



SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 21st MEETING

Chairman: Mr. AL-ASHTAL (Democratic Yemen)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 12: REPORT OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL (continued) (A/41/3, 118, 123, 179, 315, 319 and Corr.1 and Add.1 and 2, A/41/320 and Add.1, A/41/326, 329, 342, 344, 346, 354, 382, 410, 415, 461 and Corr.1, A/41/462, 474, 588 and Corr.1; A/C.2/41/6 and 7; A/C.2/41/L.2, L.3, L.4 and L.14; E/1986/68; E/1986/L.30, annex)

1. Mr. SAHLGREN (Executive Secretary, Economic Commission for Europe) said that the acceleration of economic growth in the ECE region had ceased in 1985 and it now seemed that the average growth rate in Western Europe in 1986 might only be close to the 2.5 per cent forecast before the fall in oil prices. Prospects for 1987 were better but, in view of the negative factors remaining, a reconsideration of economic policy in countries where inflation and balance of payments risks were negligible might have a decisive influence on the stimulation of growth.

2. In the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, maintaining the pace of growth had proved harder than the planners had assumed. In addition to negative short-term factors, the transition to intensive output growth had still to be achieved, and management and planning changes had not kept pace with the challenges of economic development. However, growth appeared to have accelerated in 1986 and results for the first eight months pointed to a significant pickup in economic activity. The outcome for the year should be close to the planned growth of over 4 per cent for industrial output and 3.5 to 4 per cent for net material product.

3. East-West trade figures for the first half of 1986 showed East European imports expanding quickly while exports grew only sluggishly. As a result, the trade balances of all East European countries with the developed market economies countries had deteriorated. The same was true of the Soviet Union, despite a strong recovery in exports and a further scaling down of imports from the West.

4. Almost 40 years after its establishment as the United Nations first experiment in regionalism, the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) was the only forum for region-wide economic co-operation among all the countries of Europe and North America. Its member Governments consistently underlined the important role of ECE in promoting economic co-operation that served the interests of all, irrespective of their economic and social systems. The work done and procedures evolved by ECE had contributed much to creating a climate conducive to dialogue and co-operation both within the region and beyond.

5. Governments found it in their own interest to co-operate through ECE, and were willing to invest heavily in its activities. By working with the countries of the region, ECE had acquired unique knowledge and a capacity to react quickly to problems and opportunities. Its efforts had brought about a partnership with United Nations bodies having a global mandate such as UNIDO, UNEP, UNCTAD and the specialized agencies. In addition, the substantial co-operation on a daily basis with subregional organizations holding narrower mandates, such as the European Economic Community, the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance and the Organization

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(Mr. Sahlgren)

for Economic Co-operation and Development, had greatly strengthened region-wide economic co-operation.

6. The documents of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE) had referred to work which might be undertaken or intensified within the framework of ECE. The result had been a greater sense of urgency in the work programmes of ECE over the past decade, to which the forthcoming CSCE meeting in Vienna would doubtless give further impetus.

7. ECE was conscious of the importance of the economic relations of its member countries with those of other regions, and had therefore sought ways of making its achievements available to developing countries in other regions and reinforcing co-operation with other regional commissions. ECE had developed from a body devoted primarily to post-war reconstruction into a vital instrument for co-operation between countries with different economic and social systems. Its activities and programmes amounted to confidence-building measures promoting international economic co-operation and thereby contributed to international economic security as envisaged in General Assembly resolution 40/173.

8. Mr. SHAABAN (Egypt) said that at the second regular session of the Economic and Social Council, the President of the Council had stressed that the state of the world economy, the interrelated issues of money, finance, debt, resource flows, trade, raw materials and development, and the role of the United Nations in promoting international co-operation on those issues were the most delicate and crucial topics on the economic agenda and that the Council was competent to make recommendations on them. However, no conclusions had been reached and the working paper on them had been transmitted back to the General Assembly.

9. His delegation regretted that outcome, the reason for which was that there had been a series of monologues rather than a dialogue, and the President's warning that the issues were too serious to allow of a short-sighted and egotistical approach had not been heeded.

10. In relation to Palestine, General Assembly resolution 1803 (XVII) with its declaration on sovereignty over natural resources always had to be borne in mind. The economic policies of the occupation authorities in the West Bank and the Gaza were part of a scheme to eliminate the economic bases of those territories and turn them into markets for Israeli goods and a source of cheap Arab labour. The illegal establishment of settlements in the occupied territories not only changed their demographic composition but also threatened the local Arab economy. There was a persistent policy of expropriating areas of land in the occupied territories for Israeli settlements and displacing their Arab inhabitants. The result had been the creation of a dual legal system which further eroded the sovereignty of the Palestinian people over their natural resources in the occupied territories. The natural consequence was a further deterioration in the conditions of the Palestinian people.

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(Mr. Shaaban, Egypt)

11. In view of the inadmissibility under international law of acquiring territory through war or conquest, any claim by an occupation authority to be solely responsible for the economic development of an occupied people was legally without foundation. The establishment of a just peace in the Middle East would end the suffering of the Palestinians in the occupied territories and put an end to the violation of their rights. That was why Egypt had called for 1987 to become the year of negotiations for peace in the Middle East.

12. Mr. MWANZIA (Kenya) said that, in the International Year of Peace, hundreds of millions of homeless and inadequately housed citizens could not enjoy true peace. The Economic and Social Council had called upon all Governments and concerned national and international institutions to intensify their efforts to achieve the objectives of the International Year of Shelter for the Homeless, taking into account the activities of United Nations agencies and, in particular, the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat). The rate of population increase for Kenya was about 4 per cent, one of the highest in the world, and it was estimated that its population would increase from 20 to 35 million by the year 2000. To meet the needs of the increased population the country would have to construct 87,000 housing units each year in urban areas and 249,000 in rural areas until the year 2000. His Government took a keen interest in the housing situation of every Kenyan and was committed to the objectives and strategies of the International Year of Shelter for the Homeless.

13. The report of the Commission on Human Settlements on the work of its ninth session (A/41/8) had to be examined in the context of human settlement conditions in general and those in the developing countries in particular. By the year 2000 over 2 billion people, more than half of them below the poverty line, would be living in cities in the developing countries. Such rapid growth in the urban population had serious implications because of the increased concentration of the poor in cities. While it was recognized that any solution rested principally at the national level, the international community must also assist the developing countries in coping with the scale and complexity of the problem. The timely designation of 1987 as the International Year of Shelter for the Homeless had provided Governments and the international community with an opportunity to reassess their policies and map out new directions for the future. As many of the activities initiated for the Year were of a long-term nature, they would have an impact beyond the Year itself. His delegation recommended the adoption of the two resolutions on the tenth session of the Commission on Human Settlements and the International Year of Shelter for the Homeless, reproduced in document A/C.2/41/L.4, which had been referred to the General Assembly by the Council. In addition, it looked forward to the report of the Secretary-General on the "new agenda" called for in Council resolution 1986/162.

14. The tenth session of the Commission, which would be held in Nairobi in April 1987, would provide an opportunity for Member States to take stock of progress made in the area of human settlements and to provide a new direction to the work of Habitat as well as guidance for action to be taken by the Member States. It was to be hoped that that session would be attended by a large number of delegations at the highest possible level.

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15. Mr. INKIRIWANG (Indonesia) said that the Economic and Social Council, at its second regular session of 1986, had achieved many positive results and yet had failed to meet the expectations of the international community. Its success in forging a consensus resolution on the policy review of operational activities for development was exemplary. The main issues in that resolution, which represented the combined interests of three different groups of countries, emphasized the twin concerns of providing adequate resources for the growing needs of the developing countries for development assistance and making the operational activities of the United Nations more coherent, efficient and effective.

16. The three consensus decisions adopted on transnational corporations should help to minimize the negative effects of their activities on the economies of the developing countries. At a time when those countries urgently needed foreign investment, it was extremely important that enterprises of the magnitude of transnational corporations should promote rather than inhibit development.

17. His delegation wished to underline the views widely expressed in the Council on the importance of science and technology for the development process and the need to increase the role and effectiveness of the Intergovernmental Committee on Science and Technology for Development and of the Centre for Science and Technology for Development. With regard to international co-operation in the field of human settlements, his delegation was gratified to note that the international community had responded favourably to the implementation of the International Year of Shelter for the Homeless and joined the appeal for more contributions for that purpose.

18. The Council was to be commended for its comprehensive resolution calling for the full and effective implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, its reaffirmation of the responsibility of the United Nations system as a whole to assist in the speedy implementation of the Declaration and its resolution requesting the United Nations system to sustain and increase its assistance to the Palestinian people to help them to achieve their inalienable rights.

19. The most disappointing aspect of the Council's work at its second regular session was its failure to reach a conclusion on its priority theme, namely, the interrelated issues of money, finance, resource flows, debt, trade and development. The Council's failure to prepare a working paper on those issues would make it extremely difficult for the Assembly, at its current session, to address that urgent matter meaningfully. Less than satisfactory results had also been achieved on the issue of the net transfer of resources from developing to developed countries, a problem that some developed countries still preferred to ignore. The failure to reach consensus on that question and on research on transnational corporations, in particular transnational banks, was a matter of great concern and should be rectified at the current session of the General Assembly.

20. The adoption of Council resolution 1986/74, on the policy review of operational activities for development, reflected some progress in the

(Mr. Inkiriwang, Indonesia)

implementation of article 58 of the Charter with regard to the co-ordination of activities of the specialized agencies. However, since article 53 also addressed the co-ordination of policies, further steps should be taken by the Council to increase co-ordination of the policies of the specialized agencies.

21. The general debate of the Council was currently in a rather confused state as it tended to shift between its old style of general debate and the new thematic approach. If the Council was determined to adopt the thematic approach, its main supporting documents, namely, the World Economic Survey and the report of the Committee for Development Planning, should be adjusted accordingly. A thematic debate that led to concrete results would be of benefit to all countries. Lastly, in keeping with the spirit of rationalization, it might be appropriate for the Second Committee to give priority in its discussion of the Council's report to those delegations which had not had the opportunity to participate in the Council's session.

22. Mr. PASHKEVICH (Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic) said that the Economic and Social Council had done much useful work over the past year, notably through the adoption of its resolutions 1986/15, 69 and 75, and decisions 1986/155 and 162.

23. Attempts to use the economic difficulties of developing countries to interfere in their internal affairs through the International Monetary Fund and World Bank had earned justified criticism at the second regular session of the Council. It was obvious that global development problems could not be solved at restricted meetings behind the back of the majority of States and outside the United Nations.

24. The Council had not been able to adopt the proposed draft resolution on international economic security and had referred it to the current session of the General Assembly. Since a system of international economic security would create the most favourable conditions for solving interrelated problems requiring the joint efforts of all countries, and considerable material resources, his delegation hoped that the General Assembly would adopt the draft resolution (A/C.2/41/L.3) at its current session.

25. A closely related question was that of confidence building in international economic relations. Certain forces were currently resorting to methods that ran counter to United Nations principles on economic relations, by using international ties to interfere in the internal affairs of sovereign States. It was therefore necessary, in furtherance of General Assembly resolutions 38/196, 39/226 and 40/173, to take practical steps to strengthen confidence in international economic relations and defend them against crude political pressure.

26. His delegation had supported Economic and Social Council resolution 1986/53 on the work of the United Nations Centre on Transnational Corporations, considering that it in no way affected the Centre's mandate and did not legitimize including the foreign trade enterprises of socialist countries in the Centre's research activities. The Centre should continue to pay the greatest attention to those activities of transnational corporations that negatively affected international

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(Mr. Pashkevich, Byelorussian SSR)

economic relations as a whole and the socio-economic situation of developing countries in particular. The continuing collaboration of such corporations with the Pretoria régime was bound to cause alarm, and his delegation advocated the speediest possible completion by the Commission on Transnational Corporations of its work on a code of conduct for those organizations.

27. The Economic and Social Council's role in co-ordination was reflected in its resolutions 1986/50 and 51. His delegation took a positive view of the conclusions and recommendations of the twenty-sixth session of the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination (CPC), but thought that CPC should further improve its work by paying greater attention to proposals for reducing or halting certain types of activity, and to pinpointing priority programmes and re-allocating resources to new ideas such as a comprehensive system of international peace and security and a system of international economic security. It should also devise machinery for clear relationships between itself and other intergovernmental bodies such as the Main Committees of the General Assembly.

28. The work of the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination (ACC), on eliminating duplication of programmes and projects had to be intensified. However, its efforts to broaden co-ordination in bilateral relations between aid donor and recipient countries were illegal.

29. His delegation had joined in proposing the amendments in document E/1986/L.38 to the draft resolution on the role of entrepreneurship in promoting economic development (A/C.2/41/L.2). The amendments were intended to strengthen the references in the resolution to the sovereign right of States to decide their own policies in the field of socio-economic development.

30. Mr. WILLIS (United Kingdom), said that, speaking on behalf of the European Community and its member States, his delegation had expressed concern, in the Economic and Social Council, over the imprecise nature of the information provided regarding the draft plan of action for the world decade for cultural development. After studying the statement made by the Deputy Director-General for Culture and Communications of UNESCO, it continued to have serious doubts about the practicality of the plan, which was over-ambitious in scope, vague about the means available to UNESCO to fulfil its aims, had in places worrying implications of State direction of cultural activities, and failed to give even a preliminary estimate of the decade's costs. Because of its deliberate vagueness, it would provide little guidance to those charged with implementing it. As far as co-ordination was concerned, the plan was to be carried out, not by the United Nations itself, but by UNESCO, which would thus obtain a mandate to involve itself in the work of all United Nations organs and agencies. Even if that was desirable, there was some question about whether it would be feasible, given the limited resources of UNESCO, and whether the General Assembly would be acting responsibly in committing itself to a plan whose financial implications could not even be estimated. If, as had been said, the plan was to be implemented without an increase in the budgetary outlay of UNESCO, that must mean that resources would be diverted from other programmes to fund generalities at a time when delegations were

(Mr. Willis, United Kingdom)

urging UNECO to concentrate on practical projects, increase the proportion of funds going to developing countries and decrease the amount spent at headquarters.

31. Another matter of concern was the assumption underlying many of the proposals that the intervention by officials was required for the promotion of cultural activities. Cultural activity should be largely spontaneous, but the State could encourage it by ensuring that individuals lived in an environment of freedom.

32. Mr. ČESAR (Czechoslovakia) said that, regrettably, certain developed market economy countries had prevented the Economic and Social Council from reaching agreement on the interrelated issues of money, finance, debt, resource flows, trade and development. As a result, the question was back before the Committee. His delegation's view was that the current state of international economic relations required the United Nations to adopt unambiguous political resolutions as a basis for solving mankind's most acute economic problems.

33. One of those problems was the external debt of developing countries. His delegation fully supported the demand in Economic and Social Council resolution 1986/56 that the reverse flow of resources be halted, and expected both the Council and the General Assembly to take further steps in the coming year to solve what was an acute problem for the economies of developing countries.

34. His delegation welcomed the adoption of Economic and Social Council resolution 1986/75 on confidence-building in international economic relations and believed that the adoption at the current session of the General Assembly of the draft resolution on international economic security submitted for its consideration by the Council would create the conditions for improving those relations and developing mutually advantageous international co-operation.

35. The efforts made at the second regular session of the Economic and Social Council to "prove" the superiority of a particular economic model had been unconvincing and counterproductive. Experience showed that relying on the profit motive of private entrepreneurs did not solve the fundamental economic and social problems of developing countries. It was quite natural that on the role of entrepreneurship in development amendments to the draft resolution had been proposed, and his delegation expected the Committee to focus on the need to ensure the general economic development of developing countries without inequality or exploitation.

36. In the context of efforts to increase the effectiveness of United Nations activities, it was essential to strengthen the role of the Economic and Social Council. It was a matter for concern that the Council had to express every year its profound regret at the continuing co-operation between IMF and the Government of South Africa. In 1986, which had seen a strengthening of racist terror in South Africa, IMF had still not stopped collaborating with the apartheid régime. His delegation would continue to condemn any support for apartheid in all appropriate forums, including the Economic and Social Council and the Commission on Transnational Corporations.

(Mr. César, Czechoslovakia)

37. Czechoslovakia considered the work of the latter body to be exceptionally important and approved the adoption of Council resolution 1986/54, which focused the attention of the Centre on Transnational Corporations on the part played by transnational banks in relation to the current external indebtedness of developing countries. As for the code of conduct for transnational corporations, his delegation believed that it should be an effective instrument for developing countries to ensure their all-round development and genuine economic independence.

38. Regional co-operation was important, and Czechoslovakia regarded regional economic commissions as playing a positive role that must be further developed. It saw the activities of ECE as important for international co-operation in many areas. Nor did it overlook the important part being played by ECE in implementing the economic aspects of the process started by the Final Act of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe. It therefore expressed full support for strengthening the work of ECE and would bear that in mind when considering any proposals for the financing of regional co-operation during the course of the current session.

39. Mr. KAWASHIMA (Japan) said that developing countries were coming to realize that it was through the initiative of the private sector that economic and social dynamism, creativity and productivity were best achieved. The United Nations should therefore put more emphasis on the role of private initiative, to balance the importance it attached to the public sector in overall development efforts. Japan's own experience had shown that efficiency and dynamism in economic development and management were heavily dependent on continuous structural adjustments based on the principle of competition and technological innovation and intended to control the natural tendency of the public sector to grow too large, encourage greater mobility in the labour market, promote the initiatives of the private sector through deregulation and rationalize Government subsidies. Its position was in no way an argument in favour of a particular ideology but in favour of economic efficiency and productivity.

40. With regard to the draft resolution on international economic security transmitted to the General Assembly by the Council, the very concept of international economic security was ill-defined and no consensus had been reached regarding its meaning. To use it as a basis for international economic relations was likely to be ineffective and a cause of political polemics and ideological confrontation, rather than to promote stability and thus help ease the economic difficulties faced by both developed and developing countries. Japan had voted against General Assembly resolution 40/173 on international economic security, and the fact that Japan had associated itself with the important agenda for the seventh session of UNCTAD should in no way be construed as a change in its position on that resolution.

41. Famine was the result of various factors, the greatest and most dangerous of which was desertification. Development plans should therefore accord anti-desertification measures the highest priority. The United Nations could play an important role in providing well co-ordinated assistance to the countries

(Mr. Kawashira, Japan)

stricken by desertification. The practical recommendations contained in document A/41/346 would be helpful to those countries. Recognizing the need to pursue a green revolution in Africa, Japan had provided considerable resources and technical assistance for afforestation projects in African countries with a view to helping them control the effects of drought and desertification.

42. His delegation recognized that due consideration must be paid not only to economic but also to cultural aspects in the promotion of development, and had supported the UNESCO decision on the world decade for cultural development. However, before the world decade was implemented, the concept itself should be clarified, its plan of action refined and information obtained on its financial implications, especially in the light of current financial difficulties.

43. His delegation attached great importance to the International Year of Shelter for the Homeless, which would enhance awareness regarding the problem of human settlements and provide an impetus to efforts to improve the living conditions of people world wide. Japan had made a contribution of \$'US 1.5 million to Habitat between fiscal 1984 and 1986 and was planning to carry out a number of activities in addition to co-operating with the United Nations in its programmes and activities.

44. Mr. MULLER (Australia) said that the businesslike nature of the deliberations of the Economic and Social Council at its second regular session reflected the practical benefits of the biennial work programme and a recognition of the need to revitalize the work of the Council. Consideration of the reports called for in General Assembly resolution 40/177 on the functioning of current mechanisms and procedures in the United Nations system would provide an important opportunity to enhance still further the Council's mandated role in system-wide co-ordination.

45. The comprehensive consensus text on operational activities for development negotiated at the Council's summer session contained practical steps towards ensuring greater co-ordination of the operational activities of the United Nations system and greater consistency between decisions of policy-making bodies. The summer session had also engaged, for the first time, in a substantive economic debate on women in development. The debate and the three consensus resolutions adopted reflected growing recognition that women's issues should no longer be seen in their traditional and exclusively social context; in both developed and developing countries, they had a significant economic component, and they should be discussed in the economic forums of the United Nations.

46. His delegation strongly supported the recommendation, contained in the Council's consensus decision 1986/153, that the General Assembly should approve the inclusion of Kiribati, Mauritania and Tuvalu in the list of the least developed countries.

47. Mr. SHARFI (Sudan) said that Economic and Social Council resolution 1986/44 outlined the correct approach for consolidating international efforts to deal with the problems of desertification and drought. The Secretary-General's report on

(Mr. Sharfi, Sudan)

that subject (A/41/346) was commendable, and his delegation fully subscribed to its recommendations. National, regional and international efforts to combat desertification and drought were necessary, and the initiative taken by a number of East African countries, including his own, in establishing the Intergovernmental Authority for Drought and Development (IGADD), constituted a major step in that direction. The IGADD meeting held at Djibouti in April 1986 had finalized the Authority's organizational structure and had begun work on a short-term programme of activities for 1986. A conference of donor countries was scheduled to be held in November, and it was to be hoped that resources could also be mobilized through the Special Programme for Africa of the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD). The United Nations Sudano-Sahelian Office (UNSO) had played an important role in the establishment of IGADD, and he urged that the necessary resources should be made available to the United Nations Trust Fund for Sudano-Sahelian Activities so that the Office would be able to finance the operations of the newly formed IGADD support unit and establish a regional office at Djibouti.

48. With regard to assistance to the Palestinian people, he drew attention to the conclusions of the meeting of the relevant programmes, organizations, agencies, funds and organs of the United Nations system held at Geneva in July 1986, which had, inter alia, recognized the serious situation of the Palestinian people and the urgency of providing increased economic and social assistance to them. His delegation welcomed the steps taken by the Secretary-General, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 40/201, to organize a seminar on priority development projects for improving the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territories. The General Assembly should continue its efforts to provide economic and social assistance to the Palestinian people and, above all, bring about Israeli withdrawal from the occupied territories.

49. His delegation attached special importance to the issue of products harmful to health and the environment. The publication of the consolidated list of products whose consumption and/or sale had been banned, withdrawn, severely restricted or not approved by Governments was a major achievement, since it gave the Governments of developing countries access to information they might otherwise be unable to obtain. The list's value would be enhanced by the periodic review and refinement undertaken by the Secretariat, and he hoped that co-operation would continue between the United Nations, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the World Health Organization (WHO) and all other agencies concerned to ensure the regular publication of a more comprehensive and technically sound list.

50. Mr. REED (United States of America) recalled that his delegation, together with seven others, had presented a new initiative on the role of entrepreneurship in promoting economic development to the second regular session of 1986 of the Economic and Social Council. Because it had not been possible to consider the item fully in the Council, the question had been referred to the Second Committee of the General Assembly for action.

51. During the 1980s, all countries had been carrying out internal reforms aimed

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(Mr. Reed, United States)

at revitalizing economic activity and the development process. While their nature had varied in accordance with the economic and social system of the country concerned, the reforms were marked by a common attempt to harness the energy of individuals who were ready to work to foster economic growth and development. Motivation and reward were being recognized as the key to mobilizing entrepreneurs, and the damaging effects of capital flight were being reversed as a result.

52. What the world lacked, then, was not entrepreneurs but opportunities for them. The United Nations was in a unique position to help developing countries provide such opportunities, thereby greatly increasing the likelihood of attracting technology and outside financial assistance. The United Nations could also stimulate further discussion and exchanges of views on that important topic and place its highly qualified staff at the disposal of developing countries wishing to mobilize their entrepreneurs. He urged all members of the Committee to support that highly effective development initiative.

53. With regard to the problem of desertification and drought, he noted that the return of rains in Africa had engendered the new and very real threat of locust and grasshopper infestation there. Since June 1986, the danger posed by locusts had spread to all parts of Africa, with indications of a potential problem identified as far away as in Jordan, Democratic Yemen and India. A united effort involving FAO, donors and the countries affected had been quickly marshalled to prevent a catastrophe of massive proportions. In some cases, expertise and financing had been provided before infestations had taken hold, thereby reducing the seriousness of the problem when outbreaks occurred. The establishment of an early-warning system was important, since the vegetation covering Africa after the post-famine rains might help the insects spread to other regions.

54. The United States Agency for International Development had established a task force which met daily to assess new information in order to respond quickly and effectively to the changing locust situation. Generally speaking, however, effective action could not be taken until the urgency of the situation was recognized by all. Not only were early-warning systems needed to mobilize rapid responses to the immediate threat, but the long-term impact of current actions on the people and crops of an affected area must be analysed. The Committee must play an important role in that process by encouraging continued action by all involved and ensuring a heightened level of international awareness of the problem.

55. Mr. AL-MIDELWI (Oman) said that more than ever before, the Economic and Social Council had to assume its responsibility in reconciling the conflicting interests of the members of the international community. Monetary and financial questions as well as the transfer of resources from the developing to the developed countries, indebtedness, protectionism and the decline of commodity prices called for international understanding, with a view to working out satisfactory solutions which took into consideration the situation of the developing countries and the need to raise the living standards of their population by overcoming poverty and backwardness. Co-ordination between the Council and the other organs of the United Nations concerned with economic and social matters, particularly the Second

(Mr. Al-Midelwi, Oman)

Committee, must be increased, and the issues in the Council's report (A/41/13) should be examined carefully.

56. The Council's resolutions and decisions concerning Assistance to the Palestinian People, Economic Development Projects in the Occupied Palestinian Territories and Israeli economic practices in the occupied Palestinian and other Arab territories must be supported, and their implementation followed up. The Secretary-General's reports on that subject were very revealing as to Israeli economic practices in the occupied territories and the deteriorating living conditions of the Palestinian people under Israeli occupation. The efforts made by the Secretary-General and by the United Nations and its specialized agencies and funds were commendable, and the proposals contained in document A/41/319/Add.1 were also important because they were bound to contribute to the alleviation of the hardships endured by the Palestinian people.

57. Oman attached great importance to the protection of health and the environment and had therefore established a Ministry for the Environment which was responsible for the various aspects of pollution control. The resolution adopted by the Economic and Social Council on protection against products harmful to health and the environment was commendable, and his delegation urged all States to co-operate in that sphere.

58. Confidence building in international economic relations was likely to promote international economic co-operation in the best interests of all. Economic relations must be governed by the basic principles of international law and all States, especially the developed ones, must therefore discharge their international obligations particularly in respect of the provision of financial assistance to the developing countries. The latter's debt problem must be solved in a fair and satisfactory manner, without prejudice to their development and social stability. More than ever before it was necessary to work towards the establishment of a new international economic order, as an ideal means of ensuring international economic co-operation and building up confidence between States.

59. Mr. SIDDIKY (Bangladesh) said he had been disappointed to note that the report of the Economic and Social Council (A/41/3) did not contain a set of action-oriented recommendations for attacking such important problems as the net transfer of resources from developing to developed countries. That phenomenon was the most worrisome development to take place in economic history since the Second World War. In its report to the Council (E/1986/26), the Committee for Development Planning had emphasized that an additional \$25 billion per year would be needed to restore moderate sustained growth in the developing world. It was to be hoped that that Committee's recommendations would be followed up through all appropriate channels.

60. During 1987, the world population would reach 5 billion, or double what it had been only 35 years earlier. That might explain why the vast majority of the developing countries remained in abject poverty despite their efforts to raise their standard of living. It was therefore more important than ever that the

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(Mr. Siddiky, Bangladesh)

developing countries should be given sufficient time and opportunity to ensure that their socio-political systems and development perspectives provided their growing populations with a more meaningful and rewarding existence. If economic development was to be sustained and the recommendations of the Mexico City Declaration on Population implemented, the international community must provide more support for the United Nations Fund for Population Activities (UNFPA).

61. The International Year of Shelter for the Homeless ought to provide an occasion for taking new directions with a view to providing shelter for all by the year 2000. Consequently, his delegation endorsed the draft resolutions contained in document A/C.2/41/L.4 and called for their implementation by all concerned.

62. With regard to the work of the Office of the United Nations Disaster Relief Co-ordinator (UNDRO), he drew attention to Economic and Social Council resolution 1986/47 and emphasized the need to strengthen national capabilities for emergency management and disaster preparedness, including the use of early-warning systems.

63. The adoption of the code of conduct on transnational corporations was a matter of particular importance and urgency, and it was regrettable that a number of issues relating to the code remained unsettled. It was to be hoped that the high-level round table held on that subject at Montreux, Switzerland, earlier in the month would provide new impetus towards a resolution of those questions, and that a definitive decision would soon be taken regarding the proposed biennialization of the meetings of the Commission on Transnational Corporations.

64. While he agreed that the revitalization of the Economic and Social Council had been a matter of priority in recent years, he expressed concern that, in the eagerness to focus attention on the Council's co-ordinating and monitoring responsibilities, the role assigned to it by the Charter - dealing with policy issues of global concern in the areas of its competence - might be downplayed. It was of the utmost importance that Articles 62-64 of the Charter should be fully respected in the formulation of any proposal to revitalize the Council.

65. Mr. ANAD (Iraq) said that confidence-building in international economic relations called for the adoption of practical measures aimed at the implementation of the basic decisions of the United Nations concerning the restructuring of those relations, especially the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States and the Declaration on the Establishment of a New International Economic Order. The economic situation of the developing countries had to be improved, notably by reforming the international financial and trading system, and through confidence-building. Iraq therefore fully supported the draft resolution contained in document A/C.2/41/L.13. It also fully supported the recommendations made in document E/1986/L.30 concerning the world decade for cultural development, and hoped it would be adopted by consensus. Furthermore, it supported the draft resolution in document E/1986/L.37 because international economic security was a pre-condition of the improvement and development of economic relations between States.

(Mr. Anad, Iraq)

66. His delegation had examined the Secretary-General's report on Israeli economic practices in the occupied Palestinian and other Arab territories. In that connection, it hoped that the study would be completed on time and that the items set out in General Assembly decision 40/432 would be considered. The Secretariat should not yield to Israeli obstructionism as it had done in the past. The question of Palestine could be settled only through the restoration of the lawful rights of the Palestinian people, including its right to self-determination and to set up an independent State in Palestine under the leadership of the Palestine Liberation Organization, its sole legitimate representative. The exploitation of the human and natural resources of the occupied Palestinian and other Arab territories by the Zionist occupation forces constituted a flagrant violation of international law. The United Nations and the other international institutions and organizations should support economic development projects in the occupied Palestinian territories in order to stop the exploitation of the West Bank and Gaza whose economy was being paralysed by the Zionist occupation forces.

67. His delegation supported the recommendations contained in the report of the Secretary-General on countries stricken by desertification and drought. The international community and especially the developed countries, must support those developing countries not only by providing emergency relief but also by improving their infrastructures.

68. Lastly, his delegation commended the considerable efforts made by the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia to promote economic and social programmes and activities aimed at integrating the economies of the Arab countries of that region. In that connection, the statement made by the representative of the Zionist entity had been a pack of lies and fabrications. That entity, apparently forgetting that it did not belong in the region and that it had been occupying sovereign Arab territory by force since 1948, had applied for membership in the Commission in an attempt to legitimize its presence in the region.

69. Mr. MASRI (Syrian Arab Republic) recalled that, since 1967, Israel had continued to apply coercive economic measures against the Palestinians living in the territories occupied by it with a view to displacing them so that Israeli settlements could be established there. Every day the news media reported new actions undertaken for that purpose. Those actions had led to a severe deterioration in the living conditions and economic situation of the population of the occupied territories and even in southern Lebanon. Israel's repressive policies had escalated since 1981, when the Knesset had decided to impose Israeli law in the Golan Heights, an act which virtually annexed the territory to Israel, in contravention of the fourth Geneva Convention of 1949 and Convention IV of The Hague of 1907. That action had also been denounced by the Security Council as a violation of the United Nations Charter.

70. Since 1981, all people living in the Syrian Arab Golan Heights had been required to adopt Israeli identity in order to engage in any economic activity. The Israeli occupation authorities continued to expropriate large tracts of arable land from Syrian citizens without compensation and had imposed a heavy tax burden

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(Mr. Masri, Syrian Arab Republic)

on the Syrian Arab population of the territories. Syrian Arab citizens were subject to a curfew and, at the slightest pretext, denied the right to work or move about freely. Finally, they were prevented from selling their agricultural produce as they wished, being forced to sell it at the lowest possible prices to the Israeli authorities, who then resold it for a profit.

71. The international community must take action to deal with that situation, which was the result of Israel's fascist, nazi policies. Punitive measures should be taken against Israel in accordance with Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations: a trade embargo of Israel would bring the fascist practices directed at the Syrian Arab population of the Golan Heights and other occupied Arab territories to an end. Furthermore, the complete withdrawal of Israel from Palestine and the other occupied Arab territories must be achieved so that the Palestinians could form their own independent State.

72. Mr. HABIBOULAYE (Niger) said that the report of the Economic and Social Council (A/41/3) was an invitation to take concrete action at both the national and international levels to end the economic crisis and to create a better world.

73. His country, beset by desertification, drought, a drop in world demand for uranium, and balance of payments difficulties, had adopted structural adjustment measures aimed at liberalizing trade, rehabilitating public enterprises and improving development planning. While those measures were expected to reduce the budget deficit, lower inflation and increase the economy's growth rate, external assistance was required in order to make the effects of those strategies truly positive. According to current projections, in 1987 debt servicing would require more than one and a half times the resources earmarked by the State for productive sectors. The primary objective of his country's development plan was to protect its production base by combating desertification. He therefore welcomed the adoption by the Council of resolution 1986/44 entitled "Countries stricken by desertification and drought in Africa". He was grateful to the international community for its support and hoped that such support would continue, particularly through multilateral institutions such as the International Fund for Agricultural Development.

74. Mr. RIPERT (Director General for Development and International Economic Co-operation), presenting the oral report which had been called for in General Assembly resolution 40/177, said that the key words in examining the question of the co-ordination of policies at the intergovernmental or inter-secretariat levels should be efficiency, responsiveness and cost-effectiveness. Co-ordination was not an end in itself and could not be applied indiscriminately to all fields of all activities. It was therefore necessary to be selective in the choice of subject areas in which the costs of co-ordination would be clearly outweighed by the benefits. The need to avoid duplication of efforts must be constantly borne in mind in international bureaucracies, in which there was no competition to ensure that less useful activities were eliminated.

75. While the Charter and existing agreements between the United Nations and the

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(Mr. Ripert)

specialized agencies entrusted certain co-ordinative functions to the General Assembly and to the Council, the paramount consideration must be to harness the enormous potential of the system as a whole in a collective effort to respond more effectively to the needs of Member States. In that context, it was important to recognize the major role of informal consultations, which were probably more important than rigid structural mechanisms. Development was a complex phenomenon which involved the interaction of the economic, social, political and cultural sectors, inter alia. That interdependence required co-ordination within the United Nations system based on a partnership between member Governments and secretariats. The task of co-ordination would, of course, be made easier if broad consensus could be reached among Member States on questions of development assistance. Consultations should be intensified on those questions on which no consensus had been reached.

76. The recommendations of the Group of 18 on the streamlining and rationalization of both intergovernmental and Secretariat sectors were aimed at enhancing co-ordination. In implementing the decisions of the General Assembly with respect to those recommendations, the Secretary-General would be guided by the need to ensure greater cohesion and complementarity in the work of the various parts of the Organization and between the United Nations and the specialized agencies. Such an approach was of particular importance in the economic and social sectors, in which, over a period of years, there had been a continuous increase in the range and complexity of the tasks entrusted to the Secretariat. The report to be submitted by the Secretary-General in 1987 would reflect the actions taken in implementation of the recommendations of the Group of 18.

77. Effective co-ordination of operational activities for development, particularly at the country level, was essential not only because of the resources involved but also because of its critical importance to the activities of the developing countries. In its resolution on operational activities for development (1986/74), the Council had decided to intensify its efforts to ensure overall co-ordination of those activities and had stressed that efforts should be undertaken to strengthen the necessary dialogue and interaction between the governing bodies of the United Nations system concerned with them in order to ensure consistency in decision-making.

78. At its previous session, ACC had adopted a number of measures to improve the operation of its main bodies. Further efforts would be made the following year to streamline its other subsidiary machinery. ACC had also taken steps to improve the dialogue among executive heads of the organizations of the system on major policy issues related to development and international economic co-operation.

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AGENDA ITEM 81: TRAINING AND RESEARCH (continued)

(b) UNITED NATIONS UNIVERSITY: REPORT OF THE COUNCIL OF THE UNITED NATIONS
UNIVERSITY (continued)

79. The CHAIRMAN announced that Poland had become a sponsor of draft resolution
A/C.2/41/L.16.

The meeting rose at 1.05 p.m.