

secondly, operative paragraph 5 should be deleted and the subsequent operative paragraphs should be renumbered accordingly.

74. Mr. CAVAGLIERI (Italy) said that the report of the Administrator of UNDP to the Economic and Social Council referred to in operative paragraph 7 (renumbered operative paragraph 6) should be made through the Governing Council. An insertion to that effect should be made in the paragraph.

75. The PRESIDENT suggested that the words "through it" should be inserted between the word "and" and the words "to the Economic and Social Council".

It was so agreed.

Draft resolution E/L.1606, as amended, was adopted.

76. The PRESIDENT invited the Council to take a decision on draft resolution E/L.1604/Rev.1, on assistance to southern Sudanese returnees and displaced persons.

Draft resolution E/L.1604/Rev.1 was adopted.

77. The PRESIDENT invited the Council to take a decision on draft resolution E/L.1607 on the drought problem in Africa, as amended by the sponsors in the second preambular paragraph.

Draft resolution E/L.1607, as amended, was adopted.

78. The PRESIDENT said that the Council had now concluded its consideration of agenda items 10, 11, 12 and 22. He wished, on behalf of the Council, to express appreciation to the representatives of the various organizations of the United Nations system for their introductory statements and for their participation in the Council's discussion.

Organization of work

79. The PRESIDENT informed the Council that the Bureau had decided to recommend, in the light of the fact that the item was closely linked with other matters allocated to the Economic Committee, that agenda item 4 (Programme of Action on the Establishment of a New International Economic Order) should also be referred to the Economic Committee for action, on the understanding that the general debate on the item had been completed and that the two pending reports would be introduced in plenary.

It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.

1916th meeting

Friday, 19 July 1974, at 10.25 a.m.

President: Mr. A. KARHILO (Finland)

E/SR.1916

AGENDA ITEM 9

World Food Conference (E/5533; E/L.1609; E/NGO/18;

1. The PRESIDENT drew the Council's attention to the report of the Preparatory Committee for the World Food Conference on its second session (E/5533) and, in particular, to paragraph 1, in which the issues requiring action by the Council were set forth.

2. Mr. RYDBECK (Sweden), Chairman of the Preparatory Committee, introducing the report in question said that, in accordance with Council resolution 1840 (LVI), the Preparatory Committee had been required to conclude its action on the documentation on the assessment of the world food situation, on the draft provisional rules of procedure and draft provisional agenda for the World Food Conference and on the duration and dates of its third session.

3. It had proved impossible for the Preparatory Committee to extend its second session as provided for in that resolution but it had managed to discharge its duties and to

reach agreement on the recommendations to be made to the Council in a five-day session, with an additional night meeting. Its recommendations were to be found in chapter I of the report.

4. The active participation of 66 Members of the United Nations including 38 members of the Council, together with that of a large number of other participants, had contributed greatly to the successful results of the session. The consultations had taken place in a friendly spirit, and the Secretary-General of the World Food Conference and his staff had provided invaluable support.

5. Since the Conference would be similar in many respects to other United Nations conferences, the Preparatory Committee had been able to base its consideration of the draft provisional rules of procedure of the Conference on precedent and had therefore been able to conclude its consideration of the subject without protracted debate. He commended the draft provisional rules set out in annex I to the report to the Council for adoption and for onward transmission to the World Food Conference.

6. In annex II to the report, the Preparatory Committee recommended a draft provisional agenda of 10 items. In annex III, it proposed that the organizational structure of the Conference should consist of the plenary, a credentials committee and three main committees of the whole to which various agenda items would be allocated. The Committee had expressed the hope that, in view of the importance of the Conference and the implications of the results anticipated, all Governments would be represented at the ministerial level in plenary meetings and at the policy-making level in the committees.

7. The most important substantive item considered by the Preparatory Committee had been the preliminary assessment of the world food situation, present and future, on the basis of a report¹ submitted by the Secretary-General of the Conference. The stimulating discussion, in which a great number of representatives had participated, had been unusually profound. A number of important suggestions and recommendations for amplifying and revising the preliminary assessment were to be found in paragraph 12 of the Committee's report. The Secretary-General and his staff were making every effort to accommodate as many of those suggestions as possible in the final report to be submitted to the Preparatory Committee at its third session.

8. A number of suggestions on national and international action had also been forthcoming and those were to be found in paragraph 16 of the Preparatory Committee's report. Other important suggestions for the establishment of funds or other institutional arrangements were set out in paragraph 19. The Preparatory Committee had recommended that a working party should be convened in Rome to discuss those suggestions and to report thereon at its third session, which it was proposed should be held at Rome from 23 September to 4 October 1974.

9. He was confident that, with the continued co-operation of all concerned, the preparations for the World Food Conference would be brought to a successful conclusion.

10. Mr. MAREI (Secretary-General, World Food Conference) said that it was remarkable that the World Food Conference should be scheduled to be held less than a year after the relevant discussion by the General Assembly in resolution 3180 (XXVIII). Such unusual dispatch on the part of Governments to convene and attend an international conference was an encouraging sign of the importance they attached to the world food crisis and of their determination to take strong action to meet it. The convening of the sixth special session of the General Assembly and of the World Population Conference that same year was a further reflection of the interrelationship of all the economic and social issues which called for the urgent attention of Governments and for political willingness to promote effective action.

11. He had taken into account all the Preparatory Committee's comments on the preliminary assessment of the food situation which he had submitted at its second

session, as also the Committee's views on policy implications for national and international action. The secretariat had almost completed its work on the revised assessment of the food situation and on the document making proposals for national and international action. He was grateful to all the United Nations agencies and the regional economic commissions for their assistance in that undertaking. The two documents would be submitted to Governments on schedule, i.e. about four weeks before the proposed opening date of the third session of the Preparatory Committee, 23 September 1974. The Committee had suggested that interested delegations should meet from 16 to 20 September to discuss certain specific proposals that had been submitted to the second session.

12. With the completion and circulation of those documents, an important phase in the preparations for the Conference would have been accomplished. The main purpose of the documents would be to help Governments to reach a consensus on the main issues to be considered and on short- and long-term actions that the Conference should take or recommend to solve the world food problem.

13. He hoped that Governments would find it possible to undertake intensive discussions in the coming months to seek a basis for their actions and decisions at the Conference. The secretariat would do everything possible to help. In that connexion, he looked forward to his forthcoming visits to Africa and Latin America, and later to certain Asian countries.

14. He had noted with interest the many references in the general discussion to the world food problem, as also the hopes placed by heads of delegations on the outcome of the World Food Conference. The food problem appeared to be a reflection of global crises which had brought about an imbalance in the world economy. There was daily evidence of immediate food shortages in developing countries and of crises in developed countries as a result of inadequate adjustment, all of which had serious economic and social repercussions. That confirmed the fact that the existing international economic order could not withstand changing events. A comprehensive world food policy encompassing all aspects of the food problem could alone provide an answer. Such a food policy should cover such matters as food aid, price stabilization, stock arrangements and steps to ensure a balance between supply and demand. Increased food production, particularly in the developing countries, would be needed to solve the problem.

15. While high-yielding seed varieties were necessary for increased production, the developing countries could not make use of them if fertilizers were in short supply and were constantly rising in price. Increased production also called for agricultural machinery at acceptable prices. Additional land could not be brought into cultivation without land reclamation and the development of rural institutions. It was therefore clear that increased food production required increased investment, an adequate supply of inputs, adaptive research and rural development. Productivity in the agricultural sector called for over-all rural development, including the full utilization of human resources.

¹ E/CONF.65/PREP/6.

16. The desired results could be achieved only through concerted international action in which developed and developing countries co-operated. That was necessary not only in the increase of food production but in trade, distribution and all other aspects. The world would move in the direction, not of self-sufficiency, but of increased trade. The fact that trading countries were naturally interested in guaranteed markets, price stability and favourable terms of trade further demonstrated the international nature of the problem.

17. His comments, which had served to emphasize the serious shortcomings of the present international economic system and institutions, had been made in the spirit of the new international economic order called for by the General Assembly at its sixth session. Urgent political measures were needed to bring about a more rational and equitable economic order, of which a world food policy should undoubtedly be a major component. The proposals of Sri Lanka on a world fertilizer fund, of Mexico on a world bank of food and research on agricultural inputs, of Bangladesh on a world food security council and of Sierra Leone on an agricultural development fund referred to in paragraph 19 of the report, were being analysed in the documentation for national and international action, as also further proposals that had been submitted for discussion at the World Food Conference including one from Japan on the establishment of a world-wide information system on the food and agricultural situation.

18. The subject matter of the World Food Conference touched directly on individuals, their hopes and aspirations. It was to be hoped that its resolutions would initiate substantive action consonant with those aspirations.

19. Mr. TUDOR (Romania) said that his delegation had taken note of the report of the Preparatory Committee on its second session and of the comments of the Chairman of that Committee and of the Secretary-General of the Conference. The Committee had done well to conclude its heavy programme of work in so short a time and he welcomed the spirit of co-operation which had prevailed throughout its session.

20. Commenting on chapter II of the report, he said that it had been difficult for the Preparatory Committee to make its preliminary assessment of the world food situation both because of the essence of the world food problem, which, as the situation in the Sudano-Sahelian area had shown, affected human existence itself. His delegation hoped that the World Food Conference would have before it a thoroughly well-prepared document in which the proposals made at the second session of the Preparatory Committee would be taken into account, the document should also clearly reflect the situation in developed and developing countries alike.

21. The Conference should consider steps for increasing agricultural production, particularly in the developing countries; among those steps should be firstly, the introduction into the production process of modern agricultural techniques through the transfer of technology from developed countries; secondly, increased technical assistance and financial aid; and, lastly, increased international co-

operation for development. The United Nations and the specialized agencies, particularly FAO, would have a decisive role to play in that respect.

22. Attention should also be given to the training of personnel and to improved conditions of trade for the developing countries in respect of agricultural and food products, including greater access to markets, export promotion and the removal of tariff and non-tariff barriers.

23. Action taken at the national level to establish food reserves should not preclude similar action at the international level. That was why the Romanian delegation in the Preparatory Committee had suggested the redrafting of the section of the report dealing with international action.

24. The World Food Conference would provide an opportunity to take stock of the world food situation; his delegation was convinced that it would make a great contribution to the establishment of a new economic order, of which food policy should be a basic element.

25. Mr. MARKEY (United States of America) said that the considerations which had led to the proposal at the twenty-eighth session of the General Assembly for the convening of a World Food Conference were still as cogent as ever.

26. It could not be denied that the preliminary conclusions in the Preparatory Committee's report were sobering conclusions. The international community was clearly faced with a serious problem, for it was doubtful whether the final assessment would be any more optimistic than the first. Unless the international community came to grips with the problem in a realistic way, there might be no alternative to massive starvation and disappointment of the hopes for a more just and equitable world.

27. His delegation had two thoughts on the subject. The first was that the proposal to convene a World Food Conference might have come too late and most certainly had not come too soon. The second was related to the work carried out in the two preparatory sessions held so far. His delegation was generally satisfied with what had been done in those sessions and looked forward to seeing considerable additional progress on substantive issues at the third session. He was particularly satisfied to note that the Preparatory Committee had stressed the need for an effective national and international programme of action. He also noted with approval the Committee's unanimous recognition of the over-riding importance of increased food production and of improved food distribution, particularly in developing countries. The Committee's endorsement of the need to strengthen world food security through more effective food stock policies and to establish an improved early warning and information system on food and the causes of food shortages, including better arrangements for emergency relief and food aid, was also deemed appropriate.

28. He hoped that it would be possible to dispose of the specific issues requiring action by the Council by consensus. The draft provisional agenda of the Conference, the draft provisional rules of procedure and the proposed organiz-

ation of work had been worked out in detail in the Preparatory Committee and should be approved intact.

29. The convening of a third session of the Preparatory Committee was essential. His delegation also agreed with the proposal to hold discussions in Rome from 16 to 20 September 1974 to consider specific proposals submitted by various delegations. Such discussions were necessary to enable the Preparatory Committee at its third session to complete its task of preparing for the Conference.

30. Mr. SMÍD (Czechoslovakia) said that the present political *détente* provided favourable conditions for international co-operation in dealing with such urgent problems as the world food situation. The World Food Conference would be a most useful and timely step towards the solution of that particular problem. Czechoslovakia welcomed the proposal to provide emergency food aid for developing countries critically short of food, but felt that such measures could serve only as a temporary palliative; the only effective long-term solution to those countries' food problems lay in improving their economies as a whole and expanding their agriculture and food industries.

31. Outmoded, and in some cases virtually feudal, systems of agriculture and profound social distinctions in most of those countries hampered the efficient use of manpower, land and agricultural technology. To ensure adequate food supplies, for the developing countries required that their agricultural production be increased. That could only be done through agrarian reform and the establishment of agricultural co-operatives, to permit the adoption of large-scale modern farming techniques. That had been proved by experience in Czechoslovakia, whose policy for the immediate future was to meet its growing domestic food demand from domestic sources, to avoid drawing on world market supplies. At the same time his Government intended to increase its purchases from developing countries of foodstuffs and agricultural produce which could not conveniently be grown in Czechoslovakia. That applied mainly to tropical and sub-tropical products.

32. Czechoslovakia supported all efforts to liberalize trade in agricultural produce with developing countries and had abolished duty on a number of agricultural products imported mainly from developing countries, at the same time applying a preferential customs tariff favouring those countries. Its trade in agricultural produce with developing countries was mainly based on long-term bilateral trade agreements, which gave those countries the stable guaranteed market they needed for modernizing their agriculture.

33. Mr. MUSZALSKI (Poland) said that, among the many conferences scheduled for 1974, the forthcoming World Food Conference probably occupied first place from the point of view of direct response to the most essential needs of human beings. Poland hoped that the States participating in the Conference would make every effort to formulate specific and realistic recommendations for action. Its interest in the Conference had been shown by its active participation in the work of the Preparatory Committee.

34. His delegation had from the outset stressed the importance of thorough preparation for the Conference and

of selecting subjects which would be acceptable to all and in relation to which immediate or long-term action might be agreed upon. It had noted with satisfaction that the Preparatory Committee had reached agreement on the main topics of the Conference, namely, assessment of the world food situation and consideration of action programmes designed to increase food production in developing countries, to strengthen world food security and to bring about improvements in international trade relevant to the food problem.

35. The Conference agenda provided a good basis for discussion in depth of the current world food situation and future prospects, particularly in the medium term, and of steps to improve the present situation, including increased agricultural production to satisfy the growing needs of the world population and to eliminate the hunger and malnutrition existing in many parts of the world.

36. Experience had shown that no dynamic or large-scale increase in agricultural production or development, nor any improvement in the living standards of the rural population, could be achieved without radical social and institutional reform, the first step in which should be agrarian reform and the promotion of co-operative movements. The obsolete structure of land-ownership and of means of agricultural production was one of the basic barriers to development in that sector. In the absence of profound changes in that respect, no substantial improvement could be achieved even with the more advanced methods and technologies of plant breeding.

37. The Special Committee on Agrarian Reform of FAO had given specialist advice to the FAO Council and to the Economic and Social Council on the subject of agrarian reform dealt with in Council resolution 1707 (LIII). His delegation fully supported the special Committee's conclusions² and was confident that the Conference would devote sufficient attention to agrarian reform to speed up its introduction, together with that of all the other social reforms necessary for overcoming the present phenomena of hunger and malnutrition.

38. The third session of the Preparatory Committee would no doubt afford ample opportunity for discussing all the remaining substantive issues and administrative arrangements for the Conference, which should be a forum for the discussion of problems and proposals and for the adoption of decisions and recommendations. Poland would participate actively in the discussion. It was confident that the FAO secretariat would make every effort to ensure the smooth and efficient working of the Conference. His delegation was grateful to the Director-General of FAO and his staff for their efforts in that direction.

39. Mr. BARCELÓ (Mexico) commended the Preparatory Committee for its work in furthering the preparations for the World Food Conference. As his delegation had stated on other occasions, the Conference should strive to find practical means of increasing food production and consumption in the developing countries. Hence the important

² See E/5100, annexe I.

points to be included in the draft provisional agenda should be fair and stable prices for agricultural products of the developing countries, liberalized access to markets and an adequate supply at low prices of the requisite agricultural inputs. His delegation wished to stress the need to set up a world food bank; such an institution would be of considerable assistance in increasing agricultural production, which was vital to the development of the developing countries. His delegation would bring the matter up at the meeting of interested delegations in September 1974 with a view to agreeing on a specific proposal for discussion at the Conference.

40. Mr. MARKOVIĆ (Yugoslavia) expressed his Government's approval of the draft provisional agenda, draft provisional rules of procedure and organization of work proposed for the World Food Conference. The exchange of views at the second session of the Preparatory Committee on the preliminary assessment of the world food situation had been most useful, and the revised version of that assessment, based on the suggestions submitted to the secretariat, would be an important background document for the Conference. Its basic substance and orientation were satisfactory, but it should reflect more fully the close relationship between food production and the development of the developing countries. That would enable all countries to help to formulate appropriate international policies or measures in the matter of food production and distribution. Short-term emergency measures were urgently needed to help countries stricken by drought, for example, but the world-wide food problem called for long-term action on the part of all countries and international organizations.

41. Certain questions proposed for discussion at the second session of the Preparatory Committee, at the fifty-sixth session of the Council and elsewhere had not been included in the draft agenda. He hoped there would be an opportunity for reconsidering those proposals, either at the third session of the Preparatory Committee or at the beginning of the Conference itself. The Preparatory Committee had recommended that certain proposals not considered at its second session owing to lack of time should be discussed at the meeting of interested delegations to be held prior to the Committee's third session. The question of the establishment of a world fertilizer fund, for example, deserved special attention, since in many developing countries adequate food production depended on fertilizers. Yugoslavia was in favour of such a fund, which would help developing countries to deal with the problem of the increasing cost of fertilizers. The Peruvian proposal concerning a universal declaration on the eradication of hunger, the Mexican proposal for a world food bank and research on agricultural inputs, the proposals of Bangladesh for a world food security council, a world food bank and an international agricultural development fund, and the agricultural development fund proposed by Sierra Leone on behalf of the African countries were all extremely important. Some of them might be grouped together under a single item. The Council should authorize the Preparatory Committee to give them due attention at its third session.

42. Mr. WATANAKUN (Thailand), expressing support for the World Food Conference, said that both international co-operation and national efforts would be needed to

increase food production in developing countries. To make effective use of human and land resources in the expansion of their agriculture, the developing countries needed fertilizers and pesticides, which they must be able to obtain at reasonable prices. In the longer run, however, they should also be helped to produce them from locally available raw materials. Much had been said about general inflation and imported inflation, but price increases differed widely from product to product. The increases in the prices of fertilizers, fuel and other inputs had a direct bearing on agricultural products. He agreed with the representative of Mexico that improved terms of trade and access to markets were of vital importance to developing countries. Thailand supported the Preparatory Committee's recommendations in paragraph 1 of its report.

43. Mr. DIETZE (German Democratic Republic) said that his Government has supported the decision to hold a World Food Conference because the unsatisfactory food situation in large areas of the world was incompatible with the humanitarian objectives enunciated in the United Nations Charter and called for concerted action by all States. Hunger and malnutrition were particularly prevalent in countries which had suffered colonial and neo-colonial exploitation by imperialist States, and those States were therefore under an obligation to help to eliminate those effects. At the sixth special session of the General Assembly, his Government had pressed for the elimination of the vestiges of colonialism of *apartheid* and of neo-colonialism; it therefore considered it inadmissible that the preliminary assessment should attribute hunger to poverty alone, when its primary causes were political and social, as was recognized in the Declaration on the Establishment of a New International Economic Order, adopted by the General Assembly at its sixth special session. One of the most important tasks of the World Food Conference would therefore be to identify the political and socio-economic causes of hunger and malnutrition and to find a general solution to that problem.

44. Agrarian reforms and the development of a co-operative system were essential if the developing countries were to solve their food problems themselves. His country had much experience in the intensification of agriculture through the introduction of industrial methods, based on a co-operative system designed to develop the country's food-producing potential, improve rural life and ensure reliable food supplies. It was ready to make that experience available to other countries.

45. Since the development of food production and the improvement of the food situation should be viewed in the context of economic development as a whole, his Government supported the efforts of countries to expand their trade in foodstuffs and agricultural materials. A basic principle of his Government's agrarian policy was to meet the country's growing food needs through domestic production. It was nevertheless constantly expanding its trade in agricultural, especially tropical, products with developing countries. Its long-term trade agreements with developing countries, based on equal rights and mutual benefit, offered them a guaranteed market and stable prices. The present *détente* in international political relations provided favour-

able conditions for all countries to develop their resources and solve the world's food problem.

46. The German Democratic Republic, in principle, approved of the draft provisional agenda and draft provisional rules of procedure proposed for the World Food Conference.

47. Mr. BASSIOUNY (Observer for the Organization of African Unity), speaking at the invitation of the President, said that in his statement the Secretary-General of the World Food Conference had made clear the relationship between the present world economic order and the world food shortage and related problems of the developing countries. His organization had stated on other occasions that only within a new international economic order could food shortages be permanently overcome; the same was true of the constant economic imbalance suffered by developing countries.

48. The World Food Conference was taking place at a time when thousands of people were dying of starvation in Africa. He hoped that the Conference would propose not only short-term relief measures but medium-term and long-term action. There were vast unused resources of land, water and manpower in Africa – what was lacking was the money for the requisite investment. Even in cultivated areas, the shortage and high price of fertilizers impeded agricultural production. The Preparatory Committee's report showed that many positive proposals had been made; their implementation would depend on the attitude of the developed countries at the Conference. The developed countries must realize that the world was interdependent and that participation in solving the world food problem was not a question of providing donations but of assuming their legitimate responsibilities. He assured the Secretary-General of the World Food Conference of the full political co-operation of OAU in any measures relating to Africa.

49. Mr. GATES (Australia) said that the success or failure of the World Food Conference would vitally affect the lives of millions of people. As the Secretary-General of the Conference had pointed out, its task was to provide the foundations for a world food policy. He commended the work of the Preparatory Committee, which would be of the utmost importance in achieving that objective.

50. With regard to the preliminary assessment of the world food situation, present and future, which had been discussed at the second session of the Preparatory Committee, his delegation trusted that in the revised document to be submitted to the Committee's third session the Secretary-General of the Conference would take full account of the observations on the subject set out in paragraph 12 of the Preparatory Committee's report.

51. He hoped that the Council would accept the draft rules of procedure for the Conference, which had been the subject of lengthy scrutiny at the second session of the Preparatory Committee, and that it would endorse without alteration the draft provisional agenda for the Conference, which represented a consensus arrived at after considerable discussion at both the first and second sessions of the Committee.

52. His delegation supported the proposal in paragraph 1(d) of the report that the third session of the Preparatory Committee should be preceded by a meeting of interested delegations. Since such a meeting would consider the specific proposals referred to in paragraphs 19 and 20 of the report, it would play an important part in achieving the ultimate success of the Conference. It was encouraging that progress was already being made in regard to emergency supplies of fertilizers and pesticides, as advocated in Council resolution 1836 (LVI). It was a practical approach of that type that the Council should adopt in considering the world food situation.

53. Mr. SMIRNOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that his Government shared the view that the problems created by the present world food situation were urgent and that the World Food Conference might help to solve some of them and others which could arise in the near future. The preliminary assessment of the present and future world food situation showed that the pattern of problems connected with world food production trends was varied and complex. The Conference should therefore concentrate on the cardinal problems. One of its main tasks should be to identify the primary causes of the present food supply difficulties and work out practical ways of overcoming them.

54. Although such matters as anti-tse-tse fly measures in Africa had a bearing on food production, the principal means of increasing agricultural yields lay in radical social and economic changes. Progressive agrarian reforms and the establishment of a co-operative sector, for example, would help to eliminate the survivals of colonialism, archaic forms of land ownership and land use and other obstacles not only to agricultural but to economic development. The need for agrarian reform had been admitted in resolution 1707 (LIII) adopted by the Council at its fifty-third session. As was stated in paragraph 13 of the Preparatory Committee's report, several delegations had expressed the view that, when reviewing the assessment, the secretariat should throw into relief the main decisions upon which the success of the solution to the food problem as a whole would be dependent. Unless the main problems were solved, all other remedial measures, although important in certain contexts, would be mere palliatives and might even aggravate those problems. The Conference's attention should be drawn to the harmful effects of the dominant role of multinational corporations in the economies of many developing countries.

55. The solution of the agricultural problems of developing countries called for financial resources as well as the determined efforts of their people. The continuing political *détente* and the establishment of a just, durable peace would enable countries to expand their co-operation with and assistance to developing countries and so help to solve their food problems. The USSR understood the agricultural problems of developing countries and provided appropriate assistance on a large scale. It was carrying out a comprehensive agricultural development programme at home.

56. Referring to the draft provisional agenda proposed for the World Food Conference, he said that it would be unwise to formulate items so specifically as to pre-empt the

right of the Conference to decide for itself, and restrict opportunities for initiative. That applied particularly to item 9 (c) (the strengthening of world food security . . .) and item 9 (e) (Arrangements for follow-up action . . .). Item 9 (d) (Specific objectives and measures in the area of international trade and adjustment . . .) could be more appropriately discussed in UNCTAD; if the Conference decided that it would be desirable to discuss that subject, it should do so in close collaboration with UNCTAD, taking into account action already taken or being taken in that organization. In his opinion, the main topics of discussion at the Conference should be the role of agrarian reform and co-operative systems in the expansion of agricultural production in developing countries; agricultural development assistance in the form of agricultural equipment supplies and the construction of fertilizer and agricultural machinery plants in developing countries; the dispatch of experts in various sectors of agriculture to help with training in developing countries; and technical assistance to facilitate the introduction of modern agricultural techniques. Such a combination of measures would help to effect qualitative changes in the agriculture of developing countries. The final decision on the agenda, however, should be left to the Conference itself. He agreed with the Preparatory Committee that the proposals mentioned in paragraph 19 of its report required careful consideration. He emphasized the importance of the timely preparation and circulation of documents for the Conference.

57. Mr. AHMAD (Pakistan) said that the World Food Conference was a recognition of the proportions which the world food crisis had assumed, as exemplified in recent events in the Sudano-Sahelian region, and of the interdependence of the world. For that reason, the General Assembly had recognized in resolution 3180 (XXVIII) that the principal task of the Conference consisted in developing ways and means whereby the international community as a whole could take specific action to resolve the world food problem within the broader world context of development and international economic co-operation.

58. The second session of the Preparatory Committee had been particularly fruitful, since, acting in the spirit of the sixth special session of the General Assembly, the Committee had addressed itself to substantive questions. Its work had been facilitated by the preliminary assessment of the world food situation submitted for its consideration; he hoped that the useful suggestions made by delegations would be duly incorporated in the revised version to be submitted to the Preparatory Committee at its third session. The Committee had also dealt with a number of important procedural points, of which the most important was the draft provisional agenda. There had been general agreement that the World Food Conference should be action-oriented; his delegation therefore considered that agenda item 9 on national and international programmes of action was of paramount importance. The need for action could be gauged from the fact that, according to FAO estimates, about one-fifth of the population of the third world was under-nourished. The situation was growing worse owing to world-wide inflation and price increases. It was estimated that food import bills of developing countries, which had increased by about \$1,500 million in 1972/73, would increase by some \$5,000 million in

1973/74. If current economic and demographic trends continued, the developing world would have a cereal gap of 85 million tons by 1985. Those figures showed the need to achieve increased food production in developing countries, to make the requisite inputs more easily available to them, to build national and international reserve food stocks and to stabilize market prices of cereals. Developing countries with food surpluses must be given the incentives of remunerative prices and secure markets, while food-importing developing countries must be allowed to expand their general exports in order to earn foreign exchange and must be assisted with food aid or imports at concessional prices.

59. At its second session, the Preparatory Committee had had before it a number of proposals, as listed in paragraphs 19 and 20 of its report. Pakistan had so far had time to consider only the proposals for a world fertilizer fund and an agricultural development fund, which it fully supported. The other proposals also deserved serious consideration in terms of an integrated approach to the situation which would avoid the proliferation of institutions and programmes. They should be discussed at the proposed meeting of interested delegations in September 1974.

60. He wished to draw the Council's attention to its resolution 1836 (LVI) on emergency measures in regard to the supply of fertilizers and pesticides. Production of cereals and other foodstuffs was falling in developing countries owing to shortages of fertilizers and to steeply rising prices. In such a situation, developed countries which were producers and exporters of fertilizers were better placed to maintain their own supplies than developing countries.

61. His delegation congratulated the Secretary-General of the World Food Conference on his work and endorsed his statement that there was a need for concerted international action based on co-operation, and not confrontation, between developed and developing countries.

62. Mr. KACIMAIWAI (Fiji) said that any international programme for rationalizing production, trade distribution and consumption of commodities required co-operation between the participating countries and a sufficient volume of world trade in the commodity concerned to make it possible to regulate supplies and prices. Exporters must agree not to demand unreasonably high prices when supplies of commodities were short, in return for assurances from importers that they would take up their normal requirements at not unreasonably low prices when supplies were plentiful. Apart from sugar and cocoa, the commodities most likely to be the subject of agreements were fine and coarse grains, although protein-deficient developing countries might also wish milk and other animal products to be included.

63. Fiji was very susceptible to inflation and rising prices of transport and commodities, owing to its dependence on imported foodstuffs and its geographical position. Consequently, like other developing countries, it was concerned to establish a programme to ensure supplies of basic foodstuffs at reasonable prices. At the same time, it hoped to accelerate its plans for import substitution, with the

ultimate aim of achieving near self-sufficiency in those foodstuffs. It also hoped to increase its share of expanding agricultural trade in order to finance future economic growth.

64. The objective of many developing countries, including Fiji, was therefore to secure supplies of fine grains and coarse grains at reasonable prices, both for human consumption and for livestock consumption and production. It also required supplies of all agricultural inputs in order to expand agricultural exports and to further its drive towards self-sufficiency in basic foodstuffs. He therefore supported the decision taken by the Council in resolution 1836 (LVI) on the establishment of a fertilizer pool. In view of the existing bilateral arrangements covering supplies of fine grains such as wheat and rice, Fiji's immediate problem was to secure better terms for imports of coarse grains and agricultural inputs. Since, however, it would never be able to produce a significant quantity of wheat, it had also to cover future requirements with respect to fine grains.

65. The first step towards securing world food supplies at reasonable prices must be to ascertain what level of reserves was required, how they should be built up and who should hold them. Stocks must be held to cover emergencies such as natural disasters and poor harvests and to offset irregular supplies from exporting countries to geographically isolated importing countries. It might also be necessary to hold sufficient reserves to stabilize prices. Reserves should cover both human and livestock requirements and include commodities as well as agricultural inputs. Although the precedent was that only producing countries should hold stocks, such an arrangement was not desirable in the case of grains. In the interests of consumers, Fiji had to accept a reserve stock policy including the costs of organizing and administering such a policy and for that, it would require international financial assistance. Since the same position obtained in other developing countries, the problem constituted a world problem which required international co-operation. It was not possible, however, to build up reserve stocks until the supply position improved with regard to agricultural commodities and inputs, for otherwise further price increases would result. There should be a united effort to rationalize the distribution of present available production, with some bias in favour of the developing countries.

66. Mr. CHANG Ping-tsien (China) said that the fourth Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries had first made the proposal for the convening of an international conference to discuss the food problem, which had subsequently been adopted by the General Assembly at its twenty-eighth session. His delegation fully supported the holding of such a conference, since the problem was one of concern to the developing countries. In the preparatory work for the conference, full consideration should be given to the eight points relating to food included in the Programme of Action on the Establishment of a New International Economic Order, adopted by the General Assembly at its sixth special session. He hoped that those points would be implemented at the World Food Conference.

67. With regard to the issue of invitations to participate in the Conference, his delegation maintained the position which it had stated at the fifty-sixth session of the Council (Economic Committee, 683rd meeting).

68. Miss GHOSE (India) said that the world economic situation had deteriorated considerably since 1973, when the resolution to convene the World Food Conference had been adopted. Uncertainty of supplies and rising prices had brought about continual increases in the food import bills of developing countries. While she agreed about the necessity of improving food production in the developing countries, it was equally important to make food supplies available at reasonable prices. It was regrettable that the Programme of Action adopted by the General Assembly at its sixth special session was mentioned in only one paragraph of the Preparatory Committee's report.

69. With regard to the draft provisional agenda for the Conference, insufficient stress was laid on the action advocated in paragraph 2 (f) of the Programme of Action: while agenda item 9 (c) related to the same subject, it was not sufficient merely to examine emergency relief measures. If there was to be real belief in a new international economic order, it was essential to make regular food supplies available on terms which did not disrupt the balance of payments of developing countries. That point should be borne in mind when the Conference discussed that agenda item.

70. The PRESIDENT said that the Council was required to reach a decision on the various recommendations made by the Preparatory Committee, as set out in paragraph 1 of its report. If he heard no objection, he would take it that the Council approved the draft provisional rules of procedure of the World Food Conference (E/5533, annex I) and decided to transmit them for adoption by the Conference.

It was so decided.

71. The PRESIDENT said that, if he heard no objection, he would take it that the Council approved the draft provisional agenda of the Conference (*ibid.*, annex II) and the proposed organization of the work of the Conference (*ibid.*, annex III) and decided to transmit them to the Conference for adoption.

It was so decided.

72. The PRESIDENT said that, if he heard no objection, he would take it that the Council agreed that the third session of the Preparatory Committee should be held at Rome from 23 September to 4 October 1974 (E/5533, para. 43).

It was so decided.

73. Mr. CORDOVEZ (Secretary of the Council) said that the financial implications of convening a meeting of interested delegations at Rome from 16 to 20 September 1974, as recommended in paragraph 1 (d) of the Preparatory Committee's report, would be \$6,000 to cover costs of documentation and interpretation.

74. The PRESIDENT said that, if he heard no objection, he would take it that the Council agreed to convene such a meeting of interested delegations at Rome from 16 to 20 September 1974 to consider certain specific proposals for possible consideration by the World Food Conference and to report thereon to the third session of the Preparatory Committee (*ibid.*, para. 20).

It was so decided.

The Council took note of the report of the Preparatory Committee for the World Food Conference on its second session (E/5533).

75. The PRESIDENT thanked the Chairman of the Preparatory Committee and the Secretary-General of the

World Food Conference for their statements and participation in the discussion.

76. Mr. CAVAGLIERI (Italy) extended a cordial welcome, on behalf of his country, to all participants in the World Food Conference. His country was happy to act as host to the Conference, which was a demonstration of international solidarity and co-operation.

77. Mr. MAREI (Secretary-General, World Food Conference) said that he had been convinced by the discussion that not only developing but also developed countries shared the secretariat's approach to the world food problem.

The meeting rose at 12.55 p.m.

1917th meeting

Monday, 22 July 1974, at 3.10 p.m.

President: Mr. A. KARHILO (Finland)

E/SR.1917

AGENDA ITEM 4

Programme of action on the establishment of a new international economic order (E/5555; E/L.1608)

1. Mr. ALGAARD (Chairman, *Ad hoc* Committee on the Special Programme) reminded the Council that under the terms of section X (Special Programme) paragraph 6, of the Programme of Action on the Establishment of a New International Economic Order, adopted by the General Assembly at its sixth special session in its resolution 3202 (S-VI) of 1 May 1974, the *Ad hoc* Committee on the Special Programme had been requested to make recommendations, *inter alia*, on the scope, machinery and modes of operation of the Special Fund. Unfortunately, the *Ad hoc* Committee had found itself unable to submit specific recommendations. However, its report (E/5555) reflected the basic views expressed on the subject, and it would be useful if the Council could comment on them.

2. Another task of the *Ad hoc* Committee had been to monitor the various bilateral and multilateral measures intended to assist the most gravely affected countries, pending commencement of the operation of the Special Fund. On that question, the *Ad hoc* Committee had been in close contact with the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the United Nations Emergency Operation who would give more detailed information on the subject.

3. The *Ad hoc* Committee had also been called to prepare, on the basis of information provided by the countries concerned and by appropriate agencies of the United Nations system, a broad assessment of the needs of the most seriously affected countries. That assessment had already been undertaken in collaboration with the World Bank and various international institutions.

4. The *Ad hoc* Committee would resume its work in the first week of September 1974 and hoped that by that time the Council would have put forward some suggestions; he also expected that a meeting of potential donor countries would have been held and that the latter would have been able to clarify their position with regard to the Special Fund.

5. He regretted that a large number of Member States did not appear to have appreciated the urgency of the situation. He wished to stress that the survival of millions of human beings depended on the United Nations, which was passing through the most serious crisis in its existence. It was for the Economic and Social Council to ensure that the Organization met the challenge, for the sake both of the countries affected and of its own reputation.

6. Mr. PREBISCH (Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the United Nations Emergency Operation)¹ stressed that the Emergency Operation had got off to a slow start if one considered the date which had been fixed for receiving contributions or announcements of contributions, and of the desperate plight of the poorest developing countries, which had worsened still further after the increase in oil prices. Nevertheless the operation had begun to take shape; as the Secretary-General had recently stated, on the assumption that the pre-conditions envisaged by certain contributors, notably as regards adequate participation by others, were realized, it appeared that pledges or expectations of bilateral and multilateral contributions already indicated by Governments would amount to over \$1,000 million – the equivalent of more than one-third of

¹ The complete text of the statement made by the special representative of the Secretary-General for the United Nations Emergency Operation was circulated as document E/L.1610.