

2078th meeting

Friday, 22 July 1977, at 3.30 p.m.

President: Mr. L. ŠMÍD (Czechoslovakia)

E/SR.2078

AGENDA ITEM 4

Regional co-operation and development (*continued*)
(E/5937 and Corr.1, E/5937/Add.1 and Corr.1 and 2, E/5937/Add.2 and 3, E/5937/Add.4 and Corr.1, E/5939 and Corr.1, E/5941 and Add.1, E/5943, E/5944 and Add.1, E/5945 and Add.1, E/5969 and Add.1, E/5997, E/5998, E/6021, E/CEPAL/1027, E/L.1775-1780)

1. Mr. HÖHNE (Observer for the German Democratic Republic), speaking at the invitation of the President, considered that the development of economic co-operation among countries with different social systems would contribute decisively to détente in Europe and in many other areas of the world. The strengthening of political and military détente would make peace more durable and help the peoples liberated from colonialism to solve the tremendous problems of development.

2. The primary task of ECE was to promote trade and, to achieve that end, it had to seek to eliminate discrimination and any artificial obstacle to international trade.

3. The Soviet Union's proposal that all-European congresses on various questions should be held seemed likely to stimulate co-operation and his country therefore welcomed the decision taken by ECE in section II of its resolution 1 (XXXII) (E/5944, p. 96) that preparations should be made for a meeting on environmental protection. In his delegation's view, that meeting should deal with environmental questions of general interest whose solution was of high priority for the well-being of peoples and economic development.

4. To facilitate the preparations and organization of the meeting, countries should submit constructive proposals. His Government had recently sent to the Executive Secretary of ECE a note containing detailed ideas on the subject.

5. The same section of the resolution also referred to the possibility of holding all-European congresses on transport and energy. Such meetings would help to solve many problems of economic co-operation between socialist and capitalist countries and would certainly give a strong impulse to co-operation with the developing countries, in particular scientific and technological co-operation.

6. Mr. FASLA (Algeria) said that the master-plan for development and co-operation in Africa during the period 1976-1986, approved at the OAU Summit Conference at Libreville in July 1977, was a kind of development strategy for Africa. The plan, which was based on the principles of the new international economic order and collective self-reliance, could not be carried out without aid at all levels. Africa was the region with the greatest number of least advanced and land-locked countries and it was the area most affected by cyclical fluctuations in the developed market-economy countries. It was therefore necessary to redress the imbalance in the relations between Africa and the developed countries and to obtain remunerative prices for the region's export products, which were primarily raw materials. International action on behalf of Africa should take the form of substantial and sustained aid to the region, so that the countries in it could carry out their national, subregional and regional plans.

7. At the national level, it was essential that the efforts made to mobilize resources should be accompanied by economic and social reforms to ensure social justice and an equitable distribution of income and to satisfy basic needs. Basic needs were permanent needs which could be satisfied only by the creation of permanent conditions facilitating the rapid development of the developing countries, the narrowing of the gap between the rich and poor countries and the correction of the imbalance in North-South relationships. The emphasis should be on the means of achieving the objectives sought rather than on the objectives themselves, since they could be attained only if the rich countries with economic power accepted the principles

of the new international economic order and acted accordingly.

8. The United Nations' role in the development strategy should be exercised primarily through the regional commissions. They must therefore be strengthened and provided with the necessary means to enable them to co-operate usefully in the development efforts made in their regions and to collaborate among themselves in order to ensure that their work was as effective as possible. His delegation was therefore in favour of a continuous exchange of information between the Executive Secretaries of the regional commissions.

9. In conclusion, he said that for the reasons already given at some length by previous speakers, his delegation fully supported the draft resolution on the Transport and Communications Decade in Africa (E/L.1776), adding that his country was about to undertake the construction of a trans-Saharan highway; his delegation also supported ECWA resolution 40 (IV) relating to Lebanon (E/5969, p. 26) and the proposal for the admission of the Palestine Liberation Organization to membership of ECWA, on which he expressed the hope that the Council would be able to take a responsible position consonant with historical trends.

10. Mr. MWANGAGUHUNGA (Uganda) thought that the Council should take note of the reports of the regional commissions and approve the programmes of action submitted by them. With regard to Africa, he was disturbed at the poor results achieved during the past 15 years. His delegation recognized that the responsibility for development rested primarily with the countries themselves, but it also considered that the world community, and in particular the OECD countries, which were Africa's major trading partners and included some of its former colonizers, had a duty to contribute to their development by agreeing to co-operate in a way that would really improve the situation in the region. Regional economic problems would not be solved by force of arms, political rhetoric or the mere adoption of resolutions, but by a co-operative spirit, such as had characterized the thirteenth session of ECA.

11. His delegation considered that the programme of work and priorities established by ECA for 1978-1979 (E/5941/Add.1) were in complete accordance with the principles of the Kinshasa Declaration, approved by the OAU Summit Meeting in July 1977. The African countries had taken the political decision to implement that programme of work and to respect those priorities. They asked the Council to endorse the programme and the international community to help them find the necessary resources to implement it.

12. The new international economic order would not by itself work miracles, and if Africa was to profit from it, it would have to endeavour to transform itself. Collective self-reliance was a step in the right direction. He wished to commend ECA for having organized at Lagos a supplementary ECA pledging conference, which had produced an encouraging response and demonstrated the determination of the Africans to make the programme of work for 1978-1979 a success. Uganda, which was one of the least developed countries and land-locked, attached great import-

ance to collective self-reliance, and it was for that reason that it had made its pledge at the Lagos Conference.

13. The fact that in 1976 21 per cent of the total budget of ECA had come from extra-budgetary resources, provided mainly by United Nations bodies, donor countries and organizations in industrialized market-economy countries, emphasized the urgency of his delegation's appeal to the OECD countries.

14. Referring to the draft resolutions submitted to the Council under agenda item 4, he said that the need for a transport and communications decade in Africa, as proposed in draft resolution E/L.1776, was undeniable, in view of the importance of that sector for development and considering the fact that at a time when man could go to the moon, it was necessary to pass through Europe in order to travel or communicate from one African country to another. He therefore urged that the draft resolution in question should be adopted by acclamation. Uganda fully supported the draft resolution on the admission of Egypt to membership of ECWA (E/L.1777) and the draft resolution on the admission of the Palestine Liberation Organization to membership of ECWA (E/L.1778), of which it was a sponsor, and commended them to the Council for adoption.

15. Mr. BINTU'a-Tshiabola (Zaire) noted that the Executive Secretary of ECA had surveyed (2071st meeting) the factors behind the mediocre performance of the region between 1960 and 1975, namely, the burden of indebtedness, the fall in the growth of agricultural production, the dependence of the African economy on the outside world and, in particular, cyclical fluctuations in the economies of the industrialized countries, especially those of the OECD countries, which were the main markets for African exports. Among the remedies advocated by ECA, the Executive Secretary had stressed the intensification of current efforts to modify the structure of the international economic system and had clearly indicated that the main responsibility lay with the African Governments and peoples themselves.

16. His own country had demonstrated its desire to participate in the establishment of a new international economic order by acting as host to the eleventh extraordinary session of the OAU Council of Ministers, devoted exclusively to the discussion of the economy of the African continent. The fourth biennial meeting of the Conference of Ministers of the ECA member countries had also been held in Zaire in February 1977. At both those meetings, the President of the Republic of Zaire had made specific proposals which had aroused particular interest.

17. The importance of Africa in the third world must not be underestimated. In a way, it was the continent of the future, owing to its immense resources, most of which had yet to be discovered, and it had great potential in energy, fisheries, forestry, minerals and agriculture. In a continent composed of widely differing countries, Zaire, with its coastline of only 38 kilometres for an area of 2,400,000 square kilometres, was practically land-locked. Having been deprived for some years of certain routes to the sea, it was being cruelly suffocated and was having to get its supplies

through countries which were themselves land-locked, such as Uganda, Zimbabwe and Zambia.

18. In his desire to lay the foundations for better planned and better understood regional co-operation between African partners, the President of Zaire had proposed the creation of the African Economic Community, the first stage in which would be the setting-up of the African Energy Community. Africa was in fact one of the greatest reservoirs of energy in the world, since it possessed all the known resources: fuels, radio-active ores and various sources of both new and conventional types of energy, such as hydroelectric power, which was more abundant there than in any other continent. The hydroelectric power which his country was now producing at Inga would be made available to its African partners.

19. ECA was playing a particularly dynamic role by encouraging a wide range of activities, from the preparation of an inventory of intergovernmental co-operation organizations in Africa to remote sensing and trans-African highways. To help ECA carry out its task efficiently, the Council should closely examine the Commission's annual report (E/5941 and Add.1), including the record of its thirteenth session and the resolutions adopted, in the light of Africa's harrowing economic situation. His country considered that action should be taken on Council resolution 2043 (LXI) on the strengthening of the regional commissions for regional and interregional co-operation, in which the Council had reaffirmed that the commissions should be enabled to play their full role as the main economic and social development centres within the United Nations system for their respective regions and exercise team leadership and responsibility for intersectoral co-ordination and co-operation at the regional level.

20. With regard to ECA resources, his delegation welcomed the results of the Conference for the Pledging of Voluntary Contributions by Governments of African States, held at Lagos in April-May 1977, and wished to point out that Zaire was among the countries which had pledged a financial contribution to the Commission.

21. His delegation also supported the draft resolution relating to the Transport and Communications Decade in Africa, since the transport and communications infrastructure was destined to play an important part in the development and integration of Africa. Lastly, his delegation called upon the Council to support the draft resolution on the admission of Egypt as a member of ECWA.

22. Mr. Qazi Azher ALI (Bangladesh) said that the annual report of ESCAP for 1976-1977 (E/5943) did not present too happy a picture of the socio-economic development of the region. The end of the Second United Nations Development Decade was approaching, but most of the ESCAP member countries were still far from achieving the objectives set in the International Development Strategy. It was against that background of setbacks and uncertainties that ESCAP had started working on the preparation of programmes for the remaining years of the Decade and the strategies for the third development decade.

23. The basic philosophy behind the development efforts of the ESCAP countries was the gradual establishment of a self-reliant economy through regional and subregional economic and technical co-operation. Since the economies of those countries were basically dependent on agriculture, ESCAP was laying special emphasis on the development of an integrated rural development programme. His own country had made satisfactory headway in that direction.

24. Because of the comparative backwardness of the ESCAP countries' infrastructure, emphasis was being laid on the transfer and adaptation of modern technology; the first regional centre for the transfer of technology had recently been inaugurated and the sub-centres in the member countries were being strengthened. Moreover, the ESCAP countries were taking steps to put an end to their population explosion and to make the optimum use of existing manpower.

25. The entire United Nations system, particularly UNDP, FAO, UNIDO and UNFPA, had a part to play in supplementing the efforts being made by the ESCAP countries to build up self-reliant economies. His own country had noted with satisfaction the statement of the UNDP representative, at the thirty-third session of ESCAP, to the effect that the Programme had decided to restore the individual country expenditure ceilings to 100 per cent for 1977. His delegation thought that UNDP would be more effective if the decision-making process were more decentralized and if the country representatives were given more authority for sanctioning expenditure at the local level.

26. His delegation also felt that the decision to strengthen the regional commissions should be implemented as soon as possible and that the apparatus for global co-operation should be further rationalized so as to make it more adaptable and effective. Lastly, it wished to thank the donor countries for their multilateral and bilateral contributions to regional development and hoped that their participation in national efforts would be further strengthened. His own country had received much advice through various technical assistance programmes and thought that the time had now come to put it into practice; that, of course, would entail adequate funds for the purchase of materials and equipment.

27. Mr. KASTOFT (Denmark), speaking on behalf of the European Economic Community, said that the Community had serious objections to the draft resolution on the admission of the Palestine Liberation Organization as a full member of ECWA. Participation in the regional commissions was confined to States alone; the Council had stated that principle in its resolution 1818 (LV) of 9 August 1973, which had brought ECWA into being. Any departure from that principle would have serious legal and institutional implications, and if the draft resolution was put to the vote, the members of the European Economic Community would feel bound to oppose it.

28. The PRESIDENT invited the observer for the Palestine Liberation Organization to speak under rule 73 of the rules of procedure of the Economic and Social Council and in accordance with Council decision 129 (LIX).

29. Mr. KHADER (Palestine Liberation Organization) said he wished to comment on ECWA resolution 36 (IV) concerning the admission of the Palestine Liberation Organization to ECWA. In its resolution 2026 (LXI), the Economic and Social Council had invited UNDP, the specialized agencies and other United Nations bodies to intensify their efforts to identify the social and economic needs of the Palestinian people, to co-operate closely with the Palestine Liberation Organization and to co-ordinate their efforts with ECWA. The aim of the Commission was, of course, to foster the economic and social development of the countries of the region and to improve the standard of living of their people.

30. Palestine was a part of the Western Asian region, and its people, whether in exile or under occupation, lived in that region. The Palestinian people had their own economic institutions and took an active part in the economic life of the region, in whose development they were playing an important role. In applying to join ECWA as a full member, the Palestinian people was simply seeking the same rights and obligations as the other Arab countries which already belonged to it.

31. At its third and fourth sessions, ECWA had adopted several resolutions which directly concerned the Palestinian people, relating among other things to the census of the Palestine Arab people and a general survey of their economic and social situation and potential.

32. As the legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, the Palestine Liberation Organization was a full member of the League of Arab States, and hence a member of all the institutions affiliated to the League. Co-operation in matters of economic and social development between ECWA and the specialized bodies of the League was both routine practice and a necessity. The fact that the Organization was reduced to observer status in ECWA was, therefore, an anomaly which should be remedied.

33. Lastly, the Palestine Liberation Organization was a full member of the Group of 77 and of the non-aligned movement, with which ECWA was also required to co-operate, and a member of the Islamic Conference; as such, it had participated in the Afro-Arab Summit Conference held at Cairo in March 1977.

34. To those delegations which had misgivings on legal grounds, he would point out that it was precisely to avoid such difficulties that the members of ECWA were recommending that paragraph 2 of its terms of reference should be amended to allow the Palestine Liberation Organization to become a member. The purpose of rules of procedure was to facilitate the work of organizations; under no circumstances should they become a limitation or an obstacle. At some time or other, many States were led to amend their laws, adopt new ones or even revise their constitutions when circumstances made particular regulations or provisions redundant, obsolete or inappropriate.

35. The members of ECWA, which were in the best position to determine the region's requirements, had unanimously decided to recommend the Council to amend paragraph 2 of its resolution 1818 (LV) concerning the

Commission's terms of reference, so that the Palestine Liberation Organization could become a member. The admission of the Organization to a regional commission concerned with problems which directly affected the Palestinian people could not, therefore, be regarded as doing violence to the rules.

36. On the other hand, the illegal occupation and continuous aggression to which the Palestinian people were subjected certainly did violence to the principles of international law and the United Nations Charter. Yet the parties responsible sat with impunity in the United Nations and their offence against the Charter did not seem to trouble those who on pretexts of legality and respect for principles contested the right of the Palestine Liberation Organization to become a member of a regional commission whose work was of direct concern to it.

37. Those who feared that the admission of the Palestine Liberation Organization might set a dangerous precedent actually had nothing to fear, since the members of the regional commission concerned had to put forward and recommend all candidates. He shared the hope of the representative of Pakistan that the Palestinian people would be the last to suffer the unenviable fate which was theirs today and that there would be no similar cases in future.

38. Admittedly, it would be pointless to deny that the adoption of draft resolution E/L.1778 would have political implications, but it was even more obvious that its chief objective was to make ECWA more effective in the economic and social fields and to enable the Palestinian people to assume full responsibility in the economic development and integration of the region. The political implications were still within the limits of what was acceptable to the international community. If the Palestinian people had not yet set themselves up as a State, it was because of the continuing occupation of their territory, a situation imposed on them by force.

39. In the present day and age, it would be utopian to believe that politics could still be divorced from economics. The economic and political interests of peoples were so interdependent that to wish to separate them would be to deny one of the most important facts of international life. Accordingly, any denial of the Palestine Liberation Organization's right to join ECWA was also of political significance; to contest the recommendation made by the members of ECWA would be to support the policy of occupation, annexation and intransigence openly and arrogantly pursued by the Israeli leaders.

40. That would be all the more regrettable now that, after having for so long denied the existence of the Palestinian people as a nation, some countries on both sides of the Atlantic had started to recognize their national identity and right to a homeland of their own. The Palestine Liberation Organization simply asked them to be logical and to stop expressing sympathy in words alone, while supporting by their deeds an illegal occupation which they themselves described as inadmissible. In conclusion, the Palestine Liberation Organization hoped that the recommendation by the members of ECWA would be accepted, so that the Palestinian people could join their

Arab brothers and help towards the achievement of the Commission's objectives.

41. Mr. JURASZ (Poland) introduced the draft resolution submitted to the Council by 16 countries on the examination of long-term trends in the economic development of world regions (E/L.1780).

42. In resolution 3508 (XXX) on the same subject, the General Assembly had requested the Secretary-General to promote for the Council, in consultation with the Committee for Development Planning, a report on trends and forecasts for the various regions. In that report (E/5937 and addenda and corrigenda), which the Council had found useful, the Secretary-General had concluded that long-range projections would have to be further developed and perfected, with a view to improving the international community's ability to assess the impact of policy decisions and to increase its awareness of the interrelationships of policy decisions in terms of national, regional, sectoral and other considerations. The Committee for Development Planning had also stated, in its report on its thirteenth session, that long-term studies and projections could clarify future policy choices (E/5939, para. 79).

43. The sponsors of draft resolution E/L.1780 recommended that the regional commissions should continue and further expand their studies of long-term economic trends in their respective regions and affirmed the need to bear in mind long-term prospects in the elaboration of the new international development strategy; they also requested the Secretary-General, in consultation with the Committee for Development Planning, to start, on the basis of the regional studies under way, the preparation of an overall socio-economic perspective of the development of the world economy up to the year 2000, with special emphasis on the years up to 1990. The sponsors were convinced that such an undertaking would greatly facilitate social and economic policy-making in the developing countries.

44. The 16 sponsors had drafted the text after lengthy negotiations, which had enabled them to incorporate in the draft many ideas submitted by different delegations, and they strongly hoped that the Council could adopt it promptly by consensus.

45. Mr. CARANICAS (Greece) said that, despite the relatively modest recovery over the past year in the economies of the various regions, inflation, unemployment and external imbalances still persisted. In particular, for countries with economies highly dependent on foreign trade, the present distribution of current account surpluses and deficits in all regions was highly unsatisfactory. That was particularly true for Africa and Asia, where there were wide and growing economic disparities between countries. The Executive Secretary of ECA had described the frightening picture yielded by a disaggregated presentation of the African economic scene; the Executive Secretary of ESCAP had pointed out in the summary of the *Economic and Social Survey of Asia and the Pacific, 1976* that income disparities within the ESCAP region as a whole had widened (E/5980, para. 11).

46. The Executive Secretaries of the regional commissions had understandably stressed the need to draft a medium-term plan for the period 1980-1983 before the end of 1977. At the same time, however, they had expressed concern at the constraints imposed upon them by the schedule for the preparation of that plan; the Council should therefore recommend the General Assembly to make the necessary corrections and changes, since otherwise the regional commissions would not be in a position to implement the medium-term plan.

47. At their joint meetings, the Executive Secretaries had also discussed the population problem, and again he endorsed their recommendations. The interregional meetings planned to decide how the decisions and recommendations adopted by the world conferences should be applied would be particularly useful, since, in his view, the population explosion in the developing world was becoming more and more catastrophic; despite repeated warnings by the Executive Secretaries of the regional commissions and the President of the World Bank, the efforts made were clearly inadequate and even non-existent in many regions.

48. Among the developing regions, the ECLA region was the one that seemed to be doing best, for despite the world crisis its growth rates were on the whole positive. However, more systematic attention should be given to relieving mass poverty in the region if serious social conflict was to be avoided.

49. In the ECE region, he feared that the persistence of emotional or irrational attitudes would not, as the Executive Secretary of ECE hoped, promote the re-establishment of mutual confidence and thus encourage investment to pick up. Moreover, the preliminary results of the current preparatory meeting at Belgrade on the application of the Final Act of the Conference on Co-operation and Security in Europe were hardly encouraging. There, too, ECE could only carry out the tasks entrusted to it with a view to the implementation of the Final Act if the necessary political will existed among the various parties. Nevertheless, positive moves had been made by certain member countries; the USSR had proposed that ECE should organize pan-European congresses on technical questions of current interest, such as the protection of the environment, energy and transport. Great care should be taken in preparing such meetings, which, to be really useful, should be held at a very high level.

50. ECWA, a relatively recent creation, had already made itself very useful to the countries of the region. He welcomed in particular the recommendations in ECWA resolutions 38 (IV) and 51 (IV) concerning a programme of action in favour of the least developed countries of the region, and the study of the possibility of establishing a Western Asian centre for the transfer and development of technology, respectively (E/5969, pp. 24 and 37). He was disturbed by the figures showing the extent of the damage in Lebanon and hoped that the Council would unhesitatingly endorse the recommendation of ECWA in its resolution 40 (IV) that the whole United Nations system should participate in the reconstruction and development of Lebanon.

51. Turning to the drafts before the Council, he said that the draft decision on the invitation to the Holy See to attend sessions of the regional commissions (E/L.1775) should not arouse any opposition; the draft resolution on the Transport and Communications Decade in Africa should be adopted unanimously, since it was essential to link the various regions of Africa with each other; his delegation also supported the draft resolution on the admission of Egypt to ECWA, which it would like to co-sponsor.

52. The draft resolution under which the Palestine Liberation Organization would become a full member of ECWA had at first caused a problem for his delegation. However, it had finally come round to the view that even if the case was not provided for in the Charter of the United Nations, the proposal—just because it was *sui generis*—was acceptable. There could be exceptions to every rule, and the rule was not weakened because of them; on the contrary. Every time a regional commission had unanimously decided to admit a new member, even if it was not a State, the Council had endorsed that decision, and there was no reason for the Council to depart from its practice in the present case. His delegation would therefore vote in favour of draft resolution E/L.1778.

53. His delegation also supported the draft resolutions and draft decisions proposed by the President (E/L.1779). However, he proposed that in the eight draft decisions the words “with satisfaction” should be added after the words “decided to take note”.

54. Mr. MERON (Observer for Israel), speaking at the invitation of the President, denounced the ceaseless pressure put upon the Council by the Arab States and their allies to grant their every demand. In their view, the Palestine Liberation Organization must become a full member of ECWA even if all the rules governing the United Nations had to be breached, and even though no African, Asian or Latin American movement had been granted such privileges since the founding of the United Nations. Israel had no illusions; as usual, there would be an automatic majority for the draft resolution—not on its merits, but because of the insistence of the Arab States. However, for the benefit of those representatives who did not feel in duty bound to support the Arab States in all their demands, he wished to explain why draft resolution E/L.1778 was unacceptable *de facto* and *de jure*.

55. From the very establishment of ECWA, the rule on the equality of States had been violated, since Israel, which was within the geographical scope of the Commission, had been excluded. It was now proposed to admit as a member of ECWA a body which the Arab States themselves did not contend was a State, a Government or a territory. But only States could become members of regional commissions, as was clear from the *Repertory of Practice of United Nations Organs* (paragraph 85 of the section of chapter IX relating to Article 68 of the Charter of the United Nations⁴¹), and for more than 30 years that rule had always been applied. A

body which was not subject to the obligations imposed by the Charter upon Member States could not enjoy the rights of membership. Any alternative would be a breach of the Charter.

56. The representative of Iraq had told the Council that the admission of the Palestine Liberation Organization as a member of ECWA would help that Organization in its struggle against Zionism. Such a motive was inadmissible, being contrary to the letter and the spirit of the Charter. The Council should resist becoming an instrument of Arab belligerency. Under the Charter, only peace-loving States could become Members of the United Nations and its subsidiary bodies. Clearly, the Palestine Liberation Organization was the opposite of peace-loving.

57. Furthermore, the draft resolution was in contradiction to resolution 3237 (XXIX), by which the General Assembly, under pressure from the Arab majority, had granted the Palestine Liberation Organization observer status. Under Article 60 of the Charter, it was under the authority of the Assembly that the Council discharged the functions of the United Nations set forth in Chapter IX of the Charter.

58. The argument that the case of the Palestine Liberation Organization was *sui generis* was not enough reason to waive the law. To maintain that because it was an exception it did not break the rules was tantamount to saying that all rules could be broken.

59. And what was the organization for the sake of which the rules and practice of the United Nations were on the point of being discarded? The Covenant of the Palestine Liberation Organization, adopted in May 1964 and amended in 1968, stipulated that its aim was to liquidate the State of Israel, to annihilate its people and deprive Israel of its independence, legitimacy and sovereignty by armed force. According to that Covenant, only Jews who had lived in Palestine in 1917 would be allowed to remain. Those written intentions were corroborated by the terrorist methods of the Palestine Liberation Organization: the murder of innocent civilians, athletes at the Olympic Games, women and children, acts of air piracy. It was the irony of fate that the same representative of Lebanon who in 1973 had introduced the draft resolution establishing ECWA should in 1976, in a moving appeal to the General Assembly, have complained of the intolerable encroachment on the sovereignty of Lebanon by the Palestinians and protested against acts of violence perpetrated by their organizations against the Lebanese people.

60. Israel deplored the decision which the Council was preparing to take. The draft resolution made a mockery of the Charter and would encourage the Palestine Liberation Organization in opposing peace by terrorism. It would not bring about a change in Israel's position towards that Organization, nor in the policy of the Israeli Government, which would consider the resolution as arbitrary and illegal.

61. Mrs. WELLS (United States of America) noted that those delegations in favour of admitting the Palestine Liberation Organization to ECWA as a full member had stated that such a move would facilitate economic and

⁴¹ *Repertory of Practice of United Nations Organs, Volume III, Articles 55 to 72 of the Charter* (United Nations publication, Sales No. 1955.V.2 (vol. III)), p. 496.

social assistance to the Palestinian people. The United States continued as always to support the principle that the Palestinian people must be aided, but the proposal to admit the Palestine Liberation Organization to ECWA was an entirely separate matter.

62. The proposal raised weighty issues for the United Nations as an institution and, if adopted, would create a precedent with very considerable implications for the whole United Nations system. The status of full membership of a regional commission had hitherto been granted only to States, never to non-States. In accordance with paragraph 1 of Article 2 of the Charter, the United Nations system was based on the principle of the sovereign equality of all its Members, and since membership entailed obligations as well as rights, it ought to be restricted to entities willing to accept those obligations and capable of implementing them; some commissions had among their members States that were not members of the United Nations or States not located in the region, but the precedents went no further than that.

63. If the Council were to decide to create a fresh precedent by making ECWA a "mixed" commission consisting of both States and non-States, it would be desirable first of all to hear the opinion of the other regional commissions, which, as constituted at present, were intergovernmental bodies.

64. A number of delegations argued that the Palestine Liberation Organization was an exceptional case, that the exception proved the rule and that therefore no precedent was being set. The United States believed that the only way to protect a principle was to adhere to it. On the other hand, if the rules applying to membership of the regional commissions were to be altered, the implications of such a change would first need to be examined and the terms of reference defined, and that would take time.

65. From the political point of view, the adoption of draft resolution E/L.1778 would complicate current efforts to reactivate negotiations on the Middle East, in which the status to be granted to the Palestine Liberation Organization and to Palestinian representation was one of the key problems to be resolved before the Geneva Peace Conference on the Middle East could be reconvened. For all those reasons, her delegation would vote against draft resolution E/L.1778. It still hoped, however, that it would not be put to the vote, since that could only have a divisive effect.

66. Her delegation would support the draft resolution to make the Arab Republic of Egypt a full member of ECWA (E/L.1777).

67. Mr. NETTEL (Austria) said that he welcomed draft resolution E/L.1776 on the Transport and Communications Decade in Africa. Austria was fully aware of the importance of infrastructure development and had therefore put forward specific proposals at previous sessions of the Council and the General Assembly for a major multilateral programme in support of infrastructure programmes in developing countries. Something in the nature of a new Marshall Plan was required for the African continent, and his delegation believed that the Transport and Communications Decade would be a move in that direction.

68. Mr. ABBAS (Sudan) said that the Executive Secretaries of the regional commissions had done an excellent job. The Sudan attached great importance to the work of ECA, whose programme of action for 1978 was a step on the right path. The poor performance by the African countries in the economic sphere called for redoubled efforts on the part of both ECA and its member States. Co-operation between ECA and ECWA and between ECA and ECE should be encouraged, because Asia, Africa and Europe were interdependent, the natural resources of Asia and Africa being the counterpart to Europe's technical resources. Co-operation should take the form of plans for action.

69. He fully supported draft resolution E/L.1776 on the Transport and Communications Decade in Africa, agreement on which had been one of the positive results of the Paris Conference on International Economic Co-operation.

70. The Sudan was a sponsor of draft resolution E/L.1777 on the admission of Egypt to membership of ECWA. That proposal was backed by arguments of a historical, economic and geographical nature which had already been put forward by the representative of the Syrian Arab Republic (2075th meeting).

71. His delegation had also co-sponsored the draft resolution on the admission of the Palestine Liberation Organization to full membership of ECWA (E/L.1778). There was absolutely no truth in the allegations that pressure had been exerted on ECWA and the Council, the members of which took their decisions as fully sovereign States. Such allegations were purely designed to hide the fact that the proposed decision was justified.

72. With reference to the moving description given by the Lebanese representative (2075th meeting) of the losses suffered by his country, the international community should give Lebanon financial assistance as a matter of urgency and thereby enable it once again to play its role in the region.

73. Mr. YUNUS (Pakistan) said that the objections to draft resolution E/L.1778 had been answered in advance. There was no point in referring to the very Council resolution that would be amended if the draft resolution was adopted. Such a decision would not create a precedent, because the case of the Palestine Liberation Organization was *sui generis*. It might be worth explaining why that special case existed, but the present meeting was neither the time nor the place, and in any case the facts were perfectly clear and familiar to everyone. The situation being what it was, an effort had been made to deal with it in the most sensible way. The draft resolution had been prepared with the utmost care. It was not a question of playing politics, but simply of correcting an anomaly which prevented the Palestine Liberation Organization from taking full part in the economic and social activities of ECWA. Moreover, the ECWA decision had been a unanimous one and the draft resolution before the Council did not introduce anything new into the situation.

74. On draft resolution E/L.1780, he wished to make an amendment. In paragraph 4, the words "Committee for

Development Planning” should be followed by the words “the Secretary-General of UNCTAD and the heads of other interested bodies of the United Nations system”. He had consulted several other sponsors of the draft and they were prepared to accept that amendment.

75. Mr. CORDOVEZ (Secretary of the Council) said that in the French version of paragraph 2 of draft resolution E/L.1777 the words “*Secrétaire général*” should be replaced by “*Secrétaire exécutif*”. In draft resolution E/L.1778, the French version of paragraph 1 did not correspond exactly to the original English text, and the same applied to the text of Council resolution 1818 (LV) amended by that paragraph. In both cases, the French wording would be brought into line with the original English.

76. The PRESIDENT invited the Council to take action on the draft decision on the invitation to the Holy See to attend sessions of the regional commissions (E/L.1775).

77. Mr. BOTERO (Colombia) proposed that draft decision E/L.1775 should be amended to take account of changes in the procedure governing participation by non-member States in the work of the regional commissions. The words “*Requests the Secretary-General to authorize the Executive Secretaries... to invite the Holy See...*” should be amended to read: “*Recommends the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, the Economic Commission for Latin America, the Economic Commission for Africa and the Economic Commission for Western Asia to invite the Holy See...*”.

Draft decision E/L.1775, as orally amended, was adopted [decision 244 (LXIII)].

78. The PRESIDENT announced that the statement on the financial implications of the draft resolution submitted by Yugoslavia on the Transport and Communications Decade in Africa (E/L.1776) was not yet ready and proposed that consideration of the draft resolution should be postponed until later.

It was so decided.

79. The PRESIDENT invited the Council to take a decision on the draft resolution concerning the admission of the Arab Republic of Egypt to membership of ECWA (E/L.1777).

Draft resolution E/L.1777 was adopted [resolution 2088 (LXIII)].

80. Mr. BERHANU (Ethiopia) said until now there had never been a single case in the United Nations system in which a State not responsible for the international relations of colonial territories was a member of more than one regional commission. The adoption of the resolution by the Council marked a new trend, of which official note should be taken.

81. Mr. MOKHTAR (Observer for Egypt), speaking at the invitation of the President, pointed out that several member States had been or were still members of more than one regional commission; specific cases had been mentioned during the discussion on the draft resolution, and the

question of colonial territories was absolutely irrelevant to those cases.

82. The PRESIDENT invited the Council to take a decision on the draft resolution entitled “Annual report of the Economic Commission for Western Asia” (E/L.1778).

83. Mr. LAWSON (Togo) said that his delegation would vote in favour of the draft resolution in order to facilitate the restoration of the lawful rights of the Palestinian people, a prerequisite for stability in the Middle East. Togo had never spared its efforts to attain that end. The resolution had been adopted unanimously by ECWA and should not meet any difficulties in the Council; it was on the same lines as the draft resolution on assistance to the Palestinian people adopted on 21 July by the Policy and Programme Co-ordination Committee at its 617th meeting (E/AC.24/L.544).

At the request of the representative of Pakistan, a vote was taken on draft resolution E/L.1778 by roll-call.

Jamaica, having been drawn by lot by the President, was called upon to vote first.

In favour: Afghanistan, Algeria, Bangladesh, Bulgaria, China, Cuba, Czechoslovakia, Greece, Iraq, Jamaica, Kenya, Malaysia, Mauritania, Nigeria, Pakistan, Poland, Somalia, Sudan, Syrian Arab Republic, Togo, Tunisia, Uganda, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, Yemen, Yugoslavia, Zaire.

Against: Austria, Canada, Denmark, France, Federal Republic of Germany, Italy, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America.

Abstaining: Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Ethiopia, Iran, Japan, Mexico, Peru, Philippines, Portugal, Venezuela.

Draft resolution E/L.1778 was adopted by 27 votes to 11, with 12 abstentions [resolution 2089 (LXIII)].

84. Mr. BERHANU (Ethiopia) wished to assure the representative of the Palestine Liberation Organization that his delegation's abstention was not politically motivated; Ethiopia had supported the admission of the Organization to the non-aligned movement and the Afro-Arab Summit Conference. He had given due consideration to the argument that the draft resolution before the Council had been adopted unanimously by ECWA, but had unfortunately been unable to accept it, since he was unable to find a single legal or procedural precedent within the United Nations system to support it. Nevertheless, because of the deep sympathy that the Ethiopian Government and people had for the Palestinian cause, his delegation had abstained.

85. Mr. NAKAMURA (Japan) said that he had abstained because there were still several points which required further clarification, including the implications of the resolution just adopted in relation to General Assembly resolution 3237 (XXIX) on observer status for the Palestine Liberation Organization. However, that abstention did not mean any change in the attitude of the Japanese Government, which would continue to support the Palestinian people's right to self-determination and to regard the Palestine Liberation Organization as the representative of that people.

86. Mr. ARIAS-SCHREIBER (Peru) said that he regretted having been unable to support the draft resolution before the Council. However, he considered that the Palestinian people, who already took a sovereign part in the activities of various international organizations and had been prevented by certain factors from taking their place in the concert of the United Nations, deserved to be represented in ECWA. Nevertheless, rules 56 and 72 of the rules of procedure of the functional commissions of the Economic and Social Council⁴² made it clear that only States were entitled to take part in their work. His delegation had therefore had no choice. It had abstained for purely legal reasons. However, Peru would continue, as in the past, to give proof of its solidarity with the Palestinian people.

87. Mr. VERCELES (Philippines) said that he had had to abstain for reasons of principle. The Philippines had supported and indeed had several times been the moving force behind resolutions concerning the representation of the Palestine Liberation Organization within various bodies of the United Nations, notably the General Assembly. It considered, however, that the participation of bodies which were not States in the work of the regional commissions ran counter to the provisions of the Charter concerning the participation of States in the United Nations.

88. Mr. EHSASSI (Iran) said there was no need to dwell on the ties of affinity and brotherhood between Iran and friendly Arab countries. Iran would continue to spare no effort to ensure that the legitimate aspirations of the Palestinian people were recognized in the United Nations and other international bodies. It had felt unable to support the draft resolution for legal reasons and for reasons of principle; it had had to take account of the well-established principle whereby States alone could become full members of the United Nations, the specialized agencies and other organizations of the United Nations system.

89. Mr. BRUCE (Canada) observed that since 1945 full membership of the United Nations had always been confined to States. To depart from that rule was to violate the very principles on which the Organization was based and which the Economic and Social Council had explicitly recognized in its resolution establishing ECWA. The admission of bodies other than States could only weaken an organization whose members assumed rights and obligations that could be carried out only by States.

90. Mr. EL-FATTAL (Syrian Arab Republic) said that he was extremely concerned at the interpretation given to the resolution by certain delegations, particularly those of the member States of ECE, who considered that it might have institutional and legal implications. Those were the very countries that after the Second World War had been determined in the Charter of the United Nations "to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war which twice in one lifetime has brought untold sorrow to mankind". The Charter also said that the peoples of the United Nations would employ international machinery for the promotion of the economic and social advancement of all

peoples; the Charter spoke of peoples, not States, and the Palestinians were a people. If one wanted to take a legalistic attitude, it could be pointed out that Article 1 of the Charter mentioned not only the principles of international law but also those of justice. Those two concepts should not be confused; justice was not a meaningless word, but a universal concept, which did not lend itself to as many differing opinions and interpretations as that of international law. By invoking the principles of justice, the Charter had introduced into the international field a scale of moral and ethical values stricter than those of international law. As several representatives, notably the representative of Pakistan, had pointed out, the resolution just adopted by the Council merely made good an injustice and put right a wrong. If the question of what was legal and what illegal was raised, Israel might one day find itself in a very difficult position; it should not be forgotten what criteria and standards of justice lay behind the United Nations resolution that had divided Palestine in 1947. If all the resolutions adopted since then by the United Nations were sent to the International Court of Justice, the conclusion might well be that Palestine had been divided without its people even being consulted.

91. Mr. KHADER (Palestine Liberation Organization), speaking at the invitation of the President, said that he had asked to speak in order to reply to the untruths uttered during the discussion, but that, as the results of the vote were significant enough, he would merely, on behalf of the Palestinian people and the Palestine Liberation Organization, thank all the friendly delegations that had voted in favour of the resolution and all those which, while feeling obliged to abstain, had made it clear that they did not contest the legitimacy of the national aspirations of the Palestinian people or the representativeness of the Palestine Liberation Organization.

92. There was no point in saying how false and mistaken the accusations of terrorism against the Palestinian people were; they were all the more unwarranted because they had been made by the representative of a Government ruled over by a notorious terrorist, a man whom an eminent leader of the Zionist movement had called "a dangerous terrorist". If the Palestinian people were in Lebanon, it was because they had been expelled from their homeland. He eagerly looked forward to the day when the Palestinian people could go home to live in equality of rights and obligations with all those now in Palestine who were prepared to renounce Zionism.

93. Miss FLEYFEL (Observer for Lebanon), speaking at the invitation of the President, said that she fully supported the two resolutions just adopted by the Council. In general, the Lebanese Government wholeheartedly supported the right of peoples to self-determination and independence, in accordance with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, and had always recognized and defended the Palestinian people's legitimate rights, both to exist and to recover the occupied territories. The basic problem was the recognition of the rights of the Palestinian people, which was the only possible way of safeguarding peace.

94. Without desiring to enter into political polemics, her delegation thought it ironical that Israel should make

⁴² *Rules of procedure of the functional commissions of the Economic and Social Council* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.70.I.9), pp. 12 and 15.

reference to the problem of Lebanese sovereignty, which it had totally disregarded by attacking Lebanese territory on several occasions.

95. The PRESIDENT announced that the statement on the financial implications of his proposals in document E/L.1779 was not yet ready and suggested that it should be examined at a later stage.

It was so decided.

96. The PRESIDENT suggested that the consideration of the draft resolution on the examination of long-term trends in the economic development of world regions (E/L.1780) should be deferred until the next meeting.

97. Mr. MARSHALL (United Kingdom) supported that suggestion. The draft resolution was a very important one and a consensus was both desirable and practicable. However, he believed that the exact wording should be carefully considered. It might be useful for the text to be examined by a small working group, so that the Council could then reach a quick decision.

98. Mr. MWANGAGUHUNGA (Uganda) said that if the sponsors of the draft resolution accepted the amendment proposed by Pakistan, Uganda would like to join them.

99. Mr. JURASZ (Poland) said that he was prepared to consider any amendments and thought that his co-sponsors would share his view. The proposal of the Pakistan representative in particular should present no difficulties. However, the position of the sponsors of the draft resolution would depend on the nature of the amendments proposed, and it might perhaps be useful to set up a small working group.

100. Mr. BARCELÓ (Mexico) said that he would like to join in sponsoring draft resolution E/L.1780.

101. Count YORK (Federal Republic of Germany) supported the United Kingdom proposal for the establishment of a small working group.

The meeting rose at 7.15 p.m.