

United Nations GENERAL ASSEMBLY

TWENTY-THIRD SESSION

Official Records



SECOND COMMITTEE, 1183rd
MEETING

Wednesday, 9 October 1968,
at 10.55 a.m.

NEW YORK

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Chairman: Mr. Richard M. AKWEI (Ghana).

GENERAL STATEMENTS (continued) and

AGENDA ITEM 37

United Nations Development Decade: report of the Secretary-General (continued) (A/7203, chap. III; A/7251, E/4496, E/AC.54/L.25, E/AC.54/L.28, E/AC.54/L.29/Rev.1, E/AC.54/L.30, E/AC.54/L.31, TD/B/186/Rev.1)

1. Mr. DAHMOUCHE (Algeria) said that recent developments had removed some of the justification for the scepticism and discouragement to which the complexity of the international problems underlying all the Committee's discussions had given rise in the past. Although the nature of those problems had not changed, Member States now had a better understanding of one another's needs and capabilities.

2. International financial issues were important, since they were the keystone of all economic development. It was therefore regrettable that so little time would be available at the current session for considering relevant financial matters, such as the reports of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). The system of special drawing rights recently announced by IMF, for example, was a matter of acute concern to the developing countries, because it completely ignored their special needs in the matter of liquidity. The method of allocating special drawing rights would give the industrialized countries—which least needed them—the lion's share at the expense of the developing countries whose balance-of-payments difficulties they had originally been intended to relieve and which alone could make the additional liquidity economically effective to the full extent.

3. The Minister of Finance of Algeria had recently suggested a scheme which would be more responsive to the needs of countries whose shortage of liquidity was impeding their economic development: countries availing themselves of the special drawing rights would make available to IBRD and the International Development Association (IDA) the equivalent in their national currency of their share of the new rights on

the understanding that only a small proportion of such amounts would be utilized, subject to their prior consent, for settlements with the third countries. The effect of those arrangements would be that the amounts in national currencies so contributed would constitute resources which could be applied at low interest rates to the development of the poorer countries, thus reducing the burden of their future repayments.

4. The Committee would recall that the establishment of the United Nations Capital Development Fund in 1967 (General Assembly resolution 2186 (XXI)) had been warmly welcomed by most delegations. Some others, however, had not only openly opposed it, but had ignored a General Assembly resolution and absented themselves from the Pledging Conference on the Fund. Their refusal to pledge even a token contribution to the Fund merely gave support to those who believed that the real divisions among nations were not between East and West but between the less developed and the richer industrialized countries and it was to be hoped that the forthcoming Pledging Conference would not witness a repetition.

5. International solidarity had been severely undermined by such events in recent years and the best prospects for true co-operation lay in new areas where no conflicts of interest existed, for example, the resources of the sea. As the President of the Economic and Social Council had pointed out in the introduction to the annual report of the Council to the General Assembly (A/7203), knowledge of the resources of the sea was still very limited and incomplete and, accordingly, it was necessary to envisage a long-term programme of investigations and to enhance international co-operation with a view to making adequate use of those resources for the benefit of all mankind, with due recognition to the great needs of the peoples of the developing countries. That approach would, in addition, eliminate the potential danger to international peace and security of predominance of the great Powers in the new environment.

6. His delegation acknowledged the cogency of the observations made by the Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs, in his opening statement at the 1180th meeting (A/C.2/L.1002), with regard to common misunderstandings concerning the behaviour of the industrial nations in matters of aid, trade and the transfer of technology to the developing countries. On the other hand, the accusation that the developing countries failed to make the policy changes necessary to enable them to utilize assistance effectively was often made without taking into account those countries' critical shortage of one of the major factors of development: trained human resources. Indeed, one of the major achievements of the first United Nations Development Decade was that it had promoted wider

recognition of the need for each country to mobilize its own human resources together with material and financial resources.

7. The problem of the human resources of the future was, of course, inseparably linked with current population policies. The role of the State in that respect was paramount and its policy necessarily had to be one which, while seeking to influence population trends in the light of the country's level of development, respected the rights of the individual and of the family. Accordingly, his Government had based its family planning policy on the belief that its role was essentially to educate the population on the subject, to provide the necessary facilities, and to respect life and personal convictions, whether religious or moral. Population policy was, of course, only one element of a concerted development effort; other important elements were production, trade and financial planning.

8. Concerted action was also essential at the regional and sub-regional levels, as the Economic and Social Council had repeatedly pointed out. The major difficulty in regional integration had proved to be in the traditional sectors, such as agriculture. One reason for the situation might be that in most developing countries agricultural productivity had increased in recent years, so that it was the agricultural sector which was providing the resources for national subsistence—and at a relatively low cost in investment. It was therefore hardly surprising that agriculture should be given priority over industrialization. At a certain point, however, such a policy had to be supplemented by at least a modicum of industrialization, if agricultural products were to be processed and packed for export.

9. While not all developing countries were faced with such elementary choices, there were some in which malnutrition and protein deficiency were a tragic reality. It was therefore gratifying to learn that a basis for international co-operation to solve the problem had been established and his delegation would welcome further details of the manner in which the Secretary-General planned to organize that co-operation. His delegation likewise believed that food aid should be encouraged and, where possible, organized on a multilateral basis. Clearly, such aid should not be limited in future to the mere transfer of food-stuffs; it should be planned in such a way that recipient Governments could gear it to their requirements and national objectives.

10. The reference in the statement of the Under-Secretary-General to suggestions that the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) should be strengthened to meet new demands, prompted his delegation to point out that it might be prudent to allow the Programme to operate in the manner which had proved so successful to date until new ways of tackling development problems had been fully explored. Only experience could show the true value of a relatively new institution. For similar reasons, his delegation hoped that a cautious attitude would be adopted in the case of the United Nations Capital Development Fund. The unfortunate experience of certain countries in their relations with the World Bank, potentially one of the best instruments for fruitful international co-operation, strengthened the case for caution. It was

to be hoped that the recent innovations in the Bank's functions would produce the expected results.

11. Mr. DE SILVA (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) said that, at the joint meetings of the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination (ACC) and the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination, held at Bucharest in July 1968, and at the forty-fifth session of the Economic and Social Council, the Director-General of UNESCO had drawn attention to two main reasons for the poor results of the first United Nations Development Decade: the lack of adequate preparation and the fundamental error of treating development almost exclusively as a function of the exploitation of natural resources. It was therefore gratifying that both defects were to be eliminated in the second Decade: thorough preparations were already in progress and the development of human resources was being given the key role it deserved. The ILO World Employment Programme, to be launched in 1969, and the International Education Year, scheduled for 1970, would make a significant contribution to the human resources activities of the Decade.

12. Further contributions by UNESCO to the preparations for the Decade included the regional conferences of Ministers of Education and Science, which provided opportunities for regular consultation with national economic and planning ministries and the regional economic commissions. Moreover, the conclusions of the International Conference on Educational Planning, held in Paris in August 1968, and the studies that would be carried out during the International Education Year, could provide the basis for a world plan similar to the Indicative World Plan for Agricultural Development of FAO and the ILO World Employment Programme, and would serve to guide educational activities during the Decade. The Conference had also dealt with the problems of the internal effectiveness and external productivity of educational systems, and its conclusions on all those subjects had provided UNESCO with a basis for its contribution to the Committee's forthcoming technical discussion of the second Development Decade.

13. In the words of the President of the General Assembly in his opening address:

"... let us not ask what the United Nations, as an entity apart from ourselves, can do for its Member States, let us ask rather what the Member States and their peoples can do for the United Nations and its principles. What is needed is not a new organization; what is needed is simply a return to the spirit of the Charter ..." (see 1674th plenary meeting, para. 62).

That quotation referred to what States and peoples could do for the United Nations, as well as to the structural aspect of the existing machinery. The Director-General's position with regard to that machinery was a very definite one: he was concerned about the proliferation of co-ordination centres and recognized the responsibility of the Economic and Social Council, under Articles 58 and 63 of the Charter, for general co-ordination of the economic, social and human rights activities of the entire United Nations system. Moreover, the Director-General recognized

the very special role of ACC as the instrument for effective inter-agency co-operation. Those considerations would govern UNESCO's participation in the preparations for, and in the activities of, the Decade.

14. In conclusion, he said that it was encouraging that the role of education as a dominant factor in development had come to be universally acknowledged. Such developments as the recent announcement by the World Bank of its intention to triple its investment in education during the forthcoming five years were bound to stimulate peoples, Governments and international agencies to redouble their efforts to promote education.

15. Mr. OMEISH (Libya) observed that the numerous items with which the Committee dealt each year could in fact be reduced to a single theme: the economic development of nations and the role of international economic co-operation in raising the material and moral levels of mankind. As the Secretary-General had pointed out in the introduction to his annual report on the work of the Organization (see A/7201/Add.1, para. 61), the key problems were essentially the same as those of the early sixties: the food-population equation, education, transfer of science and technology, mobilization of financial resources, foreign exchange and general strategy of development.

16. That situation justified the present concerted efforts in connexion with the second Development Decade. During the current Decade, the endeavours of the industrialized countries to allocate funds and the efforts of developing countries to develop their resources had fallen short of the targets set. Yet that was no excuse for abandoning such efforts and the high degree of priority accorded by developing countries to development was extremely encouraging. Moreover, the appraisal of progress entailed more than a review of such factors as production or changes in structures and external balances. The pattern of investment, the structure of productivity and the productivity of labour were no less important. The developing countries were called upon to make changes in their social structure to facilitate progress. They must recognize that only if their populations were themselves actively participating in development could the optimum use be made of international assistance.

17. It was important that clearly defined and detailed targets should be established for the second Development Decade. The formulation of a common growth target for the developing countries was an extremely delicate undertaking. His delegation considered that it was for each country to set its own growth target. Where a choice lay between higher rates of growth and the distribution of the fruits of such growth among the population, it could be made only by the Government concerned; it would not be the same in all cases. He emphasized the importance of associating Governments with the preparations for the second Development Decade and with its implementation. If targets were to be reached, developed and developing countries alike should be willing to accept firm commitments. It was noteworthy that economic aid usually served a wide variety of objectives and was rarely determined solely by considerations of development. The whole world must recognize that international co-operation was essential to the development process and that all

had a moral obligation to prevent the continuation of poverty. The United Nations and the specialized agencies had contributed to the achievements of the current Decade but more had been accomplished through the efforts of the developing countries themselves. The ever-increasing number of ventures, such as the founding of development banks in recent years, had helped to pave the way for the second Decade. His delegation shared the concern of the developing countries at the disappointing outcome of the second session of UNCTAD. Nevertheless, there had been a broad consensus on the obstacles to economic development and the Conference had recognized the need for an international policy to supplement the efforts of the developing countries to mobilize their potential.

18. His delegation was deeply interested in the work being done by Governments in connexion with the demographic problem. The growing concern of the United Nations with that problem was indicative of its seriousness. It was also a delicate problem contingent on social factors which could not be ignored, and family planning could not be regarded as the sole solution; ways to improve the productivity of the working population must also be found. In that connexion, the progress made in agriculture was encouraging in that it could help to relieve demographic pressures.

19. Dr. COIGNEY (World Health Organization) recalled that the Director-General of WHO had informed the Economic and Social Council at its forty-fifth session that WHO was ready to co-operate fully in the formulation of plans to execute the projects proposed for the second Development Decade. The World Health Organization could make a useful contribution to the common endeavour and had already called on the services of a consultant to assist it in preparing its own programme for the second Decade.

20. While spectacular results had been achieved by WHO campaigns, such as that against communicable diseases, they could not endure without permanent health structures comprising curative and preventive medical services, particularly in rural areas. Consequently, the establishment of such national health infrastructures would remain a prime WHO concern during the next Decade; it depended on the synchronization of health planning and economic and social plans. Such planning was essential for the rational development of medical services and environmental sanitation, for the optimum utilization of available human resources, and for determining the timing of campaigns against communicable diseases. It also enabled national authorities to identify priorities with greater precision. A department of epidemiological research had recently been established at WHO headquarters and would assist national authorities in their planning. Economic and social planning authorities would thus be in a better position to appreciate the value of investment in health. The problems of health planning at the national level were linked to the demographic problem. The health needs of populations as a result of demographic growth must be studied, as must the effect of demographic changes on the achievement of health objectives. The fundamental aim was to raise the level of health by the establishment of an infrastructure of health services.

21. The health aspects of family planning as a factor in the health of the individual, the family and the community were evident, and many countries regarded such planning as an important aspect of mother and child care and family health—quite apart from its role in the solution of the demographic problem. Activities connected with family planning necessarily involved a whole series of problems and called for trained staff and general medical skills. The World Health Organization was diligently striving to meet requests for assistance in that connexion and was providing a wide range of advisory services concerned with organization, administration, co-ordination, nursing and training.

22. The World Health Organization had always given priority to the organization of education and training programmes for the various categories of health personnel and had long provided assistance to countries in planning the development of their national health services. It was now preparing to increase such assistance. If the second Development Decade was to bear fruit, due account must be taken of the promotion of health, an essential element in the development of human resources. During the decade, therefore, priority should be given to education and training programmes, to the development of health services and to ensuring the success of health campaigns. WHO planned to increase its efforts in those directions and would gladly co-operate with all interested agencies.

23. The World Health Organization practised a policy of long-term planning in the form of general work programmes for given periods. The programmes were prepared by the Executive Board and the World Health Assembly and gave guidance to Governments in preparing their own health policies. WHO was preparing its next long-term programme which would begin in 1971. Although normally prepared on a five-year basis, future programmes would be planned in such a way that they could be synchronized with the second Development Decade.

24. The twenty-first World Health Assembly had invited Member States to co-operate, within the framework of the regional committees, with a view to further extending the long-term planning of the WHO programmes and had recommended that regional committees should give particular attention, at their 1968 sessions, to long-term health planning and the formulation and evaluation of health programmes. As a result, consultations would be held during the current year and, although preliminary, they would enable WHO to incorporate the needs of Governments into a global strategy. Such a strategy should be considered from the social as well as the economic standpoint and should be adapted to scientific, technical and technological progress. WHO was therefore gratified that the World Plan of Action being prepared by the Advisory Committee on the Application of Science and Technology to Development was to be drawn up in the context of the global strategy for the second Decade. Its structure should be such as to allow the necessary interaction between scientific and technical activities and those undertaken by sectors. WHO would continue to support every effort to lay a rational foundation for economic and social development during the forthcoming Decade.

25. Mr. SHAHEED (International Labour Organisation) said that, although much had been said about the disappointing results of the first United Nations Development Decade, there was no doubt that some forward steps had been taken which could be an important basis for the second. Perhaps the most important was the better use made of the basic existing institutional machinery afforded by the United Nations system which would provide the infrastructure for the second Decade. The concept of international collective responsibility for development and the interdependence of efforts to that end had also made some headway. Furthermore, there was a better realization of the need for a more realistic approach and for careful planning at the international, regional and national levels. The ILO had been gratified to note the prevailing view, expressed during the Council's debate on the second Decade during its forty-fifth session, that a proper balance should be struck between the development of natural resources and the utilization of human resources. Among the particularly challenging problems which appeared to be common to most developing countries were the size and qualifications of the labour force and the need to raise levels of skill and to multiply useful employment opportunities by mobilizing existing sources. The objectives of the global development strategy were of great interest to the ILO; many fell directly within its traditional field of responsibility. Other objectives were also geared to the achievement of the ultimate aim of the second Decade—to increase incomes and well-being.

26. The ILO would launch the World Employment Programme in 1969, a basic element of the global development strategy. One reason why it had given high priority to the Programme was that, even where economic development had been successful, it had generally failed to solve the problem of creating productive employment commensurately with the expanding labour force. As a result, economic progress had bypassed large sectors of the population in developing countries. Those problems would become even more serious in the next two decades owing to the population explosion. Employment opportunities would not increase at the same rate as the population in the future unless concerted action was taken. In the past it had been assumed that higher levels of productive employment would be created automatically as a result of economic development. Experience had disproved that premise. The ILO had assumed that, by assisting in the training of large numbers of people, it would be possible to raise levels of employment; it now realized that its training activities must form part of a dynamic employment policy.

27. The aims of the World Employment Programme were to raise levels of productive employment, particularly in agriculture, to tap the rich human resources of the developing countries, and to ensure a more widespread rise in levels of living. It would also emphasize schemes for the training and employment of youth and for labour-intensive public works schemes. It would operate essentially at the regional level, while seeking to bring international action into closer relationship with requirements at the country level. The Programme would consist of the regional manpower plans now in the process of formulation.

In each region, a team of experts would be convened to set targets, in close co-operation with the countries concerned, for creating employment and training skilled manpower which would serve as guide-posts for national policies and action and as a context for international co-operation.

28. Like similar programmes of other specialized agencies, the World Employment Programme would be a basic element of the global development strategy, and everything possible would be done to co-ordinate it with other programmes in the second Development Decade. In that connexion, senior ILO economists had participated in the first three sessions of the Committee for Development Planning, and the ILO intended to continue and expand its close association with that body.

29. At the forty-fifth session of the Economic and Social Council, the Director-General of the ILO had stated that the World Employment Programme would represent a joint effort by a number of international organizations, with which he hoped certain bilateral aid programmes would be associated, and had expressed satisfaction that FAO and UNESCO, as well as a number of regional organizations, had agreed to participate in the work of the regional team that had already been established to begin work on the employment plan for the Americas. He had also expressed the hope that other organizations, particularly the United Nations Industrial Development Organization, would be able to join in that effort, and had stated that similar arrangements were being made for the Asian and African regions, and would be made for the Middle East and Europe. Thus, the Programme would be a truly co-operative undertaking under ILO leadership, in response to operative paragraph 5 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1274 (XLIII).

30. Mr. MARSH (Jamaica) stressed the need for the United Nations to concentrate on the development of human resources and, given the scarcity of the funds available to international financial institutions, on finding ways and means for the most efficient utilization of existing resources. Those resources should be used primarily for developing the skills needed to ensure the success of capital investment in the developing countries; that would encourage lending institutions to make funds available for basic education in the developing countries on a more realistic and modern basis.

31. The recent tendency to hold frequent consultations within the United Nations family of organizations was encouraging, and it was to be hoped that adequate attention would be given in those consultations to the planning and implementation of programmes for the second Development Decade. That involved certain difficulties and the work of the Secretariat would not be easy. Since developing countries were becoming aware of certain inadequacies in their development planning structures, the Secretariat would have to make suggestions tailored to the needs of individual countries on an increasing scale and, having obtained the approval of the countries concerned, incorporate them in the global strategy of development. In that connexion, he recalled that the Jamaican delegation had suggested, at the 1679th plenary meeting of the General Assembly, the establishment of documentation

centres on a programme basis, which would stimulate local initiative and facilitate the implementation of substantive projects.

32. The World Food Programme had played an important part in fighting malnutrition in the developing countries, and its past performance should encourage donor countries to channel more of their food aid, of which the Programme constituted only about 3 per cent so far, through the United Nations.

33. Some delegations had referred to the scarcity of documentation on the problem of the "brain drain". In that connexion, it was unfortunate that the relevant studies published by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) had not been distributed more widely. It was to be hoped that the United Nations Institute for Training and Research and UNESCO would be able to fill that information gap.

34. The Jamaican delegation hoped that the Committee's discussion of the second session of UNCTAD would produce some practical ideas to help in solving the developing countries' overriding problem: the continuing deterioration in their terms of trade. In that connexion, the Committee would no doubt evaluate the role of UNCTAD in the matter of commodity agreements; which could help solve that problem by guaranteeing a fair price for sugar and other commodities produced by developing countries.

35. Mr. PATRIOTA (Brazil) noted that intensive preparations for the second Development Decade were in progress in a number of United Nations bodies. It was gratifying that the United Nations was making an over-all evaluation of the experience gained during the first Development Decade, so that the second would be better able to meet the needs of the developing countries. The relative position of those countries in world trade had not improved since 1960, and there had been a lack of positive measures to improve their access to world markets, to stabilize those markets, to increase international trade assistance and to promote the conclusion of commodity agreements. It was true that the International Coffee Agreement had been a significant stabilizing factor, but no similar agreements had been concluded for sugar and cocoa because of the lack of co-operation on the part of major consuming countries. The situation regarding the diversification of the developing countries' economies was no brighter, and the possibility of adopting a system of non-discriminatory preferences for their manufactures appeared remote. In addition, the international flow of assistance from developed to developing countries continued to fall short of the 1 per cent target, and the terms and conditions of aid were constantly hardening. Indeed, it had been estimated that by 1975 the net flow of aid to the developing countries would stop altogether because of the mounting debt-servicing burden.

36. Thus, the results so far obtained during the Development Decade fell far short of expectations. However, new institutions, better equipped for specific purposes, had been set up and new concepts of international co-operation had achieved recognition. The failure of the first Development Decade was due mainly to a lack of political will on the part of the industrialized countries, and there was a need to translate struc-

tural and conceptual breakthroughs into action. The targets for the second Development Decade should be set in the light of the recommendations put forward at the second session of UNCTAD by the developing countries. Their implementation could significantly narrow the trade gap.

37. The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development would have an important role to play in the second Development Decade and its autonomy should be safeguarded. His delegation therefore wished to have more information on the international surveillance machinery to which the Under-Secretary-

General for Economic and Social Affairs had referred in his statement (A/C.2/L.1002). In particular, it wished to know how and under whose authority the new body was to be established, whether it would consist of independent experts or government representatives, and how large its membership would be. In that connexion, he recalled that an intergovernmental body to study UNCTAD's role in the second Development Decade had been established at the seventh session of the Trade and Development Board and stressed the need to avoid duplication.

The meeting rose at 12.40 p.m.