

1888th meeting

Monday, 7 January 1974, at 3.25 p.m.

President: Mr. KARHILO (Finland).

E/SR.1888

AGENDA ITEMS 3 AND 4

Actions arising from decisions of the General Assembly at its twenty-eighth session (*continued*) (E/L.1573)

Basic programme of work of the Council for 1974 and consideration of the provisional agenda for the fifty-sixth session (*continued*) (E/5437 and Corr.1, E/L.1575)

1. Mr. CORDOVEZ (Secretary of the Council) read out Conference Room Paper No. 1 on the programme of work for the Council for 1974.
2. Mr. SMIRNOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) observed that the Council's programme of work for 1974 was very heavy, and proposed that consideration of the first item listed in document E/L.1573, on quantification of scientific and technological activities related to development, should be deferred until the fifty-seventh session. He was surprised to find that the second item, on the role of modern science and technology in the development of nations and the need to strengthen economic, technical and scientific co-operation among States, was also to be given priority; priority implied a choice.
3. Concerning the list of items proposed for consideration at the fifty-sixth session set forth in document E/5437 and Corr.1, he doubted whether the Council would have time to consider population questions, given the breadth of the subject and the controversy it aroused. Furthermore, there were several items which could not be examined in depth at the fifty-seventh session because they involved more than merely endorsing decisions which would then be referred to the General Assembly. As two very important conferences were to be held during the year, the Council might have to defer 10 or more items until a later date, which would be most regrettable.
4. Mr. HOVEYDA (Iran) praised the quality of the note by the Secretariat on the basic programme of work of the Council for 1974 (E/5437 and Corr.1); it could, however, be improved in certain respects. For example, the first part of paragraph 20 could be reduced to a single sentence, since it went without saying that the Secretariat had given careful consideration to the manner in which issues to be considered by the Council in 1974 would be presented. The fact that the suggestions made by the Secretariat in the document were, as stated in paragraph 5, of an experimental nature made them all the more acceptable to his delegation.
5. Referring to paragraph 14, he said that the number of questions to be considered by the Council could be reduced, given their interdependence; the suggestion in subparagraph (a) appeared logical, but the Council should not burden the agenda of its subsidiary organs unduly. He pointed out, with respect to the end of subparagraph (d), that experience had proved that there was everything to be gained by considering

agenda items on the basis of draft resolutions prepared in advance.

6. In paragraph 19, the Secretariat rightly pointed out that the quality of documents contributed to the rationalization of work; it was therefore very important that they should be drafted in clear and simple language.

7. His delegation whole-heartedly endorsed the Secretariat proposal in paragraph 23, and the proposed list of substantive items for the fifty-sixth session. He was happy to note that natural resources and the environment had been combined under a single heading in the list for the fifty-seventh session.

8. His delegation considered that members could greatly facilitate the rationalization of the Council's work by being punctual.

9. Mr. VAN GORKOM (Netherlands) emphasized the role the Secretariat could play in strengthening the Council by preparing good documents, such as the basic programme of work for 1974; he endorsed paragraph 13, in which attention was rightly drawn to the basic role of the Council, and all the suggestions in paragraph 14. It was important that the Council should not set a rigid time-table and that it should be guided, in particular, by the experience the Second Committee had gained with certain innovations during the twenty-eighth session of the General Assembly. The organization of informal consultations on draft resolutions could, for example, be entrusted to one of the Vice-Presidents.

10. He agreed, too, with the comments in paragraphs 15 to 17 on the resumed summer session. Indeed, except for the decision to convene the World Food Conference, the Council's work at the resumed fifty-fifth session had not been very satisfactory. His delegation considered that the Council should not deal with highly important items, such as the reports of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), in a routine and perfunctory way. It suggested that no decision should be taken at the current session, but that item 7 of those proposals for the fifty-seventh session should be considered at the fifty-sixth session, the Secretary-General being requested to consult IBRD and IMF and thereafter to suggest alternative solutions to the Council.

11. His delegation also agreed with the suggestions in paragraph 20, with the exception of that in subparagraph (b); it was recommended in document E/L.1573 that that item should be included in the programme of work of the Council for 1974 as a subitem of item 4 of the draft list of items for consideration at the fifty-seventh session. His delegation supported that recommendation, but drew attention to the commentary on item 7 of those proposed for the fifty-sixth session on rationalization of the work of the Council, which suggested that the Council might wish to consider the item at that session.

12. The suggestions in paragraph 21 on the exclusion of two items from the programme for 1974 were

very sound and, in the opinion of his delegation, the question of economic assistance to Zambia and the Sudano-Sahelian region should be considered at the fifty-sixth session, provided developments so warranted and the necessary documentation was available.

13. Turning to the agenda for the fifty-sixth session, he supported the Secretariat's recommendation in its note (E/L.1573) that the title of item 2 should be altered to take account of the decisions taken by the General Assembly in its resolution 3180 (XXVIII) on the World Food Conference and that a separate item on the same subject should be included in the agenda for the fifty-seventh session. Item 4 (d), on the aged and social security, should be referred to the Commission for Social Development in accordance with the provisions of General Assembly resolutions 3137 (XXVIII) and 3138 (XXVIII).

14. Referring to item 7(c) on review of the machinery for review and appraisal of progress in implementing the International Development Strategy, he noted that the subitem was also included in the agenda for the fifty-seventh session (item 4). He suggested, with respect to item 7 (e), on machinery for programme and co-ordination, that the Council should request the Secretary-General to prepare a working paper setting out all the suggestions made so far and his own suggestions, bearing in mind the new form of presentation of the budget and the provisions of General Assembly resolution 3199 (XXVIII).

15. He agreed with the suggestion made in part B, paragraph 10, of document E/L.1573, but wondered whether that subitem of item 7 should be restricted to the programme for public finance and financial institutions. It might be best to refer item 9 on the United Nations Water Conference to the Committee on Natural Resources in 1975, the Conference being convened in 1977.

16. Turning to the agenda for the fifty-seventh session, he noted that in connexion with item 2 the Secretariat had rightly referred to resolution 1768 (LIV), paragraph 7 (iv); he was not convinced, however, that the central issue to be discussed in that context should concern the impact of multinational corporations on the development process and on international relations. Because of the importance of the question and the complicated economic, political, legal and even institutional aspects on which the Council might have to formulate specific recommendations, his delegation would prefer that question to be considered separately. Under item 2 the Council might, for example, study the question of collective economic security. However, the Council would decide at its fifty-sixth session which further items it wished to consider at the following session.

17. With regard to item 5 (a), the documentation to be prepared by the Secretariat might consist of a fairly brief study of the scope and purpose of operational activities throughout the United Nations system and co-ordination within the system. The Administrator and the Governing Council of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) could provide a preliminary report on initial experience with country programming and, if time permitted, it would be useful for the Council to have a report by the Secretary-General prepared in consultation with organs of the United Nations system, in particular UNDP and the World Bank Group, indicating which types of assistance should, in their view, be provided in the light of the review and

appraisal. It would be important in that respect to know the views of the specialized agencies. Furthermore, a questionnaire for Governments would indicate what kind of assistance in which sectors they expected from the United Nations system.

18. It would be best to consider item 10, on tourism, at the fifty-sixth session if the necessary documentation could be made available in time.

19. He emphasized the importance of item 11 (d), in view of its bearing on the item concerning operational activities and on strengthening the coherence of the system and its capacity to fulfil the objectives of the International Development Strategy in an effective and co-ordinated manner. He quoted the statement by a representative of the Secretary-General at the 479th meeting of the Co-ordination Committee, confirmed by the sponsors of resolution 1768 (LIV), indicating that two separate and independent reports were to be submitted to the fifty-seventh session of the Council under that resolution. He expressed the hope that the reports would be completed early enough for them to receive thorough study.

20. Mr. MACKENZIE (United Kingdom) said that he shared the view of the representative of the Soviet Union concerning population questions; some thought should be given before placing the item on the agenda for the fifty-sixth session. He supported paragraph 14 of document E/5437 and Corr.1. In view of the heavy agenda for the fifty-seventh session and in order to save time, he proposed that items 1, 2, 3, 4 (a) and 7 should be considered together.

21. Mr. ROUGE (France), speaking of paragraph 14, stressed the respective roles of the Economic and Social Council, the General Assembly and their subsidiary organs. His delegation considered it futile to have three successive debates on a particular item, first in a specialized body, then in the Council and finally in the General Assembly. He suggested that the Council should either take a decision on a report and use it for its deliberations as a whole, in which case the item should be included in the agenda, or transmit the report to the General Assembly and avoid the embarrassment of serving as a letter-box, as it was already doing in the case of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

22. Industrial development problems would be of major importance in 1974, since the international community was in need of a doctrine concerning industrialization problems. Endorsing the suggestion made by the United Kingdom representative, he proposed that the Council should use the report of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) to illuminate the general debate.

23. His delegation wished the debate on natural resources to be one of the items discussed at the summer session so that the question could become a subject of international co-operation, rather than, as in the past, one which generated conflict.

24. With regard to paragraph 7 of Council resolution 1768 (LIV), which referred to problems of present or potential significance for development and international co-operation, he believed that to draw up at the current session a definitive list of the problems to be considered at the summer session in Geneva would be difficult; delegations should prepare themselves, however, for a debate in which specified questions would definitely be taken up, such as industrial problems or

issues relating to science and technology, natural resources and collective economic security. Without dictating the content of delegations' statements, the members of the Council might come to an agreement on the items which would receive special attention. That would make it possible to establish a link between items 1, 2, 3 and 7, and industrial problems as a whole.

25. He shared the view of the Soviet delegation on questions relating to science and technology and population questions. He also supported the Netherlands suggestion that the question of multinational corporations should be considered separately. In view of the connexion between the measures to be taken in connexion with the review of the machinery for review and appraisal of progress in implementing the International Development Strategy for the Second United Nations Development Decade and the arrangements for the special session of the General Assembly devoted to development problems, the Council should endeavour to co-ordinate its discussion of those two questions.

26. Mr. LINDENBERG SETTE (Brazil) said that paragraphs 14 (b) and (c) of document E/5437 and Corr.1 contained very reasonable suggestions. Since the functions of the subsidiary organs and the Council were not the same, the Council should not deny itself the right to consider the reports of its subsidiary bodies when it deemed that necessary. With regard to paragraph 14 (d), delegations were not responsible for the rigid time-table, and the recommendation in that subparagraph should be addressed not to the Council, but to other organs.

27. Regarding the agenda for the fifty-sixth session, his delegation stressed that item 3 should be discussed thoroughly. Item 4 (d) should be entitled "Social Security and national planning". There was some overlapping among the subitems of item 7. He agreed with the Netherlands delegation that item 9 could be referred to the Committee on Natural Resources.

28. With regard to the agenda for the fifty-seventh session, his delegation believed that the general debate on item 2 should cover collective economic security, and agreed with the Netherlands delegation that the question of multinational corporations should be considered separately. With regard to item 5, the report of the Secretary-General should be separate from the reports prepared by subsidiary bodies.

29. His delegation agreed with the delegations of the Soviet Union and the United Kingdom that it would not be possible to consider the report of the World Population Conference at the fifty-sixth session.

30. It was for the Committee on Science and Technology for Development to determine what priority should be assigned to questions relating to science and technology.

31. Mr. HAQ (Pakistan) said that in general his delegation supported the first—and very useful—part of document E/5437 and Corr.1, entitled "Background and general considerations". Paragraphs 15, 16 and 17 were particularly important since they dealt with the resumed session. Although his delegation was not absolutely certain that the resumed session should be eliminated, it was convinced that the agenda for that session should be confined to at most two items (the reports of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund).

32. With regard to the Council's fifty-sixth session, he pointed out that the Population Commission had recommended that the Council,¹ should consider the report of the World Population Conference. His delegation agreed with the British and Soviet delegations that the Council should study that report in detail. As a developing country, Pakistan recognized the great urgency of the problem but believed that the results of the World Population Conference should not be considered before 1975.

33. Turning to item 5 (a) of the agenda for the fifty-seventh session, he agreed with the Netherlands delegation that the Secretary-General should indeed submit a report on the question, but general reports on comprehensive questions were not enough. The Council should concentrate on specific problems in the field in question; to that end, the Secretary-General might be invited to submit a report on specific subjects, such as the policy of the executing agencies of the United Nations system and the policy of the specialized agencies in their regular programmes of co-operation and assistance.

34. With regard to the comments of the representative of the Soviet Union concerning the first two subjects in document E/L.1573, his delegation believed that although the two problems—quantification of scientific and technological activities related to development and the role of modern science and technology—were important, the first should have priority over the second.

35. Mr. SMIRNOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics), observing that General Assembly resolutions 3168 (XXVIII) and 3179 (XXVIII) accorded priority to the two questions simultaneously, said that although the Committee for Science and Technology for Development could, in his view, determine priorities, it could not ignore a resolution of the General Assembly.

36. His delegation supported the United Kingdom proposal that items 1, 2, 3, 4 (a) and part of item 7 be considered together during the general debate.

37. It believed, like the representative of France, that, without preventing delegations from expressing themselves on a given subject, members of the Council could agree to group some items.

38. His delegation wished to emphasize that it had not submitted a formal proposal on the World Population Conference; it had merely observed that it would not be possible to study that subject thoroughly: It should not be inferred from that that it attached special importance to the question. It was for the Council to decide the matter.

39. Mr. KITCHEN (United States of America) pointed out that no drastic reductions could be made in the number of items that the Council had to consider which, furthermore, were so numerous that it would be difficult to give them all due consideration.

40. The suggestion in paragraph 14 (b) of document E/5437 and Corr.1 should encompass not only subsidiary organs of the Council, but also other related bodies. Concerning that in subparagraph (e), stating that the Council might wish in future to refrain from specifying the session at which it would consider a subject, it was not new. There was a risk that if no date were specified, consideration of a subject might be postponed indefinitely. That was the reason why that proposal had not been adopted in the past.

¹ See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, Fifty-sixth Session, Supplement No. 3, chap. I, sect. A, part 1.*

41. The need for holding the resumed summer session had been originally dictated by the timing of the reports of the international financial organizations; yet a trend had evolved whereby the agenda had become increasingly long even though, owing to lack of time, the Council could no longer study thoroughly the questions before it. His delegation was therefore prepared to contemplate the possibility of the Council considering the reports of the financial organizations at its spring session, if that was the wish of the Council. That would not prevent the officers of the Council from convening a special session of the Council in accordance with Article 72 of the Charter if the need arose.

42. In paragraph 20 (b), the Secretariat had suggested that the question of review of machinery for review and appraisal of progress in implementing the International Development Strategy be transferred from the fifty-seventh to the fifty-sixth session. However, the Secretary-General had been requested to transmit a questionnaire on the subject to Governments. If the question were considered at the fifty-sixth session, only three or four weeks would be available in which to send out the questionnaire and to receive the replies of Governments in order to comply with the six-weeks' rule on the distribution of documents. His delegation would therefore be inclined to suggest that the question be considered at the fifty-seventh session as originally planned.

43. The question of the United Nations water conference could be considered at the fifty-seventh session of the Council so that the Committee on Natural Resources could study it beforehand.

44. His delegation wished to know whether there was a sound reason why the report of the World Population Conference should be considered at the resumed fifty-seventh session. His delegation would decide its position on that subject when it had received the reply.

45. Mr. ELIAS (Spain) said it was essential to reduce the Council's programme of work in order to enable it to study thoroughly the questions before it. As was pointed out in paragraph 14 of document E/5437 and Corr.1 it was not possible to make drastic reductions in the number of questions to be considered by the Council but changes could be introduced in the manner in which such question were to be dealt with. His delegation therefore supported the suggestion that the subsidiary organs should be utilized more fully. In that connexion, such decentralization must be contemplated not only from a quantitative point of view, i.e., in terms of the number of items to be referred to subsidiary organs, but also from a qualitative point of view: the Council must recognize the competence of its subsidiary organs. Experience had shown that previous consideration of a question by a subsidiary organ made it possible to single out the most important aspects and subsequently enabled the Council to shorten its debates, since it could concentrate on the points brought to its attention.

46. In addition to the principle of decentralization, the idea of a rational integration of the Council's programme of work should be adopted. As the Secretariat had suggested in paragraph 20, the items which the Council must consider in 1974 should be taken as a whole and not as a simple enumeration.

47. His delegation noted that the item on assistance in cases of natural disaster was to be considered at the fifty-seventh session of the Council. It felt, however,

that measures which were imperative for assisting the Sudano-Sahelian region should be taken without delay. His Government would take an active interest in the preparatory work for the World Population Conference and hoped that the Conference would produce immediate and practical results.

48. Mr. OLIVERI LOPEZ (Argentina) agreed with those who had stressed the quality of document E/5437 and Corr.1, which was in keeping with the general improvement in the documentation.

49. Paragraph 14, subparagraphs (b) and (c), contained interesting ideas; however, he too believed that those ideas must be considered with prudence and, above all, not be rigidly applied. The idea of a less rigid time-table for the Council's sessions, as indicated in paragraph 14 (d), was interesting, especially since very often delegations did not receive the necessary documentation in time. With respect to paragraph 14 (e), his delegation felt that an attempt should be made to refer as few questions as possible to the session of the Council held during the General Assembly and to leave it to the Council to decide, at its organizational meetings, at which session questions should be considered.

50. His delegation generally supported the suggestions in Conference Room Paper No. 1 concerning the items for consideration at the fifty-sixth session of the Council. However, it did not agree with those who wished to defer consideration of item 9 relating to the United Nations water conference. First of all, the item was an important one. Secondly, since the Secretary-General had been instructed to prepare that conference, it was standard procedure to request a report from him on the progress of work. When unofficially consulted, the Netherlands representative had indicated that he would agree that the item should be retained on the Council's agenda under the following heading: "Note by the Secretary-General on the progress of work".

51. As far as the programme of work for the fifty-seventh session was concerned, his delegation agreed with the delegations of France and the United Kingdom that it would be useful if the general debate at the summer session could be organized in such a way as to deal with a number of important issues. The items relating to multinational corporations and collective economic security might be covered in that debate; decisions could then be taken on them and draft resolutions adopted.

52. His delegation attached great importance to the question of industrial development and felt that the discussion on that item should take place against a sufficiently broad background, regard being had to the preparations for the second General Conference of UNIDO. His delegation agreed that the item on tourism should be deferred until the following session, since that was the wish of the organization concerned.

53. Referring to the statement by the USSR representative with regard to the first two subjects in document E/L.1573 he saw no reason why the Council should not recommend those two subjects to the Committee on Science and Technology for Development for consideration as a matter of priority; the Committee itself would decide on the order in which it would take them up.

54. Mr. BARCELO RODRIGUEZ (Mexico) said that, generally speaking, he supported the suggestions put forward by the Secretariat in document E/5437 and Corr.1. In particular, he agreed that interrelated

questions should be regrouped and combined. For instance, the question of the impact of multinational corporations on the development process and on international relations should be considered in the context of the general question of economic and social development. He also supported the suggestion that greater use should be made of the Council's subsidiary organs.

55. In the view of his delegation, population questions were among the priority questions which should engage the Council's attention and be considered in depth. Consequently, the report of a conference as significant as the World Population Conference should be considered directly by the General Assembly at its twenty-ninth session. There was a precedent for that procedure, since the report of the third session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development had been transmitted directly to the General Assembly. That procedure would make it possible both to lighten the workload of the Council and to deal with the item with all due care.

56. Mr. CABRIC (Yugoslavia) agreed with the view expressed by the Secretariat in paragraph 17 of document E/5437 and Corr.1 that the time had come for the resumed summer session to be discontinued. The question of when the reports of the international financial institutions would be taken up could be studied at either the fifty-sixth or the fifty-seventh session. Moreover, as had been suggested, it did not seem appropriate to consider the report of the World Population Conference, which would unquestionably contain extremely important recommendations, at the resumed fifty-seventh session. It would be preferable to include that question in the agenda for the 1975 spring session.

57. He wondered why the question of the establishment of an international fund or financial institution for human settlements was envisaged in connexion with item 3 (Housing, building and planning) and not in conjunction with the item on the environment. Furthermore, he felt that the Council should have the report on the situation in the Sahel and the report on assistance to Zambia before it at one of its 1974 sessions.

58. Two suggestions had been made concerning questions for consideration in connexion with item 2 proposed for the fifty-seventh session. The Secretariat had suggested the question of the impact of multinational corporations and some delegations had proposed the question of collective economic security. His delegation considered that the two questions were closely related; they were in fact two aspects of the same ques-

tion and should therefore be taken together in connexion with item 2.

59. His delegation supported the Secretariat's suggestion that the item on tourism should be deferred until the following year. However, it would like to have a progress report on the statutes of the World Tourism Organization in 1974.

60. Items 14 and 15 concerning the special session of the General Assembly and the World Food Conference envisaged for the fifty-seventh session in Conference Room Paper No. 1 should appear at the beginning of the agenda, in the third and fourth places, since they were new and important. His delegation was gratified that the Secretariat had undertaken to prepare a report on the special session of the General Assembly in time for the fifty-seventh session of the Council.

61. Mr. YAMADA (Japan) said that, generally speaking, he supported the suggestions in document E/5437 and Corr.1, and in particular those appearing in paragraph 14, subparagraphs (a) to (f).

62. His delegation supported the suggestion made in paragraph 17 to discontinue the resumed summer session; it reserved its position with regard to the time when it would be appropriate to consider the report of the World Population Conference.

63. The question of review of machinery for review and appraisal of progress in implementing the International Development Strategy, referred to in paragraph 20 (b), should be transferred to the fifty-sixth session of the Council, so that it might be considered under the heading "Rationalization of the work of the Council". However, consideration should be given to the possibility of reviewing that question again at the summer session in conjunction with the examination of the item concerning the Second United Nations Development Decade (item 4).

64. In connexion with item 11 planned for the fifty-sixth session, he recalled that at the recent United Nations Regional Cartographic Conference for Asia and the Far East, held in Tokyo, a number of delegations, including his own, had deplored the absence of closer links between that conference and the Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East (ECAFE). Since ECAFE would consider the report of the Conference at its next session, it would perhaps be better for the Council to defer its consideration of the item until its fifty-seventh session, when it would have before it the comments from ECAFE.

The meeting rose at 5.55 p.m.

1889th meeting

Wednesday, 9 January 1974, at 4.30 p.m.

President: Mr. KARHILO (Finland).

E/SR.1889

AGENDA ITEM 6

Calendar of meetings (E/L.1578)

1. Mr. CORDOVEZ (Secretary of the Council), introducing the draft decision prepared by the Secretariat on the calendar of meetings (E/L.1578), said

that most of the changes and additions suggested in it were explained in the annotated provisional agenda (see E/5439).

2. First, it was suggested that the third special session of the Population Commission should be held in New York instead of Geneva, in accordance with the recom-