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at 10.30 a.m.

New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 20th MEETING

Chairman: **Mr. XIFRA (Spain)**

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The meeting was called to order at 10.50 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 65: HUMAN SETTLEMENTS (A/34/8)

1. Mr. RAMACHANDRAN (Executive Director of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat)) said that in 1978, when he had addressed the Committee for the first time, only one preliminary session of the Commission on Human Settlements, devoted to organizational matters, had been held, and there had been no integrated work programme for the Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat). The situation had changed significantly over the past year. The Commission on Human Settlements had held its second session, the first session to be devoted to substantive issues, in Nairobi, Kenya, from 26 March to 6 April 1979 and had endorsed an integrated programme of work for the Centre for the biennium 1980-1981. All the Centre's administrative and technical co-operation staff were in place in Nairobi.
2. With respect to internal reorganization, the Centre had been divided into five functional groupings - research and development, technical co-operation, information, administration and funding - plus the office of the Executive Director, in charge of policy direction and management. That grouping had proved to be effective, but the final decision on the structure would not be made until the end of the year; the decision would be reported to the Commission on Human Settlements at its third session, in May 1980. The interim organization would make it possible, in the meantime, to gear up for the implementation of the 1980-1981 work programme endorsed by the Commission on Human Settlements, which formed the basis both for the regular-budget proposals for the 1980-1981 biennium and for the appeal for contributions at the Pledging Conference to be held at United Nations Headquarters on 6 and 7 November. It was to be hoped that, now that the Centre was well established with a definite work programme, its activities would receive generous support.
3. The Commission on Human Settlements had generally felt that the proposed work programme was "well conceived, comprehensive and sufficiently detailed" and, as for the strategy of the programme, that "the thrust of activities was focused on priority problem areas and was addressed to the needs of the least advantaged within the countries. The emphasis was on action at the national, regional and subregional levels, limiting the global activities basically to support for those levels" (A/34/8, paras. 66 and 68).
4. Several subject areas had been brought to the fore, particularly building-material and construction technologies, infrastructure and services, rural settlements, and energy and human settlements. The adverse impact of the energy crisis on the economies of many developing countries, particularly those of the least developed, could create a temptation to postpone further the implementation of crucial housing and human settlements programmes. He hoped, however, that it would be realized that human settlements planning provided a tool not only for resource and energy conservation but also for generating economic growth based on local technologies and materials and on labour-intensive applications of appropriate technologies, with minimal requirements of imported

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(Mr. Ramachandran)

capital investment and expertise. Seen in that light, the human settlements sector warranted one of the highest priorities in planning for the new international development strategy.

5. The Centre had also given priority attention to the relationship between science and technology and human settlements, as well as to training, which were basic to the developing countries' early achievement of self-reliance in technical aspects of human settlements programming and implementation. Plans were being made for integrated training activities at policy, professional and technician levels. That programme would be financed with resources from the regular budget and from technical co-operation projects; it was to be hoped that Governments would consider the programme as a worth-while recipient of extrabudgetary funds. The Government of Belgium had given its full support to a training programme initiated on 1 September 1979, and the Governments of the Federal Republic of Germany, Denmark, Finland, the Netherlands and Sweden were sponsoring other programmes in the area.

6. Over the past year, the Centre had been setting up linkages with Governments and other United Nations agencies active in the field of human settlements. He had himself visited several countries in each region and had held discussions aimed at, inter alia, defining priorities for activities in the field of human settlements and exploring possibilities of collaboration between the Centre and the Governments concerned. The Centre had also been in touch with various agencies in the United Nations system, with a view to laying the groundwork for the elaboration and implementation of joint programmes. In the case of the World Food Programme (WFP), for example, the Centre had actively participated in the monitoring and evaluation of WFP-supported human settlements development projects. He also wished to mention the Centre's efforts to co-ordinate its technical co-operation activities with the investment requirements of IBRD and UNCDF. It was expected that an agreement in principle for modalities of co-operation with the World Bank could be worked out.

7. Special attention had been given to the establishment of full collaborative relationships with the regional commissions, in accordance with the emphasis given to that matter by the General Assembly, and a general understanding had been reached on the modalities of co-operation. It would be recalled that the Centre was expected under General Assembly resolution 32/162, to deploy resources to the regions to supplement their existing resources, to assist in solving regional human settlements problems. However, as the Secretary-General had reported in document A/C.5/33/63, the personnel resources of the Centre were insufficient for that to be done. Despite that shortfall, the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1980-1981 did not assign the Centre any post for deployment to the regions; instead, on the advice of the Budget Division, a special request would be prepared for submission to the General Assembly at the current session. He hoped that that would be done and that the Assembly would approve the request.

8. At its second session, the Commission on Human Settlements had recommended three draft resolutions for adoption by the General Assembly. The first of those

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(Mr. Ramachandran)

resolutions was a general endorsement of the role of human settlements in the new international economic order and a call for resources commensurate with the task to be undertaken. The second draft resolution referred to the quinquennial report on the world housing situation, called for under General Assembly resolution 2598 (XXIV), and proposed that the survey should be broadened into a report on human settlements throughout the world. The Commission further proposed that the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) should prepare a biennial report on human settlements assistance to developing countries, human settlements activities of the United Nations system, collaboration between the Centre and non-governmental organizations, and human settlements activities of intergovernmental organizations outside the United Nations system. The third draft resolution related to the United Nations Audio-Visual Information Centre on Human Settlements, known as Vision Habitat, the funding for which had been provided by the Government of Canada and would expire in March 1980. The Commission recommended that, after that date, the activities of Vision Habitat should be integrated within those of the Centre. He had already taken steps to implement that recommendation.

9. As required by General Assembly resolution 32/162, the Economic and Social Council had at its second regular session in 1979 considered the report of the Commission on Human Settlements on the work of its second session. During the Council's debate, the success of that session had been recognized, its main achievement having been the adoption of the Centre's work programme for 1980-1981 and of the criteria for its implementation. Particular notice had been taken of the fact that the Commission's decisions had been reached by consensus, and satisfaction had been expressed at the quality of the documents submitted. The arrangements for co-operation between the Centre and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) had been commended, and the need had been stressed for greater co-ordination between the two organizations and for a clearer delineation of their respective functions.

10. The Economic and Social Council had adopted a resolution endorsing the resolutions and decisions of the Commission on Human Settlements, and in particular the 1980-1981 work programme and the criteria for its implementation. Furthermore, the Council had specifically recommended to the General Assembly the adoption of the three draft resolutions proposed in the Commission's report.

11. The support which the Commission on Human Settlements and the Economic and Social Council had given to the Centre's work programme, and any approval from the Second Committee and the General Assembly, could be translated into meaningful action provided that the necessary funds were forthcoming. Those included, first, the regular-budget proposals for the Centre submitted to the General Assembly and, secondly, the voluntary contributions of between \$10 million and \$12 million made through the United Nations Habitat and Human Settlements Foundation for the biennium 1980-1981. All Governments should give due recognition to the importance of human settlements and should contribute the necessary funds at the forthcoming pledging conference.

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(Mr. Namachandran)

12. He then introduced the Secretary-General's report on the living conditions of the Palestinian people, which appeared in document A/34/536. By resolution 33/110, the General Assembly had requested the Secretary-General to prepare and submit a comprehensive and analytical report on the social and economic impact of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Arab territories. The report was to be based on a thorough and objective assessment and it had therefore been considered especially important that expert consultants should be enabled to visit the occupied territories in order to gather the relevant information. To that end, informal consultations had been held between members of the Secretariat and the parties most directly involved, including the administering authority of the occupied territories. Regrettably, it had not thus far been possible to send expert consultants to those territories and the discussions in question had not as yet resulted in further progress towards the preparation of the report requested. Information obtained from some of the Governments concerned, as well as from some agencies, had been made available to the Committee in the reports submitted in documents A/32/228 and A/33/354. More recently, two reports had been received: one from the Permanent Observer of the Palestine Liberation Organization to the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements, in Nairobi, and the other from the Executive Director of UNEP. Both documents appeared as annexes to document A/34/536. The Secretariat would continue to seek the co-operation of the Member States concerned and of the Palestine Liberation Organization, as well as of other organizations that might have access to information pertinent to the matter, with a view to submitting a full report in time for the thirty-fifth session of the General Assembly.

AGENDA ITEM 61: FOOD PROBLEMS: REPORT OF THE WORLD FOOD COUNCIL (continued)

13. Mr. MALINGUR (Somalia) said that the World Food Council, after considering the implementation of its Programme of Action, had noted that the feeling of urgency about the need to eradicate hunger and malnutrition had largely disappeared. At its fifth session, held at ministerial level in Ottawa the previous September, the Council had considered the structural imbalance in the world food economy and the growing dependence of the majority of developing countries on food aid and commercial imports to meet their basic food needs. That was a reflection of the international community's failure to achieve the objectives laid down by the World Food Conference. It was necessary to bring about a structural change in the world food economy within the framework of the Declaration and Programme of Action on the Establishment of a New International Economic Order, adopted by the General Assembly in resolutions 3201 (S-VI) and 3202 (S-VI) of 1 May 1974.

14. It had been recognized in both the Manila Communiqué and the Mexico Declaration that the problems of hunger and malnutrition could not be divorced from broader socio-economic and political factors. Despite the over-all lack of progress, a measure of success had been achieved, for instance, with the establishment of the International Fund for Agricultural Development. Although the objective of 500,000 tons of cereals for the international emergency reserve had not been attained, the growth in that reserve was a positive result of the Council's efforts.

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(Mr. Malingur, Somalia)

Appreciation was due to those countries which had contributed to the reserve for 1980 and to those which had expressed a desire to contribute.

15. It was necessary for developed and developing countries alike to display a stronger political will and for developing countries to achieve a greater degree of self-help and self-sufficiency. The latter countries should ascertain which were the internal conditions that restricted food production and should draw up specific proposals with a view to overcoming those limitations, in close consultation with the relevant United Nations bodies. The Somali Democratic Republic had already benefited from the advice of United Nations agencies and trusted that that relationship would be intensified in future.

16. The fact that the developed countries had not attained the goal of earmarking 0.7 per cent of their gross national product for official development assistance was an important factor in the unsatisfactory state of food production in the developing countries. Contributions from individual donors could not compensate for the deficit in external aid; for that reason, the developed countries should step up their aid, both bilateral and multilateral, for agricultural projects and should provide a greater proportion of aid on favourable terms.

17. The objectives of the Programme of Action in regard to food security were likewise far from attainment. In the absence of a new International Wheat Agreement, of an internationally co-ordinated system of grain reserves and of an international commitment within the framework of a Food Aid Convention, an annual level of 10 million tons of cereals, world food security and an effective system of food aid would remain very distant targets. It was therefore to be hoped that the negotiations for the establishment of those fundamental institutions would be pursued.

18. Another important aspect of the world food situation was the relationship of international trade to world food problems. The current international trade system should be changed in order to ensure greater access for the exports of developing countries to the markets of developed countries. In that regard, he deplored the protectionist practices of the developed countries, which adversely affected the export possibilities of developing countries, and urged developed countries to make greater efforts to adjust their trade policies to internationally accepted principles.

19. While unlimited financial resources were being spent on arms production, it was difficult to obtain support for such a fundamental humanitarian question as the elimination of hunger and malnutrition. No right was more fundamental than the right to food and no goal more urgent than feeding a billion hungry people. In that context, his delegation fully endorsed the appeal of the World Food Council that the United Nations should give the highest possible priority in the next decade to food and agriculture for development and should declare the 1980s as the food and development decade.

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20. Mr. SCHADE (German Democratic Republic) said that five years after the World Food Conference, despite progress achieved in several countries, hunger and malnutrition not only continued to exist but were on the increase. As estimated by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, 450 million people in developing countries were suffering from malnutrition and 15 million children died annually of malnutrition and diseases caused by hunger.

21. Many developing countries were not yet in a position to supply their populations with sufficient food-stuffs, with the result that food aid continued to be a vital necessity. Such aid could not solve the problem, but it helped to alleviate dire needs. His country considered useful the efforts of the World Food Programme in providing food aid to developing countries, particularly the least developed among them, and to States which had recently been the target of aggression, such as Viet Nam, or of attacks by racist régimes, such as Angola and Mozambique. His country had been providing food aid to Asian, African and Latin American States and was stepping up its assistance to help develop their agricultural production. His country's assistance to developing countries in each of the years 1977 and 1978 had been worth 200 million marks.

22. Hunger and malnutrition remained a widespread phenomenon. That situation could change if the developing countries themselves could increase their food production. Democratic agrarian reforms eliminating the concentration of lands and means of production in the hands of large landowners and foreign monopolies would create favourable conditions for augmenting agricultural production. As experience showed, the best results in industrial, agricultural and social development were achieved by those States which laid particular stress on the public and co-operative sectors, adopted long-term and comprehensive planning in their national economies, exercised sovereignty over their national resources and, to a large extent, trained and employed their own cadres.

23. His delegation shared the view expressed by the Executive Director of the World Food Council (WFC/1979/3, para. 13) that "although the importance of agrarian reform is increasingly acknowledged, actual progress in implementing comprehensive agrarian reform programmes has been limited. Conceptual confusion, weakness of legislative provisions, and inadequacy of institutional frameworks and financial support are all part of the problem." It also shared the opinion that "the greatest single impediment to development in most countries is a shortage of qualified manpower; the greatest single under-utilized resource is human potential" (WFC/1979/3, para. 155).

24. Those were the main problems at the national level, and had been discussed at the recent World Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development. The recommendations for national measures contained in the Programme of Action of that Conference constituted a useful basis for practical steps to carry out the necessary social and economic transformations. His country was prepared to support interested developing countries in their agrarian development. In full accordance with those recommendations, it provided assistance aimed at mobilizing human and

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(Mr. Schade, German Democratic Republic)

material resources in a way which best served the national development needs of those countries and would like the World Food Council to play a greater role, in accordance with its possibilities, in the implementation of the decisions adopted at the World Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development.

25. His delegation also welcomed the intention of the World Food Council to have a study prepared by the Centre on Transnational Corporations on the adverse consequences of the activities of transnational corporations in the field of food-stuff production and processing in developing countries. In that way, the attention of the Council would be directed at an obstacle impeding the economic development of developing countries.

26. His country reaffirmed its view that the solution of the food problem in developing countries was closely connected with the implementation of the principles contained in the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States and the decisions adopted at the sixth special session of the General Assembly. The opposition of monopolistic circles to the restructuring of international economic relations on a democratic basis also impeded agricultural development in developing countries. For that reason, the need to eliminate hunger and malnutrition in developing countries presupposed the need to overcome that opposition.

27. Mr. OULD SID'AHMED (Mauritania) said that the five years which had passed since the establishment of the World Food Council were equivalent to an eternity for those suffering hunger. On the threshold of the third development decade, it was time to analyse what had been achieved in a field on which the very survival of mankind depended.

28. As document A/34/19 indicated, two items had dominated the work of the fifth session of the World Food Council: the structural imbalance of the world food economy, and its corollary, the growing dependence of developing countries on food imports and food aid. A consideration of those items led to several conclusions. First, although it was primarily incumbent on the developing countries to solve their own food problems, support should also be provided by the international community. Secondly, the struggle against hunger and malnutrition was the common responsibility of the whole international community. Thirdly, the assistance provided by donor countries and international institutions should be increased and improved. Lastly, a highly structured food authority designed to monitor the implementation of adopted policies and supervise the preparation and implementation of a food strategy should be established. Nevertheless, that initiative should be studied carefully so as not to create a body encumbered by its own bureaucracy.

29. One of the most outstanding events of the decade now drawing to its close had undoubtedly been the World Food Conference, some of whose recommendations should be recalled. Despite the appeals of the Conference and the recommendations made at the Seventh Special Session of the General Assembly, only a small start had been made on achieving food security. The annual rate of growth of food production in the developing countries in the 1970s had not reached the target of 4 per cent,

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(Mr. Ould Sid'Ahmed, Mauritania)

and in some countries it had actually declined in the second half of the decade. The necessary food aid must be granted in reliable and predictable form and over a long term. The minimum food aid of 10 million tons of grain to answer the most pressing needs had not been provided. One of the Conference's objectives had been the eradication of malnutrition by 1985; nevertheless, according to FAO statistics, between 450 and 500 million human beings were still under-nourished. The bleakness of the picture showed how much still remained to be done in that area.

30. The World Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development had borne witness to FAO's pragmatic approach to food problems and its endeavours to resolve them at their source. In the same perspective, FAO had set up various aid funds but, well-intentioned as they undeniably were, they could provide only small sums. His delegation urged donor countries to increase their contributions to those funds.

31. There was a lesson to be learned from the experience of the last few years: that the criteria that had been adopted on food problems were not appropriate and that sporadic intervention often lagging behind the problem was no substitute for reliable, continuous and foreseeable aid. Consequently, the criterion for food aid must be prevention rather than cure. Only by strengthening self-sufficiency and the means of production in the developing countries would mankind be able to triumph in the long, hard battle against hunger and malnutrition.

32. Mr. ROCHE (Canada) recalled that the Prime Minister of Canada, in his opening statement at the fifth session of the World Food Council, had described hunger as an affront to human dignity. There were now more hungry people in the world than the 455 million there had been at the time of the 1974 World Food Conference, and the situation might well deteriorate still further. At the same time, the world's fields and oceans produced enough food to feed mankind. Nature was no longer the problem: the problem was man.

33. Canada regarded itself as a "bread-basket", with food production many times its own needs. Yet, there were few issues that could arouse as much interest, concern and anger among Canadians as the shortage and maldistribution of food in any part of the world. Canadians wanted their food aid to reach hungry people, and Canadian producers had no interest in maintaining the dependence of some countries on food aid or imports of essential foods. Rather, they wished to see adequate commercial demand throughout the world and more people and countries able to feed themselves and sell their own products. Increased investment and substantially larger food production in the developing countries was in the interest of Canada and the other advanced industrial countries. Clearly, the increasing demand for food grains was greater than could be met by North American farmers alone. Meeting that demand would require huge investment, in both developed and developing countries, and assistance to the latter to help them meet the nutritional needs of their growing populations and promote their role as equal partners on the world stage.

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(Mr. Roche, Canada)

34. Co-operation for development would only make sense to Canadians if it was aimed at promoting greater self-sufficiency, especially in food, for the poorest and most vulnerable people. That kind of aid would be supported by Canadian taxpayers no matter how difficult the economic conditions at home. For that reason, the Prime Minister had told the World Food Council that his Government undertook without reservation to continue to contribute \$400 million every year to agricultural and rural development, through bilateral and multilateral channels. Non-governmental organization and agricultural research groups were also vital channels for such co-operation.

35. Five years after the first World Food Conference, it was clear that, despite record cereal production, the international community had not been able to build an international system of global food security capable of preventing the recurrence of a crisis like that of 1972-1974. Canada was committed to the objective of an international grains agreement that would provide the basis for such a security system, which must be founded on international arrangements to ensure stable and adequate returns to producers and the investment needed to increase productive capacity and improve infrastructure. The world's poor remained critically vulnerable because the world community had not yet found reasonable compromises between producer and consumer nations. Canada wanted the international community to be ready with an adequate response when the 1971 International Wheat Agreement expired. To help provide some of the aid required to bridge the gap, the Canadian Government had agreed to negotiate a new Food Aid Convention separately from a new Wheat Trade Convention. As indicated during the wheat negotiations, Canada intended to provide 600,000 tons of grain annually under the new Convention; at the same time, it was conscious that total food aid needs were still greater than the total food aid commitment, and it strongly urged other producer countries to contribute also.

36. In the long-term perspective, there were some grounds for encouragement in the doubling of international development assistance for food production between 1973 and 1977, with multilateral agencies accounting for the greatest part of the increase. However, in its report, the World Food Council had noted with alarm that current and projected levels of investment were far below what was needed for the world's growing population. Production growth in the third world had barely kept pace with population increases and on average showed no improvement over the 1960s. Those countries which had achieved substantial improvements in production and distribution had had to overcome many obstacles, since the setting of goals in those areas often went against the social grain and was vitally influenced by a great number of economic and other conditions. Many countries had fallen short of the improvement they could have achieved. Despite the appeals of many international conferences and the declarations of many delegations, public investment in agriculture in many developing countries continued to be at a very low level when compared with the important part, whether measured in terms of gross national product or of employment, which agriculture played in the economic and social life of those countries. In several developing countries, declining or stagnating agricultural production was more a function of political choice than of climatic or other natural circumstances. The inadequacy of national food planning and management had undoubtedly been one constraint on food and agricultural development.

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(Mr. Roche, Canada)

37. In its report, the World Food Council placed particular emphasis on the use of national food sector strategies, which it regarded as a promising instrument for food deficit countries. Canada believed strongly that such long-term national food strategies could play a key role in mobilizing increased energies and resources, in both developed and developing countries. The adoption of policies in favour of food and agricultural development would increase political support in developed countries for the transfer of additional resources to developing countries. Canada was therefore setting aside a special fund of \$2 million to assist developing countries to prepare long-term national food strategies for the 1980s, and was hopeful that other countries would also make funds available for that purpose.

38. Both the World Food Council and the World Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development had recommended more direct action by Governments to overcome malnutrition and achieve greater equity in food distribution, so as to ensure that food reached the hungry and malnourished poor. At the Rome Conference in July, President Nyerere of the United Republic of Tanzania had said that creating the essential conditions for rural development took strong political will and was never painless, and that in practically all developing countries it required a revolution in the present patterns of government expenditure and of taxation. As the International Development Strategy for the 1980s was being prepared, it was clear that those internal changes would be quite as important as would structural changes at the international level. Nutritional status, the record of rural investment, land reform and employment would provide the key bench-marks of development progress for poor people and for everyone.

39. Canada had been and remained a supporter of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the International Fund for Agricultural Development, the World Food Programme and the international agricultural research institutions. The World Food Programme, in particular, had been a great success. When it had begun as an experiment in 1962, member countries had pledged \$90 million. For 1979 and 1980, Canada alone would contribute \$95 million for each year. That reflected Canada's concern for the current world food situation, its awareness of its international responsibilities and its approval of the record of the Programme.

40. Developed countries could provide a healthy external environment for agricultural development in developing countries. They could contribute skills and resources to reinforce well-planned national efforts. In the final analysis, however, it was for the developing countries to make the main effort to eliminate hunger. Canada would continue to help to meet emergency food needs, as in the case of assistance to Kampuchea, and to bridge transitional food gaps. However, now and in the future, Canada would prefer to concentrate its resources on helping those countries which were unmistakably committing their own political will and their own material investment to feeding themselves.

41. In the general debate in the Committee, the Jamaican delegation had deplored the absence of political will to translate agreed objectives into action. In no sector was the divergence between rhetoric and action more evident than in food

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(Mr. Roche, Canada)

and agriculture. It would be difficult to generate the political will required to increase the flow of resources from developed countries in the absence of political will in developing countries to accord a high priority to the food and agricultural sectors. Man now had the means to eradicate hunger. That required a concentration of political will on the part of both developed and developing countries, in order to build together a better world where each citizen enjoyed the essential right to food.

42. Mr. EKANEY (United Republic of Cameroon) said his delegation particularly welcomed the fact that the World Food Council was moving from agreements in principle to more specific implementation of commonly held objectives relating to the global food situation.

43. Although the Council's report seemed to portray some optimism, it also alluded to the realities of the deplorable long-term food situation in the developing countries. The conclusion to be drawn from the report was that millions of the world's present population, mostly in the developing countries, were still living below acceptable levels. In a world which prided itself on achievements in science and technology, the supposed benefits of such innovations had failed to trickle down to the poor. It was no wonder then that poverty, malnutrition, hunger, disease and ignorance, coupled with the ever-widening gap between the rich developed countries and the poor developing countries, continued to pose a serious threat to international peace and security. That the problem continued to retain the attention of the international community did not necessarily imply that long-term global solutions had been found, particularly in ensuring effective structural changes in the world food economy.

44. There was a widely-held view that, in order considerably to reduce the serious imbalance in the current world food situation, concrete efforts would inevitably have to be made to bring about the development of agriculture in the developing countries. That thesis was particularly applicable to those developing countries which, because of their low levels of scientific and technological development and slow economic growth, had been unable to increase their agricultural production or their export earnings.

45. In his delegation's opinion, the development and modernization of agriculture in the developing countries was closely linked to the ability of those countries to obtain substantial external aid designed to complement their own national resources and to enable them to invest more in agriculture, with a view to reducing their food deficit and dependence. That would require ensuring appropriate co-ordination between multilateral and bilateral donors, with a larger proportion of assistance coming from multilateral sources. In that context, his delegation agreed with the conclusions and recommendations of the last session of the World Food Council and of the Committee of the Whole Established under General Assembly Resolution 32/174.

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(Mr. Ekaney, United Republic of Cameroon)

46. With regard to the World Food Council's view concerning the imperative need for the developing countries to develop food strategies as a necessary part of their national development programmes, it should be noted that the Economic Commission for Africa, in its resolution ECA/RES.332 (XIV), had already adopted that recommendation. While such a food strategy was necessary, it would be difficult to implement it successfully in many developing countries unless there was a genuine willingness on the part of the developed countries to help to solve the difficulties facing developing countries, particularly in identifying and formulating food projects, owing to administrative and financial problems. The support of the developing countries for the food strategy approach should not be regarded by the developed countries as a pre-condition for increasing their technical and capital assistance to the food sector; rather, it should be regarded as a means of strengthening existing machinery for the channelling of international assistance to development projects.

47. The Canadian Government's decision to make available \$2 million in technical assistance for the identification and preparation of food sector strategies was commendable, as was the Italian Government's decision to double the volume of its official development assistance in 1980 and to increase it further in subsequent years. His delegation hoped that other developed countries would take similar action.

48. At the last session of the World Food Council, some speakers had argued that the developing countries should be primarily responsible for their own development in the food and agricultural sectors. However, it must be borne in mind that the causes of the problem were generally extraneous to the developing countries and that the support of the international community was crucial. There was therefore much merit in paragraphs 5, 6, 7, 8 and 17 of the Council's report.

49. In the United Republic of Cameroon, agriculture continued to be the sector accorded highest priority. For example, the current Fourth Five-Year Economic, Social and Cultural Plan (1976-1981), like the earlier plans, gave significant emphasis not only to food production, changes in production techniques, qualitative and quantitative improvements in production and a rise in the incomes of the rural population, but also to changing certain outmoded attitudes of the population and modernizing production structures. The Fourth Plan had been prepared with a view to ensuring, despite severe drought in many areas of the country, food self-sufficiency and improved living conditions for the rural population constituting 80 per cent of the total population of 7.5 million. That integrated approach to agricultural development explained why his Government had actively participated in the deliberations of the World Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development. It should be mentioned that the objective of the Fourth Plan was a per capita annual rate of growth of the gross domestic product of at least 5 per cent, or 1 per cent more than the rate recommended by the Committee of the Whole at its March 1979 session and by the World Food Council at its fifth session. The rationale for such a goal was to meet national food needs and thus restrict imports of food-stuffs to those

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(Mr. Ekaney, United Republic of Cameroon)

which could not be produced in the country under conditions compatible with its development objectives, and to obtain, through an increase in exports and a reduction in imports, the foreign exchange needed for the purchase of the capital and consumer goods which the country could not produce itself. The creation of several national institutions, such as the National Fund for Rural Development (FONADER) to provide credit facilities to small farmers, was a clear demonstration of the Government's desire to expand and modernize the agricultural and food sectors. However, despite the results achieved, there were still constraints resulting, for instance, from the low level of organization among rural food producers, the lack of research facilities and manpower, the absence of an effective transportation and communications network and the lack of storage facilities, which had hampered the Government's drive. That was why international action was needed in support of the efforts of each developing country to improve its food infrastructure.

50. While his delegation supported the establishment of a world food security system, it considered the conclusion of a new International Wheat Agreement and a new Food Aid Convention no less important. In that respect, it was disappointed at the slow progress of negotiations aimed at replacing the International Wheat Agreement, 1971, although that should not prevent the international community from taking appropriate actions to improve food security, especially for countries still suffering from hunger and malnutrition. His delegation therefore hoped that the recommendations addressed to Governments by the World Food Council in paragraph 27 of its report would be implemented.

51. The establishment of an effective food security system was inherently dependent on changes in the inequitable commercial arrangements which had thus far characterized relations between developed and developing countries in the agricultural sector. As had been stated in the Manila Communiqué and the Mexico Declaration, if increased agricultural production in developing countries was to have any positive effect on the lives of the populations of those countries, the developed countries must guarantee stable world prices and remove protectionist barriers.

52. A new mechanism, as already provided for in General Assembly resolution 3202 (S-VI), which would permit equitable participation in all international decision-making processes, especially with regard to agricultural products, of export interest to developing countries, would, if implemented, complement the current food aid and food security measures and contribute to the socio-economic development of the entire community of nations.

53. Temporary measures could not solve the world's food problems unless the measures needed for permanently improving the production capacity, terms of trade and purchasing power of the developing countries were adopted. The nations of the world, and in particular the developed countries, could show proof of their political will to realize the fundamental human right to eat adequately and to live decently if they devoted to the task of increasing the world's food production and feeding the hungry masses even an infinitesimal portion of the billions of dollars wasted annually on weapons of mass destruction.

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ORGANIZATION OF WORK

54. The CHAIRMAN announced that delegations wishing to have the texts of their statements distributed should provide 200 copies to the Committee secretariat. He suggested that the list of speakers on items 61 and 65 should be closed at 6 p.m. on Wednesday, 24 October, and the list of speakers on items 57 and 60 at 6 p.m. on Monday, 29 October. He also suggested that 29 October should be the deadline for the submission of draft resolutions on agenda items 61 and 65. If there was no objection, he would take it that the Committee agreed to those suggestions.

55. It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 12.45 p.m.