

American Model United Nations
Economic Commission for Africa

Report to the Economic Commission for Africa on Enhancing the climate resilience of Africa's infrastructure

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1 1 Executive Summary

At its 13th session, held on 23 November through 26 November, the Economic Commission for Africa discussed enhancing the climate resilience of Africa's infrastructure as a priority for the 2019 review cycle, and the review of the United Nations plans and programs of action pertaining to the situation of climate change resilience in Africa.

6 The Commission separated into three committees with each committee elaborating on a specific sector of 7 climate change resilience, those committees, focusing specifically on infrastructure in the agricultural, transportation 8 sectors, and water and energy.

9 The first chapter of this report submits three resolutions to the Economic and Social Councils, 2.1, 2.2, and 10 2.3. Resolution 2.1 addresses transportation, 2.2 addresses agriculture and 2.3 addresses water and energy.

11 The second chapter details the deliberations of the Commission on enhancing climate resilient infrastructure 12 in Africa and the three committees on agriculture, transportation, and water and energy. The committees discussed 13 problems, implications, and solutions relating to climate resilience.

¹⁴ 2 Matters calling for action

15 2.1 ECA II/1

16 *Reaffirming* this body's previous work on enhancing climate resilient infrastructure,

17 *Realizing* the detrimental effects climate change has already had on many African nations,

18 *Recognizing* the importance of transportation infrastructure to enhance trade, domestic economies, and 19 general wellbeing,

Further recognizing the need for housing in areas of extreme poverty to facilitate the development of those neighborhoods,

Remaining concerned about the lack of roads and other such transportation mechanisms among African nations,

24 *Noting* the poor condition of already existing roads across the continent,

25 *Considering* the limitations of road, river, and air transport,

Expressing deep concern for the deficiency of financial services for housing development and other infrastructure that lacks the ability to withstand climate change,

Understanding the need for other viable options for means of travelling, such as helicopters, airplanes, and other modes of air transport,

Further noting that air travel is necessary in the midst of emergency situations in order to provide prompt relief and evacuation to those affected,

Affirming that the role of protected and conserved areas as natural tools to address the negative effects of climate change,

1. Suggests the formation of a panel of experts, in which a proportional representation of individuals are gathered from each region of the African continent to further delve into the specific calamities affecting each respective region, including but not limited to finding:

37 (a) the most effective materials and resources;

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(b) pathways to build climate resilient transport infrastructure;

2. *Recommends* the creation of an adjacent working group to the panel of experts, a panel of representatives, to be formed with vulnerable farmers and other such stakeholders, in order to represent all communities affected by this issue at hand;

3. Welcomes partnerships among Member States, their governments, and non-governmental organizations in order to optimize the use of resources already available, allowing for sustainable transport infrastructure to more easily be built and maintained within such coalitions;

45 4. *Emphasizes* the need for other forms of transport, including air and water travel, in the event of natural 46 disasters brought about by climate change blockade and destroy road structures;

5. *Asks* the international community to recognize national and regional efforts of countries to improve the contribution of protected areas and other effective conservation strategies;

6. *Further emphasizes* that the Economic and Social Council implement mechanisms for foreign investment in African Countries who wish to enhance infrastructure, their respective economies, and green jobs markets;

51 7. *Further emphasizes* housing projects as a way to help modernize homes that are affected by environmental 52 stressors exacerbated by climate change;

8. *Recommends* existing buildings be improved to withstand the effects of global climate change and natural
 disasters;

55 9. *Expresses its hope* for member states to cooperate with non-governmental organizations, form public-56 private partnerships and encourage foreign investment for housing projects to be implemented; 10. Encourages a focused development plan for housing in severely underdeveloped rural areas.

58 2.2 ECA II/2

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59 *Recognizing* the serious problems presented by the lack of environmentally and economically sustainable 60 agriculture in Africa,

61 Bearing in mind the importance of enhancing the climate resilient infrastructure for the future economic 62 success of African countries and peoples,

63 Noting the intersectionality of these problems across region, religion, and identity,

64 *Noting* the suffering caused by this surfeit of efficient agriculture,

65 Declaring that water scarcity is a pressing issue across Africa,

66 *Recalling* the established United Nations definition of "indigenous peoples,

67 Acknowledging the massive disparities between urban and rural community wealth,

68 *Emphasizing* the need to ameliorate these problems immediately,

1. *Recommends* the promotion and growth of the World Bank's Climate Change Knowledge Portal for further use within Africa as an information sharing platform and the continued expansion of data and research on sustainable agriculture;

2. Urges the formation of public-private partnerships to facilitate access to climate-resilient technology, particularly crop seeds, which are imperative to meeting the food needs of our people for years to come;

3. Welcomes the re-adaptation of indigenous methods in combination with modern technology would promote a streamlined production of agricultural resources, seeing that the implementation of economically sustainable indigenous methods is crucial toward the resolution of these issues:

- (a) Calls for the education of African farmers on this unique blend of old and new technology andsolutions;
- (i) Recommends a scientific, comprehensive, community-sourced education be facilitated across the
 continent to ensure that methods are understood, applicable, and properly implemented;
- (ii) Acknowledges massive disparities between urban and rural community wealth, we encourage this
 with a focus on the empowerment of rural communities, incorporating environmental education and
 utilization of rangeland;

4. *Encourages* a focus on the empowerment of rural communities, incorporating environmental education and utilization of rangeland:

(a) Notes that the aforementioned indigenous methods include food, water, and livestock preservation
 methods predate European colonization of Africa in the 19th and 20th century;

(b) Urges a return to these practices, cognizant that they worked for millennia;

5. Acknowledges that this is a universal problem and that it demands a universal solution that encompasses all countries, and all of their peoples;

6. Welcomes a modern approach that facilitates equality of access and efficiency of distribution for local farmers' interests, in light of the fact that much of the existing water infrastructure in some regions is outdated and colonially oriented;

94 7. Asks the Economic and Social Council to consider funding and promoting equitable distribution of 95 resources across the continent and within countries;

8. *Expresses* its hope that investment and aid from non-governmental organizations and international governing bodies should be utilized but monitored to ensure benefit to all.

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98 2.3 ECA II/3

99 Acknowledging the present Neo-Colonial influence of Western developed countries that inhibit the economic 100 ability for Western African countries to exercise their economic power for economic growth,

101 *Welcoming* future assistance from the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) and other inter-102 governmental organizations,

103 Stressing the importance of each Member States' access to clean water and sewer systems,

104 *Recalling* Economic Commission for Africa resolution 844 of 16 May 2006 on re-position the Economic 105 Commission for Africa to better respond to Africa's priorities,

106 Alarmed by the various wealth disparities exhibited between the urban and rural areas in Africa,

107 *Bearing* in mind that African states lack the required resources that may aid in building sustainable infras-108 tructure in African states,

109 Concerned with the privatization of vital resources necessary for stable infrastructure in African countries,

110 *Recognizing* the individual needs and resources as they may pertain to every respective African nation as an 111 individual,

112 Seeking western developed nations to take initiatives in climate sustainable infrastructure through subsidiza-113 tion of lesser developed nations,

114 1. *Recommitting* to trans-national agreements for economic sustainability such as NEPAD, albeit while 115 taking the environment into concern;

116 2. *Rejects* the expectations of western developed countries that urge African countries in taking charge in 117 climate sustainability;

118 3. Reaffirms the Paris Climate Agreement which grants exception to lesser developed Member States that 119 cannot be expected to progress at the same rate as developed Member States;

4. *Welcomes* foreign investors in pursuing profitable endeavors in the construction of higher quality and resilient infrastructure:

(a) SinoHydro built the largest hydropower facility in Cote d'Ivoire which increased the national
 electrical output by 10%;

5. *Encourages* equitable compensation for resources exchanged between African countries and developed Western countries:

- (a) As with the World Bank aid packages to further invest in the improvement of African infras-tructure;
- 128 (b) 200 million dollar aid package to increase access to electricity in Sahel and Western Africa;
 - (c) Paris Climate Agreement pledges 100 billion in aid, met 48 billion by 2020;

6. *Further encourages* the peaceful and cooperative deliberation between African countries with conflicting resource related interests:

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(a) As with the foreseeable damaging acts that may be deliberated through the blockage of the Nile;

133 7. *Affirms* the need for cooperation between African countries and non-governmental organizations in build-134 ing up and strengthening infrastructure:

(a) Cooperation between non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and states have done much tostrengthen institutional infrastructure such as the training of staff;

(b) A non-governmental organization known as Building Resilience and Capacities for Emerging
 Disasters (BRACED) has trained staff in weather reporting services in African Member States to strengthen resilience
 against climate-related disasters;

140 8. *Emphasizes* the need for the education of the populous in lesser developed nations regarding sanitation 141 infrastructure: (a) Over 70% of Africans in some rural areas don't have access to sewer systems and proper sanitation
 infrastructure.

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144 **3** Consideration of the status

145 **3.1 Deliberations**

The body began by deciding to focus on topic area two. The body decided that it should focus on 146three main areas; these areas being agriculture, resource sustainability, and transportation. This was done via the first 147suspension of the meeting where Kenya, Eritrea, and Morocco took the lead in formulating sub-committees. The body 148then split into these groups with Eritrea leading the agriculture group. Morocco leading the resource sustainability 149group, and Kenya/Libya leading the transportation group. For agriculture: Togolese Republic, Kingdom of Eswatini, 150151People's Democratic Republic of Algeria, State of Eritrea, Somalia, Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, and the Republic of South Africa. For the resource sustainability: The Kingdom of Morocco, Republic of Equatorial 152Guinea, The Republic of Sudan, Republic of Cote d'Ivoire, the Federal Republic of Nigeria, Republic of Ghana, The 153Republic of Cameroon, Republic of Madagascar, and Arab Republic. of Egypt. For Transportation: Burkina Faso, 154The Democratic Republic of the Congo, Republic of Kenya, The Republic of South Sudan, Republic of Mozambique, 155State of Libya, and State of Eritrea. 156

157 For further clarity, the resource sustainability committee was separated into three sub-committees: 158 Clean and Quality Water, Electricity, and Sustainable Development.

Once the body was divided into subcommittees, representatives from Libya, Kenya, South Sudan, Mozambique, Burkina Faso, Eritrea, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo worked together to report on and provide recommendations to mitigate the issues of transportation infrastructure within the continent. Keeping in mind the concerns of all nations within this body, the transportation subcommittee aimed to examine the issue from several viewpoints, including divides in rural and urban areas, regional areas, and economic and political areas.

The African continent's primary mode of transportation for intercontinental trade are the roads 164that connect cities to cities, states to states, and regions to regions. Road connections are critical in facilitating 165trade between African states, but also offer opportunities for jobs, as well as supplying access to essential social 166 167institutions such as schools and hospitals. However, the current roadway infrastructure system across Africa is severely underdeveloped and currently stands as a serious impediment to the growth of African states. As only one-168third of the rural inhabitants of Africa have access to roads within two kilometers of their homes. The current access 169to road structures fails to account for the agricultural economy of several African states. The roads that do exist 170are insufficiently funded and are worn at an accelerated rate due to climate-related stressors impacting them. This 171172including severe rainfall, unprecedented high temperatures, and natural disasters such as monsoons and harmattans. 173The current road structures of Africa fail to provide the infrastructure required by the socio-economic climate of the continent, and those failures are exacerbated by the increasing threat of climate change. 174

Whist climate change impacts all regions of Africa differently, the intercontinental road infrastructure universally is negatively impacted by climate change due to the stressors of higher temperatures, increased precipitation, and flooding. Current research indicates those stressors will place considerable pressure on Africa's road system, enough so to accelerate the aging of those roads and require increased maintenance and more frequent rehabilitation. Climate-related damage to the road structures will cause more frequent disruptions to the movement of people and goods, detrimentally impacting economic productivity.

Enhancing the climate resilience of African infrastructure necessitates the revitalization, improvement, and creation of interconnected national and international roadway systems. The projects to accomplish this lofty, but necessary, goal will require substantial funds. Funds that many States may be unable to supply. It is important that this complication be remembered by ECOSOC and remain central in any future work.

The lack of roads in any capacity for most of the rural inhabitants of Africa severely limits the agricultural economic sector of the continent. The agricultural industry of Africa is a wellspring of potential sustainability and economic growth, yet the severely underdeveloped state of the roads restricts certain areas from optimizing that potential. Providing roads will be a huge investment in the agricultural economy of Africa and will overall be beneficial in numerous ways. Providing the enhancement of road infrastructure in rural areas will, among other benefits, allow for efficient crop exportation while providing assistance in resolving food insecurity and increasing both the standard of living for rural industry workers and State GDP.

After discussing transportation in great depth, discussion turned briefly to the issue of housing. As it is, many Africans in rural and urban areas alike do not have well constructed or climate resilient housing. These 194 underdeveloped housing areas are particularly vulnerable to climate change driven damages such as natural disasters 195 and environmental degradation. Many of the homes in rural Africa must be modernized if they are to be climate 196 resilient structures capable of protecting their inhabitants from the effects of climate change. This modernization of 197 housing will also serve to increase standards of living and productivity levels across Africa.

As climate change continues to affect the global community, the importance of acclimating societies' climate change resilient infrastructure to be more adaptive to the effects of climate change becomes more pertinent. The African continent lacks climate resilient infrastructure, yet its industries and gross domestic product are heavily affected by the effects of climate change. Therefore, it is imperative for not only the success of the current generation but also future generations that the implementation of climate-resilient infrastructure is enacted now.

Previously, the United Nations has worked towards minimizing the effects of climate change. Specifically, the United Nation's Climate Change Adaptation Unit has focused on four areas: ecosystem-based adaptation, knowledge and analysis-based networking, the world adaptation science program and the access to adaptation finance. The United Nations has enhanced global cooperation and projects in all four of these sections. Furthermore, it has held forums and treaty signing including the 1997 Kyoto Protocol, the 2015 Paris Agreement, the 2017 United Nations Climate Conference and the 2019 Climate Summit.

Agriculture is an essential component of enhancing the climate-resilient infrastructure in the African 209continent. The majority of African countries economies are heavily agriculture-based. Hence, the importance of 210building climate change resilience in the agricultural sector is imperative. In order to move forward with enhancing the 211agricultural system, the problems that currently exist must be addressed. These problems include the management 212213of food storage, sustainable farming, theft of agricultural resources, food insecurity, desertification, drought, theft of 214natural resources that are the main exports of many African countries, food distribution and lack of investment in the agricultural sector. The effects of colonization continue to be an impediment to the rapid development of African 215countries. The separating of the different ethnic groups is the origin of many problems between African countries. 216Thus, it is imperative to reclaim the successes of Africa before colonization and prioritize the needs of Africans. This 217218commission suggests promoting traditional practices, creating a holistic approach that reclaims our identity and is 219cost-effective.

Climate finance refers to the local, national and transnational financing that can be drawn from private and public sources of funding. Funding is crucial to addressing climate change resilient infrastructure, for which significant financial resources will be allocated to allow societies and economies to adapt to the adverse effects. Regarding funding mechanisms, micro-financing programs for agriculture and entrepreneurship have shown promise in some areas but require selective implementation for maximum effectiveness. Countries have shown a desire to collaborate with regards to funding, but have recognized the importance of recognizing the differing economic means of various countries.

Unequal and illegal theft of natural resources from African countries is rampant and continues to produce unethical results from an economic and sustainable scope. Theft negatively affects the export system of countries resulting in depreciating economies. Land degradation, loss of lives, increased levels of poverty and food insecurity are all directly related to natural resource theft. The exploitative process disproportionately affects postcolonial countries who do not reap the benefits of the consumption or profit these natural resources. A holistic approach should be taken to improve the trade ethics in order to prevent the prevalence of neocolonialism in climate change policies pertaining to illicit natural resource theft.

Agricultural techniques in Africa are oftentimes less efficient than those used in wealthier parts of the world. In a continent where drought poses such a threat, it is severely detrimental to the people of Africa that drought-resistant strains of seeds are not readily available. Improving accessibility through open markets and incentivization for public-private collaboration will help increase crop yield and expedite production efficacy.

Additionally, desertification is an expanding problem on the continent that has been combated by a number of innovative solutions. The development of the Great Green Wall began in 2007 to end the expansion of the Sahara Desert, revitalize agricultural land and reduce food insecurity. Due to erratic weather behavior and having to cope with climate variability, developing sustainable agricultural technologies is a priority. The social cost of environmental degradation is extremely significant, and by developing agricultural technologies such as droughtresistant seeds, soil and water management, this commission seeks to improve and increase nutrient content during needed cropping periods.

The education of rural areas in relation to technological advances in the agricultural sector is vital to adaptive measures that need to be taken to ensure climate resilient infrastructure. In many rural areas, there

is an educational disconnect with farmers and the technologies they need to prevent the adverse effects of climate 247change. In order to educate farmers, it is vital to provide already educated professionals. Hence, it is imperative 248to launch training programs which create knowledgeable professionals who can, in turn, continue to educate other 249250individuals on the planning, designing, and operating of climate-sensitive infrastructures. This will ensure the adequate strengthening of the technical skills that are required to enhance the climate resilience of infrastructure. 251Additionally, there is a wide gap between the available information and farmers in relation to seasonal forecast 252convention. African farmers face difficulty in using observational data. Innovations for producing more locally 253254relevant historical and forecast climate information for farm decision-making should be adopted.

255 Representatives from Algeria, Eritrea, Eswatini, Ethiopia, Somalia, South Africa and Togo worked 256 together to consider the problems, implications and plausible solutions of the enhancement of climate-resilient in-257 frastructures in relation to the agricultural sector.

Representatives from Eritrea, Eswatini, Ethiopia, Somalia and South Africa suggested a myriad of holistic solutions to this issue recognizing each member states individual perspective on the effects of climate change in the agricultural sector.

Representatives from Togo and Algeria concur that proper consideration must be given by this commission to all suggestions made by the different subgroups in their areas of focus when observing this report as a whole.

The deliberations within the subcommittee on access to clean water noted that although Africa accounts for some of the lowest carbon emissions in the world, it experiences the negative impacts of climate change disproportionately. For decades, access to clean water in Africa has been an issue, but as the effects of global warming worsen, it has become clear that the infrastructure of many African countries unequipped to adapt to rising sea levels while also providing access to clean water for all of their citizens. All regions of Africa are impacted by this problem, and it is a consensus among the countries in our committee that access to clean and safe water that this is an issue of utmost importance.

271The main cause of these issues is a lack of water infrastructure, especially infrastructure that is able to survive the impacts that climate change is currently having on African countries. Our committee emphasized the 272importance of recognizing the different needs of countries from different regions, and with different geographies that 273impact the ways in which they can access water. Consequences of climate change include natural disasters, coastal 274regions especially suffer from cyclones. These natural disasters are detrimental to most government infrastructure. 275276Another cause of past water mistreatment within eastern Member States is the lack of knowledge and public awareness 277for alternative methods for conserving water. For example, one of the most pressing issues in Northern Africa is the impact rise sea levels are having on the infrastructure surrounding the Nile River. If infrastructure around the Nile 278River is not adapted to combat the threat of sea level rising, citizens in the Nile Delta will face economic and quality 279of life struggles. Due to Egypt's unique relationship with the Nile. The people of Egypt will face incredible risk if 280this issue is not addressed. The majority of Egypt's agriculture is grown along the Nile, and farmers have already 281282beginning to have problems harvesting crops due to the increase of saltwater in the area.

In order to combat these issues, the representatives present during deliberations, Egypt, Equatorial 283284Guinea, Ghana, Madagascar, and Somalia see fit that developed countries within organizations such as the United Nations support African countries' efforts to develop climate-resilient infrastructure that helps provide clean water to 285areas that are currently struggling. More specifically, our subcommittee sees conservation of soil, water and natural 286resource management for equitable growth and development as important aspects of improving the climate resilience 287of Africa's water infrastructure. We also recognize that individual regions and countries with different geographies have 288289different resources and needs when it comes to their water infrastructure. For example, this commission discussed the possibility of expanding desalination technology for member states along the coast. In contrast, we discussed 290that countries along the Nile River are in need of more infrastructure to protect from flooding while also still allowing 291those countries to utilize the river as a resource for clean water. Furthermore, we emphasized the importance of clean 292water projects by Non-governmental Organizations for Western and Central African countries, such as UNICEF's 293successful Water for Guinea initiative, in which they built 163 water wells to provide access to clean water to remote 294295villages within the country.

In its deliberations, the subcommittee on access to electricity considered that in most African countries, the majority of electricity can only be accessed by those who live in capital cities and urban areas, thus limiting access in rural areas. This is usually due to the fact that typical cable wires are not able to reach most rural areas. In addition, the lack of adequate training, data sharing and social infrastructure creates an increase in this deficit. Rural areas are not able to develop roads and other infrastructure because the equipment and technology depend on electricity. The lack of development in rural areas contributes to inequality between the rural and urban areas. A lower standard of living is attributed to the lack of infrastructure in rural areas furthering contributing to the inequality. Enhancing the climate resilience of Africa's infrastructure would assist in decreasing the inequality across rural and urban areas.

The representatives present during deliberations, Cote d' Ivoire, Cameroon, Sudan, and Madagascar recommend African countries share data, technology, and techniques to bridge the gap between urban and rural access. Doing this would require the implementation of renewable energy across the continent, such as wind power, solar power and hydro power. The implementation and usage of institutional programs to facilitate training in the field of sustainable energy, and newer forms of energy would help more rural areas better connect to the urban, and capital cities. Partnerships between business, governments, and non-governmental organizations can help decrease this deficit.

The subcommittee on sustainable development found in its deliberations that sustainable development has become increasingly difficult throughout the continent due to a lack of access to the high quality materials necessary to build climate resilient infrastructure. This lack of access results in low grade roads, houses, bridges, electricity, and overall materials for use. In turn, those issues create a need for more repairs, which ends up costing more over time. We find that this disproportionately affects all African countries. The entire continent is affected by lack of access, and this commission holds that this needs to be addressed.

While effort towards creating sustainable energy has been made, significant factors limit these efforts. Western influence has allowed privatization of resources, which has created an inflation of prices beyond affordability for many developing African countries. The privatization of resources is especially concerning for African countries because it creates opportunities for Western influences to gain significant control over local resources. The westernization of resources creates a boundary between Africa's people and their needs. A boundary created by western powers is one that is not in the best interest of the African continent. It is imperative that African countries have control over their own resources in order to create the most efficient path of growth towards stable infrastructure.

325 Considering these problems and implications, the representatives present during deliberations, Morocco, Guinea, and Nigeria discussed that a possible solution would look towards encouraging regions in Africa to 326work together in order to improve the lack of access to sustainable energy. A regional effort proves most effective as 327 each country can work to support its surrounding countries. Furthermore, this commission encourages an increase in 328 trade with quality sources for all countries that would allow inflation to go down; this would help access for countries 329330 that cannot always afford the same quality of products. We would also like to see countries focus on building quality infrastructure rather than effortless repairs. This can be achieved by taking a unified approach to supporting each 331other. Economic help from larger to smaller countries can allow smaller countries to make the changes they need. 332

333 3.2 Actions taken by the commission

The commission moved to looking at draft resolutions. The first draft resolution to be brought to the floor was that submitted by the Transportation committee including the following countries: Burkina Faso, The Democratic Republic of the Congo, Kenya, South Sudan, Mozambique, Libya and Eritrea. The commission moved into a consultative session. After exhausting the consultative session, Nigeria moved for the closure of debate. This was passed with one objection to adoption by consensus; the body passed this resolution.

The commission moved on to the second draft resolution first thing the next day. They began with a consultative session before receiving the physical draft. This resolution was submitted by the agriculture committee consisting of Togo, Eswatini, Algeria, Eritrea, Somalia, Ethiopia and South Africa. After the consultative session the draft was received and the commission re-entered consultative session. Once finished Nigeria moved for consideration of draft resolutions. The commission discussed the resolution, and Libya promptly moved for closure of debate. This passed and the commission immediately passed the resolution by consensus.

The commission moved on to the third draft resolution later the same day. Libya moved for the consideration of the draft resolution submitted by the resource sustainability committee of Morocco, Guinea, Sudan, Cote d'Ivoire, Ghana, Cameroon, Equatorial Guinea, Nigeria, Madagascar and Egypt. Eritrea then moved for a ten minute consultative session in order to hear all deliberations on the topic. Next Kenya moved for a suspension of the meeting in order to discuss potential amendments. A friendly amendment was submitted and approved by the 350 dais. Eritrea then moved for closure of debate. By a roll call vote the resolution passed, and the deliberations on

351 the resolutions closed.

352 4 Adoption of the report

At its meeting on 26 November 2019, the draft report of the Commission was made available for consideration. The Commission considered the report, and with no amendments, adopted the report by consensus.

Passed by consensus, with 0 abstentions