ecological areas” at its sixtieth session.

60. By its resolution 59/251 of 22 December 2004 regarding the **‘Permanent sovereignty of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan over their natural resources’**, adopted by a vote of 156 for, 5 against and 11 abstentions, the General Assembly, aware of the detrimental impact of the

Israeli settlements on Palestinian and other Arab natural resources, especially as a result of the confiscation of land and the forced diversion of water resources, and of the dire economic and social consequences in this regard, reaffirmed the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people and the population of the occupied Syrian Golan over their natural resources, including land and water. It also recognized the right of the Palestinian people to claim restitution as a result of any exploitation, damage, loss or depletion, or endangerment of their natural resources, and expresses the hope that this issue will be dealt with in the framework of the final status negotiations between the Palestinian and Israeli sides.

61. On 3 December 2004, the Assembly adopted resolution 59/73 on **‘Mongolia’s international security and nuclear-weapon-free status’**, in which it invited Member States to continue to cooperate with Mongolia in taking the necessary measures to further consolidate and strengthen, *inter alia*, Mongolia’s ecological balance.

62. In a resolution (59/174 of 20 December 2002) dealing with the **‘Second International Decade of the World’s Indigenous People’**, the Assembly welcomed all achievements during the Decade, in particular the establishment of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, and the contributions to the realization of the goals of the Decade made by the Permanent Forum, the Working Group on Indigenous Populations of the Sub-commission on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights and the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights on the situation of human rights and fundamental freedoms of indigenous people, such as the comprehensive work programme that the Permanent Forum is carrying out for the benefit of indigenous peoples in the areas of culture, education, environment, health, human rights and social and economic development. It decided that the goal of the Second Decade should be the further strengthening of international cooperation for the solution of problems faced by indigenous people in such areas as culture, education, health, human rights, the environment and social and economic development, by means of action-oriented programmes and specific projects, increased technical assistance and relevant standard-setting activities.

63. By its resolution 59/116 on **‘International cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space’**, adopted on 10 December 2004, the General Assembly, convinced that the use of space science and technology and their applications, in such areas as environmental protection as well as other Earth observation applications, contribute to achieving the objectives of the global conferences of the UN, endorsed the recommendation that the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, consider, *inter alia*, matters relating to remote-sensing of the Earth by satellite, including applications for developing countries and monitoring of the Earth’s environment. The Assembly also recommended that more attention be paid and political support be provided to all matters relating to the protection and the preservation of the outer space environment, especially those potentially affecting the Earth’s environment.

64. In a related resolution (59/2) entitled, **‘Review of the implementation of the recommendations of the Third United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space’** (UNISPACE III) of 20 October 2004, the Assembly noting with satisfaction that the implementation of the recommendations of UNISPACE III contribute to the implementation of the results of global conferences held within the UN system, in particular the Millennium Summit and WSSD, requested the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space to examine the contributions that could be made by space science and technology and their applications to one or more of the issues selected by CSD as a thematic cluster and to provide substantive inputs for consideration by the Commission.

65. The Assembly adopted resolution 59/68 on the **‘Observance of environmental norms in the drafting and implementation of agreements on disarmament and arms control’** on 10 December 2004, by a vote of 175 for, 2 against and 3 abstentions. The Assembly reaffirmed that international disarmament forums should take fully into account the relevant environmental norms in negotiating treaties and agreements on disarmament and arms limitation and that all States, through their actions, should contribute fully to ensuring compliance with the aforementioned norms in the implementation of treaties and conventions to which they are parties. The Assembly called upon States to adopt unilateral, bilateral, regional and multilateral measures so as to contribute to ensuring the application of scientific and technological progress within the framework of international security, disarmament and other related spheres, without detriment to the environment or to its effective contribution to attaining sustainable development and decided to include the issue in the provisional agenda of its sixtieth session.

66. By its resolution 59/237 of 22 December, entitled, **‘United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development’**, the Assembly, recalling chapter 36 of Agenda 21, on promoting education, public awareness and training, requested the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), as the designated lead agency, to promote the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development, in coordination with other relevant UN organizations and programmes, taking into account the special needs of developing countries.

67. In a resolution entitled, **‘Sport as a means to promote education, health, development and peace’**, (59/10) adopted on 27 October 2004, the General Assembly recalling its resolution 58/5 to proclaim 2005 as the International Year for Sport and Physical Education, invited Governments, the UN, its funds and programmes, the specialized agencies, where appropriate, and sport-related institutions to, *inter alia*, further promote sport and physical education, on the basis of locally assessed needs, as a tool for health, education, social and cultural development and environmental sustainability.

68. By its resolution 59/221 entitled, **‘International trade and development’**, adopted on 22 December 2004 by a vote of 166 for, 2 against and 6 abstentions, the Assembly, recalling the provisions of the UN Millennium Declaration pertaining to trade and related development issues, as well as the outcomes of the International Conference on Financing for Development, and WSSD, recognized that a universal, rule-based, open, non-discriminatory and equitable multilateral trading system, as well as meaningful trade liberalization, can substantially stimulate development worldwide, benefiting countries at all stages of development, thereby promoting economic growth and sustainable development that is necessary to achieve the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the UN Millennium Declaration. The Assembly also recalled the commitment of the members of the World Trade Organization (WTO), in line with the Doha mandates, to progress in the areas of rules, trade and environment, and trade-related aspects of intellectual property rights, as stated in the WTO General Council decision of 1 August 2004.

69. In a related resolution (59/224) on **‘Commodities’**, adopted on 22 December 2004, the Assembly, regretted that schemes to mitigate earnings shortfalls have not reached the originally envisaged goals, and stressed the importance of empowering developing country commodity producers to insure themselves against risk, including natural disasters.

70. The General Assembly adopted resolution 59/249 entitled, **‘Industrial development cooperation’** on 22 December 2004. By that resolution, it stressed the critical role of productive capacity-building and industrial development for the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the UN Millennium Declaration. It urged all Governments to adopt and to implement development policies and strategies to unleash the productivity growth potential through private-sector development, the diffusion of environmentally sound and emerging technologies, investment promotion, enhanced access to markets and the effective use of official development assistance to enable developing countries to achieve the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration, and to make this process sustainable.

71. In a resolution entitled **‘Role of the United Nations in promoting development in the context of globalization and interdependence’** (59/240) of 22 December 2004, the General Assembly, acknowledged that globalization has also brought new challenges for growth and sustainable development and that developing countries have been facing special difficulties in responding to them, and recognized that some countries have successfully adapted to the changes and benefited from globalization but that many others, especially the least developed countries, have remained marginalized in the globalizing world economy, and as stated in the Millennium Declaration, the benefits and costs of globalization are very unevenly distributed. It underlined that in addressing the linkages between globalization and sustainable development, particular focus should be placed on identifying and implementing mutually reinforcing policies and practices that promote sustained economic growth, social development and environmental protection and that this requires efforts at both national and international levels.

72. The General Assembly, on 20 December 2004, adopted resolution 59/146 on the **‘Implementation of the outcome of the World Summit for Social Development and of the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly’**, in which it considered that, despite the efforts made and the progress achieved in some areas of economic and social development, vast sectors of our societies, in particular in developing countries, are still facing serious challenges, including financial

crises, insecurity, poverty, exclusion and inequality in income growth and distribution, education and health, as well as environmental degradation. It underlined the responsibility of the private sector, at both the national and the international levels, including small and large companies and transnational corporations, regarding not only the economic and financial, but also the developmental, social, gender and environmental implications of their activities, their obligations towards their workers and their contributions to achieving sustainable development, including social development, and emphasized the need to take concrete actions within the UN system and through the participation of all relevant stakeholders on corporate responsibility and accountability.

73. By its resolution 59/242 on **‘Preventing and combating corrupt practices and transfer of assets of illicit origin and returning such assets to the countries of origin’** of 22 December 2004, the Assembly, called upon the private sector, at both the international and the national levels, including small and large companies and transnational corporations, to remain fully engaged in the fight against corruption, welcomes the agreement to add anti-corruption as the tenth principle of the Global Compact, and emphasized the need for all relevant stakeholders, including within the UN system, as appropriate, to continue to promote corporate responsibility and accountability.

74. In its resolution 59/170 of 20 December 2004 on the **‘Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees’**, the Assembly, among other things, called upon the Office to continue to play its catalytic role in mobilizing assistance from the international community to address the root causes as well as the economic, environmental and social impact of large-scale refugee populations in developing countries. In a related resolution on **‘Assistance to refugees, returnees and displaced persons in Africa’** (59/172) of 20 December 2004, the Assembly, *inter alia*, called upon the international donor community to provide material and financial assistance for the implementation of programmes intended for the rehabilitation of the environment and infrastructure affected by refugees in countries of asylum.

75. In its resolution 59/241 of 22 December 2004 on **‘International migration and development’**, the General Assembly recalling its resolutions, deciding to devote a high-level dialogue to international migration and development during its sixty-first session, to discuss the multidimensional aspects of international migration and development in order to identify appropriate ways and means to maximize its development benefits and minimize its negative impacts, called upon all relevant bodies, agencies, funds and programmes of the UN system and other relevant intergovernmental, regional and sub-regional organizations, within their continuing mandated activities, to continue to address the issue of international migration and development, with a view to integrating migration issues, including a gender perspective and cultural diversity, in a more coherent way within the broader context of the implementation of agreed economic and social development goals and respect for all human rights.

76. On 2 December 2004, the General Assembly adopted resolution 59/41 on the **‘Report of the International Law Commission on the work of its fifty-sixth session’**, which, among other things, noted the Commission's report and recommended that it continue its work on the topics in its current programme. The Assembly also invited Governments to provide information to the International Law Commission regarding their practice, bilateral or regional, relating to the allocation of groundwaters from transboundary aquifer systems and the management of non-renewable transboundary aquifer systems relating to the topic currently entitled “Shared natural resources”.

77. On decolonization-related issues, the Assembly, in resolution 59/132 of 10 December on the **‘Question of New Caledonia’** noted the positive initiatives aimed at protecting the natural environment of New Caledonia, notably the “Zonéco” operation designed to map and evaluate marine resources within the economic zone of New Caledonia. In resolution 59/134 on the **‘Questions of American Samoa, Anguilla, Bermuda, the British Virgin Islands, the Cayman Islands, Guam, Montserrat, Pitcairn, Saint Helena, the Turks and Caicos Islands and the United States Virgin Islands’**, the Assembly, conscious of the particular vulnerability of the Territories to natural disasters and environmental degradation and, bearing in mind the programmes of action of the UN Conference on Environment and Development, the World Conference on Natural Disaster Reduction, the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of SIDS, the International Conference on Population and Development, the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II), WSSD and other relevant world conferences, requested the Territories and the administering Powers to take all necessary measures to protect and conserve the environment of the Territories under their administration against any environmental degradation, and once again requested the specialized agencies concerned to continue to monitor environmental conditions in those Territories. With regard to Bermuda, the

Assembly welcomed the agreement reached in June 2002 between the United States of America, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the Territory formally transferring the former military base lands to the territorial Government, and the provision of resources to address some of the environmental problems. In a decision on the **'Question of Gibraltar'**, the Assembly recalled the establishment of a negotiating process aimed at overcoming differences over Gibraltar and at promoting cooperation on a mutually beneficial basis on economic, cultural, touristic, aviation, military and environmental matters.

78. In a resolution addressing, **'Specific actions related to the particular needs and problems of landlocked developing countries: outcome of the International Ministerial Conference of Landlocked and Transit Developing Countries and Donor Countries and International Financial and Development Institutions on Transit Transport Cooperation'**, (resolution 59/245 of 22 December 2004), the Assembly, recalling the Almaty Declaration and Programme of Action, *inter alia*, invited relevant UN organizations to integrate the Almaty Programme of Action in their relevant programmes of work, and encouraged them to continue their support to the landlocked and transit developing countries, *inter alia*, through well-coordinated and coherent technical assistance programmes in transit transport.

79. The General Assembly also adopted resolution 59/145 on 17 December on the **'Modalities, format and organization of the High-level Plenary Meeting of the sixtieth session of the General Assembly'**, in which it, *inter alia*, decided that the High-level Plenary Meeting of the sixtieth session of the General Assembly shall be held from 14 to 16 September 2005 in New York, composed of six plenary meetings and four interactive roundtable sessions. The Assembly looked forward to the comprehensive report requested in its resolution 58/291, which the Secretary-General will submit in March 2005 and which will serve as the basis for the consultations leading to the High-level Plenary Meeting.
