



SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 16th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. RINGNALDA (Netherlands)

later: Mr. VERCELES (Philippines)

later: Mr. Ter HORST (Venezuela)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.15 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 69: DEVELOPMENT AND INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION (continued)
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1. Mr. KITTIKHOUN (Lao People's Democratic Republic) said that the international community was suffering from a generalized economic crisis that was acquiring unprecedented dimensions and was marked by a substantial decline in world economic activity and growth, serious imbalance in international payments, a deterioration in the terms of trade of many developing countries, a rise in protectionism, inadequate transfer of real resources, high rates of unemployment, underemployment and inflation, galloping increases in the external indebtedness of the developing countries and instability in food supply.

2. In the face of that disturbing situation, which was not a cyclical phenomenon but a chronic crisis brought about by the unequal and exploitative structures of the wealthy countries themselves, it was essential that those countries should eschew empty promises and adopt a global, positive and concrete approach with a view to putting an end to the profound, global structural crisis affecting all nations. However, it must be recognized that over the last 10 years, since the adoption by consensus of the principles and objectives of the new international economic order in 1974, very little had been achieved in the North-South negotiations and none of the agreed objectives had been attained.

3. With the prevailing economic stagnation, certain capitalist countries, which had become wealthy largely through their exploitation of the colonial countries and peoples and which were continuing to enrich themselves through the activities of the transnational corporations whose astronomical profits

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(Mr. Kittikhoun, Lao People's
Democratic Republic)

continued to grow in the absence of an effective code of conduct that would protect the legitimate interests of the developing countries, refused to enter into a serious dialogue with those countries, rejected the coherent and reasonable proposals of the third world countries and sought to evade compliance with their commitments, all in order to perpetuate a situation that gave them the advantage.

4. The International Development Strategy for the Third United Nations Development Decade, adopted unanimously by the General Assembly in 1980, which represented an important step forward towards the establishment of a more democratic and equitable world economic order despite the fact that it did not take into account many of the real needs of the developing countries, had been greatly weakened by the interpretations attached to it by a number of large developed countries even as it was being adopted, which had cast doubt from the start on the possibility of implementing it in practice. That lack of political will had been confirmed recently by various Western leaders, who attached excessive importance to a narrow bilateralism, to a presumed free play of international market forces and to the role of the transnational corporations, and relegated to second place the multilateral co-operation on which the principles and objectives of the United Nations were based.

5. There were also countries which managed to use the aid from various international agencies as a means of political pressure on other States. In that connexion, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, which was one of the land-locked, least developed and most seriously affected group of countries, had just been the victim of the unjustified decision of an important international financial institution to withhold a loan for the construction of a highway which would give it access to the sea on the grounds that it could not provide the necessary security conditions. Such attitudes seriously prejudiced multilateral co-operation and constituted unacceptable interference in the internal affairs of sovereign States.

6. An end must be put to that negative trend, and all international co-operation bodies must devote themselves strictly to their work, which was fundamentally to promote the development of all peoples without discrimination, particularly the most disadvantaged. In that way, the goals of the United Nations would be attained and the ardent desire to build peace and security on a foundation of understanding and co-operation among peoples and respect for the identity of each of them would become a reality.

7. Ms. NICHOLSON (Canada) said that in times of economic difficulty such as those now faced by many countries, including Canada, countries had a tendency to look inwards and to seek to protect their own position. Such a tendency, however understandable, was short-sighted and ultimately ineffective. Assertions of national interest which paid insufficient attention to their effects on other members of the international community would provoke countervailing measures by other States, and over the longer term all countries would suffer the consequences of such a situation, in particular in terms of a worsened international political and security environment. Thus, restraint in the assertion

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(Ms. Nicholson, Canada)

of national interests was an essential political condition for any resolution of the current difficulties besetting the international economy.

8. The industrialized countries must be aware that their own problems paled in comparison with those of most of the developing world. In that sense, the argument that a pause in official development assistance would help the developed countries out of their current difficulties, which would in turn provide a motor for increased growth in developing countries, was not an adequate response to the challenge of development. Canada, which had committed itself to reach the target of 0.5 per cent of its gross national product by 1985 and to make every effort to reach 0.7 per cent by the end of the decade, rejected that approach on the grounds that the poor in the developing countries could not wait to satisfy their basic human needs for food, shelter, education and health care.

9. Development activities would be able to rely on firmer support from the people of the developed countries if they produced noticeable improvements in the quality of life of the ordinary people of the developing countries. The need for safe drinking water was a good example. Although it was obvious that a clean water supply was essential, for the simple reason that people suffering from disease could not contribute to the economic or social development of their communities, 80 per cent of disease in developing countries could be traced directly to the absence of safe water. Every year, 15 million children under the age of five died, largely from water-borne diseases. Half the people in the developing world had no access to safe water and two-thirds were without adequate sanitation. On the other hand, the technology required to solve the problem was simple and inexpensive, and the return on comparatively small investments in water supply and sanitation could be very high in terms of health, social well-being and the economy.

10. Canada was participating in the Water Supply and Sanitation Decade, the aim of which was to make clean water available to all the world's people by 1990. In that connexion, over the last ten years Canada had provided grants and concessionary loans to 26 countries and regions to assist them in the investigation and development of water resources for domestic, municipal and agricultural use and for the generation of electricity. The Canadian International Development Agency had committed 10 per cent of its budget for bilateral aid to water resource and rural and urban water supply projects. In addition, Canada was currently providing \$14 million to 18 non-governmental organizations in support of 65 water projects in 35 countries.

11. Canada would continue to support the efforts of food deficit developing countries to feed their populations. Canada was conscious of the alarming trends which had become apparent in the 1970s, when population growth exceeded that of agricultural production in 61 developing countries and 15 of those countries experienced a drop in food production not merely on a per capita basis but in absolute terms. For that reason, Canada shared in the growing international consensus that it was necessary for national Governments to give high priority to measures aimed at encouraging food production by offering incentives to farmers, improving transport and the storage infrastructure and giving increased emphasis to agricultural development. The elaboration of national food strategies or plans

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and pricing policies, tailored to the particular needs and circumstances of each country, could help encourage international support for domestic food priorities.

12. Donor countries should actively support the efforts of developing countries to increase food production through greater attention to the agricultural sector in such areas as training, research, technical assistance and rural infrastructure. To that end, Canada was actively supporting multilateral institutions such as FAO, IFAD, UNDP, WFP, the World Bank and others which devoted a high proportion of their resources to agricultural development. Food aid should be a temporary measure and should complement but not supplant efforts to increase food production. Although it was not advisable for the International Emergency Food Reserve to be made into a legally binding instrument, there was a need to improve the predictability of contributions to it, while at the same time maintaining their voluntary nature. The proposed Canadian approach could help stabilize forward planning by having donor countries make pledges at regular intervals during the World Food Programme conference rather than on the current ad hoc basis. It was obvious that agreement should be reached without further delay on the replenishment of the International Fund for Agricultural Development, and Canada also supported efforts to negotiate a new International Wheat Agreement and foster a more open agricultural trading system. An important step which would assist in improving food security was the decision by the Executive Board of the International Monetary Fund to extend balance-of-payments assistance to countries experiencing temporary increases in the costs of their cereal imports because of crop failures or an increase in world prices.

13. The convening of a session of a special character of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme in 1982 to commemorate the tenth anniversary of the Stockholm Conference would mark an important milestone in the history of UNEP. It was to be hoped that the session would give a new impetus to efforts to manage the world's resources in an environmentally sound fashion so that the objectives established at Stockholm could be achieved.

14. Canada had always supported the development of international environmental law and a notable example of the valuable contribution which UNEP could make in that field was the Regional Seas Programmes, which were contributing so effectively to the protection of the marine environment. There was still much to be done in the field of environmental law and Canada had been very encouraged by UNEP Governing Council decision 8/15 in 1980 and 9/19 A in 1981 which provided for the convening of an ad hoc meeting of senior government officials expert in environmental law to take place soon in Montevideo.

15. Canada's efforts to protect its own environment, the fundamental priority being to reduce polluting sulphur emissions, were proof of the importance which it attached to environmental questions. For that reason, the Government of Canada wished to express its concern that UNEP would be unlikely to achieve the desired target figure of \$120 million for the 1982-1983 biennium. To ensure that the priorities identified by the Governing Council were respected, the UNEP Secretariat should be encouraged to plan activities so as to ensure that expenditures were in line with the percentages set out in Governing Council decision 9/23.

16. The achievements of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements during 1981 had been significant and Canada agreed with the importance attached at the last session of the Commission on Human Settlements to the contribution of the

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construction industry in economic and social development and to the provision of infrastructure in slums and squatter areas and in rural settlements. Canada recognized that the fate of homeless people, particularly in developing countries, was an important problem with which the international community must deal. For that reason, it supported the Economic and Social Council's resolution 1981/69 which proposed, inter alia, that there should be an international year of shelter for the homeless. However, the Canadian delegation wanted all the necessary arrangements for financing and organizing the year to be adopted, in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1980/67 and General Assembly decision 35/424, before a decision was taken to hold it.

17. Canada recognized the importance of industrialization for the development process and had instituted an industrial co-operation programme as part of its international assistance efforts. That programme, which complemented the support given by Canada to UNIDO, was intended to facilitate the transfer of technology to developing countries, as well as to encourage direct investments in commercially viable and developmentally sound projects. The resources allocated to that programme had increased from less than \$500,000 in 1978 to \$20 million in 1981.

18. In conclusion, she pointed out that even if global negotiations could not be a panacea for all the many ills attacking the world economy, they nevertheless provided the framework and the necessary impetus for moving forward in various areas where there were good prospects for progress. In view of the difficult and uncertain economic situation, the process of global negotiations should be launched as soon as possible. Those negotiations would provide a reality for a principle on which all countries appeared to be agreed: the principle of interdependence which united them.

19. Mr. ZIMMERMANN (Federal Republic of Germany) said that proof of the importance which his country attached to the environment could be seen in the fact that at a time like the present, characterized by economic difficulties and budgetary restraints, the Federal Republic of Germany's efforts to protect the environment had suffered no serious impairment. Nor had those circumstances prevented an increase in development aid, in the framework of which it had always sought to protect the environment during the execution of projects. Environmental protection measures taken in that context aimed to encourage the use of land in accordance with ecological principles; to design projects which would ensure ecologically sound industrial production; to develop techniques which would make it possible to save resources, in particular by making use of solar energy, biomass energy and the recycling of waste; to expand the infrastructure while protecting the environment to the greatest possible degree; to curb migration to the towns and the consequences of rapid urbanization; and to encourage the establishment of environmental protection institutions and services.

20. The United Nations Environment Programme must play a fundamental part in multilateral programmes and the Federal Republic of Germany, which was continuing to support it, noted with satisfaction that appointments had recently been made to fill posts in its secretariat which would contribute effectively to the performance of its functions. It was essential that UNEP should concentrate its efforts on the most urgent questions whose priority was measured on a world

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(Mr. Zimmermann, Federal
Republic of Germany)

scale. UNEP activities could not and must not embrace areas covered by other international organizations, in particular those of the United Nations system or which had a particularly political character. With regard to the Programme's financial machinery, it must be remembered that the creation of new and special accounts and funds did not automatically ensure an increase in available resources. The Government of the Federal Republic of Germany was very interested in the holding of the special session of the Governing Board of UNEP in 1982 and would be represented on that occasion by the Federal Minister of the Interior who was responsible for environmental questions.

21. The Government of the Federal Republic of Germany was gratified by the positive results achieved in 1980 by the Centre for Human Settlements, which had managed to become a full-fledged member of the United Nations system in a short period. Judging by the work programme for 1982-1983 and the medium-term programme for 1984-1989, the Centre's activities were oriented in the right direction, in particular because they gave priority to practical measures which could be taken at regional, subregional and national levels rather than concentrating on theoretical studies.

22. His Government welcomed a close co-operation between the Centre and UNDP and the World Bank, but the number of joint projects must be compatible with the staff and financial resources of the Centre. The Federal Republic of Germany had already made a contribution of 1 million marks to further the implementation of the Centre's work programme and was at the same time constantly broadening its substantive co-operation with the Centre. Thus, in co-operation with the Centre, it was organizing and implementing training and promotional activities. The Federal Republic of Germany would, within its possibilities, continue to support the Centre's activities.

23. Mr. Verceles (Philippines) took the Chair.

24. Ms. WALDER-BRUNDIN (Sweden) said that the experience of all countries since the Conference on the Human Environment had been held in 1972 showed that basic ecological principles had to be observed in order to attain sustained economic and social development. Growing difficulties in the world economy, however, had had a negative influence on long-term international co-operation to solve environmental problems, on which much new knowledge had been gained in the last decade. The time had therefore come to review the principles and recommendations formulated in Stockholm and to work out a plan of action for the future. The session of special character of the Governing Council of UNEP should provide a suitable occasion. The Governing Council had recommended in its decision 9/2 (A/36/25, Annex I) a draft resolution regarding that session for adoption by the General Assembly.

25. The principal document meant to embody shared perceptions by the international community of the most urgent environmental problems and ways of attacking them was the so-called Perspective Document, also referred to in the above-mentioned decision of the Governing Council. At the ninth session of the Governing Council, the best procedure for preparing that document had been debated. Some members of

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the Council, including Sweden, had felt that it needed to be negotiated and accepted by Governments, international organizations, voluntary organizations and the scientific community and that consequently its preparation should be entrusted to an open-ended intergovernmental preparatory committee, set up by a decision of the General Assembly. Other members had been of the opinion that it could be formulated by an independent commission of high stature. In any case, the Governing Council had only been able to reach agreement on having the Executive Director of UNEP continue consultations with Governments, and deferring any decision on the Perspective Document to its tenth session, when it would take into account the results of the consultations and of the session of special character.

26. However, the provisional agenda for the session of special character did not include any agenda item dealing specifically with the Perspective Document, and his delegation wished to introduce to the Committee a draft resolution providing for the inclusion of such an item. Such a step was needed first because the session of special character, which would be open to all Governments, many probably represented at the ministerial level, would have to provide input for the subsequent preparation of the Perspective Document by the Governing Council at its tenth session and, secondly, would have to go beyond reviewing past action to map out future-oriented activities and not only action by UNEP but also measures to be taken by Governments, international organizations and voluntary organizations.

27. Only by dealing specifically with the Perspective Document could the session of special character revive the sense of urgency and commitment of Governments to national and international co-operative action to protect and enhance the environment, which was precisely the goal of the draft resolution being recommended for adoption by the General Assembly in decision 9/2 of the Governing Council.

28. With regard to the problem of remnants of war, Sweden believed that a solution could be found only by analysing comprehensive and factual information and it would therefore be appropriate, as a first step, to initiate a United Nations study on the subject, on the basis of which it might eventually prove possible through diplomatic procedures or negotiations to arrive at an understanding concerning the best ways to promote co-operation in removing the material remnants of war. Such a study could describe the problem as it existed in different parts of the world, indicate the technical resources that would be needed for mine-clearance operations, analyse the legal setting of the problem and make some suggestions on how to solve it.

29. The problem called for practical solutions and there would be a stronger possibility of achieving them if the controversial questions of responsibility for having placed mines and the demands for compensation were set aside. His delegation would consult with others to find out whether an approach along the lines he had just indicated might find general support, and felt that in the longer term the possibility of referring the item on remnants of war to the First Committee should be considered.

30. Mr. GAUCI (Malta) said that the presence of unexploded remnants of war was a serious danger to the inhabitants of many countries and hampered their economic

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development, the problem was of very direct concern to Malta, where in the last seven months alone over 70 unexploded bombs had been found. During the Second World War, when Malta was still a colony of the United Kingdom, it had been the object of intensive and concentrated bombing aimed primarily at the island's harbors. Many of the bombs had fallen into the sea and, unexploded, they lay there still. When hostilities had ceased, the British Admiralty had removed some of the bombs, but only to a depth which permitted safe navigation for shipping in the 1950s.

31. In its drive for economic development, Malta had converted its former Naval Dockyard into a modern commercial ship-repairing and ship-building yard, with docks designed to accommodate some of the largest passenger ships and oil tankers afloat, provided the natural depth of the harbour, which by dredging could be increased to take ships of 17 m draught, could be utilised. The dredging operation, however, was hindered because it was extremely dangerous until the bombs and other war remnants still in the harbour were removed. The harbour now could only take ships of up to 13 m draught, and Malta recently had been unable to take advantage of an offer to utilise a 79,000-ton ship as a floating grain-storage and transshipment facility, because the ship could not safely enter the harbour with its 14 m draught.

32. The accumulation of war material was also preventing Malta, where land was very scarce, from putting part of its territory to productive use. The islet of Filfla, for instance, had long been used by the British Navy and air force as a target for gunnery and bombing practice. The islet itself and the seas around it had accumulated a large amount of unexploded ordnance, much of which was deeply imbedded in the surface of the islet and in the surrounding sea, to the point where the entire area had been declared to be dangerous even for fishing. If the area were cleared of the remnants of war, the islet of Filfla would offer an ideal site for tourism and economic development in general. The waters surrounding the island of Gozo, fertile fishing grounds, could also not be exploited because part of the area had been used by the British armed forces as a dumping ground for explosives.

33. For a number of years, Malta had been negotiating with the United Kingdom to reach a solution of the problem but, unfortunately, the negotiations had led nowhere. Malta's position was that the bombs and wrecks to be disposed of were undeniably the direct result of the British presence in Malta and of Britain's use of the island as a military base. The least Malta would expect, therefore, was a formal undertaking by the United Kingdom Government that it would remove, at no cost to Malta, all wrecks and unexploded ordnance when the need arose. The United Kingdom had partially removed some when Malta was a military base, but they seemed unwilling to do it now that Malta was an independent country.

34. Moreover, the United Kingdom had refused to accept any responsibility and had expressed only a vague willingness to help, when what was actually needed was a thorough survey with modern equipment which would show where existing wrecks and unexploded ordnance were situated, to be followed by their removal or safe detonation. That was what the United Kingdom Government refused to do; it maintained instead that the ordnance at the bottom of the sea presented no danger

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if it were left to rot, and that in any case it was Malta which should present a plan for solving the problem and request the necessary help. The United Kingdom had also indicated that it would not agree to have the dispute brought before the International Court of Justice.

35. Malta had brought that question before the Council of Europe, but the United Kingdom scarcely deigned to co-operate with a fact-finding mission, which was to determine whether the United Kingdom, as the former colonial Power and a developed country, should accept full liability for removing all impediments and hazards resulting directly from the presence of British forces in Malta.

36. The case of Filfla was a clear example of unwillingness to accept responsibility for acts committed deliberately. The United Kingdom had maintained that it was technically impossible to remove the bombs from Filfla and the surrounding area—a position that had never been accepted by the Government of Malta, which doubted that the British armed forces, with all the means at their disposal, could not solve a problem of their own making. Malta's scepticism was also justified by the fact that a private American company had offered its commercial services to clear the island and restore it to safety.

37. In view of all that, his delegation was pleased to note during the past few years the growing international awareness of that problem, which affected several developing countries, most of which were former colonies. Proof of the recognition of the seriousness of the problem was found, for example, in General Assembly resolution 3435 (XXX) and 35/71; in studies carried out by UNEP in that field; in a resolution on compensation for remnants of war adopted by the Fifth Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries in August 1975; in the consideration of the question of the Tenth Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers held in August 1979 and in the holding of a symposium on material remnants of the Second World War, which had taken place in Geneva in April and May 1981. That symposium had been jointly organized by UNITAR and the Libyan Institute of Diplomatic Studies, and had provided valuable additional information on that question.

38. A compilation and updating of all relevant information was essential and further action would be necessary. In view of the failure of bilateral and regional initiatives to resolve that question, the countries concerned had no alternative but to turn to the United Nations and request that an international conference attended by all interested parties, for the purpose of finding effective solutions to the problem, should be held as soon as possible.

39. Mr. VOSS (Uruguay) said at the General Assembly, as the main body representing the entire international community, should consider the fundamental questions relating to the world economic situation, showing a political will which would permit progress in the search for the solutions demanded by the peoples of the world, endeavouring to ensure the common good and upholding the idea that man was the ultimate objective of development. The mission of the General Assembly was all the more important because joint solutions leading to the establishment of a new, more just and equitable economic order, inspired by the highest degree of solidarity, could be reached only within the framework of the

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Assembly. Otherwise, the only alternative for the world was chaos and misery. The solutions to be sought should also bring about an open economy, in which there was a healthymobility of factors and in which producers received stimulating remuneration for their efforts. Those solutions would also require the developed countries to promote, through structural changes, greater efficiency in the use of production factors, since productivity was the only realistic guide for economic growth.

40. The current economic crisis was not just another recession within a series of cyclical changes; it was a fundamental crisis caused by numerous interrelated and interacting factors, and, therefore, could be overcome only through advance agreement on the integrated and coherent consideration of all relevant questions. One of the most obvious symptoms of the crisis was inflation, which in turn resulted partly from the economic policies pursued by developed countries during the past 15 years, which had not taken account of the long-term effects of the use of various instruments and had resulted in the abnormal growth of the public sector and excessive interventionism and measures violating the principle of equality of opportunity. Protectionism, which destroyed the income of workers, sacrificed the interests of consumers and gave rise to an inefficiency which only caused greater stagnation and further deterioration of the economic situation, was another cause of the current situation. For those reasons, his country would firmly support all legitimate measures taken by developing countries to correct that situation.

41. The new International Development Strategy should be the frame of reference for considering all development problems. Implementation of the Strategy could not focus on partial criteria and should not imply any regression from what had been obtained through earlier negotiations; within the framework of such implementation, it was necessary not only to consider the North-South problems from a narrow viewpoint but also to take account of energy problems with all their implications, with regard both to North-South relations and to relations between South countries. In implementing the Strategy, it would be necessary also to preserve the legitimate right of all countries to adopt whatever measures they considered most appropriate for their own development, without any interference in matters within their exclusive competence. It was also necessary to try to introduce real changes in the structures of the international economic system, and take account of the interdependence of all nations.

42. The world food trade was on the downturn. Uruguay, with considerable resources which it could use to help feed the world's population, was faced with marketing problems because subsidized exports from industrialized countries had replaced its products on the markets. That was unacceptable, and his country wished to place special emphasis on the damage which those measures were inflicting on its development. Any restructuring of the international economic system must be based on a free trade arrangement founded on the principle of a suitable international division of labour, and it was to be hoped that during its current session the General Assembly would adopt the resolution on protectionism and structural adjustments which the Group of 77 had unsuccessfully submitted at the thirty-fourth and thirty-fifth sessions.

43. Industrial redeployment must be accompanied by the transfer of technology and the necessary financial resources. He expressed the hope that, with the

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support of the industrialized countries which possessed those elements, a more equitable redistribution of the industrial means of production would be achieved. His country was willing to receive foreign industries and required only that they should comply with its laws, which favoured the establishment of industries. With regard to science and technology, co-operation between developing countries with limited markets would permit them to develop their scientific potential, negotiate jointly for the acquisition of technology in their common interest and strengthen their influence in regional and international agencies. Those agencies should take steps to help developing countries, inter alia, to set up a viable and adequate structure in the areas mentioned.

44. His country attached particular importance to methodical prospecting and optimal utilization of natural resources on the basis of ecologically sound criteria and felt that the international community should provide assistance so that countries could achieve that objective, bearing in mind that the sovereign rights of all countries over their natural resources should be reconciled with the right of all States to share in the natural resources of the planet according to their needs and potential.

45. His country, as a food producer, had embarked on a foreign policy designed to liberalize international commodity trade. Uruguay would soon be able significantly to increase its production, both for its own benefit as well as for that of the food-importing countries, if there was a favourable international climate free of obstacles to commodity trade. His country had ratified the international commitment on food security and was actively participating in several international meetings on that question in order to try to contribute to the strengthening of food security and the establishment of stable reserve mechanisms and emergency mechanisms based on adequate international financing.

46. Uruguay had concluded bilateral and multilateral technical co-operation agreements with other developing countries. The lack of understanding and foresight on the part of the developed countries, together with the difficulties of initiating global negotiations, had forced developing countries to initiate a South-South dialogue through the implementation of a broad system of economic co-operation, in which his country enthusiastically participated both in order to expand the bases of its economy and also to respond in a concerted manner to the needs of the other developing countries.

47. Uruguay paid special attention to the problem of the environment and had incorporated rules to protect it in its domestic legislation. It had also participated in several international talks and would have the honour of hosting the forthcoming high-level conference on environmental law, to be held from 28 October to 6 November 1981, which it hoped would be successful.

48. As for the global negotiations, it was essential that all States participate in their preparation, so as to preclude completely unacceptable exclusions. The global approach was based on the real interdependence between all countries and all economic sectors and that meant that no topic could be dealt with in isolation. Uruguay very much wanted the question of negotiations to be considered as soon as possible in the General Assembly, not only for the sake of fairness, but also because of the urgent need of most developing countries for the

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international community to adopt negotiated measures to correct the injustices arising from unilateral and arbitrary decisions. The global negotiations should ensure the security of international economic relations and equal opportunity for all.

49. The programme of global negotiations did not include in its current wording any explicit reference to the problems of trade in food. His delegation therefore proposed that the following paragraph should be added to that programme:

"Establishment of an effective system of world food security, including food aid; establishment of an emergency food reserve; access to markets for the food products of particular concern to developing countries; ways of increasing and stabilizing the purchasing power of the food export earnings of the developing countries; co-ordination by producers and consumers of production, prices, trade and storage of food products; adoption of measures by the international community to provide financial assistance to meet the growing needs of the developing countries for food purchases; and early conclusion of an international grain agreement".

50. Industrialization and economic development depended on the availability of energy, and solutions must be sought to ensure that all the developing countries obtained supplies at reasonable prices. It was to be hoped that the Nairobi plan of action for new and renewable sources would be implemented promptly on the basis of technological and financial arrangements geared to the establishment of a new international economic order; in the meantime, the only option of countries which did not have conventional sources of energy of their own to exploit was to depend on oil imports and to suffer the economic, financial and political consequences. For the same reason, Uruguay viewed with the greatest interest the co-operation existing in the exploration and exploitation of additional sources of energy in the energy-importing developing countries.

51. Mr. MUÑOZ LEDO (Mexico) wished to place on record his country's interest in the subject of international economic co-operation for development and in the start of global negotiations. In spite of the obstacles encountered, efforts to initiate the negotiations must be pursued because there was no alternative which would make it possible to solve economic problems without affecting the principle of universality and which would be commensurate with the seriousness of the current situation. Given the inability to find solutions equal to the dimension of the economic problems, imbalances were growing more acute and crises, social tension and, consequently, political conflicts were multiplying.

52. World economic problems did not appear in isolation; they affected each other. It was therefore absolutely necessary to reconcile interests in order to find answers which benefited everyone. The United Nations was the only logical forum in which sovereign States met to tackle problems which fell within the competence of the States but which none of them could solve separately. The Organization, which had proved effective in promoting political decolonization, must now meet the challenge of international economic co-operation.

53. Inflation, unemployment, protectionism, trade restrictions, monetary instability, the scarcity of financial resources and disarray in the energy field affected everyone, but the developing countries undeniably bore the heaviest burden

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(Mr. Muñoz Ledo, Mexico)

in that respect. The economic system had reached its limits and there would be a general collapse unless some way was found to promote the growth of the countries which possessed most of the planet's human and natural resources and to correct the concentration of economic progress which was affecting the operation of the world economy and undermining the most elementary democratic principles.

54. In an interdependent world, growth depended on momentum within each country and momentum from without. World economic interdependence affected the autonomy of States, whatever their level of development; that gave the crisis a structural dimension which cast doubt on the effectiveness of the traditional tools of economic management and required global solutions. The failure to make progress in the global dialogue was reflected in institutional paralysis. The specialized forums for economic negotiation had lost coherence and direction. Those in which the interests of the industrialized countries predominated merely produced partial solutions and tended to maintain the status quo. Those which were universal in nature were awaiting guidance expressing the political will of the United Nations.

55. The analysis of the questions being considered by the Committee under agenda item 69 clearly showed the alarming deterioration of the world economic situation. No progress had been made in the food area. Hunger and malnutrition were growing in various regions of the world and effective machinery had not been set up to improve the production and distribution of food or to provide food security. The industrial slowdown in the developing countries and the low growth rate of the developed ones were the result of failure to fulfil commitments made to support industrial redeployment. Furthermore, methods had not been evolved for achieving the goals outlined in the International Development Strategy—the most important document of recent years, in which the common desire to reorganize the world economy was reasserted.

56. For all those reasons, the time had come to adopt a political decision, and it would be difficult to reach agreement under any dialogue arrangements other than global negotiations. Work should therefore begin immediately in accordance with General Assembly resolution 34/138. For that purpose, his Government had decided to host the high-level International Meeting on Co-operation and Development. The purpose of the Cancún meeting was not to replace the United Nations but to contribute additional political factors which might revitalize economic co-operation and get the negotiating process started. It was to be hoped that the Meeting would facilitate the start of global negotiations and confirm the irrevocable responsibility of the United Nations in the adoption of economic decisions of universal scope.

57. Mr. HILLEL (Israel), referring to the report prepared by the Government of Israel entitled "An Outline of Development through Promotion of the Transitional Economy" (A/36/497), said that it contained a series of proposals designed to bring about gradual improvements in the peripheral sector of developing countries through nation-wide, usually low-cost, programmes. The basic purpose of the programmes was to harness the available resources and the latent self-help capacity of the peripheral population of third-world countries for the promotion, on a national scale, of intermediate development phases tailored to the needs of the population. At a later stage, the programmes would lead to more advanced

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(Mr. Hillel, Israel)

production systems and ultimately to a mutually beneficial integration with the central-modern sector of the country.

58. The transitional economy approach offered a number of advantages over the conventional programmes on which most development funds had been spent in the past. Some of their central components had been applied and found effective. The initial phases could be launched within a relatively short time and did not require large-scale funding. Existing projects could be modified and incorporated in the proposed programme. The farmer would be directly involved in the implementation of the programme and become an active element in the development process, thereby reducing his dependence on the central government. Unlike other programmes, the proposed model created conditions in which the recipient of assistance had something to offer to the donor in return. The emphasis on the peripheral sector was conducive to a "trickling-up" effect which would ultimately yield significant benefits for the central-modern sector. Initially, the programmes would be concentrated in such sectors as agricultural productivity, the creation of non-agricultural jobs in rural areas, rural social services, and infrastructure. The programmes would be launched on a step-by-step basis with a view to using the experience gained and the institutions created at each stage as a foundation for the next step.

59. The transitional economy approach would be based on the earmarking of concessionary development funds by international, regional and bilateral funding institutions for projects which met the required conditions. Special assistance for promoting such projects could also take the form of favourable interest rates provided by consortia combining international, regional, bilateral and commercial financing. The earmarking of concessionary funds for development of that type would prove a powerful political incentive for Governments to devote more efforts to the development of the peripheral sector. However, economic incentives would have to be supplemented by consideration of the new approach at national and regional conferences of professional organizations if the desired objectives were actually to be attained. Israel had in fact applied elements of the approach both at the domestic level and in its numerous international co-operation programmes in the third world.

60. With reference to the problems of food and the environment, it was obvious that, although superficially world food production might seem to have improved, at a deeper level the situation had deteriorated. In general, food production in the developing countries was not keeping pace with the growing food requirements of the population. National and international bodies must renew and expand their efforts to increase agricultural yields in the developing countries. In so doing, they should seek to radically improve food production methods and to generate employment opportunities through a more intensive and efficient use of land and water resources, by obtaining several harvests per year and by developing arid lands.

61. More than half the surface area of Israel being arid, the Israeli Government had devised methods to combat desertification and had applied policies to encourage settlements and industrialization in the desert. The Negev desert had thus been transformed into a life-supporting environment. Israel was willing to share its experience with the developing countries and to contribute to international efforts to combat the world food shortage by making full use of all modern methods with a proven practical value for development purposes.

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62. Mr. BRECHER (United States of America) said that the delegation of Iraq, in its statement at the 14th meeting of the Committee, had levelled two specific charges against the United States. The first charge was to the effect that the attack on the Iraqi nuclear plant had been carried out with the full knowledge of the United States, which ostensibly desired in some way to limit the advancement of technology in the developing countries. The second charge was that the United States opposed the transfer of technology to the developing countries. This delegation rejected both charges and wished to state for the record that they had been made in the face of clear and incontrovertible evidence to the contrary. The United States had had no foreknowledge of the attack and had communicated that fact to other Governments, including the Government of the delegation which had made the allegation. The charge that the United States would go to such lengths as to launch a military attack in seeking to impede the transfer of technology was absurd. Any objective assessment of the role of the United States in the transfer of technology would show that it had played a positive and responsible part.

AGENDA ITEM 12: REPORT OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL (continued)
(A/C.2/36/L.6-9)

63. Mr. ESAN (Nigeria), introducing draft resolution A/C.2/36/L.6 relating to the proclamation of World Communications Year, announced that Mali, Nepal and the United Republic of Tanzania had become sponsors and trusted that the draft resolution would be supported by all delegations since it provided an opportunity for reviewing the efforts made towards the development of communications infrastructures. The International Telecommunication Union (ITU) had made it known that the administrative costs of holding the Year could be financed from the voluntary contributions already received, although contributions were required to the projects referred to in paragraph 5. Although ITU had also organized meetings to co-ordinate the participation of the various United Nations agencies, further efforts were required in that respect.

64. Mr. ter Horst (Venezuela) took the Chair.

65. Mr. KHAN (Pakistan), introducing the draft resolution relating to assistance to the Palestinian people (A/C.2/36/L.7), announced that Afghanistan, Angola, China, the Comoros, Czechoslovakia, the German Democratic Republic, Guinea, India, Indonesia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Madagascar, Malaysia, Mali, Malta, Mongolia, Nicaragua, Niger and Senegal had joined Pakistan in sponsoring the draft resolution, which he trusted would have the Committee's support. It was based on earlier resolutions of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council and its purpose was to facilitate assistance to the Palestinian people from UNDP and other agencies.

66. Mr. DORADO (Philippines), introducing the draft resolution relating to the World Tourism Organization (A/C.2/36/L.8), announced that Thailand had joined the Philippines in sponsoring the draft resolution. He recalled the statement made in the Second Committee by the Minister of Tourism of the Philippines and President of the World Tourism Conference, who had outlined the contents of the Manila Declaration (A/36/236) and had referred, inter alia, to the significant repercussions of international tourism on the economies of many developing countries, notably its positive impact on cultural development. Requesting the

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(Mr. Dorado, Philippines)

Committee to support the draft resolution, he drew attention to the special importance of paragraph 5, in view of the growth in the membership of the World Tourism Organization.

67. Mr. SMITH (Jamaica), introducing the draft resolution relating to the mobilization of personal savings (A/C.2/36/L.9), said that paragraph 3 reflected the importance attached by the sponsors to the series of symposia on the subject, the first of which had been held in Jamaica.

68. The CHAIRMAN announced that Sudan had become a sponsor of draft resolution A/C.2/36/L.6 and that Nigeria and Yemen had become sponsors of draft resolution A/C.2/36/L.7.

The meeting rose at 6.15 p.m.