

United Nations  
**GENERAL  
ASSEMBLY**

TWENTY-SEVENTH SESSION

Official Records



**SECOND COMMITTEE, 1468th  
MEETING**

Friday, 20 October 1972,  
at 3 p.m.

NEW YORK

Chairman: Mr. Bruce RANKIN (Canada).

**AGENDA ITEM 47**

**United Nations Conference on the Human Environment:**  
report of the Secretary-General (*continued*) (A/8688,  
A/8691, A/8703/Add.1 (Part II), A/8783 and Add.1,  
A/CONF.48/14 and Corr.1, A/C.2/L.1227-1229,  
A/C.2/L.1229/Rev.1)

1. Sir Colin CROWE (United Kingdom) welcomed the success of the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment and the fact that fears that a polarization of attitudes might prevent progress had proved unfounded. The success of the Conference could be attributed to the efforts of, *inter alia*, the secretariats of the United Nations system, Governments, the Conference secretariat and its Secretary-General and the Preparatory Committee.

2. His delegation supported the institutional recommendations adopted at the Conference (A/CONF.48/14 and Corr.1, chap. III). Those arrangements recognized that a successful follow-up to the Conference required the co-ordinated efforts of Governments, institutions of the United Nations system and other sources, and provided for intergovernmental control and guidance. They also wisely called for a small and highly-qualified central secretariat.

3. His delegation considered it crucial to future progress that inputs from Governments, based on economic, social and political realities and experience, should continue to be relied upon. His own Government, having been the leader of the industrial revolution and accordingly a pioneer in large-scale pollution, had also been a pioneer in anti-pollution. A series of successively stronger Acts of Parliament since 1863 had regulated the emission of industrial and domestic smoke and strong regulations on the discharge of effluents into rivers had contributed to undoing some of the extensive damage done by many countries to the North Sea. That pointed to a reality: that except in those important areas where environmental problems of a global nature were concerned, environmental work was above all a national responsibility and thus extended naturally to the regional level. His Government looked forward to ever closer co-operation with its partners in the enlarged EEC in regional efforts, as well as in global problems such as the pollution of the seas and skies.

4. Having recognized some time earlier that, for environmental planning to be effective, it must be co-ordinated with the over-all national planning

machinery, his Government had established a Department of the Environment, which included the former Ministries of Transport, Housing and Local Government and Public Buildings and Works. The Department took a comprehensive approach to research and planning, ensured co-ordination of the national effort and, with the assistance of six specialized research institutes, was also considering such problems as the economics of pollution control and techniques of monitoring pollution.

5. Stockholm had provided a valuable opportunity for Governments to share such experience, and the world community had reached a large measure of agreement on measures for the preservation and improvement of the environment. One of the most striking features of the Conference had been the general acknowledgement that environmental considerations were an essential factor to be taken into account in planning economic development and that environmental priorities at different stages of development were bound to be different.

6. Various Governments, including his own, had offered a site for the environment secretariat (see A/8783/Add.1). London provided many of the essentials: contiguity to relevant bodies of the United Nations system, easy access to other bodies, excellent communications, and easy access to research institutions and to the strong team of British officials and scientists who had contributed so much to the preparatory work. Those research facilities could, in a wider context of course, be drawn on by the developing countries as well as by the secretariat and others.

7. The United Kingdom had also pledged a contribution to the proposed Environment Fund of £2 million, subject to receipt of other contributions. The projects to be financed would be of benefit to developed and developing countries alike. They should help the developing countries increase their capacity to tackle their environmental problems. Although the proposed Fund should not be used for development aid purposes, its proper employment could not but contribute to sound development. His Government's support for the Fund and contribution to it did not affect its well-known position that it was opposed to any concept of additional environmental expenditure in the context of economic development beyond the position it had taken over the relevance of resource flows in the Second United Nations Development Decade and in announcements of future aid expenditure. He cited figures which showed that his Government's overwhelming contribution remained to development and that support for the Environment Fund did not diminish that contribution.

8. The establishment of the proposed institutional arrangements would not derogate from the roles of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council. The Council, in particular, should follow closely the interrelation of development work and environmental work and should ensure as much attention to the reports of the proposed Governing Council for Environmental Programmes as it gave to those of the Governing Council of UNDP. His delegation also supported wholeheartedly the two essential working tools of the new international environmental machinery: a global monitoring system and an international referral system. His Government was pleased to have played a leading part in formulating the proposals for setting up the International Referral Service for Sources of Environmental Information, which would play a vital role in ensuring the greatest possible dispersal of such information. The Conference secretariat could provide interested delegations with information concerning the first Meeting of Experts on the subject, held in London from 25 to 28 September 1972.

9. The most valuable recommendations adopted at the Conference were those addressed to concrete international action. Recommendation 86 of the Action Plan for the Human Environment (A/CONF.48/14 and Corr.1, chap. II), for the establishment of a global convention on the dumping of wastes at sea, was of particular concern to his Government, and it hoped that such a convention would be speedily concluded at the meeting to be held in London in early November and that as many Governments as possible would sign it, particularly those active in the field.

10. The Declaration on the Human Environment, although not a perfect document, was a significant step for the international community in acknowledging its common heritage and its common responsibility to the human environment.

11. His delegation could support draft resolution A/C.2/L.1229/Rev.1. As draft resolution A/C.2/L.1228 contained certain recommendations in addition to those adopted at Stockholm, it wished to consider them more carefully, and it was also studying draft resolution A/C.2/L.1227 on co-operation between States.

12. Not the least of Stockholm's achievements was that it had brought the problems of the environment firmly to the attention of the Governments and peoples of the world and had shown many who had come to regard the United Nations as an irrelevant or impotent Organization that it could tackle problems of global significance in a direct and practical way, in co-operation rather than confrontation and, for those reasons, with tangible results. The General Assembly should now establish the institutional machinery proposed by the Conference, and the new bodies should take up the work and the spirit of Stockholm in the directions which he had indicated.

13. Mr. CARIM (Turkey) said that many steps had been taken, particularly by the developed countries, to cope with the problems of the human environment. The developing countries, profiting from the experi-

ence gained by others, recognized the need to plan their development bearing in mind environmental concerns. International environmental awareness had been spurred by the advent of nuclear testing, the high rate of population growth, the spread of urban agglomerations, and the accompanying pollution. As an industrially developing country, Turkey recognized that it must take measures to improve its environment.

14. He hailed the very positive results of the Stockholm Conference, which had represented the polarization of international environmental concern. The decisions to be taken as a follow-up to the Conference necessarily would vary from country to country, depending on their degree of industrialization. The United Nations was best suited to organize the exchange of experience which would prove of benefit to the international community. The form which the arrangements should take should be decided upon at the current session. His delegation would continue to take part in all efforts to develop measures to improve the human environment.

15. Mr. ROUGÉ (France) said that the success of the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment could be attributed to the constructive spirit and will to co-operate of the participants, as well as to the efforts of the Government and people of Sweden and the Secretary-General of the Conference. The General Assembly must not only approve the Conference's recommendations but also enhance the awareness of environmental issues which it had created. United Nations efforts in the field should be based on universal solidarity, for the world's entire natural and cultural heritage was endangered by what was often disorderly economic activity. Such solidarity must be active and involve all States in a common effort to protect the environment, even though the diversity of ecological problems meant that priorities differed in the developed and the developing countries.

16. A calm approach to environmental problems was essential; excessive fears concerning scientific and technological progress could jeopardize effective international co-operation. The United Nations family of organizations should therefore keep world public opinion objectively informed of the exact nature and scope of environmental hazards. Furthermore, environmental protection should not penalize growth policies, particularly those of the developing countries. His delegation agreed with those which had stated in the Economic and Social Council that environment protection should not become the primary concern of the United Nations; rather, a new dimension should be brought to the policies of economic growth, whereby production to satisfy requirements would continue and increase while environmental factors were also taken into account.

17. France, for example, had built regional parks which both protected its heritage and regenerated certain regions which had been in decline. Similarly, although growth was the major task in the countries of the third world, it could not come about without an improvement in the human environment. Conver-



sely, concern with the natural environment could help to sustain economic growth through the development of environment industries. France was prepared to place its technological knowledge in that field at the disposal of the international community.

18. Turning to the institutional machinery elaborated at Stockholm he emphasized that, given the multidisciplinary nature of ecology, environmental protection should be of concern to all sectors and all geographical regions. France supported the establishment of an Environment Fund—to which it planned to make a substantial contribution—which should provide supplementary financing for a range of activities. It was also essential to ensure the most rational use of available resources. Accordingly, even before programmes were formulated, the functions of the various bodies concerned must be clearly defined in order to avoid overlapping and conflicts of competence. His delegation therefore attached importance to the establishment of an Environmental Co-ordinating Board within the framework of the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination. Governments should be encouraged to harmonize their national efforts with international programmes. However, each State must determine its own rate of growth and style of development; environmental policies could not merely be transferred from one country to another. Lastly, a link must be established between the environment and economic and social development; the Economic and Social Council was best suited to provide the necessary high-level co-ordination.

19. Mr. OGISO (Japan) said that the main achievement of the Conference had been to identify the proper standpoint on environmental matters. The growing realization that, despite their close links with problems in other fields, questions of the environment required a special approach, would serve as the basis for future concerted efforts towards their solution. With regard to the institutional arrangements arising from the Conference, his delegation welcomed draft resolution A/C.2/L.1228. It understood that the essence of the resolution was the need for co-ordination; co-ordination alone could guarantee the necessary effectiveness in implementing the Action Plan. He shared the view of the representatives of Iran and the United States that it was of particular importance that the Environmental Co-ordinating Board should be composed of the Executive Director and of representatives of United Nations agencies from the highest possible levels. The most suitable site for the proposed environment secretariat would be Geneva.

20. With regard to draft resolutions A/C.2/L.1229 and A/C.2/L.1229/Rev.1, he stressed the importance of the Declaration and of the Action Plan, although his delegation still maintained the few reservations concerning the Plan it had expressed at Stockholm. It strongly supported the original draft resolution A/C.2/L.1229 but, after consultation with the delegations of Canada and Mexico, had asked for the inclusion of the additional paragraph to be found in the revised text, A/C.2/L.1229/Rev.1. It had done so because, as it had announced at Stockholm, it was strongly in favour of

convening a second conference in order to discover new methods of international co-operation to solve the ever more numerous environmental problems. His Government had studied carefully the question of a second conference, taking into account its own experience and the keen and positive interest of the Japanese people as a whole in environmental matters. Japan was prepared to act as host to the second conference on a date to be decided upon by the General Assembly. He believed that the General Assembly should take a decision on that matter not later than its twenty-ninth session.

21. Sir Laurence McINTYRE (Australia) said that one of the major responsibilities facing the Committee was to reconcile international environmental standards with the priorities of rapid development and industrialization at the lowest possible cost. The developing countries feared, perhaps with some justification, that the establishment of expensive international obligations and environmental standards could have the effect of retarding their own industrialization and lead to discrimination against their exports or to the diversion for environmental purposes of funds now channelled into development aid. It must be recognized that economic growth would continue and that industrialization was necessary, particularly in the third world, if the less developed countries were not always to have a lower level of living. Heavy capital investment and the use of insecticides would continue to be required, and the resulting disturbance to the environment must be accepted in the interests of raising living levels. The representatives of many developing countries had reminded the Committee that their major environmental problems were those of extreme poverty, protein deficiency, shantytown dwellings and unemployment for which the only solution was development at as fast a pace as their countries' economies could bear.

22. None the less, it would be folly for the developing countries to build environmental disasters into their structures. As latecomers to industrialization, they had a unique opportunity to learn from the experience and errors of others. Intelligent planning, including regional planning, could do much to reconcile the demands of development and environmental protection.

23. Australia, together with other developing countries, had expressed concern at the Conference that enforcement of environmental controls might lead to controls on their exports, amounting in effect to the raising of discriminatory trade barriers by the industrialized countries. It was also opposed to the idea that trade barriers should be raised on the grounds that the developing countries had lower environmental protection costs. It had voted against the proposal adopted at Stockholm for compensation for discriminatory measures taken on environmental grounds because it believed the matter required further study. It therefore supported the proposal in the Action Plan that the question should be placed before the newly-established GATT Group on Environmental Measures and International Trade.

24. There were a number of areas in which the developing countries could expect to gain from concern in industrialized countries about environmental issues. Little was yet known of the costs of pollution control, but it could be expected that the general effect would be more severe in the industrialized countries and that might well result in a trade advantage for the developing countries. The high levels of pollution in industrialized countries might also cause industry to move to the developing countries where such problems were less severe. The damage to the environment resulting from the use of synthetic products could lead to increased demand for the natural products and raw materials on which the economies of many developed countries depended. Australia believed that it would be of interest in many cases to study the relative costs and benefits of natural and synthetic products serving identical purposes.

25. As a rapidly developing industrial and highly urbanized nation, Australia needed to develop safeguards to forestall the environmental problems now affecting many highly industrialized countries. As a leading agricultural, pastoral and mining country, it was also faced with many of the problems experienced by developing countries. They included salination of soils in irrigation areas and soil erosion. Australian scientists had had some success, from which others might wish to benefit, in tackling both those problems. His country also had considerable experience in the use of insect viruses, rather than harmful chemicals such as DDT, in agricultural pest control programmes. It had proposed to the Secretariat that consideration be given to developing a global programme to evolve further such pathogenic viruses. Range management, the development of tropical pastures and the control of arid zones were other areas in which Australia had done a great deal of work likely to benefit other countries.

26. As Mr. Strong had indicated, the achievements of the Conference fell into three categories: the adoption of the principles incorporated in the Declaration on the Human Environment, the Action Plan for the Human Environment and the recommendations for new United Nations machinery to co-ordinate all international environmental activities. The only major disappointment of the Conference had been the failure of the USSR and most of the countries of Eastern Europe to attend.

27. The Declaration included significant new concepts, such as the idea of a basic human right to an adequate environment and that of assigning responsibility to a country for environmental damage it caused outside its own territorial jurisdiction. It also contained guidelines for dealing with problems of conservation, urbanization, population and economic development. As such, it represented the first comprehensive international political consensus on environmental issues and, although it was not legally binding, it had been the subject of intensive negotiations and should thus be generally acceptable.

28. The Action Plan went further in making specific recommendations for action on a wide range of environ-

mental questions. Australia had supported the concept of the Plan, but had hoped for greater rationalization and co-ordination of recommendations between the various subject areas. The Action Plan should thus be regarded for the present as a framework for further consideration and refinement by a post-conference body rather than as a plan to be put into immediate effect.

29. The "Earthwatch" programme mentioned by Mr. Strong was an ambitious one involving the establishment of a world-wide environmental surveillance network. His country was ready to co-operate fully in that programme. In view of its situation, its relative significance with regard to meteorology in the southern hemisphere and its pollution-free atmosphere, Australia might be a logical choice for at least one of the proposed baseline stations to be established to monitor the earth's atmosphere. Its existing network of meteorological observing stations meant that it was also well placed to set up a number of substations to monitor regional atmospheric trends.

30. The Conference had also adopted a number of proposals concerning marine pollution. Australia recognized the need for international action in that field and intended to participate in the 1973 IMCO Conference. It hoped to join with others in an effort to bring all significant sources of marine pollution under appropriate control by the middle of the current decade. His country had also noted the emphasis in the Action Plan on the responsibility of States for exercising control over their own nationals and ships. That should not be allowed to obscure the powers that coastal States already had to control the pollution-generating activities of the nationals and ships of other countries. That related not only to activities within the territorial seas of a coastal State but also to the continental shelf, in accordance with the 1958 Convention on the Continental Shelf.<sup>1</sup> The work being done in the Preparatory Committee for the Conference on the Law on the Sea was of interest in that respect.

31. Australia was pleased to note the emphasis in the Action Plan on training programmes for environmental specialists and technicians from developing countries. It also welcomed the associated proposal to establish an International Referral Service for Sources of Environmental Information.

32. Australia's delegation to the Conference had agreed that both the specialized agencies and the proposed Governing Council for Environmental Programmes would have a role to play in implementing the Action Plan. Membership of the Governing Council should reflect equitable and balanced representation from all areas of the world, including the countries in South-East Asia and the Pacific south of the Equator. That had not been the case with the Preparatory Committee for the Conference, which was why Australia had proposed the enlargement of the Council to 54. He reaffirmed his country's keen interest in the Council and its readiness to make a constructive contribution

<sup>1</sup> United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 499 (1964), No. 7302.



to its work, as evidenced by the pledge to donate \$2.5 million to the proposed Environment Fund.

33. His country agreed with the proposal to establish a small environment secretariat to be financed from the United Nations regular budget. It was important that full recognition should be accorded to the high responsibility which the Executive Director of the secretariat would be called upon to undertake. His priority task would be to draw up, on the basis of discussions with the specialized agencies, proposals for environmental programmes which would represent a balance between the needs and the available resources. He should have considerable powers of initiative, subject to the over-all policy guidance of the Governing Council. His delegation appreciated the advantages of Geneva as a site for the future secretariat, but also welcomed the offers from several developing countries to locate the secretariat in their capitals. All the proposals should be given objective and sympathetic consideration.

34. His delegation particularly welcomed draft resolution A/C.2/L.1227, of which Australia had willingly become a sponsor. The area for possible dispute over environmental issues would clearly be reduced if countries could agree to exchange information on activities which might have significant environmental effects on neighbouring areas. His delegation had noted the comments by the representative of Canada concerning the possible implications of the draft resolution for principles 20 and 21 of the Declaration. For its part, it hoped it might be possible to accommodate those points, perhaps with only minor amendments to the existing draft resolution.

35. Draft resolution A/C.2/L.1228 substantially reproduced the text agreed upon at the Conference. Operative paragraph 1 raised some delicate political questions which the sponsors might wish to hold over for consideration later in the session. His delegation assumed that operative paragraph 5 did not preclude the possibility of the incumbent being reappointed for a further term or terms.

36. His country was also a sponsor of draft resolution A/C.2/L.1229/Rev.1. As the representative of Canada had said, the all-embracing character of the Action Plan required that some organ undertake the task of establishing priorities among the many competing demands. Also, many of the proposals needed refinement to make them truly action-oriented. The proposed Governing Council for Environmental Programmes was clearly the appropriate body to undertake those tasks.

37. Mr. CUBILLOS (Chile) said that during the introductory statement by the Secretary-General of the Conference (1466th meeting) his delegation had been particularly impressed by Mr. Strong's faith in the work he was doing for the United Nations. While stating clearly the new philosophy which was emerging with regard to the environment, he had placed the interests of the Organization first. That was important, because the United Nations, as the central organ for

international co-operation, could not give special priority to problems in the world which might affect some parts of it more than others. The environment must be subject to the priorities established by the General Assembly, since there were many other equally vital problems which also required the efforts and the material and intellectual resources of the Organization.

38. The results of the Conference justified the attitude of those delegations which had criticized it on the grounds that the German Democratic Republic had been excluded from participation, an injustice which had led to the absence of the socialist countries of Eastern Europe and Cuba. The language and philosophy of the Declaration and other documents adopted by the Conference showed a vast ideological imbalance which could be rectified only with the participation of those countries. His delegation hoped that the international community would soon be in a position to proceed with the further activities relating to the environment with the full participation of the German Democratic Republic and the other socialist countries.

39. While the report of the Conference recognized the existence of some environmental problems of special interest to the developing countries, they were generally not dealt with adequately because of the excessive concentration on the problems affecting the industrialized capitalist countries. Industrial development depended on science and technology, which were supposed to benefit the whole of the population, but in those countries, in the past, the working class had in fact received extremely little benefit from them. The real benefits had in fact accrued solely to small minorities which had gradually monopolized power, with the result that industrial empires had appeared which inculcated artificial needs and appetites that had often led to the breakdown of society itself. That inequality in society had contributed to a world-wide deterioration in the environment and in human relations. The measures used to combat environmental problems in capitalist countries were often inappropriate and had to a large extent caused the current climate of hatred and crime in the capitalist world. Man as an individual had been harmed by the policies of capitalist monopolies, and world society as a whole had been weakened in that it had lost sight of the true objectives of the working class.

40. One form of deterioration of the environment to which too little attention had been paid was that caused by the mass media, especially the film industry and television. They were responsible for the penetration into developing countries of ideas and ways of life not appropriate to their cultures, which had distorted living patterns. Broadcasts from abroad were particularly harmful in that respect, and strong controls were necessary, especially over programmes transmitted by powerful satellites. Seventy-five per cent of the international telecommunications system was controlled by developed Western Powers, and more than 60 per cent of it by large United States consortiums. The developing countries naturally wished to save the minds of their peoples for better things than the hatred and vio-

lence which was imported via the television screen. Would the machinery which it was proposed to establish to deal with the environment be capable of controlling the production and distribution of such material, which was so detrimental to the environment?

41. The developing countries had urged that attention be given to a number of problems affecting them such as erosion, arid areas, poverty, malnutrition, illiteracy, insanitary conditions and poor housing. At the Conference, those matters had been accorded a lower priority than other environmental problems; his delegation hoped that the new machinery to be established would redress the balance in that respect. The co-ordination of environmental activities should involve co-ordination with the regional economic commissions, and through them with those responsible for economic and social planning in individual developing countries. The standards to be established with regard to the environment must be appropriate to individual countries and to their regions; standards more appropriate to wealthier countries, which would entail disproportionately high costs, should be avoided. In particular, every country must be able to determine its own population programme. The Conference had paid considerable attention to population problems, but any action taken in that respect must recognize the principle of national sovereignty; recommendations on a global scale would not be acceptable. The industrial development programmes of developing countries, which were essential to their economic and social progress, must be analysed in the light of their environmental consequences, and would require careful planning and the proper choice of technologies least damaging to the environment. The developing countries must reject out of hand the view advanced by some that mankind should backpedal on industrialization and concentrate on developing better agricultural techniques; such a course would be economic suicide, because industrialization was their only means of escaping from underdevelopment. The alternative could be supported only by those who were in favour of exploitation, colonialism and neo-colonialism; its sole effect would be to perpetuate poverty, hunger and the colonialist and neo-colonialist system.

48. The preamble to the Action Programme for Economic Co-operation, adopted by the Conference of Foreign Ministers of Non-Aligned Countries held at Georgetown 8-12 August 1972, commented relevantly on the Stockholm Conference. According to it, the Conference had served to show the difference in the environmental problems experienced by the rich and the poor countries. The former were irresponsibly created by the industrialized nations which today try to unload the burden on the international community as a whole. On the other hand, while some of the environmental problems of the third world are inherent to their under-development, others are a legacy of the practices of imperialism in its manifestations of colonialism and neo-colonialism and, more recently, have been caused by the war waged by imperialism in Indo-China, the Middle East and Africa, where chemical and other arms are used for the purpose of destroying the ecology of the territories it hopes to occupy and, in

some cases such as that of the Palestinian people, whole populations are displaced from their original homes.

43. It was impossible to discuss the environment without referring to the war in Viet-Nam, where the most modern weapons were being used to destroy the population of an under-developed country who were fighting heroically for the integrity of their homeland and their independence. The use of napalm and other incendiary weapons caused irreparable damage and had shocked the conscience of mankind. *The New York Times* of 25 September 1972 reported that the bombs dropped on Indo-China during the past four years had, according to estimates by United States professors, left approximately 7.5 million craters, while the true cost of carrying on the war since January 1969 had probably exceeded \$100,000 million. The effects of napalm and other incendiary weapons were indescribably cruel; the report of the Secretary-General on napalm and other incendiary weapons and all aspects of their possible use<sup>2</sup> dealt with the non-medical effects of such weapons and their medical effects on individuals and population and should be required reading for all those concerned with the environment. Such weapons not only caused irremediable damage to the environment in Indo-China but had equally detrimental effects on human relations. They contributed to the attitude of distrust among peoples. Man's inhumanity to man in Indo-China was incredible and its legacy might well prove worse than that of the colonial period; the injustices perpetrated by the colonial Powers were not comparable with the injustice of destroying fertile land, thereby adding to the needs of a hungry people by creating more hunger. The future would regard those responsible as the killers of an entire race, and would look on them perhaps with even more opprobrium than on the South African whites who had imposed *apartheid* on the indigenous population, or the Nazis who had exterminated 6 million Jews. The United States might succeed in signing a peace agreement with the North Viet-Nameese people, but it would never be able to conclude a friendship treaty with them. The children growing up in Viet-Nam would never forgive the United States for the deaths of their parents, while their children would hate not only the invader but anyone from the West. To create such an attitude was truly destructive of the human environment, and the actions of a small fraction of the human race in so doing would have long-lasting effects.

44. Where the institutional arrangements proposed by the Stockholm Conference were concerned, his delegation believed that the membership of the proposed Governing Council must be based on a broad geographical distribution, to match the universality of environmental problems, especially those of the developing countries. The Council should report to the General Assembly, which should approve its budget, issue guidelines for its activities and ensure the appropriate allocation both of that budget and of voluntary contributions received for environmental purposes. The Economic and Social Council should

<sup>2</sup> A/8803 and Corr.1.

consider the Governing Council's reports from the standpoint of co-ordination with economic and social activities, but the General Assembly must remain responsible for establishing the broad outlines of environmental policies to be conducted through the Governing Council. The small secretariat to be established within the United Nations Secretariat might well prove to be an adequate solution. However, an assurance must be forthcoming that the States most concerned would provide substantial contributions, commensurate with their contributions to the regular budget of the United Nations, to finance the activities of that secretariat. The regular budget could not be drawn upon for environmental activities which were of less vital importance than those relating to economic and social development and human rights. His delegation noted that the estimated cost of the secretariat for 1973 was to be \$1.5 million, or 0.47 per cent of the total regular budget. The budget had been frozen, or in some cases reduced, with the result that the vital activities of the Economic and Social Council, UNCTAD and UNIDO had been affected; his delegation's position on that situation had been stated in the Fifth Committee on 16 October 1972 (1504th meeting).

45. Although the proposed secretariat would be small, its staff must be selected in the proper manner. The staff for the new area of activity could not be provided by transferring staff from other parts of the United Nations Secretariat which were already responsible for important work, such as UNCTAD or UNIDO. Ideally, the staff should be paid for by the additional contributions to which he had referred. His delegation would welcome an explanation by the

Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs or the Secretary-General of the Conference as to how the staff of the new secretariat would in fact be recruited. The growth of that secretariat and its cost must match, and not exceed, the growth rate of the regular budget and of contributions to UNDP.

46. His delegation did not agree that the proposed Environment Fund should be completely independent, as was planned. Its growth, too, must be related to the growth of the regular budget and of UNDP contributions, unlike that of other voluntary funds, established to serve the purposes and policies of the developed capitalist countries, which were growing far faster than the regular budget and that of UNDP, both of which urgently needed more funds. His delegation could therefore not agree to the establishment of the new Fund unless contributions to it were strictly matched with those to UNDP and any surplus contributions which it received above a set level were automatically transferred to UNDP. Such a procedure would prevent the developed countries from reducing their contributions to vital development purposes for the sake of the environment.

47. In conclusion, his delegation congratulated the Secretary-General of the Conference on the vital leadership he had given, and the Swedish Government on its contribution to the holding of the Conference.

48. The CHAIRMAN announced that the delegation of Tunisia had become a sponsor of draft resolutions A/C.2/L.1228 and A/C.2/L.1229/Rev.1.

*The meeting rose at 4.55 p.m.*