



Permanent Mission of Australia
to the United Nations
New York



MISIÓN PERMANENTE DE EL SALVADOR
ANTE LA ORGANIZACIÓN DE LAS NACIONES UNIDAS



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United Nations Institute for Training and Research

WORKSHOP

Revitalization of the work of the General Assembly

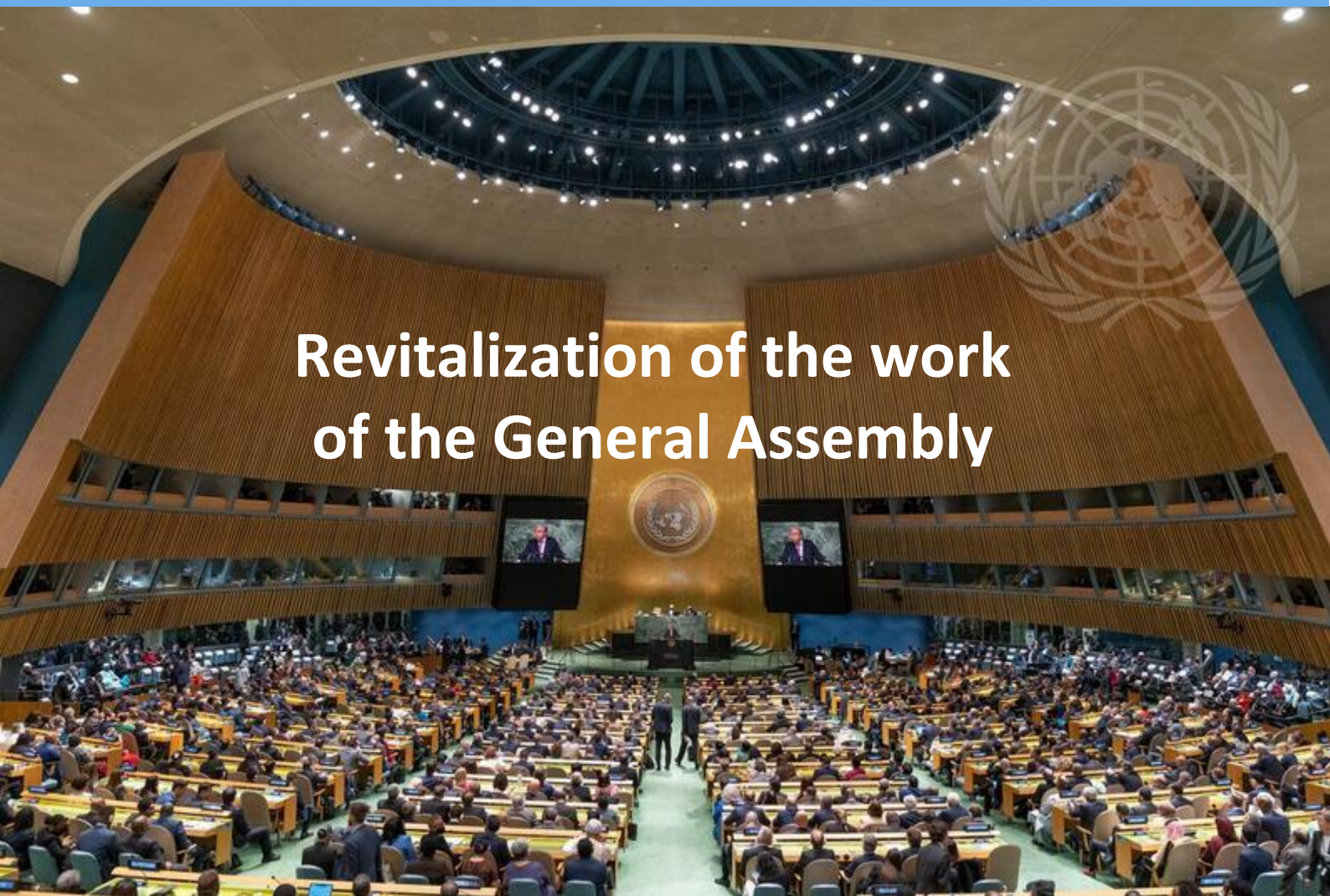
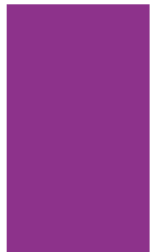


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Wednesday, 1 February 2023





**Permanent Mission of Australia
to the United Nations**
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WORKSHOP: REVITALIZATION OF THE WORK OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Concept note and programme

Wednesday, 1 February 2023

10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Trusteeship Council, United Nations Headquarters

The UN General Assembly holds a central position in the multilateral system as the chief deliberative, policymaking and most representative organ of the United Nations.

The revitalization of its work was identified as a priority from the very outset of the UN in 1946. A dedicated item was included in the agenda of the Assembly at its 46th session. At its 60th session and continuously since its 62nd session, the Assembly annually established an Ad Hoc Working Group (AHWG) on the revitalization of the work of the General Assembly.

With a mandate of identifying further ways to enhance the role, authority, effectiveness and efficiency of the General Assembly, the AHWG remains central to Member States' efforts to upgrade the UN, as agreed in the Declaration on the Commemoration of the organizations 75th Anniversary (resolution 75/1).

Amidst evolving challenges, the AHWG's deliberations and outcomes are crucial to enable the Assembly to fulfill its mandate, including to successfully address emerging challenges and for the UN to deliver action-oriented results.

PURPOSE OF THE WORKSHOP

The revitalization of the work of the General Assembly is a constantly evolving, and long-term process. The main objective of the workshop is to provide delegates with essential knowledge of the background, mandate, main areas, and outcomes of the AHWG, to enable them to actively participate in current and future sessions, and to further strengthen the implementation of the resolutions recommended by the AHWG.

The workshop will also provide an opportunity to foster dialogue with, and among, Member States, the Secretariat, global experts, and stakeholders on the future of the process to revitalize the General Assembly.



PROGRAMME

1. Welcome remarks and introduction

H.E. Marco A. Suazo, Head of the New York Office of UNITAR

2. Remarks by the Deputy Chef de Cabinet to the President of the 77th General Assembly

Mr. Fernando Marani, Deputy Chef de Cabinet to the President of the General Assembly

3. Setting the scene:

3.1. Background on the AHWG, including mandate, pillars and key outcomes

H.E. Ambassador Egriselda López, Permanent Representative of El Salvador to the United Nations

3.2. Overview of priorities for the upcoming AHWG session

H.E. Ambassador Mitch Fifield, Permanent Representative of Australia to the United Nations

3.3. The role of the Secretariat in the revitalization of the work of the General Assembly

Mr. Moses Abelian, Under-Secretary-General for General Assembly and Conference Management

4. Panel discussion: Exploring the revitalization process

Moderated by H.E. Marco A. Suazo, Head of the New York Office of UNITAR

Panelists:

- *H.E. Ambassador Michal Mlynár, Co-Chair of the AHWG at the 73rd, 74th and 75th sessions of the General Assembly*
- *H.E. Ambassador Thilmeeza Hussain, Special Adviser to the President of the General Assembly at its 76th Session*
- *Ms. Sofía Borges, Senior Vice President and Head of the New York Office of the United Nations Foundation*
- *Mr. Richard Gowan, UN Director of Crisis Group, and Non-Resident Fellow of the Center of International Cooperation of the New York University*

5. Interactive dialogue

Interactive dialogue with Member States offered to take the floor for sharing perspectives, ideas or ask questions

6. Closing remarks

Co-Chairs of the Ad Hoc Working for the 77th session



BIOGRAPHIES – SETTING THE SCENE SEGMENT



H.E. Ambassador Egriselda López, Permanent Representative of El Salvador

In August 2019, Ambassador López became the Permanent Representative of El Salvador to the United Nations, New York. She served as Chair of the 18th Meeting of States Parties to the Convention on the Rights of the Child in 2020. During the 75th General Assembly, she was appointed as co-chair of the Ad Hoc working Group on the Revitalization of the Work of the United Nations General Assembly, leading a successful and inclusive process, adopting an action-oriented resolution on this issue. Moreover, in June 2021, Ambassador López was elected Chair of the 4th Committee (Special Political and Decolonization) of the United Nations General Assembly, for its 76th Session. From 2013 to 2016, she served as Counsellor -later promoted to Minister Counsellor- at the Permanent Mission of El Salvador to the United Nations in New York. From 2010 to 2013, she was Counsellor and Deputy Head of Mission at El Salvador's Embassy in the Republic of Korea. Ambassador López began her career at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of El Salvador in 2007, 11 where she worked as an advisor on multilateral affairs. Besides serving as a diplomat, she has experience working in NGOs and think tanks in San Salvador and Geneva. Ambassador López holds a Master of Public Administration from the John F. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University (2018), a Master of International Affairs from the Graduate Institute for International Development Studies (2018) in Geneva, Switzerland, and a Bachelor of International Relations from the University of El Salvador (2006). At the Graduate Institute for International Development Studies, she completed a dissertation on gender parity in the Salvadoran Foreign Service (2018). At the University of El Salvador, her thesis focused on "The economic development model in El Salvador 1992-2002, and its impact on desertification." Ambassador López's native language is Spanish, she speaks English, French and Portuguese. Egriselda López is married and has a daughter.



H.E. Ambassador Mitch Fifield, Permanent Representative of Australia to the United Nations

The Honourable Mitch Fifield is Australia's Ambassador and Permanent Representative to the United Nations taking up his posting in New York in October 2019. Mitch Fifield is a former Australian Senator and Cabinet Minister. During fifteen years in the Senate Mr. Fifield's appointments included Deputy Leader of the Government in the Senate; Manager of Government Business in the Senate; Minister for Communications; Minister for the Arts; Minister Assisting the Prime Minister for Digital Government; and Minister responsible for disabilities and aged care. Prior to entering Parliament Mr. Fifield served as a Senior Adviser to the Treasurer of Australia and as a reservist in the Australian Army Psychology Corps. Mr Fifield holds a Bachelor of Arts from the University of Sydney.



Mr. Movses Abelian, Under-Secretary-General for General Assembly and Conference Management

Movses Abelian assumed the position of Under-Secretary-General for General Assembly and Conference Management on 1 September 2019. As Under-Secretary-General, he heads the Department for General Assembly and Conference Management (DGACM) in the United Nations Secretariat, with staff located in four duty stations – New York, Geneva, Vienna and Nairobi. On 3 September 2019, he was appointed Secretariat-wide Coordinator for Multilingualism responsible for coordinating the overall implementation of multilingualism within the Secretariat and also serves as lead for multilingualism-related matters at the United Nations System level. In addition, he is the Chair of the International Annual Meeting on Language Arrangements, Documentation and Publications (IAMLADP).

Mr. Abelian brings to the position more than 25 years of experience in conference management, peace and security issues and conflict resolution as well as extensive expertise in leading, supporting and managing complex portfolios and intergovernmental processes, including the General Assembly, the Security Council and the executive boards of United Nations funds and programmes. As Director of the Security Council Affairs Division from 2011 to 2016, Mr. Abelian served as the Secretary of the Security Council and provided substantive advice to the President and members of the Council and its subsidiary bodies on matters related to the Council's work, practices and procedures. He also has several years of experience in management, including programme planning and budgeting, having previously worked as Secretary of the Administrative and Budgetary Committee (Fifth Committee) of the General Assembly and the Committee for Programme and Coordination at the United Nations.

Prior to joining the United Nations, Mr. Abelian was the Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Armenia to the United Nations from 1998 to 2003 and Deputy Permanent Representative from 1996 to 1998. During his diplomatic career, Mr. Abelian served in various capacities, including as Chair of the Fifth Committee (1998); Vice-Chair of the Disarmament Commission and Special Negotiator for the reform of financing for United Nations peacekeeping operations (2000); President of the Executive Board of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF); and Facilitator for United Nations reform during the fifty-seventh session of the General Assembly (2002). Before joining the foreign service of Armenia in 1992, Mr. Abelian worked in academia as Associate Professor at Yerevan State University from 1989. Mr. Abelian was educated in Armenia, the Russian Federation and the United States of America. He is married and has two children.



Mr. Fernando Marani
Deputy Chef de Cabinet

A career diplomat from Argentina, Fernando A. Marani is the Deputy Chef de Cabinet of the 77th OPGA.

He previously served as Deputy Chef de Cabinet in the Office of the President of the 76th session of the General Assembly and as Chief Legal Adviser and Team Leader for United Nations Reform, Budget and Legal Affairs in the Office of the President of the 75th session of the General Assembly.

Previously, from 2015 to 2020, his work was focused on international law and human rights law at the Permanent Mission of Argentina to the United Nations.

He has been working on international law since 2005, including at the Office of the Legal Adviser of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (2005-2007 and 2013-2015) and at the Embassy of Argentina to the Kingdom of the Netherlands (2007-2012).

Among his diplomatic assignments, he has been part of several delegations in international conferences related to Public and Private International Law, including as Chairman of the Special Commission of the Hague Conference on Private International Law in 2012, legal adviser of the Argentine Delegation at the International Court of Justice in the Pulp Mill Case (2007-2010), member of the Management Group of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development Working Group on Bribery (2014) and chairman of the Group of Friends of the International Criminal Court in New York (2019-2020).

He is a lawyer who graduated from the Universidad Nacional del Litoral (Santa Fe, Argentina). He was also a scholar at the National Foreign Service Institute (ISEN) in Buenos Aires (2003-2004) and international fellow at the Rio Branco Institute in Brasilia (2004). He speaks Spanish, English, Portuguese, Dutch and French, and has some basic knowledge of Italian and Chinese.



BIOGRAPHIES – PANEL DISCUSSION SEGMENT



H.E. Ambassador Michal Mlynár, Co-Chair of the AHWG at the 73rd, 74th and 75th sessions of the General Assembly

Michal Mlynár of Slovakia is the Deputy Executive Director of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat). Mr. Mlynár brings almost 30 years of professional experience as a diplomat and an educator, having served his country in multiple senior assignments focused mainly on international organizations, security sector governance, development cooperation, humanitarian aid and Africa.

His wide experience in multilateral affairs will facilitate efforts to re-position UN-Habitat's mandate among Member States. In times of global crises including climate, conflicts and COVID-19, Mr. Mlynár will contribute to strengthening multilateral dialogue and cooperation among Member States and donors to enhance the implementation of the New Urban Agenda in the context of the 2030 Agenda to ensure that no one and no place is left behind in our rapidly urbanizing world.

During his term as Slovakia's Permanent Representative to the United Nations, he has served as Vice President of the UNICEF Executive Board (2022), Vice Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission (2021), Chair of the Sixth Committee (Legal) (2019-2020), three-time co-Chair of the Ad Hoc Working Group on the revitalization of the work of the General Assembly (2018-2021) and Vice President of the Assembly of States Parties to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (2018-2021). In 2021-2022 he was a member of the Advisory Committee on Sustainable Urbanization to the President of the General Assembly.

His previous ambassadorial assignment (2012-2015) was to Kenya, with accreditation to eleven other African countries and the United Nations agencies based in Nairobi. At that time, he also served as Chair of the Committee of Permanent Representatives to UN-Habitat (2014-2015) and then assumed the role of the President of its Governing Council (2016-2017). He spearheaded consultations among Member States on the most suitable governance model of UN-Habitat and significantly contributed to the preparations of the Habitat III Conference in Quito, Ecuador (2016). From 2015 to 2017, he was Director General for International Organizations, Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Aid in Slovakia's Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs. Mr. Mlynár has been a member of Slovakia's Foreign Service since 2000. Prior to becoming a diplomat, he worked in the education sector for seven years, including as a Fulbright scholar at the Los Angeles Harbor College and the University of California Los Angeles (UCLA).

Mr. Mlynár holds a Ph.D. and a Master's degree from the Comenius University in Bratislava, Slovakia. He also studied in the United Kingdom and the United States. He speaks Slovak, English, Russian, Spanish and German.



H.E. Ambassador Thilmeeza Hussain, Special Adviser to the President of the General Assembly at its 76th Session

Her Excellency Thilmeeza Hussain was the Special Envoy of the 76th President of the General Assembly. She is the Permanent Representative of the Maldives to the United Nations, concurrent Ambassador of the Maldives to the United States and non-resident High Commissioner to Canada, posts she assumed in 2019. Prior to her appointments she was an Adjunct Professor of Sustainability at Ramapo College in New Jersey teaching at the School of Social Sciences and Human Services.

In 2009, she was appointed Deputy Permanent Representative at the Permanent Mission of the Maldives to the United Nations, a post she resigned in 2012. During her tenure as the Deputy Permanent Representative, she held the Climate Change and Sustainable Development portfolios. She was a lead negotiator for Maldives at Rio+20 and was also on the UNFCCC negotiation team, co-chaired the Sustainable Development Working Group for the Alliance of Small Island States and facilitated and coordinated several UN General Assembly resolutions.

Ambassador Hussain has also served as Minister of State for Home Affairs (North Province). In addition to her formal work, Ambassador Hussain has a kinship for doing non-profit work for social good. The main areas of her work include gender and climate justice where she both founded and worked closely with a number of civil society organizations. For 2018-2019 she was also an Aspen New Voices Fellow at the Aspen Institute.

Ambassador Hussain holds a Master of Science in Business Management from Colorado Technical University in the United States and Bachelor of Commerce from Murdoch University in Perth, Australia.

Ambassador Hussain is married to Mohamed Shaheen, and they have a nine-year-old son.



Ms. Sofía Borges, Senior Vice President and Head of the New York Office of the United Nations Foundation

Sofia Borges is the United Nations Foundation's Senior Vice President and leads the Foundation's office in New York. Before joining the UN Foundation, Sofia was the Deputy Chef de Cabinet to the President of the 72nd Session of the UN General Assembly (2017-2018) and served in the Cabinet of the President of the 71st Session (2016-2017) of the UN General Assembly as his Special Adviser on Strategic Engagement and Transparency.



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Prior to joining the Office of the President of the UN General Assembly, Sofia worked as Special Adviser on the 2030 Agenda to the World Federation of United Nations Associations (WFUNA).

Previously, she was Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Timor-Leste to the UN from 2010-2016. She was the Chief Negotiator for her country during the Open Working Group on the Sustainable Development Goals (2013-2014) and Chief Negotiator for Timor-Leste on the Post-2015 Inter-Governmental Negotiations on the SDGs (2014-2015). She was Chair of the Community of Portuguese Speaking Countries (2014-2016). Sofia also served as Chair of the g7+ (2010-2014), a role that was critical in the negotiations on the 2030 Agenda. Sofia was also a member of the Advisory Board UN Democracy Fund (2012-2013) as well as a Member of the Executive Board of UN Women (2012-2013). Before joining the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Sofia worked as a Women's Anthropologist at the Central Land Council in Australia.

Sofia holds degrees in Anthropology, Political Science, and Law from the Australian National University, Canberra, and Northern University, Darwin.

She speaks Tetum, English, and Portuguese.



Mr. Richard Gowan, UN Director of Crisis Group, and Non-Resident Fellow of the Center of International Cooperation of the New York University

Richard was previously a Consulting Analyst with ICG in 2016 and 2017. He has worked with the European Council on Foreign Relations, New York University Center on International Cooperation and the Foreign Policy Centre (London).

He has taught at the School of International and Public Affairs at Columbia University and Stanford in New York. He has also worked as a consultant for the organisations including UN Department of Political Affairs, the UN Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on International Migration, the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, Rasmussen Global, the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office, the Finnish Ministry for Foreign Affairs and Global Affairs Canada.

From 2013 to 2019, he wrote a weekly column ("Diplomatic Fallout") for World Politics Review.



Moderator:



H.E. Mr. Marco Suazo
Head of the UNITAR New York Office

Head of the United Nations Institute for Training and Research New York Office (UNITAR-NYO) and Senior Advisor to the Executive Director of UNITAR since October 2015. Mr. Suazo is a career diplomat and former Ambassador who served as Deputy Permanent Representative of Honduras to the United Nations in New York.

During his tour of duty in the United Nations for 27 years, Mr. Suazo served as Chair of two of the Main Committees of the General Assembly. In 2002, he chaired the Second Committee on Economic and Financial issues during the 57th session of the General Assembly (throughout this session, the Office of Finance for Development was created in the United Nations Secretariat, following the Monterrey Conference on Financing for Development); and in 2008, he chaired the First Committee on Disarmament and International Security during the 63rd session of the General Assembly. Mr. Suazo has served as representative of Honduras in the Security Council 1995-1996 as political coordinator and after as an Advisor in the Public Administration Division at the Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA); ex officio member at the United Nations Foundation Executive Board; Deputy Director at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Honduras; and Minister Counsellor in the Embassy of Honduras in Managua, Nicaragua.

Mr. Suazo has published several articles on the United Nations matters and two books related to Honduras' history and its participation in the Organization as a funder member. The first one is entitled "Our History- Honduras in the United Nations 1945-2005" and it was published on the 60th Anniversary of the United Nations (2005) and the second one, "We the People" in 2013. Mr. Suazo is working in his third publication. In 2015, he was awarded with the title of "Commendatore of the Republic of Italy" which is a high distinction given by the Italian President and offered by the President of the Chamber of the Parliament. Graduated with a degree in Social Science and Jurisprudence at the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de Honduras (UNAH), Mr. Suazo completed his postgraduate studies at the University of Florence (Italy), "Cesare Alfieri Faculty, and earned a degree in International Relations and Law. He has completed other academic courses and seminars on public international law, international negotiations, economic integration, human rights, and peacekeeping. He speaks Spanish, English, Italian, and French.



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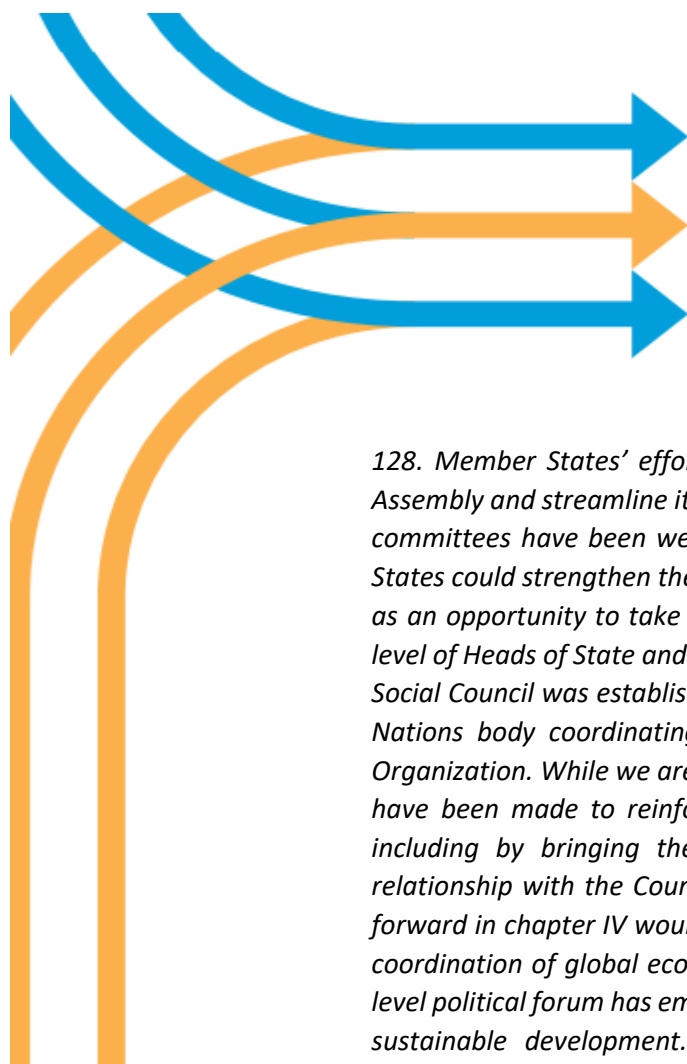


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OUR COMMON AGENDA

Report of
the Secretary-General

128. Member States' efforts to revitalize the work of the General Assembly and streamline its resolutions, reporting requirements and committees have been welcomed. It has also been suggested that States could strengthen the high-level week of the Assembly, using it as an opportunity to take decisions and make commitments at the level of Heads of State and Government. Similarly, the Economic and Social Council was established in the Charter as the principal United Nations body coordinating the economic and social work of the Organization. While we are now in a different era, various proposals have been made to reinforce the role and profile of the Council, including by bringing the G20 and its processes into a closer relationship with the Council. In my view, the Biennial Summit put forward in chapter IV would be an important step forward in better coordination of global economic governance. In addition, the high-level political forum has emerged as the primary global gathering for sustainable development. It provides an inclusive platform for monitoring implementation of the 2030 Agenda, while promoting peer learning and expanding the global movement for the Sustainable Development Goals. I invite all Governments, sectors, partners and alliances to engage at the high-level political forum each year to increase ambition, accelerate implementation efforts and build connections across issues that are essential for effective multilateralism.



United
Nations



A/RES/75/325

**Resolution adopted by the General
Assembly on 10 September 2021**



A/75/973

**Report of the Ad Hoc Working Group on the
Revitalization of the Work of the General
Assembly**



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