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President: Mr. Raymond SCHEYVEN (Belgium).

AGENDA ITEM 6

Concerted action in export promotion (E/4714)

1. The PRESIDENT drew attention to the report on United Nations export promotion efforts (E/4714), prepared by the Secretary-General in compliance with Council resolution 1362 (XLV), in accordance with paragraph 3 of which it had been submitted to the Trade and Development Board at its ninth session. The comments of the Board and resolution 59 (IX), which it had adopted on the subject, were to be found in paragraphs 189 to 210 and annex I of the Board's report on the first part of its ninth session.¹

2. At its forty-fifth session, the Council had decided that it would examine the important matter of export promotion periodically. It was proposed, in the introduction to the Secretary-General's report (see E/4714, para. 12) that he should submit a report on the subject to the Council every two years.

3. Mr. ARVESEN (Norway) said that Council resolution 1362 (XLV) had been adopted in 1968 as a result of a proposal by Sweden. The Nordic countries had already expressed their views on the report at the ninth session of the Trade and Development Board and he drew attention to paragraph 205 of the report on the first part of that session. The only point he wished to stress at present was the need for improvements, adjustments and changes on the production side, if developing countries were to make full use of their export potential, and the desirability of a different method of presentation in future reports on the subject. As explained in paragraph 206, the representative of UNIDO had stated at the Board's ninth session that he did not feel there was any great danger of duplication in the export promotion efforts of different bodies and that parallel activities often led to a partnership which was the most fruitful approach in the long run. If UNIDO pursued parallel activities, it was to be hoped that it would maintain close co-operation with the other bodies active in export promotion.

4. He was in general agreement with the Board's resolution 59 (IX), which stressed the importance of increased support for the activities of the regional economic commissions so that they could discharge their export promotion responsibilities, but he had been surprised to note that, in paragraphs 4 and 5 of the resolution, the Board "requested" and "further requested" the Council to do certain things. The normal practice in the United Nations was for requests in resolutions to be addressed by main organs to subsidiary bodies or to secretariats. Consequently, the wording in paragraphs 4 and 5 should have been "invites" and "further invites".

5. Mr. BLAU (United States of America) said that many members of the United Nations family participated in export promotion; co-ordination, an important function of the Council, was consequently necessary. His delegation was happy to note that the United Nations, through the semi-annual meetings of the Executive Secretaries of the regional economic commissions and the other bodies concerned, continued to perform a co-ordinating function. But the focus of export promotion activities must be the UNCTAD/GATT International Trade Centre and the regional centres. It was to be hoped that all the United Nations bodies concerned would continue to co-operate with those centres in order to avoid duplication which would waste the scarce resources of the United Nations system, lead to inefficient action by its various components and confuse Member States. The International Trade Centre had proved its worth over the years; it had received considerable budgetary and extra-budgetary support, and the time had come for it to review and consolidate its programme and ensure its own effectiveness. A period of consolidation was desirable for organizations that had enjoyed a rapid period of growth.

6. Mr. MARTIN-WITKOWSKI (France) said that the subject of the Secretary-General's report was important and should not be dealt with at the current session, but at a time when other related matters were being discussed. The Council had tried to establish the principle that no questions of substance would be dealt with at its resumed sessions unless they required urgent attention. Periodic reports produced every two years should be dealt with at the summer session and taken up first by the Economic Committee.

7. Mr. LOBANOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that the subject under discussion was of great importance, not only in itself but also in relation to other questions, and deserved more attention than it was receiving. He agreed with the representative of France that it should be discussed at the same time as other problems relating to trade and development and to the economic efforts of the United Nations in general, which were dealt with mainly at the summer session.

¹ See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-fourth Session, Supplement No. 16 (A/7616)*, pp. 175-179 and 206.

8. It was highly desirable that the United Nations should do all it could to encourage exports from developing countries. He welcomed the special attention being given by the regional economic commissions to export promotion; their initiative had led to the adoption of Council resolution 1362 (XLV). Referring to paragraph 12 of document E/4714, he said that the Secretary-General's proposal to submit a report to the Council every two years was quite appropriate, particularly since some regional economic commissions met only at two-year intervals. The general structure of the report (E/4714) was acceptable; however, he did not share the views expressed in paragraph 205 of the report of the Trade and Development Board on the first part of its ninth session. An integrated approach tended to becloud the issues; to divide the material into types of activity would be more logical and would also facilitate co-ordination between the various bodies concerned. Such a division should take account of the structure of production of the developing countries and provide a clear picture of measures proposed or taken to increase exports. The present form of the Secretary-General's report was in line with practical requirements, but he would prefer more space to be given in subsequent reports to the future programmes of the participating agencies, in order to provide a proper perspective and to facilitate co-ordination of the activities of the various bodies. The Executive Secretaries of the regional economic commissions had made a valuable contribution by taking the action that had led to the adoption of Council resolution 1362 (XLV), and had rightly suggested that more account should be taken of the relevant documents produced by various bodies, to ensure that they led to practical results and did not remain a mere academic exercise. The aim must be to make the best use of the material prepared in compliance with Council resolution 1362 (XLV); that could best be done if the matter was considered at a time when other related questions were being discussed, namely, at the Council's summer session, as the representative of France had suggested.

9. Mr. ABE (Japan) agreed with the representative of France that the Council should not now engage in a substantive discussion of the subject. The Secretary-General's report (E/4714) had been submitted in response to the Council's own request at its forty-fifth session. It covered a wide field, dealt with very important matters and hence required careful study. Trade promotion had far-reaching implications for development, because without a sound export trade the developing countries could not easily achieve sustained economic growth.

10. The Executive Secretaries of the regional economic commissions and the Director of the Economic and Social Office in Beirut were to be congratulated on the action they had taken in 1967 to establish a United Nations export promotion programme. He was gratified that the first steps to set up a regional trade promotion centre had been taken in the Far East and had led to the establishment of similar centres in other regions.

11. The result of the Trade and Development Board's consideration of the Secretary-General's report at its ninth session had been a resolution stressing the importance of regional trade promotion centres in the United Nations export promotion programme. The UNCTAD/GATT International Trade Centre was, of course, best situated to play

the central role in a global programme, in co-operation with the regional economic commissions and the other bodies concerned. The Secretary-General's report showed that trade promotion activities had many different aspects that were dealt with by many different members of the United Nations family. Consequently a high degree of co-ordination was needed; much was already being done, but he hoped co-ordination would increase as the scope of the trade promotion programme was widened, and as more stress was put on regional activities, in order to ensure the best use of resources. His delegation appreciated the Secretary-General's report.

12. Mr. AHMED (Pakistan) said that Pakistan was a member of the Trade and Development Board and had expressed its views at the Board's ninth session. He agreed with what the representative of France had said about the timing of the discussion of the report. Obviously the Council's main aim in considering it must be to ensure general co-ordination, since the wide range of activities included in export promotion were carried out by various members of the United Nations family. He regretted that the report had not emphasized where action was needed by the Council to ensure better co-ordination. The report should not be considered at the Council's resumed session; it should first be studied by the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination (CPC) so that the questions of overlapping and duplication and the need for giving a positive direction to developing export promotion programmes could be discussed. Then the Council could study it in the light of the Committee's comments. The substance of the matter had been dealt with by the Board, but he wished to stress how strongly the developing countries felt about the importance of export promotion, which was well attested by their efforts in that direction.

13. The better prospects in recent years of aid being provided through the UNCTAD/GATT International Trade Centre had led to greater co-operation with the Centre; Pakistan's co-operation with it was growing and, he hoped, would continue to do so.

14. With respect to the export promotion functions of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), he recalled that, when UNIDO had first been established, the General Assembly had clearly defined the respective responsibilities of UNCTAD and UNIDO and had specified that UNIDO would be concerned mainly with export-oriented industries. UNIDO had been playing an active part and would, for example, be contributing to the Asian fair at Teheran. It was to be hoped that countries would identify projects that could lead to joint regional projects and thus enhance export possibilities in the various regions. Pakistan had been a sponsor of resolution 59 (IX) of the Trade and Development Board, and the terms "requests" and "further requests" in the text were certainly not intended to derogate in any way from the standing of the Council.

15. Mr. DECASTIAUX (Belgium) endorsed the comments made by the French representative. His delegation had been surprised, for instance, given the impact UNCTAD could have on development, at the small amount of time devoted to consideration of the Trade and Development Board's report at the 1641st meeting. It seemed appropriate that

the Council should deal with substantive matters at its regular sessions and procedural matters at its resumed sessions.

16. Mr. POSNETT (United Kingdom) said that the report on export promotion efforts was a valuable one and it would be remiss of the Council not to pay a tribute to its authors.

17. As the French representative had suggested, subjects such as that under discussion should, if possible, be dealt with at the summer session. Similarly, it might be useful if, as the representative of Pakistan had suggested, the report were to be submitted first to CPC and then to the Council. In the present case, however, it seemed more appropriate for the Council to consider the matter at its resumed rather than its summer session, for by the summer the report, the substance of which called for immediate comment, would have been in existence for almost a year.

18. The representative of Pakistan had made important comments on the role of UNIDO. His delegation was not entirely satisfied that co-ordination between UNIDO and the UNCTAD/GATT International Trade Centre was as good as it should be. It appeared from paragraph 179 of the report, for instance, that UNIDO was concerning itself with marketing and export promotion, matters which came within the purview of the Centre. So far as the last sentence of that paragraph was concerned, liaison should precede rather than follow project planning, for that was the only way to ensure that the correct priorities were established from the start.

19. It was important, too, that finance should be available to the developing countries for the export promotion projects which those countries wished to implement. It followed that funds for export promotion should be supplied by UNDP, because the developing countries would thus be able to choose the projects they wanted.

20. His delegation was interested in regional export promotion projects, but drew attention to the possibility that the limited expert personnel available for that type of technical assistance would be wasted if there was overlapping between Headquarters activities and regional activities. Co-ordination between the regions and Headquarters was necessary in order to avert the danger of an accumulation of administrative and Headquarters staff unable to play an adequate role in the field.

21. Mr. BLAU (United States of America) agreed with the French representative that the resumed session was the worst time to consider reports such as that under discussion. It must be remembered, however, that the primary responsibility for export promotion lay with the International Trade Centre, which reported to both UNCTAD and GATT. The Council would, therefore, be unable to consider reports on the subject until they had been examined by the parent bodies of the Centre. The need for the report to be submitted to CPC before being submitted to the Council had been demonstrated by the United Kingdom representative, for it appeared that there was some question of the desirability of UNIDO undertaking the activities referred to in paragraph 179 of the report. An inquiry should be made in order to determine UNIDO's

reasons for involving itself in such activities, but the Council did not have the time to undertake one.

22. It would have been unfortunate to delay consideration of the report until one year after its publication. Perhaps the Secretary-General could suggest when the item could most appropriately be considered. It might, for instance, be feasible to consider it at the spring session or at the organizational meeting in January. It was unwise, unless unavoidable, to consider important matters while the General Assembly was in session. It was impossible to avoid discussing the Board's report during the resumed session; it had not been available for the summer session and yet had to be considered by the General Assembly. If, therefore, the Council wished to examine it before it went to the Assembly, the only time it could do so was during its resumed session.

23. Mr. ROUAMBA (Upper Volta) said that his delegation was not in a position to discuss the report on United Nations export promotion efforts adequately at the current session. The vagueness of the first sentences of paragraphs 3 and 6 made it difficult for his delegation to suggest how the report could be improved. In any case, it was unlikely that, at the current stage, his delegation would be able to say more on the subject than had been said by the units, organizations and agencies listed in paragraph 2. Upper Volta was prepared to take note of the report but considered that the discussion of it should not be concluded until delegations had had time to examine it thoroughly.

24. Mr. KASSUM (Secretary of the Council) said that the Secretary-General would bear in mind the comments made during the meeting and endeavour to produce the next report in time for it to be considered by the Trade and Development Board at its spring session and the Council at its summer session. The Secretary-General would consider delegations' comments and suggest when the item could most appropriately be considered.

25. Mr. BLAU (United States of America) said that the Secretary-General should bear in mind the fact that the Board had decided to meet only once a year in future.

26. The PRESIDENT suggested that the Council should adopt the following draft resolution:

"The Economic and Social Council

"1. Takes note of the report of the Secretary-General entitled 'United Nations export promotion efforts' (E/4714);

"2. Requests the Secretary-General to report to it on this subject every two years."

It was so agreed.

AGENDA ITEM 12

Appointment to fill a vacancy in the Committee for Development Planning (E/4754)

27. Mr. POSNETT (United Kingdom) said that his delegation did not wish to let the occasion go by without once

more expressing its deep sympathy to the late Mr. Mboya's family and country.

28. He whole-heartedly supported the Secretary-General's nomination of Mr. Mensah as a member of the Committee for Development Planning. Mr. Mensah had a distinguished record and would make a valuable contribution to the Committee's work.

29. Mr. BLAU (United States of America) said that his delegation, too, wished to express its sadness at the untimely death of such a distinguished son of Africa as Mr. Mboya.

30. He supported the Secretary-General's nomination of Mr. Mensah to fill the vacancy in the Committee for Development Planning.

31. The PRESIDENT said that he was sure that all delegations wished to be associated with the words spoken by the representatives of the United Kingdom and the United States. He suggested that the Council should endorse the Secretary-General's nomination and appoint Mr. Mensah to the Committee for Development Planning for the term 28 October 1969 to 31 December 1971.

It was so agreed.

The meeting rose at 4.20 p.m.