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at 3 p.m.

New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 34th MEETING

Chairman: Ms. ERIKSSON (Sweden)

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19 November 1985

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The meeting was called to order at 3.25 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 12: REPORT OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL (continued)
(A/C.2/40/L.14 and L.36)

Draft resolution A/C.2/40/L.36

1. Mr. BITAR (Lebanon), introducing on behalf of the sponsors draft resolution A/C.2/40/L.36 on co-operation between the United Nations and the Agency for Cultural and Technical Co-operation, of which Lebanon was the current Chairman, said that no action had been taken since the submission of the first report of the Secretary-General on co-operation between the United Nations and that Agency (A/38/236). The draft resolution therefore asked the Secretary-General to bring his report up to date, in co-operation with the Secretary-General of the Agency, and to submit it to the General Assembly at its forty-first session, through the Economic and Social Council at its second regular session of 1986. The sponsors hoped that the resolution would be adopted by consensus.
2. Mr. KPAKPO (Benin) and Mr. MAYIRA (Rwanda) said that their delegations wished to join the sponsors of the draft resolution.
3. The CHAIRMAN said that the Comoros also wished to sponsor the draft resolution.

Draft resolution A/C.2/40/L.14

4. Mr. MWANZIA (Kenya) said that his delegation would have supported the adoption of draft resolution A/C.2/40/L.14 if it had been present during the vote (see A/C.2/40/SR.30).

AGENDA ITEM 84: DEVELOPMENT AND INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC CO-OPERATION (continued)
(f) ENVIRONMENT (continued) (A/C.2/40/L.16)

Draft resolution A/C.2/40/L.16

5. Mr. MWANZIA (Kenya) and Mr. LOHIA (Papua New Guinea) said that their delegations would have supported the adoption of draft resolution A/C.2/40/L.16 if they had been present during the vote (see A/C.2/40/SR.30).

AGENDA ITEM 87: SPECIAL ECONOMIC AND DISASTER RELIEF ASSISTANCE: SPECIAL PROGRAMMES OF ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE: REPORTS OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (continued)
(A/40/3, 173, 423, 430, 431, 432, 433, 434 and Add.1, A/40/435, 436, 437, 438, 439, 440, 441, 672, 770; A/C.2/40/3, 7; E/1985/67, 68)

6. Mr. BITAR (Lebanon) said that the reports of the Secretary-General and oral statements on the aid provided by the United Nations and non-governmental organizations had always been comprehensive, and his delegation wished to express its deep gratitude to all United Nations staff dealing with his country's problems for their work.

(Mr. Bitar, Lebanon)

7. Before the recent troubles, Lebanon had been regarded as an example of dynamism and vitality. But just when it appeared to have everything needed to build a modern State, the crisis, organized and financed by external forces, had driven the country into its current chaos. It had thus become an arena where the opposing forces present in the Middle East fought out their differences regardless of the suffering they caused.
8. Of course, the Lebanese regretted not having paid more attention to social development, but that and other omissions could not explain or justify the course of events. Such shortcomings had simply been used for their own purposes by all those wishing to interfere in Lebanon's affairs to combat other regional forces present there. The Lebanese had sought solutions to their problems when allowed to do so and had agreed on what needed to be done, but they were not being allowed to implement their understanding. The latest news about the current talks under the aegis of Syria was reassuring, and hopes were once again high that efforts at reconciliation would establish a lasting peace which would enable the immense task of reconstruction to be tackled once more.
9. The report of the Secretary-General (A/40/434 and Add.1) and the oral statement by the Under-Secretary-General for Political and General Assembly Affairs had sounded a warning that Lebanon's economy was reaching the point of no return. A recent unofficial study had concluded that national income fell by half between 1974 and 1984, the balance of payments had registered its first big deficits of \$930 million and \$1,200 million in 1983 and 1984 respectively, the Lebanese pound had lost nine-tenths of its purchasing power compared with 1974, unemployment had reached 28 per cent of the active population and the country was losing all its skilled workers and key personnel, the areas destroyed far exceeded all the areas built up, and the State's revenues had dropped considerably while its internal debt had rocketed and its external debt quadrupled.
10. To meet that situation, the Government had established a Council for Development and Reconstruction and a plan had been drawn up to carry out reconstruction and development programmes over a period of not more than 10 years, provided that sufficient external funding was available. It had soon become apparent that it was not, but the Government had nevertheless launched its programme in 1983 using the means available and was pursuing it as fast as the security situation allowed. New projects were constantly being added to the initial plan because of the damage caused by continuing hostilities, even though the foreign aid anticipated had not entirely materialized.
11. For all those caught up in the violence, the future had become the hope that they would be able to survive and live in peace and dignity. There was reason to believe that reconciliation would soon be achieved. Once that happened, his people would tackle the immense task of reconstruction and development without delay. They hoped that the international community would continue to support them in their efforts and to ease their difficulties.
12. Mr. MWANZIA (Kenya) said that he would concentrate on the subject of assistance to the drought-stricken areas of Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, the Sudan and Uganda. Drought and desertification had aggravated the development

(Mr. Mwanzia, Kenya)

crisis characteristic of most African economies, with the majority of countries in sub-Saharan Africa facing either recurrent or perennial drought or encroaching desert. Twenty-four African countries were affected by desertification, caused mainly by such factors as deforestation and over-grazing, population growth, lack of resources and know-how, absence of research facilities and scarcity of trained manpower.

13. The efforts made by UNEP to combat desertification were laudable, in particular the Plan of Action adopted at Nairobi in 1977 and General Assembly resolution 32/172 on the implementation of that plan. African Governments, for their part, realizing the implications of drought and desertification, had drawn up specific measures to alleviate the situation within the framework of their Lagos Plan of Action. More recently, at the summit meeting of African Heads of State and Governments at Addis Ababa in July 1985, they had adopted measures for implementation at national, subregional, regional and international level within their Priority Programme for Economic Recovery (1986-1990).

14. The bilateral and multilateral assistance given to countries affected by desertification and drought, while appreciated, had not kept pace with the threat which they posed. Most of the Governments concerned had recently been taking steps at subregional level to combat the two phenomena. For example, a Ministerial Conference on Desertification had been held at Dakar in July 1984, while the Governments of Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, the Sudan and Uganda had agreed to establish an Inter-governmental Authority for Drought and Development with headquarters in Djibouti. A plan of action for their region would be considered by a meeting of Heads of State scheduled for Djibouti in January 1986.

15. Because rainfall was generally deficient in most of Kenya and agriculture was vital to its economy, his Government had taken various steps to combat drought and desertification, including the development of irrigation in the plains, the establishment of a presidential commission for soil conservation and afforestation, the development of surface and subterranean water resources, the drawing up of a policy and a master plan for forestry, and research on drought-resistant plants and crops. The government measures were being implemented throughout the country by means of a strategy which made districts the key development planning unit.

16. Countries facing desertification and drought would need help in developing their ability to prepare against drought, obtaining reliable financial resources, developing drought-resistant crops and livestock and raising their scientific and technological expertise in the areas of forestry, soil conservation, development of water resources and irrigation. He hoped that the draft resolution on assistance to drought-stricken areas of Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, the Sudan and Uganda could be adopted by consensus.

17. Mr. LOHIA (Papua New Guinea) said that he would concentrate on the case for special programmes of assistance for small island developing countries. In so doing, he did not wish to divert attention from the urgent need of developing countries as a whole for assistance. Structural adjustment of the international economic system to relieve the unjust burdens borne by developing countries was long overdue and his country joined in calling on developed countries in particular

(Mr. Lohia, Papua New Guinea)

give increased financial and technical assistance. He also urged the industrialized countries to show greater awareness of the effect of their policies on the social and economic welfare of developing countries.

18. However, some groups of developing countries deserved special attention because, for reasons of size, location and demographic and economic characteristics, they faced particular difficulties in maintaining, let alone improving, the social and economic welfare of their peoples. They included small island developing countries, land-locked countries and countries which regularly suffered from natural disasters.

19. Some of the countries in those categories were least-developed countries, lacking either natural resources or the means to develop them, while almost all were prevented by high costs from enjoying the benefits of physical and economic linkages enjoyed by countries in other parts of the world. The needs of small island developing countries in the Pacific Ocean were often overshadowed by those of neighbouring Asian nations and were far too seldom brought to the attention of the international community.

20. Inhabitants of small island developing countries had the same basic human needs as others, but they were sometimes forgotten even by United Nations bodies. The Pacific Ocean was well-known for its commercial as well as military sea lanes, but many of the small countries there were seen only in terms of military strategies. They tried to help themselves and one another with the assistance of countries such as Australia and New Zealand, to which particular thanks were due. Two regional organizations, the South Pacific Forum and the South Pacific Commission, were largely responsible for establishing a regional university, shared medical facilities and services, regional shipping, telecommunications and air transport facilities, a fisheries agency, common marketing arrangements and joint research projects on marine resources and other development priorities. However, most of the Pacific countries represented in those two organizations suffered from isolation, fragmented markets and shortages of skilled manpower and finance. Their special problems were reflected most clearly in the communiqué issued by the South Pacific Forum in August 1985 (A/40/672-S/17488).

21. His delegation was grateful for the inclusion of Vanuatu in the list of least-developed countries, urged the Committee for Development Planning to give the cases for Tuvalu and Kiribati similar favourable consideration and looked forward to the time when Niue and the Cook Islands joined their neighbours in the list of those enjoying special programmes of assistance.

22. Mr. SECKA (Gambia) recalled General Assembly resolution 36/220, on assistance for the rehabilitation and reconstruction of the Gambia, and drew attention to paragraphs 92-110 of document A/40/441, which contained an appraisal of the numerous problems currently facing the Gambia and the Government's efforts to restore growth and development. As an African least developed country whose economy was based primarily on agriculture, the Gambia had experienced many years of declining agricultural performance in the face of prolonged drought and desertification. While the Government had embarked upon a series of adjustment measures in co-operation with IMF, it was aware of the need to complement such

(Mr. Secka, Gambia)

measures with a comprehensive programme to restore confidence in the economy. The basic elements of that programme had been carefully designed to achieve stabilization in areas of declining economic output and areas in which expenditures had exceeded income. The programme sought to generate growth in areas where exports had a distinct comparative advantage. Demand was to be suppressed while output and production were increased by means of incentives, especially in the agricultural sector, since it was only through increased agricultural production that local demand could be met and the country's dependency on food imports reduced. Increased agricultural production would also generate export earnings and enable the Government to invest in appropriate technology to raise the population's standard of living. His delegation was grateful for all efforts made in connection with the programme of assistance to the Gambia and was convinced that all donors who had participated in the successful conference organized by UNDP in November 1984 would participate in the rehabilitation and reconstruction of his country.

23. Mr. ATTIMER (Chad) said that his country was among the most severely affected by the critical situation in Africa: after eight years of war and 13 years of unrelieved drought, its already weak socio-economic infrastructure had been destroyed. Chad was the victim of ongoing aggression perpetrated by a heavily armed neighbouring State which was occupying several hundred thousand square kilometres of Chadian territory. As a result, Chad was obliged to devote all its meagre resources to its defence. The President of Chad, Hussein Habre, had noted that the country must realize that its development efforts would suffer so long as Libya continued to exert pressure.

24. At the same time, Chad was suffering from persistent drought: in the past three years, some areas of the country had received no rainfall at all, while irregular rainfall had prevented successful harvests in others. The dimensions of the human crisis generated by that catastrophe were described in the Secretary-General's report on the critical economic situation in Africa (A/40/372/Add.2). In the face of that dramatic situation, the current Government of Chad had, upon taking office, set the revitalization of socio-economic activities as its objective, placing emphasis on the agricultural and livestock sectors with a view to achieving self-sufficiency in food. Assistance from the international community would help Chad overcome its difficulties; the country had in fact shown encouraging signs of recovery.

25. Given the results achieved at past meetings with donors, Chad hoped to hold a new round-table meeting in collaboration with UNDP at Geneva from 4 to 6 December 1985, in accordance with General Assembly resolutions 38/214 and 39/195. At that time, the interim development plan for 1986-1988, which contained a large number of priority projects, would be submitted to donors, and he invited all countries and international and charitable organizations to participate in that meeting. However, since that meeting would not provide a total solution to Chad's problems, his delegation intended to submit a draft resolution on special economic assistance to Chad.

26. Mr. AL-SALLAL (Kuwait) said that his country was deeply concerned by the critical situation in Africa. It was distressing to see millions of people suffering from famine when billions of dollars were being wasted on weapons, instead of scientific and technological developments being put at the service of poor countries so that they could develop their economies, increase agricultural production, combat desertification and drought and offset their own lack of scientific expertise. His delegation therefore welcomed efforts by the United Nations to provide economic and technical assistance to famine-stricken countries. While the contributions of the international community as a whole had not been adequate, they had nevertheless been valuable and had borne witness to a commendable degree of political will.
27. Kuwait had always been a leader in the provision of aid, both on bilateral terms and through such international financial institutions as the African Development Bank, the Islamic Development Bank, IMF and the Fund for International Development of OPEC. Document A/40/852 contained information regarding bilateral assistance provided to African countries by Kuwait during 1984 and 1985. Despite a drop in national income, Kuwait would try to continue its policy of giving aid to needy African countries through all available channels. He hoped that the developed countries and international financial institutions would increase their aid to those countries and focus increased attention on their development projects.
28. Mr. LIGAIRI (Fiji) noted that three of the 24 countries covered by programmes of special economic assistance - Kiribati, Tuvalu and Vanuatu - were in the Pacific region. Their major handicaps had been well documented in the reports of the Secretary-General. His delegation, which had often stressed that the problems and constraints peculiar to the island developing countries of the Pacific and the disparities between those countries required appropriate attention, welcomed the recommendation by the Committee for Development Planning to include Vanuatu in the list of least developed countries, but was disappointed that the same recommendation had not been made in the case of Kiribati and Tuvalu. There was compelling justification for classifying those two countries as such a decision and he hoped that the cases of those two countries would be considered more sympathetically when the Committee for Development Planning met in April 1986.
29. Natural disasters were a common occurrence in the South Pacific and constituted a formidable obstacle to national development there. Fiji had lately experienced a number of natural disasters which had forced the Government to divert scarce resources from urgent social and economic projects to repair the damage done. The Government had also taken steps to cope with natural disasters as they occurred and to co-ordinate subsequent recovery efforts. Given that island developing countries were generally quite small, natural disasters tended to affect a country's total national productive capacity. His delegation was consequently extremely grateful to the many countries and agencies which had supported local rehabilitation efforts as well as providing overall relief assistance.
30. Mr. LAZAREVIC (Yugoslavia) said the fact that 19 African countries were covered by programmes of special economic assistance testified to the severity of the situation in sub-Saharan Africa. Furthermore, many of those countries were affected not only by natural disasters but by unprovoked and constant aggression from the racist minority régime of South Africa. The documentation before the

(Mr. Lazarevic, Yugoslavia)

Committee showed that the United Nations and its specialized agencies were actively involved in a broad range of assistance and relief activities. However, the documents drew attention to the need for further relief and rehabilitation efforts and increased attention to the development needs of African countries. The international community should demonstrate its solidarity with the peoples and countries exposed to natural disasters and foreign aggression by providing bilateral and multilateral assistance. For its part, Yugoslavia had been quick to respond, to the extent of its ability, to the famine in Africa and the earthquakes in Mexico.

31. The situation of countries receiving special economic assistance was strongly influenced by the general situation of the world economy and international economic relations. Obviously, the problems of those countries could not be tackled outside that context. Moreover, short-term and emergency measures could alleviate those problems, but not solve them. International efforts should therefore gradually focus on the long-term prospects of the countries receiving special economic assistance. In addition, he suggested that, in the future, the Secretariat should consider submitting a single report covering a group of countries which might be considered together because of common climatic, geographical or other disadvantages. A single draft resolution relating to a number of countries might then be considered.

32. Mr. OKELO (Uganda) drew attention to General Assembly resolution 39/188, on assistance to Uganda, and said that as the economic problems referred to in that resolution persisted, continued assistance to Uganda was required. That resolution had also requested the Secretary-General to keep the economic situation in Uganda under constant review and to report to the General Assembly at its fortieth session on the progress made in that situation and in organizing international assistance for the country. It was regrettable that the Secretary-General had not submitted a report on Uganda to the Assembly at its current session, and that the section of his report on special economic assistance dealing with Uganda (A/40/439, paras. 375-395) contained no information regarding the country's situation in 1985.

33. In an effort to assist in the rationalization of the Committee's work, and in view of the unchanged nature of Uganda's economic situation, his delegation would not submit a draft resolution on special assistance to Uganda at the current session. However, he wished to have an explicit statement from either the Chairman of the Committee or the Secretary-General as to whether, in the absence of a new resolution, General Assembly resolution 39/188 still constituted a valid mandate and a directive to the Secretary-General.

34. What was perhaps not apparent to many people was the fact that, after two decades of anguish caused by a process of political and moral decay and the abuse of power by the previous authorities, Uganda was currently engaged in a determined effort to secure peace based on justice, law and order and economic and social prosperity for all Ugandans. That was a daunting task, but one whose time had come and which Ugandans were prepared for. The additional external assistance his delegation was requesting would supplement, rather than replace, national efforts.

35. The CHAIRMAN thanked the representative of Uganda for his willingness to co-operate in the rationalization of the Committee's work and assured him that the provisions of General Assembly resolution 39/188 remained in effect. If the representative of Uganda had no objection, the officers of the Committee would submit a draft decision on assistance to Uganda.

36. Mr. MUTALIK (World Health Organization) said that the special economic and disaster relief assistance provided by WHO encompassed specific priority health needs, including disaster relief and rehabilitation. WHO focused its technical co-operation on strengthening the health infrastructure and health manpower in those countries and on improving the managerial process for national health development so as to enhance their capacity to absorb assistance from abroad. In order to include elements of disaster preparedness and prevention, special attention was given to the accelerated implementation of health strategies which focused on primary health care. WHO regarded emergency assistance as an integral part of the recipient countries' development process, and of the global and regional and interregional strategy of health for all by the year 2000. The emergency support given by WHO concentrated on the weakest part of each country's programme and the priorities would therefore be different in each country. A detailed account of WHO's activities in each of the 24 countries to which it provided health support had been circulated to Committee members.

37. Mr. HAYFORD (Ghana) expressed profound appreciation for the United Nations's initiatives in assisting his country and for the promptness with which missions had been sent at Ghana's request on two occasions when there was a sudden influx of Ghanaians returning home. While there had been an improvement in the difficult circumstances, his country still needed support from the entire United Nations system in its economic recovery efforts.

38. Mr. FARAH DIRIR (Djibouti) said that although the special economic and disaster relief programme for his country had been initially intended to cope with an emergency situation, it had continued up to the present because of the recurrent drought and other economic difficulties. His delegation, while it intended to submit a draft resolution on the programme, shared the general concern for rationalizing the work of the Committee and would be prepared to join in any consensus on the subject.

39. Djibouti was in a precarious economic and financial situation, with no agricultural or industrial activity and excessive internal migration because of devastating drought, all of which created a strain on social services. The situation was further compounded by the fact that Djibouti had to import everything, including foodstuffs. As a least developed country without any financial and technical means for sustaining economic development, Djibouti was unable to cope without external assistance.

40. In order to combat the effects of the drought and other natural catastrophes Djibouti, together with five other East African countries, had established the Intergovernmental Authority on Drought and Development (IGADD), a ministerial meeting of which was scheduled for 13 to 17 November 1985. He expressed gratitude to UNDP and the United Nations Sudano-Sahelian Office for their assistance in establishing IGADD, and appealed to Member States, the United Nations and its

(Mr. Farah Dirir, Djibouti)

specialized agencies, and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations to contribute generously to the new institution to assist it in discharging its responsibility.

41. Mr. GERVAIS (Haiti) expressed appreciation for the work of the members of the United Nations mission which had visited Haiti under the special economic assistance programme. Haiti, like so many least developed countries, had experienced drought, crop failures, and loss of livestock. The latest blow had been a decision by the United States Environment Protection Agency to prohibit mango imports from Haiti because of the chemical substances used for pest control, with resulting heavy loss to the country's economy, which was already in a precarious situation. Fortunately, the ban had recently been lifted. He thanked the United Nations mission for noting priority projects in the amount of \$150 million whose implementation would place Haiti on the path of sound economic growth.

42. Mr. VILCHEZ (Nicaragua) thanked the international community, and the United Nations and its specialized agencies, particularly for their assistance to Nicaragua in recovering from drought and floods. In resolution 39/204, the General Assembly had recommended continued assistance to Nicaragua and requested a report from the Secretary-General on the progress made in implementing the resolution. According to that report by the Secretary-General, Nicaragua had received aid from the United Nations and its agencies during the period 1 April to 1 May 1985 totalling \$23,588,157. Notwithstanding that aid, however, the situation in Nicaragua had continued to deteriorate. Because of changes in the rainfall pattern, production of maize, sorghum and beans, and of primary commodities for export, was low. Consequently, Nicaragua needed continued support from the United Nations and the international community.

43. Mr. ELFORGANI (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that since the speaker from Chad was a representative of Hussein Habré, and not of the people of Chad, his own delegation wished to point out a number of facts. The spokesman for Hussein Habré had wrongly brought charges against the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya and tried to conceal the facts. The truth was that there was internal factional strife in Chad and one of the factions was represented by Hussein Habré. The country's internal problems were caused by Hussein Habré's intransigence and treason and his determination to overthrow the transitional Government democratically formed under the Lagos Reconciliation Agreement, which had been adopted by the different Chadian parties and the Organization of African Unity.

44. Had it not been for Hussein Habré's ambition there would now be peace in Chad. Since seizing the capital, Habré had tried to prevent national reconciliation, with the result that the attempt at reconciliation by the Chairman of OAU had failed. The civil war in Chad had begun in 1965 and thousands had died because of Habré's intransigence. The Libyan Arab Jamahiriya believed that national reconciliation could only be achieved through the Lagos Agreement, under the Chairman of OAU and with the participation of all the parties in Chad.

45. Mr. ATTIMER (Chad), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that his delegation was accustomed to statements aimed at distracting world public opinion from the true expansionist intentions of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya. Chad had brought the dispute repeatedly before the Security Council and Libya's delaying tactics could no longer conceal its true plan to occupy Chad. The Libyan leaders had declared outright that Chad was a natural extension of their country. It was common knowledge that the north of Chad was occupied by 4,000 Libyan soldiers, despite the withdrawal agreement of 7 September. The Lagos Agreements referred to by Qaddafi's representative had been buried by the Djamena Declaration of May 1984.

46. Mr. ELFORGANI (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) said that the representative of the illegal gang of Habré had just made a number of false accusations but one could not expect terrorists to be frank and honest.

47. Mr. HISSEIN-MI (Chad) said that he regretted having to speak again to respond to the clique from Tripoli. In all conferences, his country avoided using invective or insults in its dispute with the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya. His delegation felt that the régime, which had come to power in that country had no right to pass judgement on the Government of Chad. The sad reality was that Libya was occupying Chad with more than 5,000 soldiers and its Islamic legion, supported by heavy artillery and bombers.

AGENDA ITEM 84 (f): ENVIRONMENT

48. Ms. DANIELSEN (Norway), in introducing on behalf of the sponsors, which had been joined by Iceland and Nepal, draft resolution A/C.2/40/L.37, said that at its thirteenth session, the UNEP Governing Council had dealt with a number of important issues concerning the future of the global environment. She drew attention particularly to preambular paragraphs 4 and 7 and operative paragraphs 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 10 and 11 of the draft resolution, which the sponsors hoped could be adopted by consensus.

ORGANIZATION OF WORK

49. The CHAIRMAN said that the deadline for submission of draft resolutions under the second cluster of agenda item 84 would be 6 p.m. on Tuesday, 19 November. She suggested that the deadline for closing the list of speakers on agenda item 85 should be 6 p.m. on Monday, 18 November.

The meeting rose at 5.30 p.m.