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SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 39th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. PAPADATOS (Greece)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.20 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 79: DEVELOPMENT AND INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC CO-OPERATION (continued)
(A/45/25, 663 and 666)

AGENDA ITEM 80: UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT
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A/45/598-S/21854)

AGENDA ITEM 81: PROTECTION OF GLOBAL CLIMATE FOR PRESENT AND FUTURE GENERATIONS OF
MANKIND (A/45/177, 303, 361, 666 and 696 and Add.1; A/45/598-S/21854)

1. Mr. TOLBA (Executive Director, United Nations Environment Programme) said that, despite the measures taken by some Governments to reduce pollution and waste, action to address the global environmental crisis was too infrequent and too hesitant. The cost of halting pollution, implementing precautionary policies and paving the way for sustainable development would run into hundreds of billions of dollars, and Governments must redefine spending priorities and endeavour to generate new and additional resources. The 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development should introduce lasting reforms in policy priorities and delineate clear actions with defined costs, targets and resources, and identified responsibilities.

2. At the second special session of the Governing Council of UNEP, which had immediately preceded the meeting of the Preparatory Committee for the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, both held in August 1990 at Nairobi, 89 Governments had indicated their unequivocal support for the Conference. After four weeks of deliberations, the Preparatory Committee had requested UNEP to provide technical support or input in 17 areas, ranging from new and renewable sources of energy to environmental education and drought and desertification issues. The Governing Council was reviewing which requests it could fulfil within the ongoing activities of UNEP, and which would require additional financial support from the regular budget of the United Nations. That request had come at a time when the small UNEP secretariat was preparing for the sixteenth session of the Governing Council, to be held in May 1991. Consequently, a number of the reports which the Preparatory Committee had requested from UNEP would most likely be ready only for the Preparatory Committee's third session.

3. Support for the Preparatory Committee was one of the three broad categories of decisions made at the Governing Council's second special session. The second category entailed ways and means of strengthening UNEP and the Council. Proposals for enhancing the role of UNEP included the creation of a United Nations centre for urgent environmental assistance, and an early warning system for risks of environmental degradation. The third category of decisions concerned policy guidance for the Programme's priority environmental areas. In those decisions, the Governing Council welcomed the historic progress made at the Second Meeting of the Parties to the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer. At that meeting, Governments had agreed to amend and strengthen the Protocol through the virtual elimination of the production and use of most ozone-depleting

(Mr. Tolba, UNEP)

substances, and had also agreed to establish a multilateral fund of \$100 million over three years, which would increase to \$240 million when all the developing countries joined the Protocol. UNEP was working very closely with the World Bank and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in the Bank's effort to establish a Global Environmental Facility of 1 billion special drawing rights (SDRs), to begin co-operation with developing countries in addressing some of the more serious global environmental problems.

4. The international community was faced with many other environmental issues whose solution required co-operation and determination: they included measures to minimize hazardous waste generation through the urgent ratification by Governments of the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal and its entry into force, intensified work on the formulation of an international legal instrument on biological diversity within a socio-economic context, and a clear course of action to address the greatest threat to the environment -- climate change and global warming.

5. Following the General Assembly's adoption of its resolution 44/207, the Governing Council at its special session had authorized the Executive Director of UNEP to convene, jointly with the Secretary-General of the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), an open-ended working group of government representatives to prepare for negotiations on a framework convention on climate change. The meeting of the working group had been held at Geneva in September 1990, attended by more than 190 representatives from 72 Governments, and had agreed on 20 recommendations to be submitted to the General Assembly for consideration when it reviewed ways, means and modalities for continuing the negotiating process on climate. Twenty of those recommendations had been adopted by consensus and could be classified in three broad categories. The first was to ensure openness, transparency, universality and legitimacy, as well as the full participation of all countries. The second concerned the organization of the negotiating process itself, and the third group of recommendations involved the role of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change in the negotiating process.

6. Mr. STRONG (Secretary-General of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development) introduced the report of the Preparatory Committee for the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development on its first substantive session, held at Nairobi from 6 to 31 August 1990 (A/45/46). He paid a tribute to all who had helped to make the session a success, particularly the Group of 77, even though financial constraints had prevented the Group's full representation. In that connection, the decision to use resources from the voluntary fund for the Conference to finance the travel and daily subsistence allowance of representatives of least developed countries made it especially important that additional contributions should be made to the fund.

7. The importance of the Conference and its preparatory process was enhanced by the Preparatory Committee's decision to recommend to the General Assembly that representation at the Conference should be at the level of heads of State or Government. A predominant theme of the deliberations had been the need to

(Mr. Strong)

integrate the relationship between environment and development in every aspect of the conference preparations and that documentation thus far did not fully reflect that need. The link between poverty and environmental degradation had been stressed and the secretariat had been given valuable guidance for its work on such key cross-sectoral issues as financial resources, the transfer of technology and institutions.

8. In considering the anticipated outputs of the Conference, the Preparatory Committee had agreed that work should continue in the following areas: negotiation of conventions to be signed at the Conference; preparation of an "Earth Charter" or declaration setting out the basic principles for the conduct of peoples and nations towards each other and the Earth so as to ensure a sustainable common future; and the formulation of an agenda for action - "Agenda 21" - setting out concrete measures for implementing those principles after the Conference and into the twenty-first century. Implementation of that agenda would require financial resources, the transfer of technology, and the development of measures to strengthen existing institutions, notably UNEP, as well as co-ordination between development agencies. Given that only a year and a half remained until the Conference, completion of the preparatory work posed a formidable challenge, particularly as the subject matter to be addressed by the Conference was broad.

9. He was confident that that challenge could be met, although the full co-operation and commitment of all parties would be required. The Preparatory Committee had assigned a number of tasks to the Conference secretariat and had made a number of requests to various agencies, organizations and programmes within the United Nations system. He was encouraged by the co-operation displayed by those bodies despite the heavy demands. He was also gratified by the interest shown in the Conference by other intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, the willingness to contribute to the preparatory work and the Preparatory Committee's decision to facilitate the involvement of non-governmental organizations in the preparatory process.

10. The Conference secretariat had endeavoured to involve other organizations of the United Nations system in its substantive work. Special efforts were also being made to ensure that experts and institutions from developing countries were fully involved in the work of the secretariat, as it was essential that the interests, experience and perspectives of those countries were reflected therein.

11. The support that was being mobilized to help developing countries prepare for the Conference at the national level and to involve their institutions and experts in that process was also intended to develop the professional and institutional capacities which those countries would need to implement the decisions taken by the Conference. In fact, capacity-building was one of the most important areas in which the Conference would assist the developing countries. He also attached high priority to supporting developing countries in the preparation of their national reports. Following the Preparatory Committee's guidelines the secretariat was co-operating with UNDP in the provision of such assistance. The fact that UNDP resident representatives also served as representatives of the Conference secretariat in their countries of assignment was helpful in that regard.

(Mr. Strong)

12. Preparations at the regional level were also of great importance. The Asian and Pacific countries had held a regional meeting in October 1990 which had produced a regional plan of action and a number of other important proposals and recommendations for the Conference. A special regional conference was to be held at Bangkok in early 1991. A similar conference for the Latin American and Caribbean region would be held at Mexico City in March 1991 and would benefit from the successful results of the recent regional ministerial conference which had adopted a plan of action for that region. In Africa, a ministerial meeting would be held at Cairo in March or April 1991, in co-operation with the Organization for African Unity (OAU), following a preparatory meeting scheduled for December 1990 at Bamako, Mali. The Conference secretariat was working closely with the regional commissions and other regional organizations to ensure their full involvement in Conference preparations.

13. Climate change was the principal environmental issue facing the international community. The first assessment report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and the outcome of the Second World Climate Conference provided a promising basis for the launching of negotiations on a climate convention which, he hoped, would be ready for signature at the Conference. Negotiation of that and other conventions to be signed at the Conference should be closely co-ordinated with other aspects of the preparatory process and the Preparatory Committee should be in a position to furnish guidance in that regard.

14. While the work programme of the Conference secretariat was ambitious, he was convinced that anything less would not meet the Conference objectives set out in General Assembly resolution 44/228 or the expectations of the international community. Implementation of the programme would clearly require more resources than those which the General Assembly had approved after the Preparatory Committee's organizational meeting. For example, only 20 Professional posts had been budgeted for the secretariat, to be distributed among Geneva, New York and Nairobi. He believed that the core staff, supplemented by seconded personnel and experts financed from extrabudgetary resources, would be able to carry out the basic work of the secretariat. However, a number of decisions taken by the Preparatory Committee could not be fully implemented without additional resources. For example, reports on subjects such as forestry and environmental cost accounting would require the services of specialists. Furthermore, the Preparatory Committee had yet to establish its third working group, which would review legal, institutional and related matters. Finally, there were still three sessions of the Preparatory Committee to be held only a few months apart at which a variety of issues would be considered. The necessary additional funds would normally be sought from the regular budget, but in view of the current heavy pressures on the budget, the Conference secretariat was trying to meet those needs from extrabudgetary contributions. The response by Governments and foundations to the request for such resources had been encouraging, totalling almost \$6 million thus far. With the agreement of donors, a portion of those funds would be used to establish a number of posts at the Professional and support levels so that the activities approved by the Preparatory Committee could be implemented without delay.

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(Mr. Strong)

15. The Conference secretariat would have to maintain great flexibility in the deployment of its limited staff resources. Adequate resources should be provided to cover the services of expert consultants and senior advisers. Also, because Conference documentation had to be prepared between sessions of the Preparatory Committee, the secretariat could not rely on the normal channels of correspondence for the input needed to prepare documentation, but had to use electronic means, dispatch staff to various agency meetings or invite representatives of agencies to participate in working party meetings at Geneva. Additional funds would be sought from the regular budget for those activities. The additional requirements had been included in the revised estimates which he was submitting to the General Assembly under the section of the budget relating to the Conference. He hoped that the Second Committee would endorse those requests, thanked those Governments which had made or pledged generous contributions and urged that, as the current preparations were the most pressing in terms of resource requirements, all delegations able to do so should provide assistance generously and expeditiously.

16. Recruitment of the Conference secretariat was virtually complete. WHO and UNDP had each seconded a senior staff member and several other organizations of the system were planning to follow suit. The team established was exceptionally fine. He was also pleased with the progress of the Government of Brazil in making arrangements for the Conference at Rio de Janeiro.

17. Mr. OBASI (Secretary-General, World Meteorological Organization) informed the Committee of actions taken in response to requests expressed in General Assembly resolutions 43/53, 44/206 and 44/207 on the subject of climate. The responsibility of the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) was to facilitate and co-ordinate international efforts in research and observational systems for the purpose of understanding and measuring changes in the Earth's atmosphere and climate, mainly through the World Climate Programme, begun in 1979, in partnership with UNEP, UNESCO and its Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission, and the International Council of Scientific Unions (ICSU).

18. In addition to co-ordinating international scientific activities relating to climate, WMO had undertaken periodic assessments, with UNEP and ICSU assistance, of current scientific knowledge regarding climate and its policy implications. The first such assessment, referred to in General Assembly resolution 43/53, had led to the establishment, in 1988, of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) by WMO and UNEP. The Panel's first assessment report had been completed in August 1990. The Panel had gone beyond the natural sciences to report on the probable impacts of global climate change and a sea-level rise on natural and social systems and national economies. It had also analysed policy options to reduce the threat of increasing concentrations of greenhouse gases generated by activities in the energy and forestry sectors and other man-made influences. The Panel had also outlined elements for inclusion in a possible future international convention on climate.

19. The most recent assessment of climate issues and implications for public policy could be found in the final statement of the Second World Climate Conference

(Mr. Obasi, WMO)

Scientific/Technical session (A/45/696/Add.1, annex II). The participating scientists had agreed that the IPCC report reflected the international consensus of scientific understanding of climate change. They had also reviewed the achievements of the World Climate Programme's operations and had drawn a number of conclusions.

20. First of all, a scientific consensus had emerged that, without action to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases (referred to as the "business-as-usual" scenario), global warming would occur over the next century at a rate unprecedented in the past 10,000 years, accompanied by a rise in mean sea level of between 30 cm and 100 cm. Uncertainties remained, however, regarding the timing, magnitude and regional patterns of climate change. The Conference had then addressed the use of climate information in assisting sustainable social and economic development, priorities for enhanced research and observational systems, the need for public information, and a number of specific issues which were discussed in part II of the Conference Statement.

21. Of the recommendations made by Conference participants, he drew attention to five in particular. Steps to reduce sources of greenhouse gases must be taken at the national and regional levels and a global convention on climate change and related legal instruments should be negotiated. Emissions of CO₂ should be reduced in all countries given the existence of technically feasible and cost-effective methods of doing so. Scientific uncertainties could only be narrowed through research in priority areas, which the Panel identified. There was an urgent need for a Global Climate Observing System (GCOS), built upon the World Weather Watch Global Observing System and the Integrated Global Ocean Service System, governmental and other monitoring systems such as the Global Atmosphere Watch. Finally, a massive and sustained flow of scientific and technological expertise towards the development of the intellectual resources, technical and institutional capacity of the developing countries was imperative, as were additional financial resources to enable those countries to respond to the problems of climate change.

22. The Executive Director of UNEP had referred to the secretariat established in connection with negotiations on a framework convention on climate and he (Mr. Obasi), emphasized the need for proper funding for that secretariat and meeting servicing, as well as for funds to enable the developing countries, particularly small island States and least developed countries, to participate fully in the negotiations.

23. He drew attention to the Ministerial Declaration, adopted at the conclusion of the Second World Climate Conference (A/45/696/Add.1, annex III), and to paragraphs 3, 5, 6, 8, 12, 28 and 29 in particular. That Declaration was a positive step, and if policies and commitments were carried out further, it might be possible to reach agreement on a convention in time for the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in 1992.

(Mr. Obasi, WMO)

24. He concurred with the Executive Director of UNEP that the action which the two organizations had taken, with invaluable assistance from other organizations, had fully met the General Assembly's requests. Momentum was building towards a new global compact for protecting the atmosphere and climate, and his organization was prepared to assist in that venture.

25. Mr. NANDAN (Under-Secretary-General, Office for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea) introduced the report of the Secretary-General on large-scale pelagic drift-net fishing and its impact on the living marine resources of the world's oceans and seas (A/45/663). The Secretary-General had brought General Assembly resolution 44/225 to the attention of the international community, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and scientific institutions which specialized in living marine resources (paras. 6 and 7). Their responses had been taken into account in the preparation of the report (para. 8), particularly the detailed studies of FAO and UNEP.

26. Part II of the report noted the concerns expressed by the international community on large-scale pelagic drift-net fishing and the action taken since the adoption of the above-mentioned resolution. Part III focused on the use of large-scale driftnets by fishing fleets operating on the high seas (para. 28), as the resolution did not address small-scale driftnet fishing in coastal waters practised essentially by developing countries. With the exception of the European Community, where driftnet fisheries were much more likely to be regulated or monitored, management and data collection presented unique problems, precisely because the co-operation of all States concerned was vital.

27. Part IV of the report dealt with international legal instruments on fishing in the high seas, emphasizing in particular, articles 87 and 117 of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. The report also referred to provisions of the Convention applicable to certain species of fish (paras. 38 to 48).

28. Part V of the report described the rapid expansion of world fishing after the Second World War, made possible by technological changes such as the use of synthetic fibres in nets, the freezing of catches at sea, the widespread use of large nets, the greater versatility and operational range of fishing craft and the enhanced deployment of distant-water fishing vessels. At the beginning of the 1990s, annual fish production, largely from inland waters, stood at nearly 100 million tons. It seemed that the stocks of most preferred fish were being exploited to capacity and yet demand continued to rise.

29. Part V, section B, described the impact of large-scale driftnets on the living resources of the sea. Commercially important species which were landed in poor condition or discarded and by-catches of non-targeted fish and other animals had caused widespread concern (paras. 55 to 62). Other problems included waste by driftnet fishing (para. 64) and "ghost-fishing" by lost or discarded sections of net, which resulted in both a waste of fish and the entanglement of marine mammals (para. 65).

(Mr. Nandan)

30. Part V, section C, on management needs and objectives noted that further measures were required in order to implement the recommendations in resolution 44/225, including national legislation governing the activities of the flag State's vessels on the high seas; international agreements; and the adoption of internationally agreed practices. The main objective should be the long-term sustainability of the resources affected. Other management objectives included sustained development within the natural constraints of the oceanic ecosystem, optimum sustained utilization of both targeted and non-targeted species, and navigation safety. The duty of States to provide accurate data on catches and fishing efforts was another important element of sound management (para. 73).

31. Part VI reviewed existing large-scale drift-net fisheries region by region. He drew particular attention to a number of conclusions in Part VII. States, international organizations, regional fisheries bodies and other governmental and non-governmental bodies had responded speedily to the recommendations in resolution 44/225, particularly with respect to the 1992 moratorium. None the less, further measures, as outlined in paragraph 70, were required in order to implement the resolution fully. Furthermore, it was contrary to resolution 44/225 to react to the curtailment of drift-net fishing in certain areas of the high seas by attempting to increase or introduce it in other areas. That tendency must be avoided. In conclusion, it was encouraging that many States were taking measures to deal with the problem. He drew attention to Japan's initiation of the moratorium in the South Pacific one year in advance of the target date and to indications by other distant-water fishing States that they would implement the recommendations of the General Assembly.

32. ~~Mr. NAVAJAS-MOGRQ~~ (Bolivia), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77, said that General Assembly resolution 44/228 and his opening statement at the first substantive session of the Preparatory Committee for the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development reflected the deep concern of all States over environmental issues. The close link between development and the environment was also stressed in resolution 44/228 and in the Declaration on International Co-operation, in particular the Revitalization of Economic Growth and Development of the Developing Countries, adopted by consensus at the eighteenth special session of the General Assembly.

33. The documentation issued by the Secretariat thus far in preparation for the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development did not maintain a proper balance between the issues of environment and development. The Group of 77 had expressed its concern in that regard at the session of the Preparatory Committee in a draft decision on environment and development (A/CONF.151/PC/L.12), which the Committee had adopted as decision 1/25. That decision requested the Secretary-General of the Conference to submit a report on the interrelationships between environment and development, and between the environment and poverty, the lack of economic growth in developing countries, the external debt crisis, the net transfer of resources from developing to developed countries and the unfavourable international economic environment. The decision also called for balance between development and environment and the inclusion of cross-sectoral issues in the

(Mr. Navajas-Mogro, Bolivia)

documents and reports submitted during the preparatory process. It was to be hoped that, in implementing the decision and particularly in providing for financial resources and the transfer of environmentally sound technologies to developing countries, the Secretariat would rely on the support of UNEP and other specialized agencies such as UNCTAD, UNIDO, the Department of International Economic and Social Affairs (DIESA) and the United Nations Centre on Transnational Corporations. The recent Declaration of the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Group of 77 reaffirmed the importance of strengthened international co-operation for environmental protection and improvement, and of the relationship between development and the environment. As the patterns of production and consumption in the developed countries were the principal cause of the world's environmental deterioration, they had a special responsibility in that regard. The developed countries must adjust their economies in order to supplement the efforts of developing countries to protect the environment by making new and additional financial resources available and transferring environmentally sound technology to the developing countries on favourable terms. Furthermore, negotiations for agreements or instruments on the environment must, from the outset, take into account the relationship between the environment and development. The success of the Conference to be held in 1992 would depend largely on the extent to which the developed countries honoured their commitments under General Assembly resolution 44/228.

34. Among the significant resolutions on cross-sectoral issues adopted at the first substantive meeting of the Preparatory Committee, resolution 1/8 requested the Secretary-General of the Conference to prepare a report on environmentally sound technology to developing countries. The study would focus, *inter alia*, on the technological needs of developing countries, the human resources necessary for the transfer of technology; obstacles to the transfer in the export and import phases; the nature of existing programmes; and new mechanisms for those programmes. He wished to clarify that the Group of 77 understood "future sessions" to mean that the report would be considered at the second session of the Preparatory Committee. The international community should support the establishment of new mechanisms to study the transfer of environmentally sound technology, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 44/228. The request in resolution 1/9 concerning financial resources, together with the report requested in resolution 1/8, should supplement the progress report on the implementation of the relevant provisions of General Assembly resolution 44/228, requested in resolution 1/29 of the Preparatory Committee. The establishment of the Working Group on legal, institutional and all related matters (decision 1/26) was also of interest to the Group of 77.

35. In due course, the Group of 77 would submit draft resolutions on issues requiring action by the General Assembly, including the role of non-governmental organizations in the preparatory process of the Conference and operation of the voluntary fund. The lack of contributions thus far was particularly disturbing and the Group of 77 hoped that the international community - the developed countries especially - would support the developing countries in their efforts to attend future sessions of the Preparatory Committee. It was worth noting that of the 94 delegations present at the first substantive meeting, only 59 were from developing

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countries. The Secretary-General of the Conference should submit a written report on the operation of the voluntary fund at the second substantive session of the Preparatory Committee. In conclusion, as stated in its recent Declaration of Ministers for Foreign Affairs, the Group of 77 planned to convene a preparatory ministerial meeting prior to the 1992 Conference.

36. Mr. CALLIA (Italy), speaking on behalf of the member States of the European Community, said that the Twelve believed that global environmental problems could be solved only through global consensus and common disciplines supported by all States, taking due account of the special responsibilities of the industrialized countries. The Twelve thus fully supported the convening of the 1992 Conference on Environment and Development, to the preparation of which they were contributing expertise and funding.

37. They welcomed the outcome of the first substantive session of the Preparatory Committee for the 1992 Conference held in August 1990 at Nairobi. Some idea of the magnitude of the task ahead could be gained from the large number of reports requested from the Secretary-General of the Conference. The Twelve were confident that the secretariat would make the reports available in time for the Geneva meetings in 1991.

38. While recognizing that awareness of the value of the environment had increased dramatically in recent years, the Twelve were convinced of the need to promote further environmental education, especially among young people, and stressed the importance of democratic institutions and pluralism in allowing the whole of society, including women, to participate in decision-making processes related to environment and development. An important contribution could thus be made by the non-governmental community to preparations for the 1992 Conference. They welcomed the agreement reached at Nairobi on non-governmental organizations' involvement in the work of the Preparatory Committee, which should also apply to the next meetings to be held at Geneva and in New York. General Assembly decisions should encourage the involvement of non-governmental organizations, whether or not they enjoyed consultative status with the Economic and Social Council, in the forthcoming meetings of the Preparatory Committee and in the Conference itself. They also welcomed the meeting of non-governmental organizations, to be held in Paris in 1991, on further preparations for their contribution to the 1992 Conference.

39. Environment, development and population were inextricably linked. One of the major causes of environmental degradation and slow economic progress was rapid population growth, and policies aimed at containing such growth could not be postponed. With regard to the relationship between environment and development, good ecology and good economics coincided in the long term, since environmentally sound management was fundamental to maintaining the natural resources base on which all countries depended for their continued economic development. Environmental considerations should be systematically integrated into national planning, and especially into sectoral policies related to agriculture, industry, transport, energy and town planning, but economic progress and sustainable population growth were also essential to success in addressing problems of environmental

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degradation. Poverty was a cause, as well as a consequence, of environmental degradation, and must be combated as part of the commitment to sustainable development. The report requested from the Secretary-General in the relevant decision adopted at Nairobi would further clarify the relationship between the two.

40. All member States of the Community must consider how systems of national accounting could best reflect environmental factors with a view to developing the concept of "depreciation of natural capital" and indicators for evaluating environmental costs. The "polluter pays" principle was perfectly consistent with market mechanisms requiring every transaction fully to bear its own costs. Without help in reconciling economic progress with safeguarding of their environment, countries striving to develop or recover their economic vitality were bound to run into difficulties. The Community was already assisting developing countries in addressing local environmental problems. A special chapter of the Fourth Lomé Convention was devoted to environmental issues in favour of ACP countries. The Community was also assisting Eastern and Central European countries more actively to deal with environmental degradation, *inter alia*, in the form of specific projects under the Poland and Hungary programmes. Further steps being taken to assist developing countries in managing their environmental problems were the proposed World Bank/UNEP/UNDP Global Environment Facility and the financial mechanism of the revised Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer. Reliable estimates of developing countries' specific needs in their shift to environmentally sound policies and practices would help them acquire additional funds for that purpose from existing multilateral institutions and donors. Debt-for-nature swaps could also play a useful role.

41. Industrialized countries must facilitate developing countries' access to environmentally sound technologies, on a fair and favourable basis. The Community welcomed the decision on that subject adopted at Nairobi and looked forward to the report of the Secretary-General of the Conference on the technological needs of developing countries and the obstacles impeding the transfer of environmentally sound technologies. It was also essential to identify indigenous technologies that could promote sustainable development. A further important contribution to the preparatory process would be made by the Committee on the Development and Utilization of New and Renewable Sources of Energy.

42. The Community supported the "precautionary approach". It welcomed the request addressed to the Secretary-General of the Conference to prepare recommendations on the promotion and application of that approach in respect of marine environment protection. The approach was a logical and progressive development of the "forecast and prevent" model. Absolute certainty was not a prerequisite for action in response to the possibility of serious or irreversible damage. Needless to say, prompt and effective use of the precautionary model required improved and co-ordinated environmental monitoring and assessment procedures.

43. The Community hoped that an agreement would soon be reached on the creation and mandate of Working Group III. In line with General Assembly resolution 44/228,

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it attached great importance to the further development of international law in the environment sector. It was also important to implement existing conventions and to increase the number of States parties thereto. A charter or declaration should be drafted, setting forth general principles and the rights and obligations of States and individuals with regard to environmental protection and sustainable development. For that purpose, the Preparatory Committee should take particular account of the work of the Experts Group on Environmental Law of the World Commission on Environment and Development, and of the conclusions of the Forum on International Law of the Environment held at Siena in April 1990.

44. The capacity of international mechanisms to deal with the complex decisions involved in rational management of the environment should be improved. UNEP must be strengthened in order to fulfill its catalytic and co-ordinating role in the environment. The decision on hazardous waste adopted by the UNDP Governing Council was a landmark. The Community intended to ratify the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal at the earliest opportunity, and urged all States to accede to the Convention and implement it in full.

45. The European Environment Agency being set up by the Twelve could also play a useful role in supplying reliable and objective information on the state of the European environment to other countries and networks. The Governments of the Twelve also wished to put on record the importance that they attached to biological diversity, climate and forestry.

46. Turning to agenda item 81, he welcomed the positive outcome of the Second World Climate Conference. Unless measures were taken, emissions of greenhouse gases would significantly raise the global mean temperature and mean sea level over the next century. While many uncertainties remained with regard to the timing, magnitude and regional patterns of climate change, it would gravely affect the environment of the planet. Applying the precautionary approach, the First Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) concluded that the potential consequences of climate change justified the immediate adoption of response strategies. The Ministerial Declaration, adopted at the Second World Climate Conference, endorsed the conclusion of IPCC which urged the drafting of a convention for effective co-operation to act on greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to adverse consequences of climate change. The Twelve applauded the decision, adopted at the second special session of the UNEP Governing Council, whereby IPCC would continue its work in support of the drafting of a climate convention, with the first session of the negotiating body scheduled to take place in the United States by February 1991. The Community was satisfied with the organizational arrangements of the negotiating process for the convention made by the Ad_Hoc Working Group of government representatives meeting at Geneva in September 1990. It believed that a negotiation process launched by the General Assembly was the one most likely to receive the widest support. UNEP and the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) must play a leading role in those negotiations, which should start immediately and end before the 1992 Conference. The protocols to the Convention should set targets for limiting and/or reducing greenhouse gas

(Mr. Calia, Italy)

emissions, and establish measures to curb deforestation and promote sustainable forest management and afforestation. The Community was gravely concerned at the continuing destruction of tropical forests, which developed and developing countries should work together to preserve. While recognizing the sovereign rights of all countries to use their natural resources, it welcomed the commitment of several developing countries to halt the destruction and promote sustainable forest management. The Commission of the European Communities was collaborating with the World Bank and the countries concerned on a special programme for preserving tropical forests in the Amazon region. The Second Meeting of the Parties to the Montreal Protocol, held in London in June 1990, was a further step towards climate protection, but the Community was convinced that more could be done and called for a revision of the London Agreement by 1992.

47. Mr. McDONALD (Observer, Commission of the European Communities) said that the European Community was concerned about the rapid growth of large-scale pelagic drift-net fishing in the South Pacific during the 1980s and a potential increase on other high seas. It had thus participated actively in formulating Assembly resolution 44/225, which reconciled the need for decisive action and scientifically-based sound resource management with due concern for the socio-economic effects of the progressive phasing-out of that type of fishing.

48. The report of the Secretary-General (A/45/663) would serve as a basis for further discussion on the subject, scheduled for 1991. The Community also drew attention to the political importance of resolution 44/225. The measures taken for halting such fishing in the South Pacific by 1 July 1991 should be welcomed, as should measures taken to secure sound fishing management practices in other regions, including the seas adjacent to the Community.

49. The Community fully supported the conclusion in paragraph 157 of the report of the Secretary-General regarding a possible transfer of large-scale pelagic drift-net fishing in the South Pacific to other high seas, and considered that such transfers should have ceased with effect from the adoption of resolution 44/225.

50. In view of the need to continue the policy adopted by the United Nations in resolution 44/225, the Community would support the adoption by the General Assembly at the current session of a resolution renewing its pledge for action to combat the wasteful practice of large-scale drift-net fishing. Such a resolution should, however, respect the balance reflected in resolution 44/225.

51. He stressed once again the need for sound fishing management based on the best available scientific data regarding the impact of fishing and fishing gear on living marine resources. That policy should ensure the conservation of fish resources and the minimization of incidental by-catches of non-targeted fish and other animals. The aim had, of course, to be pursued in accordance with the principles of international law, bilaterally, regionally, or, where appropriate, by all members of the international community. In particular, regional efforts were important building-blocks for any multilateral action, and were essential to any sound fishery conservation arrangements. The Community had committed itself to

(Mr. McDonald)

pursuit of that aim, and would continue its efforts to achieve regional and international co-operation in that area.

52. Mr. BARLUND (Finland), speaking on behalf of the Nordic countries, said that the first substantive meeting of the Preparatory Committee for the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development had provided a good basis for further preparations for the Conference. It was to be hoped that the General Assembly would endorse the Committee's recommendations.

53. While negotiations on the conventions on climate change and on biological diversity were being pursued, the "Agenda 21" action plan for solving the most urgent global environmental issues must be developed. The Agenda should address the targets, priorities and allocation of resources and responsibilities for future co-operation. A review of progress should also be included in the agenda.

54. While the close relationship between environment and development had been widely acknowledged, there had been small progress in incorporating it into economic and sectoral policies. The 1992 Conference could make a substantial contribution by pursuing the integration of environmental concerns into sectoral policies, particularly in industry, agriculture, energy and transport. The Bergen Conference on Sustainable Development had produced important proposals which should constitute a substantive contribution to preparations for the Conference. National budget and national accounts systems should be developed to reflect the real values of natural resources. Fiscal and regulatory incentives, penalties and subsidies should be geared to environmentally sound and sustainable development. Environmental levies and duties should be introduced uniformly among countries, so as to avoid problems such as trade distortion.

55. The involvement of non-governmental organizations and citizen groups increased the capacity to assess environmental problems and identify ways of solving them. The Nordic countries strongly supported the General Assembly's endorsement of the provisions for the participation of non-governmental organizations in the preparations for the Conference.

56. Given the close interrelationship of environmental and development problems, the competence and functions of the various United Nations bodies and agencies in environment matters should be reviewed. The capacity of the United Nations system to respond to environmental problems should be raised, and UNEP should be strengthened, and the capacities of development agencies and financing institutions should be increased so as to respond to those issues. The Nordic countries looked forward to the Secretary-General's report on institutional arrangements, to be considered during the preparatory process for the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, and considered that the Preparatory Committee's Working Group on legal, institutional and all related matters should be established as soon as possible.

57. The availability of additional financial resources and access to environmentally sound technologies would be a major issue in the 1990s. The Nordic

(Mr. Barlund, Finland)

Governments were prepared to consider, jointly with other industrialized countries, additional financing and more transfers of technology to developing countries in order to facilitate the implementation of international environmental agreements and strategies. They regarded the agreement reached under the Montreal Protocol as very promising. That solution did not necessarily apply in all cases of international co-operation, for caution was needed regarding the establishment of separate funds. The London Agreement and the progress made on the World Bank, UNEP UNDP Global Environment Facility demonstrated that it was possible to muster political will and find appropriate solutions where there was clear and compelling evidence to support effective action.

58. Preventive and remedial action was vital and should guide the formulation of policy on climate change. The Second World Climate Conference, held at Geneva, had declared that negotiations would begin on a binding convention on climate change. It was to be hoped that the General Assembly would endorse the recommendations of the Geneva preparatory meeting on the organization of the negotiating process.

59. The Nordic countries, with a view to the negotiations to be held in Washington, in February 1991, had agreed on measures in four major areas. The first concerned the stabilization and reduction of emissions and the objective of limiting carbon dioxide emissions from industrialized countries to their current level by the year 2000. Programmes for achieving reductions in greenhouse gas emissions by the years 2005 and 2010 should also be developed. Patterns of energy use and transport should be changed in order to bring about a substantial reduction in the use of fossil fuels and a shift to other forms of energy which were less polluting. In that connection, the Nordic countries looked forward to receiving inputs from the Committee on the Development and Utilization of New and Renewable Sources of Energy on the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development.

60. The second important area concerned a sustainable forest management. The Tropical Forest Action Plan should be reviewed by 1992 and an effective plan established to ensure sustainable management of temperate forests.

61. The third issue dealt with the availability of funding to support the co-operation of developing countries on environmental issues. Studies should be undertaken in order to identify the needs of developing countries and innovative sources of financing must be found. The Nordic countries were fully prepared to participate in international efforts to that end.

62. The fourth area of co-operation, in which the Nordic countries were prepared to participate substantially, concerned further research and monitoring of climate change. The Nordic countries would propose that initial steps in that area should be agreed on at the 1992 Conference. Indeed, if specific targets were not established in Brazil, the credibility of the international community would be compromised.

(Mr. Barlund, Finland)

63. Both developing and industrialized countries would have to adjust their policies with a view to achieving the sustainable use of natural resources. In developing countries, threats to the environment were most often created by poverty, excessive population growth and the uneven distribution of wealth, which placed a heavy drain on land, water and other natural resources. While such issues would have to be addressed at the national level, assistance from the international community would also be required in order to alleviate poverty. Achieving a viable balance between environment and development would involve fundamental changes in the dynamics and content of international economic life. To that end, confrontation must be replaced by partnership and interdependence.

64. Mr. SELIVONCHIK (Byelorussian SSR) said that his delegation attached great importance to the results of the first meeting of the Preparatory Committee for the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, held at Nairobi in August 1990. At that meeting, the Preparatory Committee had decided on a programme of international co-operation for the period after 1992 and for the beginning of the twenty-first century in accordance with the issues which would be raised at the Conference. A high level of participation in the Conference was also important. Mitigation of the consequences of the Chernobyl accident should also be discussed at session of the Preparatory Committee, and at the Conference itself which should adopt specific measures for further international co-operation in that area.

65. At the current stage of preparations for the Conference, it was necessary to work out a strategy for protecting the environment, and specific projects should be initiated. In that regard, the regional environmental forums and the measures proposed by UNEP merited attention and support.

66. The Byelorussian SSR supported the specific proposals made by a number of countries in connection with preparations for the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development. The Soviet Union's proposal on the establishment of a United Nations centre for emergency environmental assistance should be implemented. The Soviet Union had already begun to form an international team of experts, and had sent the Secretary-General a list of Soviet scientists and specialists which the Soviet Government would be prepared to send, at its own expense, to places designated by the centre. That kind of specific action was a key element in international co-operation to protect the environment at the current stage.

67. Preservation of the environment required considerable expenditure at the country and global levels, and \$800 billion would be needed for environmental protection up to the year 2000, a sum roughly equivalent to the expenditure on armaments in a single year. Military production should therefore be reduced and the resources thus released should become a major source of financing for environmental measures. In that regard, the Byelorussian SSR supported the ratification by the Soviet Union and the United States of bilateral agreements on limitation of the yield of underground nuclear weapons tests and on underground nuclear explosions for peaceful purposes, as well as the relevant protocols on verification.

(Mr. Solivonchik, Byelorussian SSR)

68. The Byelorussian SSR wished to become a nuclear-free zone and was considering the possibility of acceding to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. It was in favour of the eventual creation of a nuclear-free zone which would include the Byelorussian SSR, the Ukrainian SSR and the Baltic Republics, as well as the countries of Central Europe. Since the nuclear-free status of the Byelorussian SSR would affect the strategic interests of many countries, it required a deliberate approach in order to ensure that the steps taken towards the implementation of that goal did not jeopardize anyone's legitimate security interests.

69. In the Byelorussian SSR, the most pressing problem in the area of environmental protection involved the mitigation of the consequences of the disaster at the Chernobyl nuclear power plant. Millions of the Republic's inhabitants had suffered the consequences of the Chernobyl accident, and the Byelorussian Parliament had declared the entire Republic an environmental disaster area. Recent assessments of the state of the environment in the Byelorussian SSR had revealed that vast new areas had been contaminated by radiation, including the Republic's capital, Minsk, with a population of almost 2 million. Additional research was needed to determine the true levels of radioactive contamination in the Republic. Moreover, the use of chemical substances to reduce radiation levels destroyed the ecological balance and aggravated traditional environmental problems.

70. During the recent discussion of the effects of atomic radiation in the Special Political Committee, many delegations had expressed their concerns about the long-term effects of radiation on the global environment. The Special Political Committee had renewed the mandate of the United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation, and the Scientific Committee had been requested to continue work on its report on the effects of atomic radiation. The conclusions of that report should be used both in the preparations for the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development and at the Conference itself. The Byelorussian SSR was convinced that the provisions of General Assembly resolution 44/224 should be applied to regions whose environment had been severely degraded by radioactive contamination. His delegation was prepared to co-operate in that area with UNEP, the United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation and other organizations and agencies of the United Nations system.

71. Mr. RAZALI (Malaysia) said that the successful outcome of the 1992 Conference on Environment and Development would depend very much on full implementation of General Assembly resolution 44/228, without which the Conference would be a mere political and ceremonial event.

72. As the world approached the twenty-first century, there had been a sudden realization that current social and economic trends, especially in the developed countries, were not sustainable. Drastic changes and readjustments in social ethics, international co-operation, world trade and economics would be necessary. The world environment would have to be managed properly in order to sustain life. Such strategies and actions for those purposes would need the commitment and co-operation of the international community and all Governments.

(Mr. Razali, Malaysia)

73. The areas of environmental concern included extensive deforestation and unsustainable land-use patterns: desertification; water and air pollution; depletion of the ozone layer and the greenhouse effect, wasteful energy consumption and rapid depletion of natural resources. The impacts of such excesses on social and economic development were increasingly evident. Acid rain had caused great damage to temperate forests, the ozone layer was being depleted every year, there was a prediction of global warming with its possible consequence of a rise in sea level which would threaten many of the low-lying States. Changes in the world climate would have serious consequences on the productivity of land and sea.

74. World-wide concern over the environment had drawn considerable international attention to sustainable forest management. While it was true that deforestation contributed to degradation of the global environment, there had been too much focus on the tropical rainforests and inadequate attention paid to deforestation in the temperate countries. There was also a tendency for the issue of the environment to be clouded by emotion and a lack of proper understanding of the issues, and vested interests were also involved. Faced with strong pressure from such groups, a number of developed countries were formulating policies and regulations which were detrimental to the interests of tropical timber, arbitrary, discriminatory and contrary to the provisions of GATT, the spirit of the Uruguay Round and the International Tropical Timber Agreement. They were also counter-productive, in that greater market access would encourage producer countries to conserve their timber for longer-term benefits.

75. Malaysia was fully aware of the need for effective forest management in order to supply timber; enhance environmental stability; provide sanctuary for wildlife; and act as a storehouse of genetic resources. Its awareness was reflected in the decision not to proceed with the Bakun dam project in Sarawak which, while more than meeting the country's energy needs, would have flooded extensive areas of lowland forests. Malaysia had adopted sustainable forest management practices, as was confirmed by the recent ITTO report on forestry in Sarawak.

76. At the recent meeting of ASEAN Ministers of Agriculture and Forestry, the ASEAN countries had agreed to contribute to the preparation of a report on forestry, as requested by the Preparatory Committee for the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development. The ministers had emphasized that no international instrument on forestry should be concluded without consideration of its impact on developing countries.

77. Forestry and other activities associated with land use accounted for only 9 per cent of greenhouse gas emissions, while the developed countries were estimated to contribute about 75 per cent of the greenhouse effect. Although a legal instrument was required in order to prevent global warming, there was a more urgent need to consider a convention on the control and reduction of carbon dioxide emission than a convention on forestry.

78. The International Tropical Timber Organization had a very important role to play in the sustainable management and development of tropical forest resources,

(Mr. Razali, Malaysia)

and consideration should therefore be given to expanding its role and responsibilities so as to cover also all temperate and boreal forests. Any legally binding instruments such as the proposed global forest convention should not be concluded in haste without taking into consideration their implications for developing countries. Malaysia was concerned about the thrust and pace of discussions on environmental issues in the various forums outside the preparatory process of UNCED. The rush to produce legal instruments was more often the result of domestic political pressure than of an attempt to address the real issue. The preparatory process of UNCED should continue to be the only forum on environmental issues.

79. The developing tropical countries had a moral obligation to reserve vast stretches of land for the purpose of conserving biological diversity. However, the developed countries which had used extensive areas of their own natural forests for industrial development should recognize that they too had a moral obligation vis-à-vis those developing countries, to compensate them for the opportunity cost of land set aside in perpetuity for conservation purposes. Furthermore, efforts to conserve biological diversity should also include consideration of the issues of intellectual property rights being discussed at the Uruguay Round and in other organizations such as the World Intellectual Property Organization. Malaysia was particularly concerned about the prospects of international patents which would be used increasingly to secure a monopoly over genetic resources. Modern biotechnology had opened up a vast new area for exploitation of genetic resources, but the developing countries lacked the expertise and equipment to make use thereof. As a result, biotechnology had tended to focus on the needs of the industrialized countries, and, in particular on reducing their dependence on raw materials imported from developing countries. It was time to develop new biotechnologies which would take into consideration the needs of small-scale agriculture in the developing countries. There was a danger that corporations and institutions in the industrial countries might exploit the genetic diversity of the developing countries as a free resource, patent the products of research and sell them back to the developing countries at excessively high prices. That had to cease, and mechanisms should be set up for effective co-operation with reciprocal benefits as between developed countries rich in technology and developing countries rich in genetic resources.

80. Malaysia welcomed the increasing recognition of the impact that Antarctica exerted on the global environment and ecosystems and urged the international community to continue its efforts to ban prospecting and mining in and around Antarctica and to ensure that all such activities were used exclusively for purposes of peaceful scientific research. The establishment of Antarctica as a nature reserve or a world park would be the best guarantee against harmful human activities in the region.

The meeting rose at 6.35 p.m.