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of the United Nations
Environment Programme**

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Item 4 (a) of the provisional agenda*

Policy issues: state of the environment

**Issues arising from the resolutions of the General Assembly at its
sixty-first session that are of specific significance for the work
programme of the United Nations Environment Programme**

Note by the Executive Director

Summary

The annex to the present note is presented pursuant to a standing reporting requirement of the Governing Council, a subsidiary body of the General Assembly. It provides information on issues arising from the resolutions adopted at the sixty-first session of the General Assembly which specifically call for action by, or are of relevance to, the United Nations Environment Programme.

The annex is being circulated without formal editing.

* UNEP/GC.24/1.

Annex

Introduction

1. The sixty-first session of the General Assembly was marked, inter alia, by the end of the second term of office of the seventh United Nations Secretary-General, Mr. Kofi Annan of Ghana, as well as the appointment of his successor, Mr. Ban Ki-moon, of the Republic of Korea (resolution 61/3, of 13 October 2006). In a **'Tribute to Mr. Kofi Annan, Secretary-General of the United Nations'**, (resolution 61/107 of 14 December 2006), the Assembly, acknowledging with deep gratitude the indefatigable efforts and dedicated service provided to the Organization during the past 10 years by Secretary-General Annan, placed on special record his many bold initiatives – political, diplomatic and organizational – and his important achievements, in particular with respect to the MDGs, peace and security issues, environmental issues and UN reform.
2. Other highlights of the session included the adoption of resolution 61/106, on 13 December 2006, containing the **'Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities'**, as well as resolution 61/177 of 20 December 2006 on the **'International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance'**.
3. In action on 22 December, the General Assembly adopted resolution 61/251, on the **'Capital Master Plan'**, in which it reiterated its serious concern over the risks and deficiencies of the UN Headquarters complex, and approved the Plan which is to be completed by 2014, at a total cost of up to \$1.88 billion.

Resolutions calling for action, or of direct relevance to UNEP

4. The General Assembly adopted resolution 61/205 entitled, **'Report of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) on its ninth special session'**, on 20 December 2006. In the preambular paragraphs of the resolution, the Assembly reaffirmed the role of UNEP as the principal body within the 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 recognized the need for more efficient environmental activities in the United Nations system and the need to consider possible options to address this need. It also emphasized that capacity-building and technology support to developing countries, as well as countries with economies in transition, in environment-related fields are important components of the work of UNEP. Moreover, it recognized the need to accelerate implementation of the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-building.
5. The Assembly took note of the report of UNEP's Governing Council on its session and the decisions contained therein as well as the report of the Secretary-General on universal membership of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum of UNEP and that the Governing Council, at its ninth special session, discussed all components of the recommendations on international environmental governance (IEG), as contained in its decision SS.VII/1, and noted that continued discussions are scheduled for the twenty-fourth session.
6. The Assembly emphasized the need to further advance and fully implement the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-building, and, in this regard, called upon Governments as well as other stakeholders in a position to do so to provide the necessary funding and technical assistance for its full implementation, and also called upon UNEP to continue its efforts to fully implement the Bali Strategic Plan through strengthened cooperation with other stakeholders, based on their comparative advantages.
7. It welcomed the endorsement of the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management by the UNEP Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environment Forum at its ninth special session, and invited Governments, regional economic integration organizations, intergovernmental organizations and non-governmental organizations to engage actively and cooperate closely to support the Strategic Approach implementation activities of UNEP, including the Strategic Approach Quick Start Programme, including through providing adequate resources, as appropriate.
8. The Assembly emphasized the need to further enhance coordination and cooperation among the relevant United Nations organizations in the promotion of the environmental dimension of sustainable development, and welcomed the continued active participation of UNEP in the UN Development Group

and the Environment Management Group. The Assembly also emphasized the need for the UNEP, within its mandate, to further contribute to sustainable development programmes, the implementation of Agenda 21 and the World Summit on Sustainable Development's (WSSD), at all levels, and to the work of the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD), bearing in mind the mandate of the Commission.

9. It recognized the need to strengthen the scientific base of UNEP, as recommended by the inter-governmental consultation on strengthening its scientific base, including the reinforcement of the scientific capacity of developing countries, as well as countries with economies in transition, including through the provision of adequate financial resources.
10. Reiterating the need for stable, adequate and predictable financial resources for UNEP, and, in accordance with resolution 2997 (XXVII), the Assembly underlined the need to consider the adequate reflection of all administrative and management costs of the Programme in the context of the United Nations regular budget, and it invited Governments that are in a position to do so to increase their contributions to the Environment Fund.
11. The Assembly emphasized the importance of the Nairobi headquarters location of UNEP, and requested the Secretary-General to keep the resource needs of the Programme and the United Nations Office at Nairobi under review so as to permit the delivery, in an effective manner, of necessary services to the Programme and to the other United Nations organs and organizations in Nairobi.
12. The Assembly decided to consider, if necessary, the issue of universal membership of the Governing Council/Global Ministerial Environmental Forum of UNEP at its sixty-fourth session, while noting the differences in views expressed so far on this important but complex issue.
13. Finally, the Assembly decided to include in the provisional agenda of its sixty-second session, under the item entitled "Sustainable development", a sub-item entitled "Report of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme on its twenty-fourth session".
14. By its resolution 61/195 of 20 December 2006 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 reiterated that sustainable development in its economic, social and environmental aspects is a key element of the overarching framework for United Nations activities, and reaffirmed the continuing need to ensure a balance among economic development, social development and environmental protection as interdependent and mutually reinforcing pillars of sustainable development. It also reaffirmed 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.
15. The Assembly noted with satisfaction that the CSD at its fourteenth session undertook an in-depth evaluation of progress in implementing Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, focusing on the thematic cluster of issues on energy for sustainable development, industrial development, air pollution/atmosphere and climate change, and identified best practices, constraints and obstacles in the process of implementation. The Assembly reiterated that sustainable development is a key element of the overarching framework for United Nations activities, in particular for achieving the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the UN Millennium Declaration and in WSSD's Plan of Implementation.
16. 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 the 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.
17. The Assembly reiterated its invitation to the relevant United Nations agencies, programmes and funds, the GEF and international and regional financial and trade institutions, within their mandates, to participate actively in the work of the Commission. It reaffirmed the objective to strengthen the implementation of Agenda 21, including through the mobilization of financial and technological resources, as well as capacity-building programmes, particularly for developing countries, and encouraged Governments and organizations at all levels, as well as major groups, including the

scientific community and educators, to undertake results-oriented initiatives and activities to support CSD's work, including through voluntary multi-stakeholder partnership initiatives.

18. The Assembly requested the Secretary-General, in reporting to the Commission at its fifteenth session, on the basis of appropriate inputs from all levels, to submit thematic reports on each of the four issues contained in the thematic cluster of issues on energy for sustainable development, industrial development, air pollution/atmosphere and climate change, taking into account their inter-linkages, while addressing the cross-cutting issues, including means of implementation identified by the Commission at its eleventh session and taking into account also the relevant provisions of paragraphs 10, 14 and 15 of resolution I adopted by the Commission at its eleventh session.

19. The General Assembly adopted resolution 61/222 entitled '**Oceans and the law of the sea**' on 20 December 2006, by a vote of 157 in favour to 1 against with 3 abstentions. In the preambular paragraphs, the Assembly recognized the important contribution of sustainable development and management of the resources and uses of the oceans and seas to the achievement of international development goals, including those contained in the UN Millennium Declaration. It emphasized the need to strengthen the ability of competent international organizations to contribute, at the global, regional, sub-regional and bilateral levels, to the development of national capacity in marine science and the sustainable management of the oceans and their resources. It recalled that marine science is important for eradicating poverty, contributing to food security, conserving the world's marine environment and resources, helping to understand, predict and respond to natural events and promoting the sustainable development of the oceans and seas, by improving knowledge, through sustained research efforts and the evaluation of monitoring results, and applying such knowledge to management and decision-making.

20. The Assembly reiterated its concern at the adverse impacts on the marine environment and biodiversity, in particular on vulnerable marine ecosystems, including corals, of human activities, such as over-utilization of living marine resources, the use of destructive practices, physical impacts by ships, the introduction of alien invasive species and marine pollution from all sources, including from land-based sources and vessels, in particular through the illegal discharge of oil and other harmful substances, the loss or release of fishing gear and the dumping of hazardous waste such as radioactive materials, nuclear waste and dangerous chemicals.

21. It further expressed concern over the projected adverse effects of anthropogenic and natural climate change and ocean acidification on the marine environment and marine biodiversity. The Assembly recognized that there is a need for a more integrated approach and to further study and promote measures for enhanced cooperation and coordination relating to the conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction, and that the realization of the benefits of the UN Law of the Sea Convention could be enhanced by international cooperation, technical assistance, advanced scientific knowledge, funding and capacity-building. The Assembly also recognized that hydrographic surveys and nautical charting are critical to environmental protection, including the protection of vulnerable marine ecosystems and sustainable fisheries.

22. The operative part of the resolution contains 17 sections, including one on "capacity-building", in which the Assembly calls for continued strengthening of capacity-building activities, in particular in developing countries, in the field of marine scientific research by, inter alia, training personnel to develop and enhance relevant expertise, providing the necessary equipment, facilities and vessels and transferring environmentally sound technologies. Recognizing the need to build the capacity of developing States to raise awareness of, and support implementation of, improved waste management practices, it noted the particular vulnerability of small island developing States to the impact of marine pollution from land-based sources and marine debris. The Assembly also encouraged assistance to developing States in the preparation of submissions to the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf regarding the establishment of the outer limits of the continental shelf beyond 200 nautical miles, including the assessment of the nature and extent of the continental shelf of a coastal State through a desktop study, and the delineation of the outer limits of its continental shelf.

23. In the section on the "marine environment and marine resources", the Assembly emphasized the importance of the implementation of Part XII of the Convention in order to protect and preserve the marine environment and its living marine resources against pollution and physical degradation, and called upon all States to cooperate and take measures, directly or through competent international organizations, for the protection and preservation of the marine environment. It encouraged States to ratify or accede to international agreements addressing the protection and preservation of the marine environment and its living marine resources against the introduction of harmful aquatic organisms and pathogens and marine pollution from all sources, and other forms of physical degradation, as well as

agreements that provide for compensation for damage resulting from marine pollution, and to adopt the necessary measures aimed at implementing and enforcing the rules contained in those agreements.

24. The Assembly welcomed the entry into force on 24 March 2006 of the 1996 Protocol to the Convention on the Prevention of Marine Pollution by Dumping of Wastes and Other Matter, 1972, and on 14 June 2007 of the Protocol on Preparedness, Response and Cooperation to Pollution Incidents by Hazardous and Noxious Substances, 2000. It encouraged States, in accordance with the Convention and other relevant instruments, either bilaterally or regionally, to jointly develop and promote contingency plans for responding to pollution incidents that are likely to have significant adverse effects on the marine environment and biodiversity.

25. The Assembly welcomed UNEP activities relating to marine debris carried out in cooperation with relevant United Nations bodies and organizations, and encouraged States to further develop partnerships with industry and civil society to raise awareness of the extent of the impact of marine debris on the health and productivity of the marine environment and consequent economic loss. It urged States to integrate the issue of marine debris into national strategies dealing with waste management in the coastal zone, ports and maritime industries, including recycling, reuse, reduction and disposal, and to encourage the development of appropriate economic incentives to address this issue, including the development of cost recovery systems that provide an incentive to use port reception facilities and discourage ships from discharging marine debris at sea, and encouraged States to cooperate regionally and sub-regionally to develop and implement joint prevention and recovery programmes for marine debris.

26. The Assembly welcomed the outcomes of the Second Intergovernmental Review Meeting of the Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities, convened in Beijing from 16 to 20 October 2006, and called upon States to take all appropriate measures to fulfil the commitments of the international community embodied in the Beijing Declaration on furthering the implementation of the Global Programme of Action. It also welcomed the continued work of States, UNEP and regional organizations in the implementation of the Global Programme of Action, 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 UN Millennium Declaration and of the time-bound targets in the WSSD Plan of Implementation, in particular the target on sanitation, and the Monterrey Consensus of the International Conference on Financing for Development.

27. The Assembly encouraged the competent international organizations, the United Nations Development Programme, the World Bank and other funding agencies to consider expanding their programmes within their respective fields of competence for assistance to developing countries and to coordinate their efforts, including, inter alia, in the allocation and application of GEF funding. The Assembly requested the Secretary-General to prepare a study, in cooperation with and based on information provided by States and competent international organizations and global and regional funding agencies, on the assistance available to and measures that may be taken by developing States to realize the benefits of sustainable and effective development of marine resources and uses of the oceans within the limits of national jurisdiction, and further requested the Secretary-General to present the study to the Assembly at its sixty-third session and to report to the Assembly at its sixty-second session on the progress in the preparation of the study.

28. In the section on "marine biodiversity", the Assembly reaffirmed its role relating to the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity beyond areas of national jurisdiction, noted the work of States and relevant complementary intergovernmental organizations and bodies on those issues, including the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), and invited them to contribute to its consideration of these issues within the areas of their respective competence.

29. The Assembly welcomed the meeting of the 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, held in New York from 13 to 17 February 2006, and took note of the possible options, approaches and timely follow-up process discussed. It took note of the report to study issues relating to the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity beyond areas of national jurisdiction, and requested the Secretary-General to convene a meeting of the Working Group in 2008, to consider: (a) environmental impacts of anthropogenic activities on marine biological diversity beyond areas of national jurisdiction; (b) coordination and cooperation among States as well as relevant intergovernmental organizations and bodies for the conservation and management of marine biological diversity beyond areas of national jurisdiction; (c) the role of area-based management tools; (d) genetic

resources beyond areas of national jurisdiction; and (e) whether there is a governance or regulatory gap, and if so, how it should be addressed. The Secretary-General is requested to report on these issues in the context of his report on oceans and the law of the sea to the General Assembly's sixty-second session.

30. The Assembly noted the work under the Jakarta Mandate on Marine and Coastal Biological Diversity and the Convention on Biological Diversity-elaborated programme of work on marine and coastal biological diversity, as well as the relevant decisions adopted at the eighth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, held in Curitiba, Brazil, from 20 to 31 March 2006. It reaffirmed the need for States and competent international organizations to urgently consider ways to integrate and improve, based on the best available scientific information and in accordance with the Convention and related agreements and instruments, the management of risks to the marine biodiversity of seamounts, cold water corals, hydrothermal vents and certain other underwater features. It also reaffirmed the need for States to continue their efforts to develop and facilitate the use of diverse approaches and tools for conserving and managing vulnerable marine ecosystems, including the possible establishment of marine protected areas, and the development of representative networks of any such marine protected areas by 2012.

31. The Assembly noted the work of States, relevant intergovernmental organizations and bodies, including the Convention on Biological Diversity, in the assessment of scientific information on, and compilation of ecological criteria for the identification of, marine areas that require protection, in light of WSSD's objective to develop and facilitate the use of diverse approaches and tools such as the establishment of marine protected areas consistent with international law and based on scientific information, including representative networks by 2012.

32. The Assembly further noted the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment synthesis reports and the urgent need to protect the marine biodiversity expressed therein, and called upon States and international organizations to urgently take action to address, in accordance with international law, destructive practices that have adverse impacts on marine biodiversity and ecosystems, including seamounts, hydrothermal vents and cold water corals.

33. It reiterated its support for the International Coral Reef Initiative (ICRI), taking note of the ICRI General Meetings, held in Koror, Palau, from 31 October to 2 November 2005, and in Cozumel, Mexico, on 22 and 23 October 2006, and supported the work under the Jakarta Mandate on Marine and Coastal Biological Diversity and the elaborated programme of work on marine and coastal biological diversity related to coral reefs, and noted the progress that ICRI and other relevant bodies have made to incorporate cold water coral ecosystems into their programmes and activities and to promote the conservation and sustainable use of all coral reef resources. It highlighted the need for improved monitoring to predict and identify coral bleaching events to support and strengthen action during such events and improve strategies to support the natural resilience of reefs.

34. The Assembly welcomed the publication of "The Status of Coral Reefs in Tsunami Affected Countries: 2005" published by the Global Coral Reef Monitoring Network, and encouraged States to cooperate in promoting the development of economic assessment techniques for both restoration and non-use values of coral reef systems. It emphasized the need to mainstream sustainable coral reef management and integrated watershed management into national development strategies, as well as into the activities of relevant United Nations agencies and programmes, international financial institutions and the donor community.

35. In the section on "marine science", the Assembly called for improved understanding and knowledge of the oceans and the deep sea, including, in particular, the extent and vulnerability of deep sea biodiversity and ecosystems, by increasing marine scientific research activities. It noted the contribution of the Census of Marine Life to marine biodiversity research, and encouraged participation in the initiative. The Assembly stressed the importance of increasing the scientific understanding of the oceans/atmosphere interface, including through participation in ocean observing programmes and geographic information systems, such as the Global Ocean Observation System, particularly considering their role in monitoring climate variability and in the establishment of tsunami warning systems.

36. The Assembly also recognized the significant progress made by the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) and Member States towards the establishment of regional tsunami warning and mitigation systems, and welcomed the continued collaboration of the World Meteorological Organization and other United Nations and intergovernmental organizations in this effort, and encouraged Member States to establish and sustain their national warning and mitigation

systems, within a global, ocean-related multi-hazard approach, as necessary, to reduce loss of life and damage to national economies and strengthen the resilience of coastal communities to natural disasters.

37. In the section on the “regular process for global reporting and assessment of the state of the marine environment, including socio-economic aspects” the Assembly took note of the report of the first meeting of the Ad Hoc Steering Group for the “assessment of assessments” launched as a preparatory stage towards the establishment of the regular process for global reporting and assessment of the state of the marine environment, including socio-economic aspects, held in New York from 7 to 9 June 2006, and urged the Ad Hoc Steering Group to complete the “assessment of assessments” within two years, as provided for in resolution 60/30.

38. The Assembly welcomed with appreciation the support of UNEP and IOC for the “assessment of assessments” in providing secretariat services to the Ad Hoc Steering Group and establishing the group of experts. It invited Member States, the GEF and other interested parties to contribute financially to the “assessment of assessments”, taking into account the work-plan and budget approved by the Ad Hoc Steering Group, in order to complete the “assessment of assessments” within the specified period.

39. In the section of the resolution related to the “Open-ended Informal Consultative Process on Oceans and the Law of the Sea”, the Assembly invited States to consider the agreed consensual elements relating to ecosystem approaches and oceans as suggested by the Consultative Process, in particular the proposed elements of an ecosystem approach, means to achieve implementation of an ecosystem approach and requirements for improved application of an ecosystem approach. It also: a) noted that continued environmental degradation in many parts of the world and increasing competing demands require an urgent response and the setting of priorities for management interventions aimed at conserving ecosystem integrity; b) noted that ecosystem approaches to ocean management should be focused on managing human activities in order to maintain and, where needed, restore ecosystem health to sustain goods and environmental services, provide social and economic benefits for food security, sustain livelihoods in support of international development goals, including those contained in the UN Millennium Declaration, and conserve marine biodiversity; c) recalled that States should be guided in the application of ecosystem approaches by a number of existing instruments, in particular the Convention, as well as other commitments, such as those contained in the Convention on Biological Diversity and the WSSD call for the application of an ecosystem approach by 2010; and d) encouraged States to cooperate and coordinate their efforts to address impacts on marine ecosystems in areas within and beyond national jurisdiction, taking into account the integrity of the ecosystems concerned.

40. The Assembly requested the Secretary-General to convene the eighth meeting of the Consultative Process, in New York, from 25 to 29 June 2007. It also recalled the need to strengthen and improve the efficiency of the Process, and encouraged States, intergovernmental organizations and programmes to provide guidance to the co-chairpersons to this effect, particularly before and during the Process’s preparatory meeting. It expressed concern regarding the insufficient resources available in the voluntary trust fund for assisting developing countries in attending the Process’s meetings. It decided that in its deliberations on the report of the Secretary-General on oceans and the law of the sea at its forthcoming meetings in 2007 and 2008, the Process will focus its discussions on the topics “Marine genetic resources” in 2007 and “Maritime security and safety” in 2008.

41. In a separate section on “coordination and cooperation” the Assembly encouraged States to work closely with and through international organizations, funds and programmes, as well as the specialized agencies of the UN system and relevant international conventions, to identify emerging areas of focus for improved coordination and cooperation and how best to address these issues. The Assembly also requested the Secretary-General to bring the present resolution to the attention of heads of intergovernmental organizations, the specialized agencies, funds and programmes of the UN engaged in activities relating to ocean affairs and the law of the sea, as well as funding institutions, and underlined the importance of their constructive and timely input for the report of the Secretary-General on oceans and the law of the sea and of their participation in relevant meetings and processes. The Assembly, welcoming the work done by the secretariats of relevant UN specialized agencies, programmes, funds and bodies and the secretariats of related organizations and conventions to enhance inter-agency coordination and cooperation on ocean issues, including through UN-Oceans, the inter-agency coordination mechanism on ocean and coastal issues within the UN system, encouraged continued updates to Member States by UN-Oceans regarding its priorities and initiatives, in particular with respect to the proposed participation in UN-Oceans.

42. In related resolution 61/105, 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', adopted on 8 December 2006, the General Assembly recognized that marine debris is a global trans-boundary pollution problem and that, due to the many different types and sources of marine debris, different approaches to their prevention and removal are necessary. It also stressed its concern that marine pollution from all sources, including vessels and in particular land-based sources, constitutes a serious threat to human health and safety, and endangers fish stocks, marine biodiversity and marine habitats and has significant costs to local and national economies.

43. The Assembly noted that the Second Intergovernmental Review Meeting of the Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities was held from 16 to 20 October 2006 in Beijing, and it urged all States to implement the Global Programme of Action and to accelerate activity to safeguard the marine ecosystem, including fish stocks, against pollution and physical degradation

44. The Assembly called upon States, FAO and other UN specialized agencies, 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 relevant methods and techniques to minimize and mitigate adverse effects

45. The Assembly encouraged increased capacity-building and technical assistance by States, international financial institutions and relevant intergovernmental organizations and bodies for fishers, in particular small-scale fishers, in developing countries, and in particular small island developing States, consistent with environmental sustainability. It called upon States, the FAO and other UN specialized agencies, 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 relevant methods and techniques to minimize and mitigate adverse effects. It also encouraged States to apply the precautionary approach and an ecosystem approach in adopting and implementing conservation and management measures addressing, inter alia, by-catch, pollution, over-fishing, and protecting habitats of specific concern, taking into account existing guidelines developed by FAO.

46. Under its section on "responsible fisheries in the marine ecosystem", the Assembly welcomed the progress made to address the impacts of bottom fishing on vulnerable marine ecosystems, including through initiating negotiations to establish new regional fisheries management organizations or arrangements. It called upon regional fisheries management organizations or arrangements with the competence to regulate bottom fisheries to adopt and implement measures, in accordance with the precautionary approach, ecosystem approaches and international law, for their respective regulatory areas as a matter of priority, but not later than 31 December 2008, and (a) to assess, on the basis of the best available scientific information, whether individual bottom fishing activities would have significant adverse impacts on vulnerable marine ecosystems, and to ensure that if it is assessed that these activities would have significant adverse impacts, they are managed to prevent such impacts, or not authorized to proceed; (b) to identify vulnerable marine ecosystems and determine whether bottom fishing activities would cause significant adverse impacts to such ecosystems and the long-term sustainability of deep sea fish stocks, inter alia, by improving scientific research and data collection and sharing, and through new and exploratory fisheries; (c) in respect of areas where vulnerable marine ecosystems, including seamounts, hydrothermal vents and cold water corals, are known to occur or are likely to occur based on the best available scientific information, to close such areas to bottom fishing and ensure that such activities do not proceed unless conservation and management measures have been established to prevent significant adverse impacts on vulnerable marine ecosystems; and (d) to require members of the regional fisheries management organizations or arrangements to require vessels flying their flag to cease bottom fishing activities in areas where, in the course of fishing operations, vulnerable marine ecosystems are encountered, and to report the encounter so that appropriate measures can be adopted in respect of the relevant site.

47. In an operative section on "Cooperation within the UN system", the Assembly requested relevant parts of the UN system, international financial institutions and donor agencies to support increased enforcement and compliance capabilities for regional fisheries management organizations and their

member States. It invited FAO to continue cooperative arrangements with UN agencies on the implementation of plans of action and to report to the Secretary-General on priorities for cooperation and coordination. It also invited the Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea of the Office of Legal Affairs of the UN Secretariat, FAO and other relevant bodies of the UN system to consult and cooperate in the preparation of questionnaires designed to collect information on sustainable fisheries, in order to avoid duplication.

48. In resolution 61/204 of 20 December 2006, dealing with the ‘**Convention on Biological Diversity**’ (CBD), the General Assembly, concerned with the continued loss of biological diversity and acknowledging that an unprecedented effort would be needed to achieve by 2010 a significant reduction in the rate of loss of biological diversity, reiterated the commitment of States parties to the CBD and the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety to support the implementation of the Convention and the Protocol, as well as other biodiversity-related agreements and the Johannesburg commitment for a significant reduction in the rate of loss of biodiversity by 2010, and to continue to negotiate within the framework of the Convention, bearing in mind the Bonn Guidelines, an international regime to promote and safeguard the fair and equitable sharing of benefits arising out of the utilization of genetic resources. It urged all States to commit to significantly reducing the rate of loss of biodiversity by 2010 and to continue ongoing effort towards elaborating and negotiating an international regime on access to genetic resources and benefit sharing.

49. It urged all Member States to fulfil their commitments to significantly reduce the rate of loss of biodiversity by 2010, and emphasizes that this will require an appropriate focus on the loss of biodiversity in their relevant policies and programmes and the continued provision of new and additional financial and technical resources to developing countries, including through the GEF.

50. The Assembly reaffirmed the commitment, subject to national legislation, to respect, preserve and maintain the knowledge, innovations and practices of indigenous and local communities embodying traditional lifestyles relevant to the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity, promote their wider application with the approval and involvement of the holders of such knowledge, innovations and practices and encourage the equitable sharing of the benefits arising from their utilization.

51. It invited the countries that have not yet done so to ratify or to accede to the CBD and invited the parties to the CBD that have not yet ratified or acceded to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety to consider doing so. It urged parties to the Convention to facilitate the transfer of technology for the effective implementation of the Convention in accordance with its provisions. The Assembly took note of the ongoing work of the liaison group of the secretariats and offices of the relevant subsidiary bodies of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) and the CBD, and further encouraged continuing cooperation in order to promote complementarities among the secretariats, while respecting their independent legal status.

52. By a related resolution, 61/203 of 20 December 2006, entitled ‘**International Year of Biodiversity, 2010**’, the General Assembly expressed concern with the continued loss of biological diversity, and acknowledged that an unprecedented effort would be needed to achieve by 2010 a significant reduction in the rate of loss of biological diversity. The Assembly was further deeply concerned by the social, economic, environmental and cultural implications of the loss of biodiversity, including negative impacts on the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), and stressed the necessity to adopt concrete measures in order to reverse it. The Assembly subsequently declared 2010 the International Year of Biodiversity, designated the secretariat of the CBD as the focal point for the International Year and invited the secretariat to cooperate with other relevant UN bodies, multilateral environmental agreements, international organizations and other stakeholders, with a view to bringing greater international attention to bear on the issue of the continued loss of biodiversity. It also invited relevant international organizations as well as relevant global and regional environmental conventions to communicate to the focal point for the Year efforts made towards the successful implementation of the Year’s objective.

53. On 14 December 2006 the General Assembly adopted resolution 61/109 on the ‘**Effects of atomic radiation**’, in which it expressed its concern about the potentially harmful effects on present and future generations resulting from the levels of radiation to which mankind and the environment are exposed, commended the United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation (UNSCEAR) for the valuable contribution it has been making to wider knowledge and understanding of the levels, effects and risks of ionizing radiation, and for fulfilling its original mandate with scientific authority and independence of judgement. It endorsed the intentions and plans of the Scientific Committee for completing its present programme of work of scientific review and assessment, and

requested the Committee to submit plans for its future programme of work to the Assembly at its sixty-second session. It invited Member States, the UN system and NGOs concerned to provide further relevant data about doses, effects and risks from various sources of radiation, which would greatly help in the preparation of future reports. The Assembly 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 Assembly, the scientific community and the public; and urged UNEP to review and strengthen the present funding of the Scientific Committee, pursuant to paragraph 11 of resolution 60/98, so that the Committee can discharge the responsibilities and mandate entrusted to it.

Other resolutions of higher relevance to UNEP

54. The General Assembly adopted resolution 61/16 on the **‘Strengthening of the Economic and Social Council’** (ECOSOC) on 20 November 2006. By that resolution, the Assembly recognized the need for a more effective Council as a principal body for coordination, policy review, policy dialogue and recommendations on issues of economic and social development, as well as for implementation of the international development goals agreed at the major UN conferences and summits, including the MDGs. Reiterating that ECOSOC should continue to strengthen its role as the central mechanism for system-wide coordination and thus promote the integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the major UN conferences in the economic, social and related fields, the Assembly recalled that ECOSOC should increase its role in overseeing system-wide coordination and the balanced integration of economic, social and environmental aspects of UN policies and programmes aimed at promoting sustainable development. It reaffirmed that the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) should continue to be the high-level body responsible for sustainable development within the UN system and serve as a forum for consideration of issues related to integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development.

55. In pursuance of the 2005 World Summit Outcome, the General Assembly decided to maintain the current segment structure of the ECOSOC substantive session, and that it should continue to promote global dialogue, *inter alia*, through: (a) the special high-level meeting with the Bretton Woods institutions, the World Trade Organization (WTO) and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD); (b) an annual high-level policy dialogue with international financial and trade institutions held in the framework of a strengthened high-level segment of the annual substantive session of the Council; and (c) a discussion on a theme from economic, social and related fields to be decided by the Council and informed by a report of the Secretary-General.

56. The General Assembly also decided that a biennial high-level Development Cooperation Forum will be held within the framework of the ECOSOC high-level segment, while stressing the need to preserve the distinct identity of the Forum so as to facilitate high-level participation, with a view to enhancing the implementation of international development cooperation issues affecting the realization of the internationally agreed development goals, including the MDGs. The Development Cooperation Forum will: (a) review trends and progress in international development cooperation and give policy guidance and recommendations to promote more effective international development cooperation; (b) identify gaps and obstacles with a view to making recommendations on practical measures and policy options to enhance coherence and effectiveness and to promote development cooperation for the realization of the internationally agreed development goals, including the MDGs; (c) provide a platform for Member States to exchange lessons learned and share experiences in formulating, supporting and implementing national development strategies; and (d) be open to participation by all stakeholders, including UN organizations, international financial and trade institutions, regional organizations, civil society and private sector representatives. The Assembly requested ECOSOC to consider launching the Development Cooperation Forum during the high-level segment of its substantive session of 2007 and thereafter convening it in New York, starting in 2008.

57. The General Assembly decided that ECOSOC should hold annual ministerial-level substantive reviews as part of its high-level segment, and such reviews should: be conducted by means of a cross-sectoral approach focusing on thematic issues common to the outcomes of the major UN conferences and summits in the economic, social and related fields; review progress made in the implementation of the outcomes of those conferences and summits and their follow-up processes; and assess its impact on the achievement of the goals and targets of the conferences and summits.

58. The General Assembly requested the Secretary-General, when submitting his reports for the high-level segment, to include a concise, analytical section providing an assessment of progress,

identifying gaps and obstacles in implementation and making recommendations to overcome those gaps and obstacles for consideration by Member States. It decided that the outcome of the high-level segment should be one ministerial declaration, and that ECOSOC should support and complement international efforts aimed at addressing humanitarian emergencies, including natural disasters, in order to promote an improved, coordinated UN response.

59. The General Assembly also reaffirmed ECOSOC's role in providing overall coordination and guidance for operational development programmes and funds on a system-wide basis, including objectives, priorities and strategies in the implementation of the policies formulated by the Assembly, as well as in concentrating on cross-cutting and coordination issues related to operational activities, in accordance with relevant Assembly resolutions, and reaffirmed the importance of the triennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities, through which the Assembly establishes key system-wide policy orientations for the development cooperation and country-level modalities of the UN system. It recalled the role of ECOSOC in providing coordination and guidance to the UN system to ensure that those policy orientations are implemented on a system-wide basis. The Assembly also reaffirmed the importance of interaction between ECOSOC and the Peacebuilding Commission.

60. In its resolution 61/202 of 20 December 2006 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, noting that timely and effective implementation of the Convention would help to achieve the internationally agreed development goals, including the MDGs, resolved to support and strengthen the implementation of the Convention to address causes of desertification and land degradation, as well as poverty resulting from land degradation, through, *inter alia*, the mobilization of adequate and predictable financial resources, the transfer of technology and capacity-building at all levels. The Assembly noted the activities undertaken during 2006, within the framework of the International Year of Deserts and Desertification.

61. The Assembly further reiterated its call upon Governments, where appropriate, in collaboration with relevant multilateral organizations, including the GEF implementation agencies, to integrate desertification into their plans and strategies for sustainable development. It 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 encourages continuing cooperation in order to promote complementarities among the secretariats, while respecting their independent legal status.

62. Resolution 61/201 dealing with the **'Protection of global climate for present and future generations of mankind'** was adopted by the General Assembly on 20 December 2006 by a vote of 137 in favour, none against, with 47 abstentions. The Assembly, remaining deeply concerned that all countries, in particular developing countries, including least developed countries and small island developing States, face increased risks from the negative impacts of climate change, and stressing the need to address adaptation needs relating to such effects, noted the work of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and the need to build and enhance scientific and technological capabilities, *inter alia*, through continuing support to the Panel for the exchange of scientific data and information, especially in developing countries.

63. The Assembly reaffirmed its commitment to the ultimate objective of the Convention: to stabilize greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere at a level that prevents dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system, and called upon States to work cooperatively towards achieving that objective. It noted that States that have ratified UNFCCC's Kyoto Protocol welcome its entry into force on 16 February 2005, and strongly urged States that have not yet done so to ratify it in a timely manner. It noted with interest the activities undertaken under the flexible mechanisms established by the Kyoto Protocol.

64. The Assembly noted the decisions adopted by the Conference of the Parties at its eleventh session, as well as the importance of the twelfth session of the Conference of the Parties to the UNFCCC and the second session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol, held in Nairobi, Kenya, from 6 to 17 November 2006. It also noted the ongoing work of the liaison group of the secretariats and offices of the relevant subsidiary bodies of the UNFCCC, the UNCCD and the CBD and encouraged cooperation to promote complementarities among the three secretariats while respecting their independent legal status.

65. In a resolution 61/198 on the **'International Strategy for Disaster Reduction'** (ISDR), adopted on 20 December 2006, the General 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, reiterated that, although natural disasters damage the social and economic infrastructure of all countries, the long-term consequences of natural disasters are especially severe for developing countries and hamper the achievement of their sustainable development. It recognized the urgent need to further develop and make use of the existing scientific and technical knowledge to build resilience to natural disasters, and emphasized the need for developing countries to have access to technology so as to tackle natural disasters effectively. The Assembly emphasized that disaster risk reduction, including reducing vulnerability to natural disasters, is an important element that contributes to the achievement of sustainable development and called upon the UN system, international financial institutions and international organizations to integrate the goals of and take into full account the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015: Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disasters in their strategies and programmes.

66. The Assembly noted the proposed establishment of the Global Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction, as the successor mechanism of the Inter-Agency Task Force for Disaster Reduction, and taking into account the implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action, decided that the Global Platform shall have the same mandate as the Inter-Agency Task Force for Disaster Reduction. It also emphasized the need for the international community to maintain its focus beyond emergency relief and to support medium- and long-term rehabilitation, reconstruction and risk reduction. The Assembly, recognizing the need for adequate financial and administrative resources for the ISDR secretariat, requested the Secretary-General to allocate such resources, within existing resources, for the activities and effective functioning of the Inter-Agency Secretariat for the ISDR, and to submit a report on the result of the Global Survey of Early Warning Systems including his recommendations on how to address associated technical, financial and organizational gaps and needs.

67. In a related resolution, 61/200, on **“Natural disasters and vulnerability”**, adopted on 20 December 2006, the General Assembly noted that the global environment continues to suffer degradation, adding to economic and social vulnerabilities, in particular in developing countries, and expressed deep concern at the recent increase in the frequency and intensity of extreme weather events and associates natural disasters in some regions of the world and their substantial economic, social and environmental impacts, in particular upon developing countries.

68. The Assembly noted the need for international and regional cooperation to increase the capacity of countries to respond to the impacts of all natural hazards, including earthquakes, tsunamis, landslides and volcanic eruptions and extreme weather events such as heat waves, severe droughts and floods, and associated natural disasters, in particular in developing countries and disaster-prone countries. It also underscored the importance of addressing disaster risks related to changing social, economic, environmental conditions and land use, and the impact of hazards associated with geological events, weather, water, climate variability and climate change in sector development planning and programmes as well as in post-disaster situations.

69. The Assembly stressed the importance of the Hyogo Declaration and the Hyogo Framework for Action and the priorities for action that States, regional and international organizations and international financial institutions as well as other concerned actors should take into consideration in their approach to disaster risk reduction and implement, as appropriate, according to their own circumstances and capacities, bearing in mind the vital importance of promoting a culture of prevention in the area of natural disasters, including through the mobilization of adequate resources for disaster risk reduction, and of addressing disaster risk reduction, including disaster preparedness, and the adverse effects of natural disasters in efforts to implement national development plans and poverty reduction strategies with a view to achieving the internationally agreed development goals, including the MDGs. It emphasized in order to build resilience, particularly in developing countries, the importance of addressing the underlying risk factors identified in the Hyogo Framework for Action and the importance of promoting the integration of risk reduction associated with geological and hydro-meteorological hazards in disaster risk reduction programmes.

70. The Assembly encouraged the Inter-Agency Task Force for Disaster Reduction to continue, within its mandate, particularly the Hyogo Framework for Action, to enhance the coordination of activities to promote disaster risk reduction and to make available to the relevant UN entities information on options for natural disaster risk reduction, including severe natural hazards and extreme weather-related disasters and vulnerabilities. It 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 also encouraged IPCC to continue to assess the adverse effects of climate change on the socio-economic and natural disaster reduction systems of developing countries.

71. The General Assembly adopted resolution 61/199 of 20 December 2006, on the subject of **‘International cooperation to reduce the impacts of the El Niño phenomenon’**. Reaffirming, the importance of developing strategies at the national, sub-regional, regional and international levels that aim to prevent, mitigate and repair the damage caused by natural disasters that result from the El Niño phenomenon, the Assembly called upon the Secretary-General and the relevant UN organs, funds and programmes, in particular those taking part in the ISDR, and the international community to adopt, as appropriate, the necessary measures to strengthen the International Centre for the Study of the El Niño Phenomenon, and invited the international community to provide scientific, technical and financial assistance and cooperation for this purpose, as well as to strengthen, as appropriate, other centres devoted to the study of the El Niño phenomenon.
72. On 14 December 2006 the Assembly adopted resolution 61/131, entitled **‘International cooperation on humanitarian assistance in the field of natural disasters, from relief to development’**, in which 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 called upon States to fully implement the Hyogo Declaration and the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015. The Assembly also encouraged the further use of space-based and ground-based remote sensing technologies, as well as the sharing of geographical data, for the prevention, mitigation and management of natural disasters. The Assembly encouraged Member States, relevant UN organizations and international financial institutions to enhance the global capacity for sustainable post-disaster recovery in areas such as coordination with traditional and non-traditional partners, identification and dissemination of lessons learned, development of common tools and mechanisms for recovery needs assessment, strategy development and programming, and incorporation of risk reduction into all recovery processes, and welcomed the ongoing efforts to this end. It requested the UN system to improve its coordination of disaster recovery efforts, from relief to development, inter alia, by strengthening institutional, coordination and strategic planning efforts in disaster recovery, in support of national authorities. The Secretary-General is requested to continue to improve the international response to natural disasters and to report thereon to the General Assembly’s sixty-second session.
73. In another related resolution (61/134) entitled **‘Strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the UN’**, adopted on 14 December 2006, the Assembly again noted with grave concern the number and scale of natural disasters and their increasing impact within recent years, and reaffirming the need for sustainable measures at all levels to reduce the vulnerability of societies to natural hazards using an integrated, multi-hazard approach, and the importance of including disaster risk reduction as part of long-term and sustainable development strategies, taking into account the Hyogo Declaration and the Hyogo Framework for Action. The Assembly reiterated the need for a more effective, efficient, coherent, coordinated and better-performing UN country presence, with a strengthened role for the senior UN resident official responsible for the coordination of UN humanitarian assistance. It called upon relevant UN organizations, to support the improvements of the consolidated appeals process, inter alia, by engaging in the preparation of needs analysis and common action plans, in order to further development of the process as an instrument for UN strategic planning and prioritization.
74. In resolution 61/132, which was adopted on 14 December 2006, entitled, **‘Strengthening emergency relief, rehabilitation, reconstruction and prevention in the aftermath of the Indian Ocean tsunami disaster’**, the General Assembly stressed the need to develop and implement risk reduction strategies and to integrate them, where appropriate, into national development plans, in particular through the implementation of the ISDR, so as to enhance the resilience of populations in disasters and reduce the risks to them, their livelihoods, the social and economic infrastructure and environmental resources. Emphasizing that disaster reduction, including reducing vulnerability to natural disasters, is an important element that contributes to the achievement of sustainable development, called upon States to fully implement the Hyogo Declaration and the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015, in particular those commitments related to assistance for developing countries that are prone to natural disasters and for disaster-stricken States in the transition phase towards sustainable, physical, social and economic recovery, for risk-reduction activities in post-disaster recovery and for rehabilitation processes.
75. By its resolution 61/196 on the **‘Follow-up to and implementation of the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States’**, adopted on 20 December 2006, the General Assembly urged Governments and all relevant international and regional organizations, UN funds, programmes,

specialized agencies and regional commissions, international financial institutions, the GEF, as well as other intergovernmental organizations and major groups, to take timely actions for the effective implementation of and follow-up to the Mauritius Declaration and the Mauritius Strategy for Implementation including the further development and operationalization of concrete projects and programmes.

76. It called for the full and effective implementation of the commitments, programmes and targets adopted at the International Meeting to Review the Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of SIDS and, to this end, for the fulfilment of the provisions for the means of implementation, as contained in the Mauritius Strategy, and encouraged SIDS and their development partners to continue to consult widely in order to develop further concrete projects and programmes for its implementation. It also encouraged the implementation of partnership initiatives, within the framework of the Mauritius Strategy, in support of the sustainable development of SIDS and requested the relevant agencies of the UN system, within their respective mandates, to mainstream, as appropriate, the Mauritius Strategy in their work programmes and to establish a SIDS focal point within their respective secretariats.

77. In a related resolution entitled '**Towards the sustainable development of the Caribbean Sea for present and future generations**', 61/197 of 20 December 2006, the General Assembly, emphasizing the importance of national, regional and global action and cooperation in the marine sector as recognized by the UN Conference on Environment and Development in chapter 17 of Agenda 21, recognized that the Caribbean Sea has a unique biodiversity and highly fragile ecosystem. It also emphasized that the Caribbean countries have a high degree of vulnerability occasioned by climate change, climate variability and associated phenomena, such as the rise in sea level, the El Niño phenomenon and the increase in the frequency and intensity of natural disasters caused by hurricanes, floods and droughts, and that they are also subject to natural disasters, such as those caused by volcanoes, tsunamis and earthquakes.

78. Noting the problem of marine pollution caused by, inter alia, land-based sources and the continuing threat of pollution from ship-generated waste and sewage, as well as from the accidental release of hazardous and noxious substances in the Caribbean Sea area, the Assembly called upon the UN system and the international community to assist, as appropriate, Caribbean countries and their regional organizations in their efforts to ensure the protection of the Caribbean Sea from degradation as a result of pollution from ships, in particular through the illegal release of oil and other harmful substances, and from illegal dumping or accidental release of hazardous waste, including radioactive materials, nuclear waste and dangerous chemicals, in violation of relevant international rules and standards, as well as pollution from land-based activities.

79. The Assembly called upon the international community, the UN system and the multilateral financial institutions, and invited the GEF, within its mandate, to support actively the national and regional activities of the Caribbean States towards the promotion of the sustainable management of coastal and marine resources, and it urged the UN system and the international community to continue to provide aid and assistance to the countries of the Caribbean region in the implementation of their long-term programmes of disaster prevention, preparedness, mitigation, management, relief and recovery, based on their development priorities, through the integration of relief, rehabilitation and reconstruction into a comprehensive approach to sustainable development. It also called upon Member States to improve as a matter of priority their emergency response capabilities and the containment of environmental damage, particularly in the Caribbean Sea, in the event of natural disasters or of an accident or incident relating to maritime navigation.

80. In a related resolution, the General Assembly adopted resolution 61/50 of 4 December 2006 on '**Cooperation between the United Nations and the Caribbean Community**'. By that resolution, the Assembly, recognizing the importance of adopting an integrated management approach to the Caribbean Sea area in the context of sustainable development noted that WSSD considered the specific issues and problems facing small island developing States. It also noted that the Caribbean region is frequently exposed to devastating hazards and has been hard hit, and in some cases devastated, by hurricanes in the recent past, and expressed concern that their frequency, intensity and destructive power continue to pose a challenge to the development of the region. The Assembly called upon the UN system to assist the countries of the Caribbean in addressing the social and economic consequences of the vulnerability of Caribbean economies and the challenges that this poses for achieving the MDGs and the goal of sustainable development. It reaffirmed the objective of strengthening the implementation of the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, including through the mobilization of financial and

technological resources, as well as capacity-building programmes. The Assembly recommended that the fourth general meeting between representatives of the Caribbean Community and its associated institutions and of the UN system be held in the Caribbean in early 2007 in order to review and appraise progress in the implementation of the agreed areas and issues and to hold consultations on such additional measures and procedures as may be required to facilitate and strengthen cooperation.

81. By its resolution 61/48 of 4 December 2006 on **‘Cooperation between the United Nations and the Pacific Islands Forum’**, the General Assembly affirmed the need to strengthen the cooperation that already exists between entities of the UN system and the Pacific Islands Forum in the areas of peace and security, sustainable development, environmental protection and good governance. It welcomed ongoing work in advancing knowledge in the key strategic areas related, to *inter alia*, sustainable development, in the Pacific island countries. It urged Governments and all relevant international and regional organizations, ECOSOC, UN funds, programmes and regional economic commissions, specialized agencies, international financial institutions and GEF, as well as other intergovernmental organizations and major groups, to take timely actions to support Pacific island countries in their efforts to ensure the effective implementation of and follow-up to the Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development, the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation and the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for Sustainable Development of Small Islands Developing States. It also welcomed the leadership role of the Pacific Islands Forum in furthering the implementation of the 1995 Agreement for the Implementation of the Provisions of the UN 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.

82. The General Assembly adopted resolution 61/228 entitled, **‘2001-2010: Decade to Roll Back Malaria in Developing Countries, Particularly in Africa’** on 22 December 2006. By that resolution, the Assembly recognized that malaria-related ill-health and deaths throughout the world could be substantially eliminated with political commitment and commensurate resources if the public is educated and sensitized about malaria and appropriate health services are made available, particularly in countries where the disease is endemic. It appealed to the international community to work towards increased and sustained bilateral and multilateral assistance to combat malaria, in order to assist States to implement sound national plans to control malaria in a sustained and equitable way. It called upon Member States to establish and/or strengthen national policies and operational plans, aspiring that at least 80 per cent of those at risk of or suffering from malaria may benefit from major preventive and curative interventions by 2010, in accordance with the technical recommendations of the World Health Organization (WHO), so as to ensure a reduction in the burden of malaria by at least 50 per cent by 2010 and 75 per cent by 2015.

83. The General Assembly called upon the international community, *inter alia*, to intensify access to affordable, safe and effective anti-malarial combination treatments, intermittent preventive treatment in pregnancies, insecticide-treated mosquito nets, including through the free distribution of such nets where appropriate, and insecticides for indoor residual spraying for malaria control, taking into account relevant international rules, standards and guidelines. It called upon the international community, including through existing partnerships, to increase investment in and efforts towards the research and development of new, safe and affordable malaria-related medicines, products and technologies, such as vaccines, rapid diagnostic tests, insecticides and delivery modes, to prevent and treat malaria, especially for at-risk children and pregnant women.

84. The General Assembly also called upon the international community to support ways to expand access to and the affordability of key products, such as for vector control measures, including indoor residual spraying, and long-lasting insecticide-treated nets. It called upon the international community and malaria-endemic countries, in accordance with existing WHO guidelines and recommendations and the requirements of the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) to increase capacity for the safe, effective and judicious use of indoor residual spraying and other forms of vector control. It urged the international community to become fully knowledgeable about WHO technical policies and strategies, including for indoor residual spraying and insecticide-treated nets so that projects support those policies and strategies. It requested WHO, the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), and donor agencies to provide support to those countries which choose to use DDT for indoor residual spraying so as to ensure that it is implemented in accordance with international rules, standards and guidelines, and to provide all possible support to malaria-endemic countries to manage the intervention effectively and prevent the contamination of agricultural products with DDT and other insecticides used for indoor residual spraying.

85. The General Assembly called upon malaria-endemic countries to encourage regional and intersectoral collaboration, both public and private, at all levels, especially in education, agriculture, economic development and the environment to advance malaria control objectives. It further urged Member States, the international community and all relevant actors, including the private sector, to promote the coordinated implementation and enhance the quality of malaria-related activities, including via the Roll Back Malaria Partnership, in accordance with national policies and operational plans that are consistent with WHO's technical recommendations and recent efforts and initiatives, including the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness.

86. In a resolution on the '**Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries**', 61/211 of 20 December 2006, the General Assembly stressed that the internationally agreed development goals, including the MDGs, can be effectively achieved in the least developed countries through, in particular, the timely fulfillment of the seven commitments of the Brussels Programme of Action for the Least developed Countries for the Decade 2001-2010. It invited the organizations of the UN system and other multilateral organizations that have not yet done so to mainstream the implementation of the Brussels Declaration and the Programme of Action within their programmes of work as well as in their intergovernmental processes and to undertake within their respective mandates multi-year programming of actions in favour of the least developed countries.

87. The Assembly requested 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 to and monitoring and review of the Programme of Action at the national, sub-regional, regional and global levels, including through such coordination mechanisms as the UN System Chief Executives Board for Coordination, the UN Development Group, the Executive Committee on Economic and Social Affairs and the Inter-agency Expert Group on the MDG Indicators.

88. In its resolution 61/1 on the '**Declaration of the high level meeting of the sixty-first session of the General Assembly on the midterm comprehensive global review of the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2001-2010**', adopted on 19 September 2006, the General Assembly reaffirmed the commitment to address the special needs of LDCs by making progress towards the goals of poverty eradication, peace and development through the improvement of the quality of lives of people in the LDCs and the strengthening of their abilities to build a better future for themselves and develop their countries. It welcomed the measures taken by developed and developing countries, as well as by multilateral organizations, to promote South-South cooperation and called upon them to continue to enhance their resources and efforts for capacity-building and development in the least developed countries, including the sharing of best practices in the sustainable development of the least developed countries. It also called upon the international community and the United Nations system and its agencies to continue to assist in the implementation of the Programme of Action, taking into account the conclusions of the midterm comprehensive global review.

89. By its resolution 61/191 of 20 December 2006, entitled, '**Follow-up to and implementation of the outcome of the International Conference on Financing for Development**', the General Assembly decided that the Follow-up International Conference on Financing for Development to Review the Implementation of the Monterrey Consensus will be held in Doha, Qatar, in the second half of 2008, at a date to be determined by the Assembly in consultation with the host country. It also decided to commence the preparatory process for the review conference during the present session of the Assembly, and requested the President of the Assembly to hold, starting in 2007, direct intergovernmental consultations of the whole with the participation of all Member States and the major institutional stakeholders involved in the financing for development process, on all issues related to the review conference. It reiterated that the review conference should assess progress made, reaffirm goals and commitments, share best practices and lessons learned, and identify obstacles and constraints encountered, actions and initiatives to overcome them and important measures for further implementation, as well as new challenges and emerging issues. The Assembly also decided to hold the 2007 High-level Dialogue on Financing for Development in the fourth quarter of 2007.

90. The '**Oil slick on Lebanese shores**' was the subject of resolution 61/194 of 20 December 2006, adopted by a vote of 170 in favour to 6 against, with no abstentions, in which the General Assembly takes into account the 1992 Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, especially principle 16, which stipulates that the polluter should, in principle, bear the cost of pollution, and taking also into account chapter 17 of Agenda 21. It considers that the oil slick has heavily polluted the shores of Lebanon and consequently has serious implications for human health, biodiversity, fisheries and tourism, all four of which in turn have serious implications for livelihoods and the economy of Lebanon.

The Assembly encouraged Member States, regional and international organizations, regional and international financial institutions, and non-governmental organizations and the private sector to provide financial and technical assistance to the Government of Lebanon in supporting its efforts to clean up the polluted shores and sea of Lebanon with a view to preserving its ecosystem. In resolution 61/154, adopted by a vote of 112 in favour to 7 against, with 64 abstentions, on 19 December 2006, on ‘**The human rights situation arising from the recent Israeli military operations in Lebanon**’, the Assembly, among other things, deplored the environmental degradation caused by Israeli air strikes against power plants in Lebanon and their adverse impact on the health and well-being of children and other civilians.

91. By its resolution 61/192 of 20 December 2006, the General Assembly declared the ‘**International Year of Sanitation, 2008**’, reaffirming the need to assist developing countries’ efforts to prepare integrated water resources management and water efficiency plans as part of their national development strategies and to provide access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation in accordance with the Millennium Declaration and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, including halving by 2015 the proportion of people who are unable to reach or afford safe drinking water and who do not have access to basic sanitation. It expressed deep concern with the slow and insufficient progress in providing access to basic sanitation services, and conscious of the impact of the lack of sanitation on people’s health, poverty reduction and economic and social development, and on the environment, in particular water resources, requested the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs, to serve as the focal point for the Year and to develop, in a timely manner, relevant proposals on possible activities at all levels, including possible sources of funding.

92. By its resolution 61/193 of 20 December 2006, the General Assembly declared the ‘**International Year of Forests, 2011**’, recognizing that forests and sustainable forest management can contribute significantly to sustainable development, poverty eradication and the achievement of internationally agreed development goals, including the MDGs. It requested the secretariat of the UN Forum on Forests, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, to serve as focal point for the implementation of the International Year in collaboration with Governments and the Collaborative Partnership. It also invited, in particular, FAO, as the Chair of the Collaborative Partnership, within its mandate to support the implementation of the International Year.

93. By its resolution 61/189 of 20 December 2006, the General Assembly declared 2009 the ‘**International Year of Natural Fibres**’, noting that the diverse range of natural fibres produced in many countries provide an important source of income for farmers, and thus can play an important role in contributing to food security and in eradicating poverty and hence in contributing to the achievement of the MDGs. It invited FAO to facilitate the observance of the Year, in collaboration with Governments, regional and international organizations, non-governmental organizations, the private sector and relevant organizations of the UN system.

Further resolutions of relevance to UNEP’s work programme

94. By its resolution 61/213 of 20 December 2006, entitled, ‘**Implementation of the first United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (1997-2006)**’, the General Assembly expressed deep concern that, even after the first UN Decade for the Eradication of Poverty, the number of people living in extreme poverty in many countries continue to increase and 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 also stressed the importance of ensuring, at the intergovernmental and inter-agency levels, coherent, comprehensive and integrated activities for poverty in accordance with outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits organized in the economic, social and related fields.

95. In related resolution 61/215 of 20 December 2006, entitled ‘**Industrial development cooperation**’, the General Assembly emphasized the necessity of favorable national and international measures for the industrialization of developing countries, and 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 the MDGs, and to make this process sustainable.

96. The Assembly invited the UN Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) to continue to build and strengthen its partnership with other UN organizations with complementary mandates and

activities, and took note of the vital role it played in the fields of private and public sector industrial development, productivity growth, trade capacity building, corporate social responsibility, environmental protection, energy efficiency and the promotion of renewable energies.

97. By its resolution 61/186 entitled, '**International trade and development**', adopted on 20 December 2006 by a vote of 129 in favour to 2 against with 52 abstentions, the General Assembly expressed serious concern over the indefinite suspension of the trade negotiations of the World Trade Organization (WTO) and considers it a serious setback for the Doha Round. The Assembly recognized the need to ensure that the comparative advantage of developing countries is not undermined by any form of protectionism, including the arbitrary and abusive use of non-tariff measures, non-trade barriers and other standards to unfairly restrict the access of developing countries' products to developed countries' markets, reaffirms, in this regard, that developing countries should play an increasing role in the formulation of, inter alia, safety, environment and health standards, and recognized the need to facilitate the increased and meaningful participation of the developing countries in the work of relevant international standard-setting organizations.

98. In a resolution 61/188 on '**External debt crisis and development**', adopted on 20 December 2006, the General Assembly, stressed that debt relief can play a key role in liberating resources that should be directed towards activities consistent with poverty eradication, sustained economic growth and sustainable development and the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, including the MDGs, and in this regard urged countries to direct those resources freed through debt relief, in particular through debt cancellation and reduction, towards these objectives.

99. The General Assembly adopted resolution 61/207 on the '**Role of the United Nations in promoting development in the context of globalization and interdependence**' on 20 December 2006. By that resolution, the Assembly 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 the national and international levels. It recognized that science and technology, including information and communication technologies, are vital for the achievement of development goals and that international support can help developing countries to benefit from technological advancements and enhance their productive capacity, and in this regard reaffirmed the commitment to promoting and facilitating, as appropriate, access to and the development, transfer and diffusion of technologies, including environmentally sound technologies and corresponding know-how, for developing countries.

100. In resolution 61/156 on '**Globalization and its impact on the full enjoyment of all human rights**', adopted on 19 December 2006 by a vote of 130 in favour to 54 against, with 3 abstentions, the General Assembly called upon Member States, relevant agencies of the UN system, intergovernmental organizations and civil society to promote equitable and environmentally sustainable economic growth for managing globalization so that poverty is systematically reduced and the international development targets are achieved. In a related resolution, 61/169 of 19 December 2006, adopted by vote of 134 in favour to 53 against, with no abstentions, on '**The right to development**', the Assembly stressed that poverty eradication is one of the critical elements in the promotion and realization of the right to development and that poverty is a multifaceted problem that requires a multifaceted and integrated approach in addressing economic, political, social, environmental and institutional dimensions at all levels, especially in the context of the MDG of halving, by 2015, the proportion of the world's people whose income is less than one dollar a day and the proportion of people who suffer from hunger. It recognized the need for strong partnerships with civil society, organizations and the private sector in pursuit of poverty eradication and development, as well as for corporate social responsibility.

101. In resolution 61/160, adopted by a vote of 124 in favour to 56 against, with 4 abstentions, on 19 December 2006, on the '**Promotion of a democratic and equitable international order**', the General Assembly affirmed that a democratic and equitable international order requires, inter alia, the realization of the right of all peoples to self-determination; the right of peoples and nations to permanent sovereignty over their natural wealth and resources; the right of every human person and all peoples to development; the principle of equitable regional and gender-balanced representation in the composition of the staff of the UN system; the right of every person and all peoples to a healthy environment; the enjoyment by everyone of ownership of the common heritage of mankind; and the shared responsibility of the nations of the world for managing worldwide economic and social development as well as threats to international peace and security that should be exercised multilaterally.

102. Also on 19 December 2006, the General Assembly adopted resolution 61/163 on '**The right to food**', by a vote of 185 in favour to 1 against, with no abstentions. In it, the Assembly recognized that

the problems of hunger and food insecurity have global dimensions and that they are likely to persist and even to increase dramatically in some regions, given the anticipated increase in the world's population and the stress on natural resources. The Assembly, noting that the global environment continued to suffer degradation, causing a negative impact on the realization of the right to food, in particular in developing countries, stressed that improving access to productive resources and public investment in rural development is essential for eradicating hunger and poverty, in particular in developing countries, including through the promotion of investments in appropriate, small-scale irrigation and water management technologies in order to reduce vulnerability to droughts. It also stressed the importance of fighting hunger in rural areas, including through national efforts supported by international partnerships to stop desertification and land degradation and through investments and public policies that are specifically appropriate to the risk of drylands, and in this regard, calls for the full implementation of the UN Convention to Combat Desertification.

103. The General Assembly also welcomed the work already done by the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights in promoting the right to adequate food, in particular its General Comment No. 15 (2002) on the right to water, in which the Committee noted, *inter alia*, the importance of ensuring sustainable water resources for human consumption and agriculture in realization of the right to adequate food.

104. The General Assembly adopted resolution 61/229 on the '**New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD): progress in implementation and international support**' on 22 December 2006. The Assembly, recognizing the progress made in the implementation of NEPAD as well as regional and international support, while acknowledging that much needs to be done, urged continuous support of measures to address the challenges of poverty eradication and sustainable development in Africa including, as appropriate, debt relief, improved market access, support for the private sector and entrepreneurship, enhanced official development assistance and increased flows of foreign direct investment, and transfer of technology. It requested the UN system to continue to provide assistance to the African Union and the New Partnership secretariat and to African countries in developing projects and programmes within the scope of the priorities of the New Partnership, and invited the Secretary-General to urge the UN development system to assist African countries in implementing quick-impact initiatives through, *inter alia*, the Millennium Villages Project. The Assembly decided to hold within existing resources a high-level meeting on "Africa's development needs: state of implementation of various commitments, challenges and the way forward" during its sixty-third session, the focus and modalities of which will be decided upon in its sixty-second session. It also requested the Secretary-General to promote greater coherence in the work of the UN system in support of the New Partnership, on the basis of the agreed clusters.

105. In related resolution 61/230 on the '**Implementation of the recommendations contained in the report of the Secretary-General on the causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa**', adopted on 22 December 2006, the General Assembly, noting that conflict prevention and the consolidation of peace would benefit from the coordinated, sustained and integrated efforts of the UN system and Member States, and regional and sub-regional organizations, as well as international and regional financial institutions, reaffirmed the need to strengthen the synergy between Africa's economic and social development programmes and its peace and security agenda. It recognized the importance of the Peacebuilding Commission as a dedicated mechanism to address the special needs of countries emerging from conflict towards recovery, reintegration and reconstruction and to assist them in laying the foundation for peace and sustainable development.

106. The Assembly encouraged further contributions by the partners, including through the existing forums of cooperation with Africa, to the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa by strengthening the capacity of African regional and sub-regional organizations to address the causes of conflict in Africa and the capacity for the prevention and resolution of armed conflicts, peacekeeping operations and peacebuilding. Calling for a holistic and coordinated approach at the national, regional and international levels, the Assembly urged the UN system and the international community to increase, coordinate and sustain their efforts aimed at assisting African countries in addressing the full range of causes of conflict in Africa. The Assembly also stressed the importance of effectively addressing challenges which continue to hamper the achievement of peace and stability, *inter alia*, the illegal exploitation of natural resources. In this regard, it took note of the conclusions of the Expert Group Meeting on "Natural Resources and Conflict in Africa: Transforming a Peace Liability into a Peace Asset", held in Cairo from 17 to 19 June 2006, and called upon African Member States and regional and sub-regional organizations to assist African countries emerging from conflict in devising national natural resources and public revenue management structures, and urged the international community to assist in this process by providing adequate financial and technical

assistance, as well as by renewing commitment to efforts aimed at combating the illegal exploitation of the natural resources of those countries. As part of a progress report on the implementation of the resolution to its sixty-second session, the Assembly requested the inclusion of concrete proposals for possible UN actions and plans in support of the goal of achieving a conflict-free Africa by 2010.

107. In resolution 61/145 of 19 December 2006 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 General Assembly reaffirmed its commitment to gender equality and the advancement of women, and it also reaffirmed that the full, effective and accelerated implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the Assembly’s twenty-third special session is integral to achieving the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the UN Millennium Declaration and the outcomes of UN summits, conferences and special sessions, as well as the commitments made at the 2005 World Summit. It called upon all parts of the UN system to continue to play an active role in ensuring the full, effective and accelerated implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session and maintain gender specialists, as well as ensure that all personnel, especially in the field, receive training and appropriate follow-up, including tools, guidance and support, for gender mainstreaming.

108. In resolution 61/145 on **‘The rights of the child’**, of 19 December 2006, adopted by vote of 185 in favour to 1 against, with no abstentions, the General Assembly expressed concern that the situation of children in many parts of the world remains critical as a result of, *inter alia*, the persistence of poverty, social inequality, inadequate social and economic conditions, pandemics, in particular HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis, environmental damage, and natural disasters, armed conflict, foreign occupation, displacement, violence, terrorism, abuse, exploitation, trafficking in children and their organs, child prostitution, child pornography and child sex tourism, neglect, illiteracy, hunger, intolerance, discrimination, racism, xenophobia, gender inequality, disability and inadequate legal protection, and expressed its conviction that urgent and effective national and international action is called for.

109. In resolution 61/206 of 20 December 2006, 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, conscious of the unique opportunity provided by the Cities Without Slums Initiative mentioned in the Millennium Declaration for realizing economies of scale and substantial multiplier effects in helping to attain the other MDGs, acknowledged the significance of the urban dimension of poverty eradication and the need to integrate water and sanitation issues within a broad-based approach to human settlements. It encourages Governments to consider an enhanced approach to achieving the Cities Without Slums Initiative by upgrading existing slums and creating policies and programmes, according to national circumstances, to forestall the growth of future slums, and in this regard invites the international donor community and multilateral and regional development banks to support the efforts of developing countries, *inter alia*, through increased voluntary financial assistance.

110. By its resolution 61/184 of 20 December 2006, 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 164 in favour to 6 against with 9 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. The Assembly also expressed awareness of the detrimental impact on Palestinian natural resources being caused by the unlawful construction of the wall by Israel, the occupying Power, in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including in and around East Jerusalem, and of its grave effect on the natural resources and economic and social conditions of the Palestinian people.

111. The Assembly called upon Israel not to exploit, damage, cause loss or depletion of, or endanger the natural resources in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and in the occupied Syrian Golan, and 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 resulting from illegal measures taken by Israel, and expressed the hope that this issue will be dealt with in the framework of the final status negotiations between the Palestinian and Israeli sides. The Assembly also called upon Israel to cease the dumping of all kinds of waste materials in the Occupied Palestinian

Territory, including East Jerusalem, and in the occupied Syrian Golan, which gravely threaten their natural resources, namely the water and land resources, and poses an environmental hazard and health threat to the civilian populations.

112. On disarmament-related issues, the General Assembly adopted resolution 61/63 on the **‘Observance of environmental norms in the drafting and implementation of agreements on disarmament and arms control’** on 6 December 2006, by a vote of 175 in favour to 1 against, with 4 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. It 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. In related resolution 61/81 on **‘Confidence-building measures in the regional and sub-regional context’**, also adopted on 6 December 2006, the Assembly expressed its conviction that resources released by disarmament, including regional disarmament, can be devoted to economic and social development and to the protection of the environment for the benefit of all peoples, in particular those of the developing countries.

113. In another related resolution (61/88), entitled, **‘Establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Central Asia’**, adopted on 6 December 2006, with a vote of 141 in favour to 3 against, with 37 abstentions, the General Assembly considered that the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Central Asia on the basis of arrangements freely arrived at among the States of the region, constitutes an important step towards strengthening the nuclear non-proliferation regime, promoting cooperation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and in the environmental rehabilitation of territories affected by radioactive contamination, and enhancing regional and international peace and security. It also welcomed the signing of the Treaty on a Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in Central Asia in Semipalatinsk, Kazakhstan, on 8 September 2006. In another related resolution (61/87 of 6 December 2006), entitled, **‘Mongolia’s international security and nuclear-weapon-free status’**, the Assembly, convinced that the internationally recognized status of Mongolia will contribute to enhancing stability and confidence-building in the region as well as promote Mongolia’s security by strengthening its independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity, the inviolability of its borders and the preservation of its ecological balance, invited Member States to continue to cooperate with Mongolia in taking the necessary measures to consolidate and strengthen Mongolia’s independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity, the inviolability of its borders, its independent foreign policy, its economic security and its ecological balance, as well as its nuclear-weapon-free status, and requested the Secretary-General and relevant UN bodies to continue to provide assistance to Mongolia.

114. By its resolution 61/111 on **‘International cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space’**, adopted on 14 December 2006, the General Assembly, underlined that it is convinced that the use of space science and technology and their applications in such areas as telemedicine, tele-education, disaster management and environmental protection as well as other Earth observation applications contribute to achieving the objectives of the global conferences of the UN that address various aspects of economic, social and cultural development and, *inter alia*, poverty eradication. The Assembly 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. It urged entities of the UN system, particularly those participating in the Inter-Agency Meeting on Outer Space Activities, to examine how space science and technology and their applications could contribute to implementing the UN Millennium Declaration, and encouraged entities of the UN system to participate fully in the work of the Inter-Agency Meeting.

115. The General Assembly on 19 December 2006 adopted resolution 61/141, 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, *inter alia*, underlined the responsibility of the private sector, at both the national and international levels, including small and large companies and transnational corporations, regarding not only the economic and financial but also the development, 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. It also invited the Secretary-General, the Economic and Social Council, the regional commissions, the relevant specialized agencies,

funds and programmes of the United Nations system and other intergovernmental forums, within their respective mandates, to continue to integrate into their work programmes and give priority attention to the Copenhagen commitments and the Declaration on the tenth anniversary of the World Summit for Social Development.

116. In its resolution 61/137 of 19 December 2006 on the '**Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees**', the General Assembly urged States and relevant non-governmental and other organizations, in conjunction with the Office of the High Commissioner, to cooperate and to mobilize resources to enhance the capacity of and reducing the heavy burden borne by host countries that have received large numbers of refugees and asylum-seekers, and called upon the Office to play its catalytic role in mobilizing assistance to address the root causes as well as the economic, environmental and social impact of large-scale refugee populations in developing countries. In related resolution 61/139 on '**Assistance to refugees, returnees and displaced persons in Africa**', of 19 December 2006, the Assembly called upon the 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. In its resolution 61/208 of 20 December 2006 on '**International migration and development**', the General Assembly welcomed the convening of the High-level Dialogue on International Migration and Development, on 14 and 15 September 2006 in New York, and the high level and broad participation that provided an opportunity to discuss the multidimensional aspects of international migration and development. It also welcomed the heightened awareness raised by the High-level Dialogue and decided to consider, at its sixty-third session, possible options for appropriate follow-up to the High-level Dialogue. The offer of the Government of Belgium to convene a State-led initiative, the "*Global Forum on Migration and Development*" in 2007, was noted with interest.

117. By the terms of resolution 61/231, on the '**Implementation of the Declaration of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples by the specialized agencies and the international institutions associated with the United Nations**', the General Assembly, noting the extremely fragile economies of the small island Non-Self-Governing Territories and their vulnerability to natural disasters, such as hurricanes, cyclones and sea-level rise, requested the specialized agencies and other organizations of the UN system to provide information on environmental problems facing the Territories; the impact of natural disasters, such as hurricanes and volcanic eruptions, and other environmental problems, such as beach and coastal erosion and droughts, on those Territories; and the illegal exploitation of the marine resources of the Territories and the need to utilize those resources for the benefit of the peoples of the Territories.

118. On other decolonization-related issues, the General Assembly, in resolution 61/126 of 14 December 2006 on the '**Question of New Caledonia**', noted the importance of the positive measures being pursued in New Caledonia by the French authorities, in cooperation with all sectors of the population, to promote political, economic and social development in the Territory, including measures in the area of environmental protection. It also 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 the Territory. In resolution 61/128 A-B of 14 December 2006 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**', (adopted by a vote of 173 in favour to none against, with 4 abstentions), the Assembly, conscious of the particular vulnerability of the Territories to natural disasters and environmental degradation, 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 degradation, and once again requested the specialized agencies concerned to continue to monitor environmental conditions in those Territories.

119. On legal issues, the General Assembly adopted resolution 61/34, of 4 December 2006, on the '**Report of the International Law Commission on the work of its fifty-eighth session**'. In it, the Assembly expressed its appreciation to the Commission for the work accomplished at its 2006 session, in particular for its completion of the second reading of the draft principles on the allocation of loss in the case of transboundary harm arising out of hazardous activities; and the completion of the first reading of the draft articles on the law of transboundary aquifers under the topic "Shared natural resources". In resolution 61/36 of 4 December 2006, on the '**Allocation of loss in the case of transboundary harm arising out of hazardous activities**', the Assembly, noting that the questions of prevention of transboundary harm from hazardous activities and allocation of loss in the case of such harm are of major importance in the relations of States, took note of the principles on the allocation of

loss in the case of transboundary harm arising out of hazardous activities, presented by the Commission, the text of which is annexed to the resolution, and commends them to the attention of Governments.

120. On administrative and budgetary matters, the General Assembly, in resolution 61/233 of 22 December 2006, on the '**Financial reports and audited financial statements, and reports of the Board of Auditors**', accepted the Board's financial reports, audited financial statements and audit opinions on the organizations of the UN system, including UNEP. The Assembly, inter alia, also reiterated its request to the Secretary-General and the executive heads of the funds and programmes of the UN to ensure full implementation of the Board's recommendations, as well as related recommendations of ACABQ, in a prompt and timely manner, and to hold programme managers accountable for non-implementation of the recommendations. In resolution 61/235 of 22 December 2006, on '**Programme planning**', the Assembly, inter alia, endorsed the conclusions and recommendations of the Committee for Programme and Coordination on the proposed biennial programme plan for the period 2008-2009 contained in the report of the Committee on the work of its 2006 session, including programme 11 on the "environment". The Assembly also decided on eight main priorities for 2008-2009, on the basis of which the Secretary-General should prepare his next budget proposal: maintenance of international peace and security; sustainable development; development of Africa; human rights; coordination of humanitarian assistance; justice and international law; disarmament; and drug control, crime prevention and combating international terrorism.

121. Finally, the General Assembly, in resolution 61/244 of 22 December 2006, adopted a 17-part text on '**Human resources management**', which addresses the issues of human resources management reform; recruitment and staffing; national competitive examinations; mobility; career development; contractual arrangements; harmonization of conditions of service; reform of the field service; building leadership and management capacity; measures to improve equitable geographic distribution; gender representation; accountability; human resources information technology; staff buyout; consultants and individual contractors; employment of retired staff; and other matters.
