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at 3 p.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 43rd MEETING

Chairman: Mr. PAPADATOS (Greece)
later: Mr. GIANELLI (Uruguay)
(Vice-Chairman)
later: Mr. AMAZIANE (Morroco)
(Vice-Chairman)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 12: REPORT OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL (continued)

Draft resolution on the World Decade for Cultural Development (A/C.2/45/L.33)

1. Mr. NAVAJAS-MOGRO (Bolivia) introduced the draft resolution on behalf of the Group of 77, and drew attention, in particular, to paragraphs 2, 4 and 6. He hoped that the draft resolution would be adopted by consensus.

AGENDA ITEM 79: DEVELOPMENT AND INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC CO-OPERATION (continued)

(a) INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY FOR THE FOURTH UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT DECADE (1991-2000) (continued)

(d) FOOD PROBLEMS (continued)

(e) NEW AND RENEWABLE SOURCES OF ENERGY (continued)

(f) DEVELOPMENT OF THE ENERGY RESOURCES OF DEVELOPING COUNTRIES (continued)

Draft resolution on the Unification of Yemen (A/C.2/45/L.35)

2. Mr. ORTIZ (Bolivia) introduced the draft resolution on behalf of the Group of 77.

Draft resolution on the report of the Committee on the development and utilization of new and renewable sources of energy (A/C.2/45/L.37)

3. Mr. ORTIZ (Bolivia), introduced draft resolution on behalf of the Group of 77.

Draft resolution on Development of the energy resources of developing countries (A/C.2/45/L.38)

4. Mr. ORTIZ (Bolivia), introduced the draft resolution on behalf of the Group of 77 and expressed the hope that it would be adopted by consensus.

Draft resolution on Food and agricultural problems (A/C.2/45/L.40)

5. Mr. ORTIZ (Bolivia) introduced the draft resolution on behalf of the Group of 77, and drew attention to the following amendments. The word "Fund" at the end of paragraph 19, should be replaced by the words "International Fund for Agricultural Development". In the English text, the word "stated" in the penultimate line of paragraph 1. should be changed to "stressed". He expressed the hope that the draft resolution would be adopted by consensus.

AGENDA ITEM 82: INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION FOR THE ERADICATION OF POVERTY IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES (continued)

Draft resolution on International co-operation for the eradication of poverty in the developing countries (A/C.2/45/L.41)

6. Mr. ORTIZ (Bolivia) introduced the draft resolution on behalf of the Group of 77 and drew particular attention to the final paragraph.

AGENDA ITEM 86: SPECIAL ECONOMIC AND DISASTER RELIEF ASSISTANCE (continued)

(b) SPECIAL PROGRAMMES OF ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE (continued)

Draft resolution on the Special Plan of Economic Co-operation for Central America (A/C.2/45/L.34)

7. Mr. MAYORGA (Nicaragua), introducing the draft resolution, said that recent favourable developments had made the prospects for achieving lasting peace in Central America much more promising. At their June 1990 summit meeting in Antigua, Guatemala, the Central American Presidents had reiterated that peace was not possible without development and had stressed the importance of the guidelines contained in the Central American Economic Plan of Action. The Special Plan was crucial to the implementation of that Plan of Action. In recent months, significant steps had been taken to define regional development policies, but, for the most part, improvements in the economic and social situation were not yet visible. Assistance programmes provided for by the Special Plan must be accelerated and strengthened in order to achieve the genuine potential for regional integration.

8. The report of the Secretary-General on the Special Plan (A/45/622) provided a balanced assessment of its implementation. His findings with respect to the macro-economic framework confirmed that the economic crisis which had necessitated the Special Plan continued to hamper the region's growth. The problems to be dealt with included the contraction of the Central American Common Market, capital flight, the exodus of qualified human resources, shrinking investments and the large number of refugees and displaced persons.

9. Overall, the 1980s had been a period of acute economic recession in Central America and countries had been forced to reduce their imports of essential goods for development and to abandon certain social programmes as part of difficult adjustment processes. A sharp decline in investment and productive capacity had prevented most Central American countries from resuming a normal rate of growth and development and meeting the basic needs of their populations. Continued promotion of the objectives of the Special Plan was vital to the political transformation and economic reconstruction of Central America. The General Assembly must reaffirm the mandate of the Special Plan in order to ensure the continuity of programmes and projects already under way and an effective allocation of resources to the Central American countries.

(Mr. Mayorga, Nicaragua)

10. At the thirty-seventh session of the Governing Council of the United Nations Development Programme, the Central American Governments had requested of \$US 20 million in special programme resources in order to maintain current activities under the Special Plan and initiate new ones in the fifth programming cycle. That request had been unanimously endorsed by the Latin American and Caribbean countries and a number of donor countries. The final decision of the Governing Council of UNDP would be taken in February 1991. Official and private financial flows to Central America must be strengthened urgently in order to implement the Special Plan. It was hoped that the draft resolution would be adopted by consensus.

AGENDA ITEM 79: DEVELOPMENT AND INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC CO-OPERATION (continued)
(A/45/25, 350, 663 and 666)

AGENDA ITEM 80: UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT
(continued) (A/45/46, 177, 303, 313, A/45/336-S/21385, A/45/345, 361, 584,
A/45/598-S/28154, A/45/666)

AGENDA ITEM 81: PROTECTION OF GLOBAL CLIMATE FOR PRESENT AND FUTURE GENERATIONS OF MANKIND (continued) (A/45/177, 303, 361, A/45/598-S/21854, A/45/666, 696 and Add.1)

11. Mr. EFTYCHIOU (Cyprus) said that the international community had come to realize it would have to change its ways in order to avoid threats to the continuation of life itself. The business like approach which characterized the preparations for the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development was commendable. By adopting General Assembly resolution 44/228, the international community had stressed that all nations must fulfil their responsibilities with respect to the environment and seek to eliminate the root causes of environmental damage. That resolution also embodied an understanding of the linkage between environment and development and the negative effects of unsustainable production and consumption patterns in the developed countries. Measures must be taken urgently on what might be considered traditional environmental issues, including the transfer of technology on concessional or preferential terms and the provision of new and additional financial resources. The Conference should result in concrete action to avert the disaster which would otherwise surely come.

12. Cyprus had participated actively in regional and sectoral projects and had contributed to various environmental funds. With other Mediterranean countries, it had participated in the UNEP-assisted Mediterranean Action Plan and had signed the Convention for the Protection of the Mediterranean Sea Against Pollution. The Mediterranean Action Plan, through its Blue Project, addressed problems affecting the high seas and land resources. Cyprus had also adopted a number of laws and policies aimed at safeguarding rare animal species and their habitats.

13. His delegation believed strongly that in the context of the preparatory process for the Conference, the establishment of working group III should be expedited. The functions of existing institutions must be reviewed and the positive role of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) must be taken into account.

(Mr. Eftychiou, Cyprus)

It would also be important to make full use of the existing United Nations system and regional inputs. The Conference must be action-oriented and lead to commitments based on the recognition that development and environment must go hand in hand.

14. Mr. NINOV (Bulgaria) said that both individual States and the international community must appraise the current state of the environment realistically in order to determine future activities and establish a basis for the elaboration of international legal instruments and standards. Realistic international co-operation and acceptance of responsibilities would be of genuine value to States in the elaboration of national strategies. The development and transfer of environmentally safe technologies were of particular importance.

15. The profound transformations taking place in Bulgaria had reinforced efforts to ensure environmentally sound development. Bulgaria's serious environmental problems had become the concern not only of government agencies but also of social movements and organizations, whose input was strongly encouraged. Aware of the dangers of global warming and other threats to the environment, Bulgaria supported the international community in its efforts to elaborate a convention in that area. His delegation was encouraged by the results of the Second World Climate Conference. The measures and standards contained in a convention on climate change must be realistically geared to the potential of its States parties. Scientific capacity in forecasting climate changes must be strengthened at the national, international and regional levels. Attention must also be devoted on a priority basis to the negative effects of polluting emissions and to forest preservation. Bulgaria was currently outlining measures in those areas in compliance with the Sofia Protocol to the Convention on Long-Range Transboundary Air Pollution.

16. The magnitude of ecological problems underscored the need to strengthen the role of UNEP and its Governing Council. His delegation supported the recommendations and decisions adopted at the latter's second special session, particularly with regard to strengthening the Council's co-ordinating role and increasing contributions to the Programme's funds. The recent joint statement by UNEP, UNDP and the World Bank formed a sound basis for concerted action to preserve the environment. His delegation also supported the establishment of a United Nations Centre for Emergency Environmental Assistance and an ecological disaster early warning system.

17. Mr. CHOWDHURY (Bangladesh) said that recent discussions had revealed the complex nexus between environment and development, addressing such elements as responsibility, need for appropriate legal instruments, additionality of resources, transfer of information and technology, and a supportive international environment. However, mere enumeration of the problems was not sufficient: priorities must also be established. If the environmental malaise afflicting the planet was to be addressed effectively, it was essential to adopt an integrated and comprehensive approach; and the reports requested by the Preparatory Committee for the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development must reflect that fundamental need. National reports would be crucial to the next phase of the

(Mr. Chowdhury, Bangladesh)

preparatory work, and every effort should be made to ensure that they were ready for consideration in good time. His delegation was pleased that the Secretariat planned to assist national authorities in preparation of such reports.

18. The Conference secretariat must not confine itself to the technical and organizational aspects of the preparations. Greater interaction between secretariat, delegations and Member States was needed, and the Conference Liaison Office in New York must play a vigorous role in discharging that responsibility. More briefings such as the one held in New York earlier that year by the Secretary-General of the Conference would be particularly helpful.

19. The need for resources to meet the cost of participation by delegations from the least developed countries was real and pressing and he urged the Secretary-General to do everything possible to mobilize sufficient resources for that purpose. At its current session, the General Assembly must also act upon the Preparatory Committee's decision regarding the role of non-governmental organizations in the preparatory process for the Conference.

20. At its forty-fifth session the General Assembly would also have to decide on the scope and modalities of a framework convention on climate change. His delegation appreciated the significant work already done on the convention by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), and hoped that negotiations on the convention could begin without further delay, so that it could be ready for adoption during the Conference. His delegation shared the view that the convention should be finalized through a single, open and fully transparent negotiating process undertaken under the auspices of the General Assembly. The bureau of the negotiating body should reflect a proper geographical representation, and a balance of interests and concerns. While addressing the main problems in all their interrelatedness, the convention must also meet the special needs of the developing countries.

21. Meetings of the negotiating body for the convention should, if possible, not overlap with those of the Preparatory Committee and its main decisions should incorporate contributions received from that Committee and from UNEP, WMO and other relevant bodies. A closer interaction between the proposed negotiating body and those other institutions would clearly be needed. Decision 1/11 of the Preparatory Committee deserved particular attention in that context.

22. It had also been suggested that, in order to ensure adequate participation of the developing countries, particularly the least developed countries, a special trust fund should be constituted. His delegation had fully endorsed that recommendation, and hoped that it would be duly reflected in the relevant decision of the General Assembly.

23. Mr. Gianelli (Uruguay), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.

24. Mr. DINU (Romania) said that since none of the current environmental challenges could be met unless the world embarked on a new era of co-operation and agreement, it was heartening to note the spirit of consensus that had prevailed at the recent sessions of the UNEP Governing Council and in the Preparatory Committee.

25. Romania set great store by strict adherence to resolution 44/228 as the key to the success of the forthcoming Conference. The international community must be required to observe new environmental standards. By the same token, however, some developing countries would require assistance in adapting to those standards and integrating environmental considerations into their development process.

26. It was appropriate to consider how systems of national accounts could best reflect environmental factors, further developing the concept of "depreciation of natural capital" and indicators to evaluate related costs, thereby reconciling economic progress with preservation of the environment. His country hoped to be assisted in that endeavour, not merely for its own benefit, but for that of the world community as a whole. The proposed World Bank/UNEP/UNDP Global Environmental Facility represented a further valuable initiative in that regard.

27. The decisions just taken by the Preparatory Committee were only a beginning. His delegation looked forward to studying the reports requested from the Secretary-General of the Conference, especially those on technology transfer and financial resources. It welcomed the arrangements being made in response to States' requests for assistance in preparing national reports. It also favoured a substantive presence of non-governmental organizations in both the preparatory process and the Conference itself, and hoped that it would be possible to accommodate differing opinions on the status of those non-governmental organizations invited to participate.

28. His delegation regarded the Ministerial Declaration of the Second World Climate Conference as a pioneering document, whose substance was strengthened by the commitment of some of the world's largest producers of polluting gases to cut back their production. While that operation would be costly, the enormous long-term economic opportunities offered by environmentally sound policies could not be overlooked. The future mandate of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change should thus be based on the outcome of the negotiations between Governments on the framework convention on climate change.

29. Mr. RYSINSKI (Poland) said that the preservation of civilization hinged increasingly on mankind's ability to protect the environment. It was thus justifiable to speak of an ecological imperative in development. Ecological disasters and overwhelming environmental pollution had helped the international community to understand that it was in fact an organic unity. Pollution seldom respected national boundaries: the sufferings of Polish people affected by the Chernobyl accident provided a painful lesson in that regard. Consequently, the concept of interdependence had become a personalized, almost palpable reality.

30. Respect for environmental considerations was leading to fundamental adjustments in social and political attitudes, entailing a comprehensive transition

(Mr. Rysinski, Poland)

towards accountability and co-operation. In practical terms, the objectives must be to secure transfer of environmentally sound technologies, to improve generation and distribution of resources for environmental protection, and to promote environmentally sound economic management and co-operation at all levels.

31. The international community was concentrating its attention on the interlinkage between environment and development. Sustainability of development, or, to put it differently, environmentally sound development, was not only theoretically viable, but also a practical means of accelerating the pace of environmental change, and of establishing a new global order governed by respect for the rule of the laws of nature, for rationality and equity.

32. Poland recognized the key role played by the Preparatory Committee as a focal point for activities in that field. The Committee's work would benefit from early establishment of its Working Group III, on legal, institutional and all related matters. Poland also supported requests for the strengthening of UNEP and recognized the need to draw more fully on the potential of non-governmental organizations and other sources in discussing the issues on the Conference's agenda.

33. His delegation reaffirmed the relevance of regional co-operation in ensuring protection of the environment. In that spirit it had participated in the Bergen Conference on Sustainable Development and in follow up activity to the Conference.

34. Since the Assembly's fortieth session, Poland had consistently stressed the relevance of facilitated access to and transfer of technology for the protection of the environment. The scale of such technology flows was one of the best measures of the extent to which the principle of sustainable development could become a reality. The problem could not be solved by intricate systems of legal provisions alone. By sharing their knowledge with others, more advanced countries could not only assist others, but could help themselves as well. International solidarity would assure a ready return on outlays, for example, through schemes of foreign ecological investment and debt-for-nature swaps. Furthermore, environmental co-operation might well pave the way for the establishment of closer ties in other fields.

35. Mr. BORG OLIVIER (Malta) said that his Government adhered firmly to the view that the present generation had a moral obligation to preserve an environment that could sustain life for future generations. Effective solutions to global environmental problems must be based on global co-operation, and on sound scientific knowledge. More needed to be done to educate the public on environmental problems. Non-governmental organizations had played a very important role in that regard, and his Government supported all efforts aimed at ensuring that they could make an appropriate contribution to the work of the Preparatory Committee and to the Conference itself.

36. The difficulties faced by developing countries in dealing with environmental problems had been identified and were now well understood. It was clear that such

(Mr. Borg Olivier, Malta)

countries would be unable to co-operate effectively in preserving the environment unless they had access to up-to-date, environmentally sound technologies. Malta applauded the statement contained in paragraph 23 of the Ministerial Declaration of the Second World Climate Conference adopted by consensus in Geneva the previous week, and welcomed the undertaking by representatives of the European community, the Nordic countries, and other industrialized countries to play their part in such transfers.

37. Malta had played a very important role in bringing to the fore what was probably the most serious environmental concern humanity had ever had to face, namely, the problem of climate change. The adoption of General Assembly resolution 43/53, recognizing climate change as a common concern of mankind, had focused world attention on the problems of global warming and climate change. The first assessment report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) constituted a milestone in the new field of environmental diplomacy. It placed the problem in its proper scientific perspective, underscored its complexity, and indicated possible response strategies. The report also listed possible elements for inclusion in a framework convention on climate. His delegation noted with satisfaction that the governing bodies of both UNEP and WMO had decided that IPCC should continue to exist. Malta strongly supported that decision, and looked forward to seeing IPCC play an important role in the negotiating process for a climate convention.

38. The Ministerial Declaration called for negotiations on a framework convention on climate change to begin without delay, after a decision to be taken by the forty-fifth session of the General Assembly recommending ways, means and modalities for further pursuing those negotiations. With regard to the organizational structure for the negotiations, Malta supported the recommendations approved at the September meeting of the Ad Hoc Working Group of government representatives. At the same time, it was firmly of the view that the negotiating process should be undertaken under the auspices of the General Assembly, with both UNEP and WMO continuing to play a leading role.

39. At the Second World Climate Conference the Prime Minister of Malta had stressed that the commitment required for the preservation of climate would probably constitute the greatest challenge ever to have faced humanity. That commitment called for willingness on the part of all countries to undertake co-operation on a scale hitherto unknown.

40. Mr. DEO (India) said that the only way developing countries would be able to join in international action to protect the environment was if they were provided with adequate additional financial resources for that purpose. At the same time, the imposition of "ecological conditionalities" should be avoided, since the developing countries could be relied upon to display responsibility in their environmental policies even if they sometimes lacked the means of assessing or combating environmental damage.

(Mr. Deo, India)

41. Environmental protection in many areas presupposed extensive technological change. However, developing countries were in no position to jettison older technologies which they had acquired at great cost and acquire new ones. In that regard, the preferential and concessional transfer of technology to developing countries could play a vital role in global co-operation. Any environmental protection mechanism should provide for trust funds to facilitate the participation of developing countries.
42. Environmental protection was not merely a policing or regulatory exercise; it was also an attempt to build up national and international capacity to meet the challenge. Once a country had the capacity to meet the ecological challenge, its commitment to that cause was strengthened. The adoption of strict environmental regulations when many countries still lacked the capacity to enforce them, was unrealistic. The regulatory aspect of environmental protection should therefore be tempered by supportive and/or compensatory measures.
43. The focus on global environmental concerns should not be at the expense of other vital environmental concerns such as soil degradation, deforestation and desertification. Measures at the international level for the protection and enhancement of the environment must take full account of the current imbalances in global patterns of production and consumption, and the responsibility for halting, reducing and eliminating global environmental damage must be borne by the countries which caused such damage.
44. At its current session, the General Assembly would have to make recommendations on ways of conducting negotiations on a framework convention on climate change. The Ad Hoc Working Group of Government Representatives which had met at Geneva from 24 to 26 September had proposed the convening of a "Specialized Conference for the Negotiation of a Framework Convention on Climate Change", with a Secretary-General appointed by the United Nations Secretary-General. Given the magnitude of the problem and the way in which it had to be addressed, India believed that agreement should be reached on the convening of such a conference.
45. Thought was already being given to the institutional framework for what might be called a new generation of ecological activism. The institutionalization of environmental protection required a high degree of global concurrence, which would be reached only when all countries were convinced of their stake in the endeavour. The Preparatory Committee for the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development and the Conference itself would establish mandates in that regard.
46. The legal bases for environmental protection would evolve as negotiations in each area concerned progressed. The international community had already gained considerable experience from the adoption of the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal and the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer. Legally binding instruments deserved universal commitment, and his delegation supported the Preparatory Committee's decision to consider the establishment of a third working group to deal with legal, institutional and other matters. Cross-sectoral issues such as funding

(Mr. Deo, India)

and technology transfer and co-ordination within the Preparatory Committee were also important.

47. Non-governmental organizations should also have an opportunity to make contributions to the work of the Preparatory Committee and the Conference. His delegation was in favour of a fair balance between non-governmental organizations with an environmental focus and those with a development focus and the equitable representation of organizations from the developing and the developed world.

48. Mr. MOORE (United States of America) said that the first assessment report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change identified a range of possible response strategies and the key elements to be considered for inclusion in the framework convention on climate change. President Bush had proposed that the United States should act as host for the first round of negotiations on the convention. In the light of its offer, the United States was naturally very concerned that the negotiation process should be clear, fair, open and efficient.

49. In preparation for the negotiations, representatives of over 70 Governments had met two months earlier at Geneva and adopted 20 consensus recommendations on the subject. All of those recommendations should be endorsed by the General Assembly at its current session. In order to facilitate timely and effective negotiations, there should be a single negotiating body, and negotiators should establish a balanced and representative bureau, clear rules of procedure which provided for consensus decision-making and a feasible and timely schedule for the negotiations. The negotiation secretariat should be formed at Geneva with the assistance of WMO and UNEP, and should work closely with the IPCC secretariat and other United Nations and international bodies concerned with climate change. In order to build on the progress achieved to date, the first assessment report of IPCC, including the list of possible elements for inclusion in the framework convention, should serve as the starting point for the discussions. The Intergovernmental Panel itself should provide the scientific and technical advice needed by the negotiators.

50. The first substantive meeting of the Preparatory Committee had requested the Secretary-General of the Conference to provide numerous reports for the next session at Geneva. The Conference secretariat should complete the reports needed for the next meeting in order to encourage the Preparatory Committee to focus on key issues, and should reschedule the remaining reports for an appropriate stage in the preparatory process.

51. The arrangements for participation of non-governmental organizations in the Preparatory Committee's recent meeting provided an equitable procedure for broad participation by relevant non-governmental organizations, which would include those concerned with environmental, commercial, industrial and scientific issues. Such guidelines should be adopted for subsequent meetings of the Preparatory Committee.

52. Since the adoption of General Assembly resolution 44/225, large-scale pelagic driftnet fishing had been discontinued in the South Pacific. The United States

(Mr. Moore, United States)

Government had banned the use of driftnets within its exclusive economic zone and, at a recent meeting with the leaders of South Pacific nations, President Bush had announced that the United States would sign the Convention for the Prohibition of Fishing with Long Drift Nets in the South Pacific, also called the Wellington Convention.

53. Mr. KING (Trinidad and Tobago) said that the environment crisis must be addressed at the national, regional and global levels through concrete programmes and initiatives. The industrialized countries should make available to the developing countries substantial amounts of new resources and clean technology. At the national level, Trinidad and Tobago had formulated plans as part of a comprehensive national conservation strategy, which would be implemented as part of the national policy. At the subregional and regional levels, Trinidad and Tobago had been active in various forums and agreement had been reached the previous year, at a ministerial conference of the Caribbean Community, on institutional arrangements for consultation and co-ordination of environmental issues. Her country had just hosted a ministerial meeting on the environment in Latin America and the Caribbean, which had resulted in the adoption of an action plan for the environment in that region.

54. At their recent meeting in Port-of-Spain, the Commonwealth Finance Ministers had emphasized that the protection of the environment was a global problem which required global solutions, and that the industrialized countries had a special responsibility to help meet the costs of environmental protection. The Ministers had also considered the importance of improved access and adoption of environmentally benign technology for halting the degradation of the environment, and had suggested that mechanisms should be established for the transfer of such technology to developing countries on concessional terms.

55. The Secretary-General's report on large-scale pelagic driftnet fishing (A/45/663) had succeeded in consolidating existing legislation on the matter and bringing the gravity of the problem into clear focus.

56. His delegation welcomed the Ministerial Declaration of the Second World Climate Conference, and hoped that the recommendations contained in that Declaration would be implemented for the benefit of mankind. Many of those recommendations should be at the centre of any effective strategy to preserve and enhance the environment. Trinidad and Tobago also supported the call for a framework convention on climate change.

57. The report of the Preparatory Committee for the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (A/45/46), provided a clear picture of the magnitude of the task assigned to the preparatory process.

58. The prospect of global warming and sea-level rise were of critical concern to small island States, which had not contributed in any significant way to the creation of such problems. The emergence of an alliance of small island States to

(Mr. King, Trinidad and Tobago)

co-ordinate efforts to pursue common interests and objectives in matters of the environment had been a positive development.

59. Mr. Amaziane (Morocco), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.

60. Mr. KRAVETZ (El Salvador) said that his delegation was deeply concerned at the effect which large-scale pelagic driftnet fishing had had on the fish stock of the South Pacific and other oceans and seas and, in particular, the serious consequences which such methods could have for island States of regions whose economies were largely dependent on marine resources. Other effects of that fishing method, such as the damage caused by plastic wastes dumped into oceans, should also be examined.

61. The consensus adoption of General Assembly resolution 44/225 had led to positive results, including the decision by Japan to suspend driftnet fishing in the South Pacific by 1 July 1991, one year in advance of the date stipulated in the resolution. The Secretary-General's report on large-scale pelagic driftnet fishing (A/45/663) would be a very important tool for the work of the Committee and other interested bodies.

62. It had been estimated that the commercial fishing industry dumped some 100,000 tons of plastic material, including nets, traps and buoys each year. The next report of the Secretary-General should include a chapter on the adverse impact of plastic wastes on the marine environment. The topic of plastics and other wastes in the oceans should be placed on the agenda of the forty-sixth session of the General Assembly.

63. He proposed the establishment of a driftnet identification and registration system for nets abandoned or lost at sea and the creation of reward programmes for persons or groups that recovered such plastic fishing materials.

64. Another aspect of concern to his delegation was the possible introduction of driftnet fishing in other ocean zones. Specifically, there had been reports in August 1990 of boats with driftnets that had been sighted in certain parts of the Caribbean Sea. Such an expansion would violate General Assembly resolution 44/225.

65. Mr. CHHETRI (Bhutan) said that the challenge of environmental degradation could not be met without greater co-operation between the industrial and developing countries that incorporated initiatives in a wider range of areas. His delegation believed that such a commitment existed.

66. The forthcoming Conference on Environment and Development would mark the culmination of the international community's efforts to take global action to ensure both environmental protection and economic growth. Bhutan welcomed in particular the news that every effort could be made to integrate the environment-development relationship at every level and to see to it that the experience and perspectives of developing countries would be brought fully to bear in preparing for the Conference.

(Mr. Chhetri, Bhutan)

67. Development had been a constant challenge for Bhutan. The focus of Bhutan's development had been not "gross national product" but "gross national happiness". The society was deeply rooted in Buddhist values and traditions, which stressed compassion and reverence for all sentient beings. Conservation was thus instilled into every citizen from a very early age. In some instances, the Government had chosen to forgo immediate benefits in the long-term interest of environmental protection.

68. Such a policy had required a number of difficult decisions. For example, national policy gave priority to ecological considerations over commercial benefits for managing the country's considerable forest resources and the country had been highly selective in exploiting its wide range of mineral and other natural resources. The grazing of goats in open spaces was strictly prohibited since that greatly accelerated the desertification process. To strengthen the traditional respect for the environment, school curricula gave close attention to heightening the awareness of young people for conservation issues.

69. Bhutan was, however, mindful of the growing pressure of urbanization, industrial development and growing productivity in agriculture and livestock rearing in a country with a 90 per cent farm population. Such activities, if not properly checked, could, in the delicate Himalayan ecosystem, lead to soil erosion, disruption of water supplies, flood damage and depletion of wildlife populations and their habitats. A recently adopted resolution stressed the need to strengthen Bhutan's natural-resource base through the adoption of an integrated national environment strategy. The strategy was currently being formulated with the assistance of the Government of Denmark.

70. A proposal was currently under consideration to establish a trust fund for environmental conservation with the co-operation of the World Wildlife Fund and the help of bilateral and multilateral donors. The primary objective would be to conserve the largest remaining area of intact forest in the entire Himalayan ecosystem. That would benefit not only Bhutan, but also millions of people living in neighbouring countries.

71. Mr. PANDAY (Nepal) expressed support for the convening of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, and said that representatives of the developing countries should be invited, wherever possible and relevant, to participate in the preparations for the Conference. Nepal welcomed the decision by the Preparatory Committee to establish a voluntary fund to assist the participation of developing countries, especially the least developed and hoped that such a fund would receive generous contributions.

72. Ecologically sound development required more resources than conventional development and the developing countries could not be expected to shoulder the additional costs. Accordingly, increased financial flows were needed to those countries. Moreover, a balance must be struck between the need for environmental protection and the need for socio-economic development of the developing countries.

(Mr. Panday, Nepal)

73. An integrated approach to major environmental issues required, inter alia, a further strengthening of UNEP. His delegation therefore fully supported the annual target of a minimum of \$100 million in contributions to the Environment Fund by 1992.

74. The international scientific community, which had studied the depletion of the ozone layer in the Antarctic and the Arctic, should turn its attention to other regions, including the Himalayas-Ganges region. The ecology of Nepal's foothills was a crucial determinant for climatic conditions in a large part of southern Asia. If deforestation and soil erosion were allowed to continue at the current rate there would be serious consequences for the entire region. The international community should examine conservation measures for the prevention of soil erosion, improved resource management through agro-forestry and other issues.

75. All countries should be encouraged to adhere to, and comply with, international instruments such as the 1987 Montreal Protocol on Substances and Deplete the Ozone Layer, the Sofia Protocol concerning the Control of Emissions of Nitrogen Oxides or their Transboundary Fluxes, the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal and the European Economic Community's Council Directive on the limitation of emissions of certain pollutants into the air from large combustion plants.

76. U. KYAW TINT SWE (Myanmar) said that his delegation set great store by the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development. The emerging consensus that environmental problems could be resolved only by the joint efforts of the industrialized and developing countries and that the industrialized countries bore primary responsibility for environmental problems was a positive development. It had given rise to an awareness that the industrialized countries must take action in their own countries and provide assistance to developing countries in confronting their environmental problems. His delegation welcomed the commitments made at the second meeting of the parties to the Montreal Protocol, faithful compliance with that instrument would virtually eliminate the production and use of ozone-destroying chemicals.

77. Owing to his Government's policy of incorporating environmental considerations when setting up new industries, there was very little air or water pollution in Myanmar. However, with the growth of private industry, the need for a central institution to ensure environmentally sound practices had become evident. Accordingly, in February 1990 Myanmar had created a National Commission for Environmental Affairs to co-ordinate national environmental efforts and serve as a focal point in Myanmar's bilateral and international co-operation.

78. Myanmar, a country rich in forest resources, had approximately 150,000 square miles of forests, 25 per cent of which were reserves. Those forest resources had been appropriately managed, and the extraction of timber, which was strictly regulated, was on an environmentally sound and sustainable basis. Currently, 80,000 acres of forest land were replanted annually. To further reduce the rate of deforestation - currently only 0.3 per cent - the Government was continuing the

(U. Kyaw Tint Swe, Myanmar)

existing programme of planting trees for use as fuel-wood and was implementing an integrated rural development programme to introduce modern agricultural methods in economically backward frontier areas.

79. Myanmar was sharing its experience in forest management with other countries in the area. In March 1990, it had hosted a Regional Seminar/Study Tour on Integrated Land Use and Sustainable Forest Management with the co-operation of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) and UNDP.

80. Forests and forest products played a key role in Myanmar's economy, and his delegation was therefore greatly distressed by the unilateral action taken by certain developed countries, purportedly to "save the tropical rain forests". Not only were those actions arbitrary, discriminatory and in violation of the provisions of GATT, but they also did not promote environmental protection. Furthermore, it was essential to focus on the main cause of climate change: the carbon dioxide emissions that were triggering the greenhouse effect. The industrialized countries were the source of 75 per cent of all such emissions. His delegation therefore welcomed the decision by the European Economic Community and 10 other developed countries to stabilize carbon dioxide emissions at 1990 levels by the year 2000 and urged those industrialized countries that had not yet undertaken similar commitments to do so as a matter of utmost urgency.

81. The developing countries must be given a more equitable access to the benefit of the world economy if they were to participate in environmental protection efforts. That meant a supportive international economic environment, transfer of environmentally sound technology on a favourable basis and additional funds for the developing countries.

82. Mr. ABBA (Niger) said that as a Sahelian country, Niger was keenly aware of the social and economic impact of drought and desertification. His Government attached priority to the struggle against those manifestations of environmental degradation, and was conducting a campaign to raise the awareness of the population with regard to environmental issues. In 1984, the Government had organized a national meeting on desertification, at which a global strategy had been drawn up that took into account the need for self-sufficiency in food production and the need to meet energy demands while at the same time preserving and improving the environment.

83. Although much had been done, much remained to be done. Niger's international partners, including the United Nations Sudano-Sahelian Office (UNSO) and the Nordic countries, had provided assistance which had made it possible to carry out several forestry projects. Further international action was urgently needed, particularly during the 1990s.

84. In addressing the problems of the environment and development, it was essential to develop new and renewable sources of energy. In Niger, where wood accounted for 86 per cent of energy consumption in homes, thousands of hectares of forests were being destroyed every year. With the growth of the population and its

(Mr. Abba, Niger.)

increasing concentration in urban areas, the demand for energy was likely to double in the next few years. It was therefore imperative to look towards other sources of energy. In response to that challenge, his country was working with the Inter-State Committee on Drought Control in the Sahel (CILSS) and the eight other States concerned in combating deforestation. CILSS had recently launched a large-scale regional plan aimed at promoting the use of new and renewable sources of energy, including a programme to promote the use of gas and a programme to promote the use of solar energy. Niger had opted for gas, and was promoting its use through home energy projects designed to stabilize the consumption of fuel-wood by encouraging the use of improved stoves and modern fuels.

85. The process of desertification could not be halted without an increased awareness and commitment on the part of the Sahelian populations, on the one hand and, on the other, the co-operation of the international community. Such co-operation entailed providing an adequate transfer of technology and financial resources. In that regard, his country was encouraged to note the establishment, in June 1990, of the observatory of the Sahara and the Sahel, the purpose of which was to gather the experiences of all concerned countries and the most advanced scientific know-how in an effort to find effective ways to control, in a more co-ordinated fashion, the effects of drought and desertification. Several non-governmental organizations had also played an important role in that regard.

86. He also drew the Committee's attention to the fact that children were the main victims of environmental degradation. It had been demonstrated that from 5 to 10 per cent of malformations and brain damage in unborn babies could be directly linked to environmental problems. Millions of children throughout the world died every year as a result of the absorption of chemical poisons, toxic substances and other pollutants in the water and the air, and others remained seriously handicapped for life. That carnage was due mainly to poor environmental management, and showed what a serious responsibility the present generation had towards future generations. The international community must translate into action the solemn commitment it had undertaken at the recent World Summit for Children.

87. Mr. HOFFMANN (Observer for Switzerland) welcomed the positive results of the recent sessions of the UNEP Governing Council and the Preparatory Committee. The success of the Conference could only be ensured by a joint effort of Governments and international organizations. In that context he said that the agreement reached in Nairobi on the participation of non-governmental organizations should apply also to the forthcoming meetings of the Preparatory Committee.

88. His delegation hoped that, at its next session, the Preparatory Committee would set up Working Group III on legal and institutional matters. That working group would need to make an in-depth study of the respective roles and mandates of the various international organizations. It could also evaluate the effectiveness of existing legal instruments on environment and development, and set guidelines for future work in regard to international responsibility and the settlement of disputes over damage to the global environment.

(Mr. Hoffmann, Observer, Switzerland)

89. Switzerland believed that more resources should be made available to enable the developing countries to comply with the obligations that would ensue from their acceptance of the international agreements currently being prepared. It was in favour of establishing a general funding mechanism rather than a proliferation of separate funds for each legal instrument. The World Bank's proposed Global Environmental Facility could perform such a function. Switzerland would, however, be in favour of orienting some of the facility's financial activities towards particular problems such as climate or biological diversity. It was gratified by the growing number of countries which had ratified or announced their intention of ratifying the Basel Convention.

90. The Ministerial Declaration of the Second World Climate Conference had laid the foundation for the future convention on climate. Switzerland had hoped that the Declaration would produce a political commitment by the industrialized countries first to stabilize and then reduce greenhouse gas emissions. It shared the view of the European Community and other European States regarding the part that UNEP and WMO should play in the negotiations.

91. Switzerland hoped to take part in the preparation and was in favour of setting up the proposed "intergovernmental negotiating committee for a framework convention on climate change", and of parallel protocols being negotiated simultaneously. It was ready to contribute substantially in 1991 and 1992 to the cost of the committee secretariat to be set up at Geneva. It hoped that the framework convention would be accompanied by additional protocols on stabilization followed by reduction of greenhouse gases, reforestation and the specific needs of developing countries and was in favour of setting up working groups on all three immediately.

92. Switzerland welcomed the recent decision taken by the UNEP Governing Council to invite the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) to work closely with the negotiating group. IPCC should concentrate on the scientific and technical aspects and thus provide the best possible foundation for the convention. Switzerland hoped, however, that detailed studies would be made of the costs and consequences of response strategies since they would form the basis of the vital political decisions.

93. Gratifying progress had been made in the proposed convention on biological diversity. The convention could be an important outcome of the 1992 Conference and it was essential, therefore, that it should be well prepared. Switzerland attached importance to the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) being fully associated with the preparatory work.

94. The conclusion of protocols on forests, to be annexed to the conventions on climate and biological diversity, should be given high priority. They should be directed towards the rational management and the renewal of forests. At a later stage, the protocols could be incorporated in a framework convention on forests. The preparation of such a convention could take place in a United Nations Conference on Forests modelled on the Conference on the Law of the Sea.

(Mr. Hoffmann, Observer, Switzerland)

95. The forthcoming Conference would be an opportunity for a high-level re-examination of relations between the industrialized countries and the developing countries. It was unlikely that all the preparations would be completed by the fourth session of the Preparatory Committee in the spring of 1992 and it might therefore be advisable to provide for a special session of the Preparatory Committee in May 1992. As the host country of the Conference secretariat, Switzerland attached great importance to having the work carried out to the satisfaction of all the participating countries. It expressed confidence in the secretariat and in the Secretary-General of the Conference, Mr. Maurice Strong.
96. Mrs. ORR (Jamaica) said that the urgent need to alleviate poverty and improve the quality of life of people in developing countries should be at the heart of any strategy for achieving sustainable development. That did not mean, however, that the developing countries did not wish to deal squarely with the problems of environmental degradation. Jamaica was acutely aware of the dangers of ignoring them, since the island's natural resources were crucial to two important bases of its economy - tourism and agriculture.
97. In a recently adopted five-year development plan, the Government of Jamaica had identified sustainable management of its natural resource-based economy as its basic policy goal. It was seeking to elaborate a national conservation strategy, involving participation by a wide cross-section of society through extensive public debate and sectoral consultations.
98. Jamaica was also involved in the subregional and regional efforts to design a development strategy in harmony with nature and the needs of future generations. In an effort to further strengthen regional ecological co-operation, the Governments of Latin America and the Caribbean had adopted a regional action plan for the environment which provided practical guidelines for attaining sustainable development.
99. In addition to environmental degradation, the developing countries must also deal with global warming. The fact that developing countries faced the prospect of new environmental problems to which they had contributed practically nothing added another burden to their development prospects. It was therefore vital to ensure that those countries could participate actively at all levels of the negotiating process for a convention on climate change. Specific measures in favour of the special circumstances and needs of island States, which had already been characterized as environmentally fragile, would need to be addressed.
100. The programmes of structural adjustment which many developing countries had been obliged to pursue had limited expenditure in the public sector in areas such as environmental management. Moreover, there was a continued tendency among donors to impose environmental conditionalities on public sector investment programmes. The arbitrary use of environmental criteria and insistence on channelling funds into areas not among a Government's priorities would not serve the cause of world-wide sustainable development. While the recently announced initiatives to provide developing countries with financial assistance in certain fields of the

(Mrs. Orr, Jamaica)

environment were to be welcomed, those facilities should be extended to cover environmental issues which the countries themselves considered essential.

101. Ways must also be found to enable all countries to have access to technologies that promoted development while respecting the integrity of the environment. Affordable access to environmentally sound technologies would promote a more environmentally conscious world. Adequate human resources development in the field of environmental protection was also a key issue. The forthcoming Conference offered a unique opportunity to establish clear links between environment and development and to elaborate a framework for the transfer of resources and technology to developing countries, set up new funding mechanisms and promote more favourable economic and trade practices. Her delegation expressed concern at the inadequacy of the voluntary fund intended to enable developing countries to participate in those deliberations.

102. Her delegation welcomed the important decisions taken at the second special session of the UNEP Governing Council in connection with the 1992 Conference, as well as on strengthening the role of UNEP and identifying priority environmental areas.

103. Mr. GATHUNGU (Kenya) fully endorsed the statement by the Chairman of the Group of 77 expressing the position of the developing countries on the issues under consideration.

104. Climate change was one of the major environmental issues confronting the international community and his delegation appreciated the work being done by WMO and UNEP on the question. Both organizations had been supportive of the process of preparing negotiations for a framework convention on climate change, as envisaged in General Assembly resolution 44/207, and the recent meetings of the Ad Hoc Working Group of Government representatives jointly convened by the two organizations was a clear indication that the process of negotiation had begun. In his delegation's view, what was now needed in order to make the negotiating process effective and productive was to ensure that all Governments, relevant United Nations organizations and non-governmental organizations participated in it. A special fund should be established in order to enable developing countries to take part in the process. It was important to maintain the momentum and experience already acquired, and WMO and UNEP should take the lead in the process. Their mandates should be reaffirmed by the General Assembly so that they could begin at once to prepare for the forthcoming round of negotiations in Washington.

105. The Secretary-General's report on the issue of driftnet fishing (A/45/663) correctly spelled out the issues involved and the course to be taken in order to achieve sustainable use of marine resources that would be beneficial to all. In that connection, the action taken by Japan with regard to the moratorium was commendable and encouraging.

106. The year 1990 might eventually be seen as the year in which mankind had finally begun to take action to save and restore the planet. Much work remained to

(Mr. Gathungu, Kenya)

be done in order to reach the objectives of the 1992 Conference, and all Member States must contribute to the best of their abilities.

107. Mr. LUCAS (Guyana) welcomed the progress made over the past year on environmental issues. Proper care and use of the environment had always been uppermost in his country's national development efforts. That was evident in the careful way it had handled its forestry resources and, in recent times, Guyana had intensified its efforts to ensure that sound environmental policies continued to be an integral part of the country's way of life. Within the framework of the National Environmental Education Programme, the national environment agency had embarked on an effort to ensure that Guyanese developed a full awareness of the environment and the need for its protection. It was also collaborating at the regional level and, at the international level, it had moved to intensify collaboration with UNEP.

108. The preventive approach underlying Guyana's environmental philosophy was reflected in the Programme for Sustainable Tropical Forestry (A/45/345) whose goal was to provide humanity with the capacity to utilize and conserve tropical rain forests and their biological diversity. One valuable outcome of the initiative could be the creation of appropriate technology. The advantage of the Programme was that it offered scope for determining the appropriateness of technology in the environment it was intended to benefit.

109. Mr. TRAORE (Mali) welcomed the progress made during the past year towards meeting the ecological crisis. Much had been said about the critical economic situation of Africa. It was true that the African countries as a whole had the heavy burden of restructuring the economies they had inherited from their colonial past and that despite 30 years of enormous effort they had not yet succeeded in integrating themselves into the international economic environment. Those developing countries, which had already been destabilized by the foreign debt crisis, now found themselves faced with environmental problems such as desertification and drought as well as the many obstacles to their development created by the anti-pollution and environmental protection measures affecting world industrial investment trends. Nevertheless, Africa remained hopeful, and his country was grateful for the international aid it had received since the great drought of 1973 and the enormous efforts undertaken in its arid zone.

110. Environmental questions had been given an important place in Mali's five-year development plan for 1987-1992. At the same time, as part of an integrated approach, industrial development had been regarded as an important factor for agricultural development.

111. It was to be hoped that the degradation of the environment and climate change would provoke a world-wide crisis of conscience that would lead the international community to take decisive remedial action. The forthcoming Conference on Environment and Development would provide an appropriate framework for such action. The Conference would provide an opportunity not only to achieve a global consensus on the whole range of environmental problems but to agree on

(Mr. Traore, Mali)

radical measures to correct the technological defects which had caused grave damage to the planet's ecosystem.

112. In December 1990, Mali would host a ministerial conference of OAU on the environment and sustainable development. The legal approach to the controversial question of transboundary movements of dangerous wastes still suffered from a lack of co-ordination, and OAU had undertaken to work out a convention intended to safeguard the African States from the consequences of such movements.

113. Mali was confident that in the light of the ecological crisis confronting it, humanity would mobilize its immense scientific and technological capacities to safeguard one of its most precious possessions, planet Earth.

114. Mr. KJELLEN (Sweden) said that the position of the Nordic countries on the issues currently before the Committee had been stated by the representative of Finland at the 39th meeting. He merely wished to make a few additional comments, in his capacity as the Swedish representative to the Preparatory Committee and as Chairman of Working Group I.

115. His delegation had been very encouraged to note that delegations felt that the work of the Preparatory Committee had been satisfactory and he hoped that the General Assembly would confirm the decisions taken by that Committee.

116. Turning to the issue of climate change, he said that the Second World Climate Conference held in Geneva had been very satisfactory, but there was now a need to move forward and hold concrete negotiations on the issues that had been raised. The resolution to be adopted at the current session of the General Assembly on that subject would contribute to the success of the negotiations. It was clear that there must be a single negotiating body, and that the negotiating process must be integrated into the overall efforts leading up to the Conference. The results of the negotiations would be channelled to the 1992 Conference through the Preparatory Committee, and hence would be included in the total context of the Conference.

117. The discussion in the Second Committee had been helpful in underlining that the Conference was truly a conference on environment and development. Solutions to global problems could only be found in a spirit of global solidarity. The Preparatory Committee itself and the working groups must be guided by the desire to promote the necessary combination of environmental action and development efforts.

118. Mr. LOOS (World Bank) said that the experience of the World Bank had shown that environmental factors cut across all development sectors. A purely technical approach to the environmental challenge that failed to take social, cultural and public health considerations into account would result in a wide array of social problems.

119. The fight against poverty was at the core of the World Bank's mission. At the same time, the Bank recognized the need to ensure that changes were constructive and that they did not destroy the resources on which human progress was based.

(Mr. Loos, World Bank)

Poverty was a major cause of environmental degradation, and progress that helped reduce poverty by improving incomes, introducing new skills and fostering family planning were also effective means of environmental protection. The World Bank had long been committed to addressing the complex aspects of environmental problems, but the rapidly unfolding events of recent years now called for substantially greater attention to environmental matters and a more comprehensive approach than had previously been pursued by the Bank.

120. In its approach to the issues of environment and development, the Bank underscored the need to correct economic policy incentives that promoted environmental abuse, and encouraged activities aimed at combating human and environmental deprivation. The Bank was also strengthening its long-standing policy of scrutinizing development projects for their environmental impact and withholding support from those where safeguards were inadequate, while institutionalizing an approach to natural resource management that put a premium on conservation. That was especially important in Africa, where desertification was threatening productive capacity, and in the tropical-rain-forest regions, where the negative impact of environmental deterioration had global implications.

121. The Bank was also aware of the fact that, although present and future needs did not always conflict, in some cases they did, sometimes very seriously. It was working to implement its philosophical commitment with practical operational guidelines, in the belief that increased concern for measuring the cost of resource depletion might help the Bank and others to make better choices and contribute to the enhancement of the sustainability of development initiatives. The ultimate objective of the Bank was to introduce a standard approach to environmental assessment for all Bank activities. The new environmental assessment guidelines designed by the Bank were intended to strengthen the capacity of developing countries to deal with environmental problems and to ensure that those countries and the Bank took environmental concerns into account at the earliest stage of designing development projects. The groups likely to be affected by the projects, as well as non-governmental organizations, would be fully involved in the process.

122. The Bank's commitment to environmental issues did not detract from its primary mission of global development. It had increased environmental lending and lending for population programmes. Environmental issues were fully integrated into the Bank's approach to development, and would be more so in future. The Bank was taking new initiatives in the growing international effort to protect the environment in developing countries. One third of all its projects, one half of its energy projects and 60 per cent of its agricultural projects included specific environmental components. The interface between economic actions and environmental measures was of particular significance, and the Bank had greatly increased its collaboration with member Governments of international organizations and with non-governmental organizations. Sustainable development demanded a transfer of adequate resources. The proposal for a Global Environmental Facility, which the Bank was promoting in partnership with UNEP and UNDP, represented a significant move in that direction. The issue of global climate change was a complex and urgent one. The risks involved were too high to justify complacency or evasion;

(Mr. Loos, World Bank)

the international community could not sit back and hope the problem would somehow go away.

123. The Bank was closely monitoring research on greenhouse gas emissions and climate change, and would continue to assess the economic and social impact of that interaction and its repercussion on natural resources. It would actively assist developing countries in the formulation of appropriate development responses to global warming concerns. In particular, it would support developing countries' programmes aimed at moving to cleaner fuels and processing systems. The industrialized countries also faced the challenge of fulfilling their own responsibilities, since many aspects of economic activity and lifestyle in those countries contributed to the world's accumulated pollution and resource-depletion problems.

124. The pressing environmental problems facing the international community called for more institutional co-ordination and political resolve than had yet been mustered by the industrial community. The Bank could play a much more active role in global efforts to preserve and protect the environment in developing countries, working with an invigorated coalition of Governments, institutions, organs and environmental activists the world over. The preparations for the Conference on Environment and Development and the Conference itself afforded an opportunity for focusing on the fundamental factors involved. The stakes were high for rich and poor alike. Development that was not sustainable was not development at all, but only an illusion. The human family must act in partnership to meet the need for constant renewal of the environment in order to ensure the well-being of coming generations.

The meeting rose at 7.35 p.m.