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ASSEMBLY**

TWENTY-SIXTH SESSION

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**SECOND COMMITTEE, 1445th
MEETING**

Tuesday, 14 December 1971,
at 3.20 p.m.

NEW YORK

Chairman: Mr. Narciso G. REYES (Philippines).

AGENDA ITEM 12

Report of the Economic and Social Council [chapters III to VII, VIII (sections A to E), IX to XIV, XXI and XXII] (continued) (A/8403; A/C.2/264; A/C.2/L.1184/Rev.1, A/C.2/L.1208/Rev.3, A/C.2/L.1210, A/C.2/L.1211/Rev.2, A/C.2/L.1220)

1. Mr. DINGA (Congo) said that his delegation and that of Rwanda had prepared their revised amendments (A/C.2/L.1208/Rev.3) to draft resolution A/C.2/L.1184/Rev.1 following long negotiations and after hearing the views of various delegations and regional groups. After reading out those amendments, he emphasized that the enlargement of the Economic and Social Council merely for the sake of enlargement would not take into account the principle of equitable geographical distribution; nor would it satisfy those groups which considered themselves under-represented. The numerical size of geographical groups should be reflected in the Council; at the same time the continued representation of the great Powers should be ensured and the role played by different socio-economic systems should be taken into account. Once the Committee agreed to apply the principle of equitable geographical distribution, the question of the distribution of seats could be settled later through negotiations among the various regional groups.

2. Mr. GATES (New Zealand) said that his delegation would support draft resolution A/C.2/L.1184/Rev.1, which made effective the decision taken by the Economic and Social Council in part A of resolution 1621 (LI), of which his delegation had been a sponsor. It could not, however, accept amendments A/C.2/L.1208/Rev.3 and A/C.2/L.1210; if either set of amendments was adopted, the Council certainly would not have the time to elect 27 new members to its sessional committees at the organizational meeting of the fifty-second session, scheduled for 5 January, in view of the obvious differences of opinion among regional groups as to how equitable geographical distribution should be effected. General Assembly resolution 1991 (XVIII) laid down the guidelines for adequate geographical representation in the Council. In July the Council, by a substantial majority, had decided that the enlarged sessional committees should follow the present geographical distribution. The sponsors of the amendments now appeared to expect the members of the Council to change their minds and allocate seats on a different basis, a course which many delegations—including his own—would be unlikely to follow. The differences of opinion among regional groups as to how to ensure equitable geographical distribution must first be resolved in the General Assembly;

the question of the distribution of seats was complex and undoubtedly would have to be raised in the near future. However, it was not appropriate to do so now, and his delegation hoped that the sponsors of both amendments would withdraw them.

3. Mr. SIRIWARDENE (Ceylon) said that if the Economic and Social Council was to be enlarged, the principle of equitable geographical distribution must be taken into account. The members of the Asian group rightly felt that they were inadequately represented on the Council. However, any increase in the Council's membership should be agreed upon by a consensus; if negotiations could not be completed at the present session, the matter should be deferred, perhaps until the twenty-seventh session of the General Assembly, in the interest of reaching a consensus.

4. Mr. KHANACHET (Kuwait), speaking on behalf of the sponsors of amendments A/C.2/L.1210 said that they had decided to withdraw them in favour of A/C.2/L.1208/Rev.3. They had done so in the interest of reaching a solution acceptable to all geographical regions. The matter was one which should be adopted by a consensus, not merely a majority; he therefore urged all delegations to support the remaining amendments (A/C.2/L.1208/Rev.3).

5. Mr. RAMIREZ-OCAMPO (Colombia) took issue with the French representative's contention at the 1442nd meeting that, because the Economic and Social Council was a political rather than an administrative organ, there was no need to enlarge it, and with the view expressed by a number of delegations that an increase in the Council's membership would hamper its effectiveness without enhancing its representative character. His delegation believed that the Council's difficulties could be attributed precisely to the fact that it was not truly representative of the United Nations membership, which had changed substantially since the adoption of the Charter. It was therefore necessary at the current session of the General Assembly to amend the Charter and enlarge the Council in order to invest it with sufficient authority. The draft resolution under consideration should have the support of the five permanent members of the Security Council. Furthermore, the present geographical distribution of seats should be maintained.

6. Mr. GHORRA (Lebanon) moved the suspension of the meeting to allow time for further consultations.

The motion was adopted by 77 votes to 2, with 10 abstentions.

The meeting was suspended at 4 p.m. and resumed at 4.40 p.m.

7. Mr. FRAZÃO (Brazil) said that the atmosphere was now conducive to the enlargement of the Economic and Social Council, after years of efforts by the developing countries to make the Council more representative and thus more effective. He urged the Committee not to lose sight of the fact that enlargement must now be the basic objective. The enlargement of the Council should not be postponed for want of agreement on the question of the distribution of seats; the latter point could be settled at a later stage.

8. Mr. VIAUD (France) said that the authority of the Economic and Social Council depended neither on the number of seats nor on their mathematical distribution in a pattern which ignored the economic realities of the modern world. Serious differences of opinion were apparent in the Committee, and it appeared unlikely that unanimity could be achieved, even after the withdrawal of amendment A/C.2/L.1210 and the further revision of the other amendment into a more acceptable form.

9. The debate had given the impression that the distribution of seats among the various geographic groups was the most important point at issue. Indeed, some speakers had gone so far as to argue against the existence of small organs in the United Nations. Such an attitude was contrary to the whole idea of small representative organs, and could lead to decisions contrary to the spirit of the Charter. It had been said that the developing countries should not be required to wait to take their seats on a Council which served the cause of development; however, even if the Council was enlarged, a large number of Member States would still have to wait their turn for seats on it.

10. His delegation was in favour of postponing a decision until there was some assurance that unanimity, or at least until a very substantial majority, would be achieved, which would in effect mean postponement until the twenty-seventh session of the General Assembly. Governments would thus be given an opportunity to consider the matter in greater depth. If that course of action was not acceptable to the Committee, his delegation would be compelled to vote against the amendment contained in document A/C.2/L.1208/Rev.3, and against the draft resolution as a whole. If, on the other hand, the General Assembly agreed to postpone consideration of the question until its next session, it should request the Economic and Social Council to refrain during the interval from adopting measures which might prejudice the final decision or make it more difficult to reach.

11. Mr. NDUNG'U (Kenya) acknowledged that the matter under consideration was not merely a question of mathematics and that economic realities must be taken into account; those considerations had led his delegation to sponsor draft resolution A/C.2/L.1184/Rev.1. However, times had changed since the adoption of Economic and Social Council resolution 1621 (LI). The People's Republic of China was now a Member of the United Nations and, in accordance with the agreement reached, should be represented in the Economic and Social Council together with the other permanent members of the Security Council. His delegation would support the amendments in document A/C.2/L.1208/Rev.3 on the understanding that, if the Asian group was allotted an additional seat, it would be occupied by the People's Republic of China. However, if

those amendments did not have that end in view, his delegation reserved its right to change its position.

12. Mr. DRISS (Tunisia) said that the representative of Brazil had made a valuable distinction between what was essential in the draft resolution and what was merely important. Where the essential part was concerned, the Committee should seize the historic moment and ensure that the amendment to the Charter was adopted. If the present opportunity was not taken, the developing countries might have to wait a number of years to achieve an enlargement in the composition and authority of the Economic and Social Council. Tunisia's support for the draft resolution continued a tradition of defending the interests of developing countries, which included frank and productive co-operation with the developed countries. They should wherever possible avoid placing obstacles in the way of that co-operation.

13. The draft resolution was a result of lengthy consultations in New York, at Geneva and in national capitals. Those efforts, aimed at strengthening the Economic and Social Council, should bring results at the current session. During the past year, the developing countries had experienced considerable difficulty in convincing first the Council and then Governments that a consensus on the enlargement could be achieved. Admittedly, the allocation of seats was not fully equitable, and not only where the Asian group was concerned; however, the interest in obtaining more seats was not always reflected in attendance at Council meetings, or in the interest shown in debates by those who attended. After the adoption of the draft resolution, there would in any case be further opportunity for a revision of the whole system of allocation of seats in order to do greater justice to all groups. He therefore appealed for the withdrawal of all the amendments in order to facilitate adoption of the draft resolution by the greatest possible majority.

14. Mr. JOSEPH (Australia) said his delegation was prepared to vote for a draft resolution doubling the size of the Economic and Social Council. However, problems still remained with regard to the distribution of seats. Arguments had been advanced in favour of equitable geographical distribution, distribution taking into account different political and economic systems, and distribution weighted to give fair representation to States of major economic importance. The most impressive of the arguments had been that in favour of increasing the number of seats allocated to the Asian group. In the first place, the current session of the General Assembly had seen a dramatic development, the seating of the People's Republic of China, which, as a permanent member of the Security Council, pre-empted an Asian seat on the Economic and Social Council. Moreover, the Asian group in the Council included Japan, whereas in the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, for example, Japan was included in Group B. Japan was the third economic power in the world, and had a tenable claim to permanent or quasi-permanent representation on the Council. In addition, all the new Members which had joined the United Nations at the current session of the General Assembly were Asian States. The Asian group's claim that it was under-represented therefore seemed fully justified.

15. It was regrettable that other groups had also raised the question of their own representation, although there had been no comparable changes in their membership. Such an attitude opened the way to a free-for-all of seat-grabbing which could endanger the whole enterprise of enlargement of the Council. A compromise must be found, and his delegation therefore wished to propose an amendment to the draft resolution to meet the point made by the representative of Kenya, that the Asian group should be given one more seat. The existing paragraph 4 should be replaced by the following paragraph:

"Further decides that the members of the Council shall be elected according to the following pattern:

- (a) 14 members from African States;*
- (b) 11 members from Asian States;*
- (c) 10 members from Latin American States;*
- (d) 13 members from Western European and other States;*
- (e) 6 members from socialist States of Eastern Europe;"*

A minor amendment would then be required in operative paragraph 6, replacing the words "the present geographical distribution" by "paragraph 4 above".

16. It was important that the compromise which that amendment represented should be recognized. The sacrifice of a seat by the Group of Western European and other States could give rise to complications, especially if a political settlement in central Europe led to the acceptance into the United Nations of the Federal Republic of Germany, which, because of its economic importance, could rightly expect a semi-permanent seat on the Economic and Social Council. The appeal of the representative of Tunisia that the present moment in history should not be passed over was fully justified. The essential aim was to restore to the Economic and Social Council its role under the Charter. In focusing on the transfer of one seat from one group to another, the Committee should regard it as a special case designed to accommodate the People's Republic of China. In his delegation's view, its proposal was the only practical way of solving the impasse which had developed in the Committee.

17. Mr. OSMAN (Sudan) endorsed the comments of the representatives of Brazil and Tunisia. He regretted that he was unable to support the amendments contained in documents A/C.2/L.1208/Rev.3. His delegation had frequently stated its support for the enlargement of the Economic and Social Council with a view to providing a more satisfactory representation. It had also stated that the principle of equitable geographical distribution would not mean distribution of seats simply in proportion to the number of States in each region; many other complex questions were involved, and the principle had not as yet been adequately defined. Introduction of that principle into the draft resolution would accordingly make its adoption even more uncertain, and he appealed to the co-sponsors of the amendment to withdraw it. If they were unable to do so, his delegation would vote against it.

18. The amendment proposed by the representative of Australia was a very significant development. His delegation had always supported adequate representation of the Asian

group in the Economic and Social Council, and fully recognized the significance of the admission of the People's Republic of China to membership in the United Nations. He hoped that the amendment would make it easier for Asian States to support the draft resolution. His delegation fully recognized the significance of the relinquishment of a seat by the group of Western European and other States. There were, in effect, two levels of representation in the United Nations: that for developed countries and that for developing countries; the transfer of a seat enhanced the position of the latter. The Australian amendment constituted a major improvement in the draft resolution, in the interests of all developing countries, and he hoped that the Asian group could fully support it, as his delegation would.

19. Mr. MAKEEV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said his delegation would vote against the amendment contained in document A/C.2/L.1208/Rev.3, which in its view arbitrarily and artificially separated the increase in the number of seats from their allocation. The two questions were in fact opposite sides of the same coin. In his delegation's view, the amendment was based on the desire of some delegations to reduce the proportion of seats allocated to the socialist countries of Eastern Europe. His delegation could not agree to that approach, particularly at a time when there was a strong possibility of the German Democratic Republic becoming a member of the United Nations, and his delegation must support the interests of that country, just as the representative of Australia supported those of the Federal Republic of Germany. Allocation of seats solely in accordance with geographical distribution was unacceptable; the representation of the different trends in economic development, and of countries with different economic and social systems, must also be taken into account. His delegation would accordingly oppose the amendment, and, if it was adopted, would vote against the draft resolution as a whole.

20. Mr. MOBARAK (Lebanon) requested suspension of the meeting to allow members of the Asian group to consider the Australian proposal.

The meeting was suspended at 5.35 p.m. and resumed at 6 p.m.

21. Mr. VIAUD (France) said that, although the Australian proposal required a sacrifice on the part of the group of Western European and other States, it had not been made on behalf of that group. His delegation would oppose the amendment if it was put to a vote.

22. Mr. MOBARAK (Lebanon) said that after consultation, the members of the Asian group had agreed to support the Australian amendment, subject to the addition of a final sentence in operative paragraph 4, reading "The foregoing distribution of seats shall be reviewed by the General Assembly at its twenty-seventh session on the basis mainly of the principle of equitable geographical representation."

23. Mr. JOSEPH (Australia), in reply to the representative of France, said that he had indeed made his proposal on behalf of his delegation alone. However, he had reason to believe that it might receive some support from the Western European delegations, provided—and he wished to empha-

size the point—that it represented a final solution. The Lebanese proposal exemplified the proverb “Give them an inch and they’ll take a mile”, because it went far beyond what was already a major concession. His delegation had made its proposal not merely as at the suggestion of one group to another, but also, in a sense, as an Asian country. Australia shared many of the concerns of the Asian countries and believed that the proposal was in their best interests. He therefore appealed to the Asian representatives to reconsider their amendment.

24. Mr. DRISS (Tunisia), speaking on a point of order, proposed that the debate on the question should be closed, and an immediate vote taken on the draft resolution under consideration. The Australian proposal had solved the problem of the Asian group. The problem of equitable geographical distribution remained, but that applied to all United Nations bodies, not just the Economic and Social Council. The position of everyone was clear; the time had come to take responsibility for a decision. His appeal for the withdrawal of all amendments had not been heeded. Those who maintained their amendments were depriving the Asian, African and Latin American groups of the seats they would obtain if the draft resolution were passed.

25. Mr. McCARTHY (United Kingdom) moved, under rule 117 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, that the debate on the item under discussion should be adjourned.

26. The CHAIRMAN pointed out that under rule 120 of the rules of procedure, the proposal for adjournment took precedence over the proposal for closure.

27. Mr. DIALLO (Upper Volta) proposed an amendment to the United Kingdom proposal, whereby debate on the item would be adjourned until the twenty-seventh session of the General Assembly.

28. Mr. SANTA-CRUZ (Chile) said he regretted that adjournment of the debate had been proposed after he had yielded to the Chairman of the Asian Group. He was opposed to the motion, and especially to the Upper Volta amendment to it. Like the Tunisian representative, he felt that there were times when it was necessary to seize an historic opportunity. He was convinced that the General Assembly must resolve the question of enlargement at the current session.

29. Mr. McCARTHY (United Kingdom) in explanation of his motion, said that there had been a number of new and confusing proposals. The delegations would need time to consider them, and, in some cases, to consult their Governments. His motion was not, however, an attempt to prevent a decision on the question at the current session.

30. Mr. NDUNG’U (Kenya), speaking in opposition to the motion for adjournment, said that the question had been discussed for such a long time that further adjournments would serve no purpose. He supported the motion for closure.

31. Mr. KHALIL (Egypt) said that the United Kingdom proposal was reasonable in view of the variety of positions that were being taken by various representatives. A meeting on the following day might help to clear up the situation.

32. Mr. VIAUD (France) agreed with the representative of Egypt.

33. Mr. DIALLO (Upper Volta) withdrew his amendment to the United Kingdom proposal.

The Chairman put to the vote the motion for adjournment of the debate.

The motion was adopted by 48 votes to 27, with 27 abstentions.

34. Mr. SANTA-CRUZ (Chile), introducing amendment A/C.2/L.1220 to draft resolution A/C.2/L.1211/Rev.2, said that, although the draft resolution was admirable and deserved the Committee’s support, it chiefly emphasized the short-range aspects of the problem of malnutrition. There were other long-range aspects, and his delegation wished to see the draft resolution deal with the heart of the problem. Malnutrition affected all countries of the world, but clearly it affected the developing countries most acutely. One child in four under six years of age in most developing countries had a protein deficiency of up to 60 per cent, and evidence showed that such deficiencies prevented children from attaining their full development. The fourth preambular paragraph was therefore too weak and the phrase “may permanently impair” should be amended to read “permanently impairs”.

35. The problem of protein malnutrition arose not because of the world shortage of protein but because of unequal distribution. It was related to the over-all problems of under-development, most of which derived from low income, which was in turn due to backward economic and social structures. He recognized that the draft resolution tried to take those factors into account by referring to relevant paragraphs of the International Development Strategy. The Strategy’s statements on nutritional and agricultural problems were, however, weak and oversimplified because of the fact that the governing bodies of FAO had never taken seriously their participation in its preparation. That was why his delegation’s first amendment mentioned UNCTAD Declaration 9 (II), which showed what the true causes of the problem of malnutrition were. The second amendment was designed to specify the economic and social factors that were related to malnutrition. He wished to include, in addition to the factors listed in the amendment, mention of poor sanitary conditions, defects in storage, and food waste. It was important that all the factors listed should be included.

36. Mr. SPENCER (Canada), introducing draft resolution A/C.2/L.1211/Rev.2, said he hoped that the amendments already made and those he was about to propose would make the draft resolution acceptable to all members of the Committee.

37. His delegation, like that of Chile, would have preferred that the final clause in the fourth preambular paragraph had included a stronger verb than “may”, but it had consulted with expert representatives of the Protein Advisory Group and other competent organizations, and it appeared that although there was strong evidence of permanent impairment resulting from infant malnutrition, there was no final proof of relationship as yet, and the text must be scientifically accurate.

38. The sponsors had agreed to comply with requests from various delegations by deleting the phrase "and particularly multilateral" from the fifth preambular paragraph, and, in operative paragraph 1, by adding the words "or emphasize" after "establish", replacing the word "immediate" by "short-term" and adding the phrase "in accordance with their respective national plans". Likewise, the sponsors had agreed to add the phrase "in a manner compatible with the requisites of the developing countries" at the end of operative paragraph 2 and, in operative paragraph 5, to add the words "particularly the United Nations Development Programme" after "organ", "at their request" after "developing countries" and the numeral "1" after the word "paragraph".

39. He drew the Committee's attention to paragraph 10, which had been added to the previous version of the draft resolution to draw special attention to an important institutional decision in the protein field by FAO. The sponsors recognized that the action requested in new paragraph 11 might be somewhat premature procedurally since the Economic and Social Council had not yet made any administrative arrangements regarding its Committee on Science and Technology and since it might infringe the right of the Council to instruct its subordinate bodies. They therefore proposed that the phrase "to instruct" should be replaced by "during its discussion of the terms of reference of", the phrase "to invite" by "to give sympathetic consideration to inviting", and the word "urges" by "to urging".

40. The proposal to establish a special protein fund under the United Nations Development Programme was not new. It had been supported twice by the Advisory Committee on the Application of Science and Technology to Development (ACAST) and, more recently, by the Panel of Experts. Accordingly, it had been decided that the first part of new paragraph 13 should be amended to read:

"Further requests the Secretary-General to seek the views of Governments on the recommendations of his Panel and of the Advisory Committee on the Application of Science and Technology to Development for the establishment of a special protein fund under the United Nations Development Programme, in order to ascertain Governments' views on its feasibility and to ascertain whether significant resources would be made available to it;"

A final clause calling for a report to the General Assembly through the Council had been added for administrative reasons; the clause did not specify the particular session at which the Council should consider the relevant report of the Secretary-General in order to leave the timing flexible, particularly since the Council was already requested, in paragraph 8, to consider another report relating to protein matters at its fifty-second session. He also wished to point out that paragraph 13 did not in any way represent a commitment on the part of Governments towards contributing to a special protein fund if one was eventually established.

41. The sponsors were able to accept the first amendment proposed by the delegation of Chile (A/C.2/L.1220), which should be uncontroversial, but the date of the Declaration

referred to in that amendment should be 22 March 1968 and not 22 May 1968. In respect of the second Chilean proposal, however, wide-ranging consultations had been held in connexion with the third preambular paragraph of the draft resolution in order to avoid any unwittingly controversial matters. It had also been discussed with representatives of the specialized agencies and the Protein Advisory Group so as to ensure that the text was technically accurate. Consequently, the paragraph had been very carefully drafted. The two major aspects of the global problem of malnutrition were protein deficiency and calorie deficiency. The former, although a highly complex problem, was the one which should and could be most quickly rectified and was directly related to the problem of poverty and the quantity of food supplies. However, in the short run, the greatest obstacles to the correction of protein deficiency were inadequate food distribution and education or information. Moreover, the problem was not limited to countries with a low *per capita* income. Accordingly, the paragraph stressed the complexity and multidisciplinary nature of the problem and it had not been considered possible to enumerate in the paragraph itself all the factors involved, which were however reflected in the annex to the draft.

42. Canada was more than willing to entertain requests for assistance in protein matters within the context of its bilateral aid programmes. His Government was financing an independent International Development Research Centre which conducted research in and for the developing countries—including research related to nutrition. Moreover, the Canadian Department of Agriculture was prepared to make available the results of its research in the protein field, as well as its facilities on a sharing basis, to researchers from the developing countries, while the Canadian Department of National Health and Welfare had under way eight major research projects directly related to protein. In conclusion, the sponsors viewed the draft resolution as one of great importance and urgency and sincerely hoped that it would be adopted unanimously.

43. Mr. SCHRAM (Iceland) observed that it was undoubtedly essential to focus the attention of the world community on the problem of protein-calorie malnutrition, which was the primary cause of high infant and child mortality in many developing countries. While the draft resolution merited commendation, it was nevertheless important to ask how best the protein gap could be closed by concrete action, which must after all remain the immediate aim.

44. The oceans of the world were one of the most valuable sources of protein-rich food. The total world fish catch in 1969 had been 56 million tons, of which 24 million tons had been fished by the developing countries. Those figures were especially relevant when it was borne in mind that fish and fishery products had a very high prime protein content and that the acquisition of one ton of fish involved much less time, money and effort than was the case with one ton of agricultural protein-rich food. FAO experts had estimated that the oceans had a potential yield of nearly 120 million tons of the fish species now being utilized. Unfortunately, the situation was not as promising as it might seem. The short-sightedness of nations, primarily the highly developed and industrialized fishing nations, might

prove disastrous for the majority of the world's population starved of protein-rich food. Astonishingly, more than half the world total fish catch was converted into fish-meal and oils for use as animal feed, which meant that only one tenth of the protein yield reached the human consumer. The rest was lost in the growth process of the livestock concerned. In other words, a quantity of fish which would provide 3 million people with a minimum protein requirement for one year was enough for only 300,000 people when it was converted into animal feed. The sheer folly of such a course was self-evident and the urgent need to reverse that process, which it would have been desirable for the draft resolution to reflect, should be a matter for priority consideration by the relevant United Nations bodies. FAO statistics showed that, in the Far East, fish protein constituted about 20 per cent of total protein consumption, whereas in Latin America, the Near East and Africa, the corresponding figure varied between 3 and 4 per cent. Obviously, if the 25 million tons used annually for fish-meal went direct to the consumer in those regions, the over-all health situation would improve accordingly.

45. Again, the marine resources of the oceans were being destroyed, chiefly by the industrialized nations. For example, a recent article in *Life*, which could be described as an unbiased source of information on marine matters, cited numerous species of fish that were endangered. It was futile to discuss the protein situation throughout the world and adopt draft resolutions without taking those developments into account in the United Nations. Conservation and rational utilization were therefore the only sensible course left if the sea was not to become empty of edible fish stocks.

46. He could not agree more with the suggestion, in the magazine article he had referred to earlier, that dual seaward limits should be established for all coastal States, i.e. 12 miles as the limit of sovereignty, with an additional fishery conservation zone extending out to the point where the continental shelf sloped off into the ocean depths.

47. It was his hope that, if sane counsel prevailed, the present situation could be altered and that world fishery resources could be husbanded, in particular for the benefit of those nations which suffered from malnutrition and lack of protein in a world of plenty.

48. Mr. N'DIAYE (Senegal) said that he wished to correct a statement made in the course of the 1436th meeting by the Executive Secretary of the Protein Advisory Group, who had referred to aflatoxin. The statement in question might have been true 10 years ago, but the Scientific Committee of the African Groundnut Council had done important work on the degree of toxicity of aflatoxin and his delegation could assure the Committee that, at the present time, ground-nuts cultivated in Senegal showed no dangerous symptom of that toxin, since farming techniques and conditions were scientifically controlled. The conditions under which the human organism might be affected by aflatoxin had been ill-defined and it was curious that countries which produced ground-nuts did not suffer from its alleged effects. Some countries, however, had already adopted legislation concerning the permissible toxicity level of aflatoxin and the United Kingdom, which consumed ground-nut oil, had determined a reasonable level which

might be followed by other countries. Moreover, the United Kingdom health authorities had never specified which diseases were caused by aflatoxin resulting from the consumption of ground-nuts. The Committee would realize that the matter was of extreme importance for a country such as his own, which produced a large quantity of ground-nuts.

49. Mr. JOSEPH (Australia) noted that, in his recent address to the Economic and Social Council, the President of IBRD had singled out nutrition as one of the three areas of major development concern to IBRD and had pointed out that malnutrition was in many cases passively accepted or, at best, feebly resisted. The President of IBRD had been disturbed since he believed that, even within present economic constraints, i.e. without greater financial investment, most developing countries had the potential to feed themselves better than they did now. Consequently, at least one purpose of the present draft resolution would be to increase public awareness and, in particular, make Governments more sensitive to the importance of the protein problem.

50. His delegation was appreciative of the manner in which operative paragraph 13 of the draft resolution had been formulated, although he was compelled to reiterate his country's reservations concerning the proliferation of special funds. They were unlikely to add to the total sum of available aid resources and could lead to distortion of aid flows by redirecting funds from programmes in which the recipient countries established their priorities to programmes where priorities were set by others in terms of what they felt the recipient Governments should do. The recent history of the United Nations development system pointed to the desirability of donor Governments making their contributions through UNDP rather than through various funds and special programmes. His delegation was none the less ready to vote affirmatively for the draft resolution and, in particular, endorsed operative paragraphs 6, 7 and 8, which were designed to strengthen the Protein Advisory Group. He also supported the imaginative proposal in operative paragraph 10 to hold joint meetings of the new Committee on Science and Technology and the Protein Advisory Group, which should be an effective method of focusing governmental attention on the protein problem.

51. Mr. GOBBA (Egypt) said his delegation was happy to note that the sponsors of the draft resolution had agreed to incorporate the first of the Chilean proposals in amendment A/C.2/L.1220. Moreover, the second Chilean proposal reflected the views expressed by his delegation at the previous session. He believed that protein deficiency was one of the symptoms of backwardness and under-development, a concept which was clearly embodied in the Chilean formulation.

52. He wished to thank the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.2/L.1211/Rev.2 for incorporating the suggestions made by his delegation. However, while it was true that, under the International Development Strategy, the responsibility for development in all fields lay with the developing countries themselves, it was also recognized that they were in need of additional aid in order to improve their respective economies. Accordingly, he felt that the

word “only” in operative paragraph 1 was too restrictive and should be replaced by the words “an important”. Again, it was advisable to make clear that the measures envisaged in paragraph 6 should be undertaken only on request. Therefore, the words “at the request of Governments concerned” should be inserted after the initial verb in subparagraphs (a), (b), (c), (e), and (g) of paragraph 6. He welcomed the new formulation of paragraph 13 and endorsed the view of the representative of Australia, who had expressed concern at the proliferation of special funds. His own delegation feared that such funds might infringe upon the recognized concept that recipient Governments should be responsible for setting their own priorities in accordance with their indicative planning figures. Allocations from a special protein fund, i.e. sums to be used exclusively for protein matters, would mean that countries without an acute protein problem but acute problems in other fields would receive less aid. He therefore proposed the insertion, after the new formulation read out by the Canadian representative, of wording along the following lines: “in addition to the contributions to the United Nations Development Programme expected under the relevant United Nations resolutions”, thus making it clear that Governments should be consulted to determine whether they felt that it was advisable to establish a special protein fund.

53. The CHAIRMAN announced that Costa Rica had become a sponsor of draft resolution A/C.2/L.1211/Rev.2.

54. Mr. PRAGUE (France) said that his delegation considered the protein problem as one of enormous importance and that it fully supported the draft resolution now before the Committee. However, the French delegation had expressed reservations on the occasion of the adoption of the Declaration on the World Food Problem by the Second United Nations Conference on Trade and Development and, therefore, he was compelled to express the same reservation with regard to the first Chilean proposal (A/C.2/L.1220), which cited that Declaration.

55. In his view, the provisions of paragraph 11 placed the Economic and Social Council under direct pressure from special interests and would lead to lobbying. It was unwise to detract from ACAST's normal competence in protein matters. The most recent formulation of the paragraph enabled the Council to make its own decision and he hoped that it would take into account the opinion of the General Assembly. A similar remark applied to paragraph 12. The Secretary-General's Panel of Experts would, it seemed, have to report to the Science and Technology Committee of the Economic and Social Council, whereas they should, in fact, report to the Secretary-General himself. Nevertheless, his delegation was not opposed to the adoption of the paragraph, since it included the words “as appropriate”.

56. Mr. SKOGLUND (Sweden) said that action programmes directed specifically to alleviating malnutrition among young children and pregnant and nursing mothers should have priority. To do that, it was not enough simply to increase agricultural production and the gross national product; experience had shown that practical education for mothers was also essential.

57. His Government believed that the report of the Secretary-General's Panel of Experts,¹ which had been submitted to the Economic and Social Council, was very useful; draft resolution A/C.2/L.1121/Rev.2 made recommendations similar to those in the report. Commenting on the draft resolution, he supported the broadened terms of reference of the Protein Advisory Group recommended in operative paragraph 6, and he welcomed the fact that IBRD had joined in sponsoring the Group; it should be given increased financial aid to enable it to fulfil its role. He agreed that the over-all non-technical aspects of the protein problem should be dealt with in the new Science and Technology Committee, as recommended in operative paragraph 11, and suggested that it should be a permanent item on its agenda; he also hoped that the assignment of high-level experts to its meetings would make it more successful. With regard to operative paragraph 12, he felt that the establishment of plans for integrating the nutritional aspects of the food supply was urgently required. In respect of operative paragraph 13, he saw no reason to abandon his general concept that establishing special funds made it more difficult to obtain an over-all view of development work and to establish priorities.

58. Sweden had been giving increased attention to nutritional problems at a bilateral level and intended to do so at a multilateral level, within FAO, WFP and WHO. He thought that the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research should be able to carry out further research in the protein field and make the proposed special fund unnecessary.

59. Mr. SANTA-CRUZ (Chile) said that scientific data and his own experience had convinced him that if a child did not have sufficient protein in his first year of life, he would not be able to develop fully all his potential. The arguments put forward by the representative of Canada, however, had not convinced him and he retained his second amendment (A/C.2/L.1220). The main factor in malnutrition, particularly in animal protein, was low income, under-development and unemployment and underemployment. He felt that the causes of malnutrition and protein deficiency should be included in the resolution and he hoped that his second amendment would be adopted.

60. Mr. DO RIO-BRANCO (Brazil) welcomed the establishment of the FAO intergovernmental committee which would play a very important and high-level role and help to expand the activities of FAO in the protein field; it would also cut the risks involved in assigning an excessively important role to certain large food companies. He had his usual reservations on paragraph 15 of the annex, but he recognized that the paragraph could not be amended without amending the whole annex. He supported the second Chilean amendment and the resolution as a whole.

61. Mr. DIALLO (Upper Volta) welcomed the Chilean amendment. As the new Committee on Science and Technology had not yet been constituted, he thought paragraph 11 should simply request the Economic and Social Council to ask representatives of competent bodies

¹ *Strategy Statement on Action to Avert the Protein Crisis in the Developing Countries* (United Nations publication, Sales No.: E.71.II.A.17).

to discuss the problems involved. Recalling a similar situation in 1966, and the fate of the population fund, he expressed his doubts about the proposed special protein fund, if it was to be financed from existing funds at their present level. The developing countries hoped that the new fund would be financed from additional resources. He supported Egypt's wording for paragraph 13.

62. Mr. WEITZ (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations) expressed the hope that action by the General Assembly and the specialized agencies would heighten the interest of Governments in developing effective policies and measures. A discussion of protein strategy had recently taken place at the sixteenth session of the FAO Conference, pursuant to Economic and Social Council resolution 1640 (LI). The Conference had adopted a resolution and a proposed programme of action, and also a budget for two years, 1972-1973, of which approximately 25 per cent was to fund regular programme activities to implement the strategy recommended by the Secretary-General's Panel of Experts. Additionally, some \$130 million worth of field projects were associated with the protein segment of FAO's work over the next two years. In approving the medium-term plan for the next four years, the Conference had given priority rating to FAO's protein-related work. With regard to the programme of action, the Conference also asked the FAO Council to undertake a comprehensive annual review of the progress made, and to develop strategic guidelines. To assist it in developing guidelines, the Council established a Protein Sub-Committee with seven members, Brazil, Canada, France, India, Iran, New Zealand and Sierra Leone.

63. The basic approach should be to raise income levels in the developing countries through development, to promote the redistribution of income in favour of the lower income groups and to continue to expand the production of food, including protein foods. That approach, however, was too slow, and, as short-term measures, FAO promoted supplementary feeding programmes, the preparation of special protein-rich food mixtures for infants and small children, and the enrichment of basic foods with the essential amino-acids; that was done mainly under the World Food Programme. FAO welcomed the broader discussion of the protein problem and strongly supported the suggestion that additional funds should be made available.

64. Commenting on draft resolution A/C.2/L.1211/Rev.2, he said that the Director-General of FAO appreciated the recognition given to FAO's role in paragraph 10, and was gratified that Economic and Social Council resolution 1640 (LI) placed the responsibility for solving the protein problem clearly with the agencies possessing the specialized competence. He regretted, however, that the draft resolution showed there was little likelihood of the four major United Nations bodies, including the United Nations itself, joining in the sponsoring of the Protein Advisory Group whose capacity to enlarge its work and its integrating technical role depended on its sponsors and increasing its budget.

65. He reassured the representative of Senegal that FAO fully realized that the problem of aflatoxin was no longer a hazard in international commerce.

66. Dr. COIGNEY (World Health Organization) said that enquiries had shown that serious malnutrition in the first year of life could cause permanent mental retardation. Protein deficiency was also a factor in deaths which had previously been attributed to infectious diseases. In adults it reduced the work capacity and productivity. There was no easy solution to the problem, and he stressed that the approach must be multidisciplinary. Governments should develop nutritional policies, expand food production, improve hygiene and take social and economic measures to raise the standard of living. WHO did its best in certain areas such as education on nutrition, training specialists, improving hygiene and expanding vaccination programmes, within the limits of its budget.

67. The World Health Assembly had approved a five-year programme for 1973-1977 which gave priority to eliminating malnutrition. One of the criteria to be used in assessing the progress made in the Second Development Decade was protein intake per person.

68. He attached great importance to the Protein Advisory Group and hoped that other organizations would make contributions, as was recommended in draft resolution A/C.2/L.1211/Rev.2. The advisory nature of the Group was of major importance in that it included experts from all disciplines. The World Health Organization had studied the recommendations of the Expert Panel and of the Economic and Social Council on the technical aspects of the proposed strategy. He stressed that not only United Nations agencies, but also Governments, should give material and financial support.

69. Mr. FRANCO-HOLGUIN (International Bank for Reconstruction and Development) recalled that the President of IBRD had recently spoken about the problems of malnutrition and their relationship to economic and social development. Until recently the activities of IBRD had concentrated on increasing the volume of food production, but it had become increasingly clear that much more emphasis must be laid on nutritional considerations. The Bank, UNDP and FAO had therefore recently joined in sponsoring a new body, the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research, which now had 27 members, including three private foundations, 12 donor Governments, three regional development banks and two representatives each from the five major developing regions of the world. The Group had just announced that it would make \$15 million available to increase the production and improve the quality of food in the developing countries. Members of the Group agreed to give financial support to five international research centres in Mexico, the Philippines, Peru, Colombia and Nigeria; a new institute would probably be established in India and possibly in Africa. All the current programmes at those institutes had some bearing on the increase of protein availability.

70. The Bank fully recognized that the protein problem required a multidisciplinary approach. The Bank had therefore, pursuant to Economic and Social Council resolution 1640 (LI), joined WHO, FAO and UNICEF as a sponsor and financial contributor to the work of the Protein Advisory Group. Additional support from other United Nations bodies and a greater awareness of Governments about the problem would represent significant contributions to its solution.

71. Mr. NONOYAMA (Japan), speaking on paragraph 11 of draft resolution A/C.2/L.1211/Rev.2, said he did not consider that it was appropriate for a representative from an advisory group to participate in an intergovernmental body; he suggested that the Advisory Group should submit its report through the Secretary-General to whom the group would give advice; however, he would not insist on further amendment to paragraph 11, because the text had been improved. As to paragraph 13, he considered that before studying the feasibility of the fund, the desirability of the fund in the protein field should first be studied. For example, the Protein Advisory Group could make a survey of the trend of the activities and programmes being carried out by the United Nations organizations in order to ascertain whether a special fund was desirable or not. His

delegation would like to see that the draft resolution reflect the views it had expressed. He therefore suggested that in paragraph 13 the words "desirability and" should be inserted before the words "feasibility of".

72. Mr. RAMIREZ-OCAMPO (Colombia) said that he agreed with the reservations expressed by the representatives of Egypt and the Upper Volta regarding paragraph 13 and hoped that the sponsors would take them into account. He regretted that the second Chilean amendment had not been accepted by the sponsors and hoped that it would be adopted by the Committee.

The meeting rose at 8.40 p.m.