

UNITED NATIONS
General Assembly
FORTY-FIFTH SESSION
Official Records

SECOND COMMITTEE
42nd meeting
held on
Wednesday, 14 November 1990
at 10 a.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 42nd MEETING

Chairman:

Mr. PAPADATOS

(Greece)

CONTENTS

- AGENDA ITEM 79: DEVELOPMENT AND INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC CO-OPERATION (continued)
- AGENDA ITEM 84: OPERATIONAL ACTIVITIES FOR DEVELOPMENT (continued)
- AGENDA ITEM 80: UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT
(continued)
- AGENDA ITEM 81: PROTECTION OF GLOBAL CLIMATE FOR PRESENT AND FUTURE GENERATIONS OF
MANKIND (continued)

This record is subject to correction.
Corrections should be sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned
within one week of the date of publication to the Chief of the Official Records Editing Section, Room DC2-750,
2 United Nations Plaza, and incorporated in a copy of the record.

Corrections will be issued after the end of the session, in a separate corrigendum for each Committee.

Distr. GENERAL
A/C.2/45/SR.42
3 December 1990
ENGLISH
ORIGINAL: FRENCH

90-57102 3256S (E)

/...

20p

The meeting was called to order at 10.20 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 79: DEVELOPMENT AND INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC CO-OPERATION (continued)

Draft resolutions A/C.2/45/L.30, A/C.2/45/L.31, A/C.2/45/L.36, A/C.2/45/L.39 and A/C.2/45/L.42

1. Mr. NAVAJAS-MOGRO (Bolivia) introduced the five above-mentioned draft resolutions on behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that were members of the Group of 77. With regard to draft resolution A/C.2/45/L.30, entitled "Developing human resources for development", the text reaffirmed that the human being was at the heart of the development process and that developing human resources was an essential means of ensuring that such development proceeded smoothly. That concept was the basis for the Declaration on International Economic Co-operation and the International Development Strategy for the Fourth United Nations Development Decade, as well as, at regional level, the Jakarta Plan of Action, the Khartoum Declaration and the communiqué of the tenth Meeting of the Conference of Heads of Government of the Caribbean Community. The human dimension was also the subject of the UNDP Human Development Report 1990.

2. The draft resolution emphasized the essential role of education and training, in particular the importance of modern means of communication and distance education programmes, as well as the vital role which qualified national personnel had to play in the developing countries. It stressed the need for human resources development strategies to concentrate on supportive measures in related areas such as health, nutrition, water, sanitation, housing, communications and employment, and recognized the importance of the participation of women and young people and the vital role that the public sector played in growth. It requested the Secretary-General to designate an appropriate focal point to co-ordinate the activities of different bodies of the United Nations system in the area and to submit to the General Assembly at its forty-sixth session a comprehensive report on the implementation of the resolution.

3. The States belonging to the Group of 77 hoped that they could count on the support of all members of the Committee, because developing human resources was clearly the most essential prerequisite for development.

4. Turning to draft resolution A/C.2/45/L.31, entitled "Net transfer of resources from developing countries and their impact on the economic growth and sustained development of those countries", the co-sponsors had taken as their starting-point the principle that there could be no development without investment and had stressed not only the causes of the net transfer of resources from developing countries to developed countries, but also its impact on the development of those countries. Various reliable sources, including the report of the South Commission, indicated that between 1984 and 1988, the net transfer of resources from the South to the North had totalled some \$173 billion.

(Mr. Navajas-Mogro, Bolivia)

5. Concerning draft resolution A/C.2/45/L.36, entitled "Economic stabilization programmes in developing countries", his delegation recalled the significant efforts being undertaken by developing countries in order to achieve the revitalization of their economic growth and development. The text reaffirmed that the reactivation of economic growth and development in those countries would require a concerted and committed effort by all countries and emphasized the need for appropriate measures to ensure that stabilization and adjustment programmes provided for long-term and sustained development.

6. Turning to draft resolution A/C.2/45/L.39, entitled "Report of the South Commission", his delegation recalled that the Commission, composed of 26 prominent individuals from developing countries, had set itself the goal of promoting North-South dialogue. The report that it had recently published contained information of the utmost importance and constituted a valuable contribution to the process of thinking about development. The draft resolution requested the Secretary-General, in consultation with the President of the Economic and Social Council, to convene a meeting, during the Council's second regular session in 1991 devoted to an informal exchange of views on the conclusions and recommendations contained in the report, in particular, in its executive summary. To that end, it invited Governments and the organs, bodies and organizations of the United Nations system to submit their views on the report. Lastly, it requested the Secretary-General to co-ordinate appropriate action to promote the recommendations contained therein.

7. Introducing draft resolution A/C.2/45/L.42, entitled "Industrial development co-operation and diversification and modernization of productive activities in developing countries", his delegation said that the text referred to, among other initiatives, the Lima Plan of Action, whose objective was to raise the developing countries' share in world industrial production to at least 25 per cent by the year 2000, a goal that was still far off, and to the New Delhi Plan of Action, in which a strategy had been spelt out for further industrialization of developing countries. The draft also pointed out that the General Assembly had proclaimed the Second Industrial Development Decade for Africa for the purpose of mobilizing the commitment of the international community to the industrialization of that continent. The preamble underscored the importance of direct foreign investment and entrepreneurship and the central role of UNIDO as the co-ordinating organ in the United Nations system having primary responsibility for promoting the transfer of industrial technology to developing countries.

8. The operative paragraphs stressed that developing countries needed to provide adequate support to their infant industries to enable them to build up their industrial capacities, emphasized the need for more effective international co-operation, called upon UNIDO to help developing countries evaluate and select industrial technologies suitable for their development and to formulate scientific and technological programmes and plans for their industrialization, recognized the need to support co-operation among developing countries in that regard, including the sharing of information, and recalled that industrial growth stimulated that of other areas, particularly the agricultural and service sectors. The draft resolution requested the Secretary-General, in close co-operation with UNDP,

(Mr. Navajas-Mogro, Bolivia)

UNCTAD, UNIDO and the World Bank, to prepare a study on the feasibility of creating a United Nations system fund aimed at ensuring financing for training scientists, engineers and entrepreneurs in developing countries, with a view to promoting all related sectors and disciplines supporting industrial development. The appropriate organs, organizations and bodies of the United Nations system were requested to make concrete proposals and recommendations, with a view to establishing priority programmes to be carried out in support of industrial development, and the Secretary-General was requested to give highest priority to the issue in the medium-term plan.

AGENDA ITEM 84: OPERATIONAL ACTIVITIES FOR DEVELOPMENT (continued)

Draft resolution A/C.2/45/L.32

9. Mr. HARRISON (United Kingdom) briefly introduced draft resolution A/C.2/45/L.32, entitled "Future administrative arrangements for the United Nations Pledging Conference for Development Activities".

AGENDA ITEM 79: DEVELOPMENT AND INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC CO-OPERATION (continued) (A/45/25 (Supplement No. 25), A/45/350, A/45/663 and A/45/666)

AGENDA ITEM 80: UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT (continued) (A/45/46 (Supplement No. 46), A/45/177, A/45/303, A/45/313, A/45/336-S/21385, A/45/345, A/45/361, A/45/584, A/45/598-S/21854 and A/45/666)

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

10. Mr. PEÑALOSA (Colombia) said that the problems of the developed countries could not be resolved without taking into account those of the developing countries. That was particularly true for environment-related problems, which must be the subject of a concerted and committed effort by the entire international community. Agreement currently existed both on the vital need to take decisive action to protect the ecological balance of the planet and on the close link between environment and development. The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, to be held in 1992, offered a unique opportunity to discuss strategies for environmental protection and to define clearly the guidelines for international co-operation on development. As pointed out by the President of Colombia when addressing the General Assembly, the cost of environmental protection must not fall exclusively on those developing countries that had major natural reserves. It was essential to banish the spectre of "ecological conditionality", which the countries primarily responsible for the degradation of the environment wanted to impose upon the developing countries. If prompt action was not taken to strengthen multilateral co-operation, the question might well become a new source of conflict between the North and the South.

(Mr. Peñalosa, Colombia)

11. His delegation felt that it was indispensable for the work and documents of the Preparatory Committee for the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development to focus on the close link between environment and development. It would support any decision to increase the financial resources made available to assist the developing countries to include environmental questions in their development plans and to develop environmentally sound technology.
12. It was indispensable that the developing countries should be able to participate not only in the preparations for the Conference but in the Conference itself. His delegation urged all countries to contribute generously for that purpose. It welcomed the organization and holding of regional conferences and said that it was important to set up the working group on legal and institutional matters as soon as possible. The contribution of the United Nations specialized agencies, bodies and programmes would be most valuable, as would that of governmental and non-governmental organizations. However, in respect of NGOs, only those in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council should be allowed to participate actively in the Conference. An NGO conference should be held in tandem with the United Nations Conference and it could be expected that, in accordance with the usual procedure, the conclusions of the NGO conference would be taken into account. Lastly, his delegation was in favour of the proposal that the United Nations Conference should be held at the level of Heads of State or Government.
13. Like so many others, his delegation recognized the seriousness of the problem of climate change. It had read with great interest the first report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and welcomed the results of the Second World Climate Conference, which had paved the way for the adoption of a framework convention on climate change. The General Assembly should take a decision on the proposal made by the Panel on the organization of the negotiation process which was essential if that process was to be concluded before the conference in 1992.
14. In conclusion, he expressed the hope that the common interest would override individual interests and that the spirit of consultation and agreement based on the principles of international law would avert a disaster of world-wide proportions and point the way to international co-operation for development.
15. Mr. CAMARA (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations) said that agenda items 79 (b), 80 and 81 were of particular importance for FAO in view of the multiple interactions between the environment and the management of natural resources for agriculture, forestry and fisheries and their consequences for food security. In his statement at the Second World Climate Conference, the Director-General of FAO had stressed that agriculture was the sector most at risk in any climate change and that such climate change would, in particular, exacerbate the precarious living conditions of a large number of rural people living in arid and semi-arid areas, low-lying coastal zones and other marginal lands.
16. FAO welcomed the recommendations of the scientific and technical report and the Ministerial Declaration of the Conference, which called for further research on and monitoring of the causes and impact of climate change in relation to

(Mr. Camara, FAO)

agriculture, forestry and fisheries. FAO intended to pursue and expand its programmes in those fields as it felt that the vital sectors of agriculture and food security had not been given sufficient attention by the Conference. Action should also be taken to meet short-term requirements by making policy changes in agriculture, forestry and fisheries and related trade patterns, which would make those sectors less vulnerable to the vagaries of weather and international market prices, particularly unfair terms of trade and technology transfer.

17. The threat of climate change provided added justification for strengthening several of FAO's ongoing programmes such as the global Early Warning System for food security, the Food Security Assistance Scheme, the Global Forest Resource Assessment and the Tropical Forestry Action Plan. FAO was prepared to appoint a liaison officer to assist in the preparation of the convention on climate and particularly the technical aspects of any protocols to that convention relating to agriculture and forestry and to establish the necessary links between FAO's complementary activities concerning a wider legal framework instrument on the conservation and development of forests and on biodiversity.

18. Global climate change would also certainly affect oceans and coastal zones and place additional strains on fishery resources, which were already affected in many areas by pollution and overfishing. It might, therefore, affect populations and countries that depended heavily on fisheries for their food and economic growth, and hence any efforts to protect, maintain and manage rationally the productive capacity of renewable resources were all the more justified. FAO, in particular, shared the concerns expressed in General Assembly resolution 44/225 on large-scale pelagic driftnet fishing and its impact on the living marine resources of the world's oceans and seas. One of the recommendations of the FAO expert consultation on driftnets held earlier during the current year was that there should be more studies of the legal problems posed by driftnets and that the legal régime governing fishing on the high seas should be examined more closely, possibly in collaboration with other United Nations agencies. At its most recent meeting, the Western Central Atlantic Fishery Commission had decided that, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 44/225, large-scale pelagic driftnet fishing should not be allowed in the Commission's region, that a world-wide moratorium should be imposed on all large-scale pelagic driftnet fishing on the high seas by 30 June 1992, since no effective conservation or management measures had been taken and that the statistical analysis mentioned in resolution 44/225 should be rapidly carried out in order to determine what management and conservation measures were required in connection with the use of certain types of driftnets.

19. A major FAO contribution to the preparations for the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development was being developed in connection with a joint FAO/Netherlands conference on "Agriculture and the Environment: Strategies and Tools for Sustainable Agriculture and Development", to be held in Den Bosch, the Netherlands, in April 1991. FAO was also preparing an international action programme on water resources and on sustainable agricultural development within the framework of the Mar del Plata Action Plan. It was also participating actively in the Preparatory Committee's working parties on land and agriculture, the oceans and

(Mr. Camara, FAO)

freshwater resources, inter alia. It was also working on the legal and technical elements of a possible international instrument on the conservation and development of forests and was co-operating closely with UNEP and UNESCO in the preparation of a legal instrument on biological diversity. In making those many contributions to the United Nations system-wide efforts for the protection of the environment and sustainable development, FAO wished to ensure that adequate recognition was given to the vital interests which the food, agriculture, forestry and fisheries sectors represented for the economies of the majority of member countries and to strike a proper balance between development goals and protection of the environment through the rational management and sustainable use of natural resources.

20. Mr. AL-MANA (Qatar) said that the world community was increasingly concerned over the extensive environmental degradation caused by human activities in both the rich and poor countries, which had led in some cases, to irreversible changes in the environment that threatened life-sustaining eco-systems. The many international meetings and declarations on that issue (such as the London Conference and the Helsinki, Nordic, Caracas, Amazon and Brasilia Declarations) demonstrated how important the problem was.

21. Environmental problems cut across national boundaries and could therefore be settled only through close co-operation among all nations and by means of international, regional and national measures. Such international instruments adopted on the subject as the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal were among the major results of that co-operation.

22. Like other countries of the world, Qatar was aware of the gravity of environmental problems and had introduced all the necessary legislative and institutional measures to prevent environmental degradation. Together with the other States members of the Gulf Co-operation Council, it was currently considering the possibility of acceding to the Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer and the relevant Protocol.

23. Environment and development were closely related. In its resolution 44/228, the General Assembly, convinced that the protection and enhancement of the environment were major issues that affected the well-being of peoples and economic development throughout the world, had decided to convene a United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, which would enable the international community to elaborate strategies and measures to halt environmental degradation in the context of national and international efforts to promote sustainable and environmentally sound development taking into account both the needs of present generations and the legitimate interests of future generations.

24. The success of the Conference would depend on wide-scale international co-operation and continuing growth in all countries. In particular, the developing countries must be provided with the additional resources and the technology they needed to protect their environment. Qatar attached great importance to that meeting and hoped that it would yield fruitful recommendations that would foster the development process and facilitate environmental protection.

(Mr. Al-Mana, Qatar)

25. Environmental problems could obviously not be resolved overnight; clear objectives must therefore be defined and all countries must work together to achieve them.

26. Mr. NATHON (Hungary) said that, during the past four decades, Hungary had experienced a period of rapid industrialization and urbanization, as well as an intensification of agricultural production, which had resulted in serious problems of environmental, atmospheric and water pollution. With its economic programme for national renewal, the Government intended to create conditions that would make all enterprises take an interest in protecting the environment. To that end, it would introduce a system of subsidies to encourage environmental protection through tax exemptions, preferential credits and subsidies. Society as a whole would benefit from the results of such measures.

27. International co-operation played an extremely important role in resolving environmental problems. In that regard, his delegation was encouraged by the statement made in the Committee by the States members of the European Community and was pleased to note that, without diverting attention and resources away from the developing countries, they intended to strengthen their co-operation with the Eastern and Central European countries in order to help them to deal with environmental degradation. In response to current and future environmental concerns and following the initiative launched by President Bush during his visit to Budapest in 1989, a Regional Environmental Centre for Central and Eastern Europe had just been set up in the capital. Its function was to preserve, improve and protect environmental quality and public health in the region and to promote nature conservation by utilizing world-wide experience and resources. The Centre would endeavour to accomplish those objectives in four main areas: data collection and dissemination, development of institutional capability, exchanges of information and environmental education. As an independent organization, it would not undertake research activities or emergency environmental action. It would encourage environmentally sound policies and changes at the local, regional and global levels by supporting pollution prevention, the transfer of technology, energy conservation and action to enhance public awareness about environmental health and environmental quality. Above all, it would serve as a source of information and assistance for the inhabitants of the region and would facilitate the development of national and regional environmental policies and programmes.

28. Hungary played an active role in seeking a solution to global environmental problems within the framework of UNEP and other international organizations. It participated in the Global Environment Monitoring System and supplied information to the International Register of Potentially Toxic Chemicals. It had also become a party to three important international conventions on nature conservation and species preservation, namely, the Bonn, Ramsar and Washington Conventions. It had signed the Montreal Protocol aimed at preventing any further depletion of the ozone layer. Following a Hungarian-Swiss initiative, an international agreement regulating the transboundary transport of hazardous wastes had been completed and opened for signature in 1989. Hungary also participated in the environmental and water conservation programmes launched under the auspices of the Economic

(Mr. Nathon, Hungary)

Commission for Europe. It had been among the first countries to ratify the Convention on Long-Range Transboundary Air Pollution, adopted in Geneva in 1979, and had also signed the protocols to that Convention aimed at reducing sulphur dioxide and nitrogen oxide emissions.

29. Hungary fully supported the preparatory work for the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development and welcomed the outcome of the first session of its Preparatory Committee held at Nairobi in August. In that connection, it intended to establish in the near future a Hungarian National Committee on the Environment which would be composed of representatives of governmental institutions and of movements dealing with environmental protection, and would be the spearhead of nation-wide preparations for the Conference. Hungary supported the proposal by the Secretary-General of the Conference that the issues to be addressed should be divided into six principal fields, and considered that countries should be represented at the highest level. It was also in favour of the broadest possible participation of non-governmental organizations and was convinced that the Bergen Conference, organized by the Economic Commission for Europe, had made an important contribution to the preparations for the 1992 Conference.

30. Hungary attached great importance to questions of climate change and welcomed the results of the Second World Climate Conference and its Ministerial Declaration. It hoped that the organizational arrangements recommended would enable the negotiating process for a convention on climate change to be completed before the 1992 Conference. The future of Hungary was greatly affected by changes in its climate. The 1990 drought had inflicted heavy losses on the national economy. Hungary particularly wished to prevent the desertification of the country as a result of climate change, which might affect the energy supply, food production and water management. Disturbing signs had already appeared, such as the catastrophic fall in the groundwater level in the region of the Danube and the Tisza. It was therefore particularly interested in the preparation of reliable forecasts about climate change and its consequences, the adoption of effective international measures to eliminate climate change resulting from human activities and restore the environment to its original state, and the implementation of the necessary measures to combat the harmful consequences of inevitable changes in the climate. Those three questions called for wide-scale international co-operation, with the active participation of all competent organizations; special attention should be paid to regional co-operation among the countries of the Danube basin. Hungary supported the realization of the principles laid down in the Ministerial Declaration of the Second World Climate Conference and its programme of action, and offered to convey the results of the scientific research of its national institutions to international organizations.

31. Mrs. CHAN (Singapore) said that the issue of environment and development had moved to the forefront of United Nations concerns because of environmental degradation in both developed and developing countries. That made the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, scheduled for 1992, one of the most important conferences of the decade. In order to make progress in the preparatory work, the following considerations must be borne in mind: firstly, it

(Mrs. Chan, Singapore)

was important not to lose sight of the basic theme of the conference, namely, the nexus between environment and development; secondly, it was important to avoid an ideological confrontation between the North and the South, since the issue at stake was one of immense importance for all mankind; thirdly, the policy recommendations that would be made must be backed up by financial commitments so that they could be translated into practical programmes, and the developed countries must help the developing countries with financial assistance and the transfer of technology so that the latter could embark upon a course of environmentally sound and sustainable development.

32. Her delegation welcomed the progress made by the Preparatory Committee for the Conference. According to the Committee's report on its first substantive session (A/45/46), the General Assembly was expected to take action on five of the decisions adopted at the Nairobi meeting. It was hoped that the Second Committee would be able to endorse those decisions without reopening the discussion on the issues.

33. With regard to the protection of global climate for present and future generations of mankind, her delegation welcomed the work of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and of the Second World Climate Conference. It was generally accepted that over the previous century, the world's mean surface temperature had risen by 0.5° C and that the sea level had risen by 10 to 15 centimetres. Despite scientific uncertainty concerning the build-up of greenhouse gases, the risk of global warming demanded immediate action. Her delegation therefore supported the recommendation made at the Second World Climate Conference that negotiations on a framework convention on climate change should begin without delay. Such a convention should be supplemented by a number of protocols, each dealing with one of the greenhouse gases. Any attempt to reduce carbon dioxide emissions must take into account the fact that those emissions varied considerably from one country to another. The industrialized countries were responsible for three quarters of carbon emissions, while the developing countries contributed only the remaining quarter. Given the disparities, it would be inequitable to freeze carbon emissions at existing levels for all countries or to propose that all countries should reduce their current emissions by 20 per cent by the year 2010. A fairer approach would be to require those countries which were responsible for a higher percentage of world carbon emissions to reduce them substantially. The developing countries must also attempt to reduce their emissions, but without hampering their economic development. Her delegation felt that the General Assembly should focus its efforts on adopting a resolution which would launch the negotiating process for a framework convention on climate change, instead of discussing the substantive issues to be covered by that convention.

34. Singapore was committed to the protection and preservation of the global environment. Its small size had compelled it to adopt an environmentally sensitive development policy which had enabled it to avoid much of the environmental degradation frequently associated with rapid urban and economic expansion and population growth. The country's recently established national council on the environment was a voluntary non-governmental organization comprising distinguished

(Mrs. Chan, Singapore)

personalities from the private and public sectors, which sought to help the Government to transform Singapore into a clean, green and environmentally conscious country. Singapore was also working closely with its partners in the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) to formulate practical measures to tackle environmental problems at both the regional and international levels. At their meeting in Malaysia in June, the Ministers of the Environment of ASEAN had pledged, inter alia, to harmonize environmental quality standards, to undertake research and development activities, to promote the use of non-polluting technologies and to include environmental factors in economic calculations. In that context, the Governments of the ASEAN countries had established six working groups, composed of senior officials, to examine regional environmental problems concerning the sea and the marine environment, nature conservation, transboundary pollution, environmental economics, environmental management, and public information and education on the environment. It should be possible, before the 1992 Conference, to achieve effective agreements such as the framework convention on climate change. The hopes of the entire world for the successful management of the imminent environmental crisis must not be disappointed.

35. Mr. BOECK (Austria) said that the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development would not be concerned solely with development and conservation or environmental technology; its main theme would be the relationship between man and society, on the one hand, and environmental resource systems, on the other. It was therefore necessary to approach that obvious but complex relationship in a balanced manner in order to put the Conference to its best possible use. General Assembly resolution 44/228 provided a sound basis and an adequate structure for the preparatory work for the Conference, and the first session of the Preparatory Committee had led to a useful exchange of ideas on ways of dealing with the concepts of environment and development. However, a more focused and structured approach should be adopted in order to compare the various analyses of that interdependence and to devise policies that would integrate those issues into a strategy of sustainable development.

36. In its report on the Nairobi session (A/45/46), the Preparatory Committee had highlighted the multitude of subjects involved. In that context, the role of the Secretariat, particularly in the preparation of reports and studies and the gathering of information, was essential to the success of the preparatory process. His delegation hoped that the next meeting of the Preparatory Committee would be a decisive step that would galvanize the activities and energies of the many participants in the process. It attached special importance to the contribution of non-governmental organizations and the participation of parliamentarians and members of the scientific and technological community. Furthermore, for a better understanding of environmental resource systems as production factors, it was necessary to secure the participation of representatives of such economic sectors as energy, industry, transportation and agriculture. In the context of the preparations for the Conference, his delegation supported the establishment of a working group on legal and institutional matters to deal with far-reaching legal implications, such as those outlined in paragraph 15 of General Assembly resolution 44/228. It therefore hoped that, in accordance with decision 1/26 of the

(Mr. Boeck, Austria)

Preparatory Committee, the Secretary-General of the Conference would submit to the next session of the Preparatory Committee precise recommendations concerning the establishment of such a working group, including its terms of reference.

37. On the issue of climate change, he felt that the conclusions of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, as well as the Conference Statement of the scientific and technical component of the Second World Climate Conference, demonstrated that mankind ran serious risks when emissions from human activities continued substantially to increase atmospheric concentrations of greenhouse gases and that there existed a variety of options to reduce global warming. In view of the danger of irreversible damage to the environment, his delegation felt that environmental policies should anticipate, prevent and attack the causes of environmental degradation. Industrialized nations had a special responsibility to take measures to stabilize emissions of greenhouse gases that were not controlled by the Montreal Protocol, to reduce carbon dioxide emissions by 20 per cent of 1988 levels by the year 2005, as recommended at the Toronto Conference, and to investigate the feasibility of achieving greater reductions. In its 1990 report on energy, the Austrian Government had adopted as a national target the recommended 20 per cent reduction of carbon dioxide emissions by the year 2005. Various studies on the attainment of that target were currently being conducted in Austria, including a study on the potential for energy conservation, which deserved particular attention. The scenarios presented in a preliminary report showed that it was possible to achieve the 20 per cent reduction through moderate measures to promote the rational use of energy. The negotiations on a framework convention on climate change should address the reduction of greenhouse gases, reforestation and forest conservation, as well as research and monitoring. Moreover, it was necessary to consider the specific needs of developing countries in the fields of research and monitoring, development and transfer of environmentally sound technology, adaptation measures to counter the adverse effects of climate change, and additional financial resources. His delegation strongly recommended that the negotiating body for the elaboration of a convention and protocols on climate change should be an intergovernmental negotiating committee under the auspices of UNEP and WMO. It also supported the recommendations of the Ad Hoc Working Group, contained in the annex to document A/45/696. His delegation felt that, pursuant to resolution 44/207, the task of the General Assembly at its current session was to take a clear decision on a negotiating mechanism so that the negotiation process could begin as soon as possible.

38. Austria regarded the Ministerial Declaration adopted at the Second World Climate Conference as an imperfect compromise. It regretted that no concrete commitments had been made concerning strategies for the reduction of greenhouse gases, energy efficiency, forest conservation, and the parallel negotiations on the protocols. However, it had joined in the consensus because it expected that the forthcoming negotiations would result in the definition of the necessary targets and programmes. The industrialized countries must help the developing countries to take measures concerning the environment, particularly by providing them with additional financial resources. His delegation therefore welcomed the idea of creating a global environmental facility, as proposed by the World Bank, UNDP and

(Mr. Boeck, Austria)

UNEP. That mechanism would focus on guarding against the depletion of the ozone layer and global warming. Austria would be prepared to make an appropriate contribution to that facility when it was established.

39. Mr. WON (Observer for the Republic of Korea) said that, since the resolution on the environment adopted by the General Assembly in 1987, the world community had become aware of the magnitude of environmental degradation. That awareness had given rise to the concept of environmentally sound and sustainable development, a concept difficult to put into practice, particularly for developing countries facing grave economic difficulties.

40. His Government attached great importance to the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, on account of the major issues it would deal with, and considered that all nations, developed and developing, must participate fully in the preparatory process for that meeting. Establishment of the bases for mutual understanding and earnest dialogue from the outset would ensure unified action to deal with protection of the environment.

41. The Conference should be the starting point on the road to global sustainable development. Environmental concerns should not, however, be used to inhibit the growth potential of the developing countries. Since there was a consensus on the need to protect the environment, due consideration should be given to the needs of developing countries by granting them financial resources and transferring environmentally sound technologies to them on preferential terms. It was to be hoped that the 1992 Conference would be of value in that regard.

42. With regard to the Second World Climate Conference, his delegation believed that support and encouragement should continue to be given to the activities of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, so as to pinpoint the problems and formulate strategies at an early date. In view of their capabilities and the responsibility they bore in that regard, the industrialized countries should be the first to act.

43. The negotiations on a framework convention on climate change were to commence shortly. It was to be hoped that the fullest possible participation would be secured, and that the instrument would contain a commitment to provide developing countries with additional financial resources and technology which would enable them to participate in the concerted effort being made in that field.

44. His Government accorded high priority to protection of the environment. It had taken a number of initiatives to that end, including, on the legislative side, the enactment of a framework law intended to incorporate the environment into development policy. At the institutional level, the Environment Administration had become a ministry and the National Environmental Preservation Committee had been considerably strengthened and was now presided over by the Prime Minister. Eager to participate actively in the 1992 Conference, his country had also established a working group of experts to produce recommendations and guidelines for the preparation of a national report.

(Mr. Won, Observer, Korea)

45. With regard to the problem of driftnet fishing, his delegation shared the view expressed by the Japanese delegation, that that type of fishing did not threaten the effective conservation of resources if appropriate conservation and management measures were taken.

46. In view of the importance of the question, his country had established a scientific observer programme with the United States of America, and had agreed with Canada to exchange data and information on the question. It would continue to participate in the scientific research being done on the subject.

47. Mr. SILALAH (Indonesia) said that his country was acutely conscious of the vulnerability of the world's ecosystem and of the threats that its destruction would pose to development. It thus attached great importance to the preparations for the Conference on Environment and Development. Responsibility for restoring the environment must be equitably shared among all nations, taking into account the disparities between developed and developing countries and the fact that the latter should not be penalized for the excesses of the former. Rather, the linkages between environmental concerns and the legitimate development needs of developing countries should be recognized.

48. The Preparatory Committee for the Conference had recently held its first substantive session in Nairobi, at which it had made recommendations that would make it possible to speed up the preparations, and had stressed the magnitude of the problem, alerting the international community to the seriousness of the crisis. Nevertheless, while his delegation supported the decisions taken at the session, it regretted the lack of emphasis on the development dimension. No one disputed the importance of such issues as ozone layer depletion, climate change, desertification or deforestation, but they needed to be considered in the overall context of environmentally sound development. The close relationship between the environment and development and between poverty and environmental degradation must be studied in greater depth.

49. In a world of rapidly increasing interdependence between nations and between problems, there was a need to find integrated strategies that would prevent further degradation of the environment and at the same time promote sustainable and environmentally sound development. In the current post-cold-war period, it was to be hoped that the growing international co-operation for the protection of the environment would make it possible to overcome all the difficulties. In any negotiations on the elaboration of an international legal instrument for the enhancement of the environment, the development of the developing countries should be fully taken into account.

50. Indonesia attached great importance to the concept of environmentally sound development, and conceived its own development in terms of a balanced approach, reconciling the satisfaction of material needs and the quality of life. Its natural resources were divided into two categories: those that must be protected, and would therefore remain unexploited, and those that must be exploited for development purposes. Among the resources to be preserved was the tropical rain

(Mr. Silalahi, Indonesia)

forest, which had been recognized as the world's biologically richest ecosystem. Recognizing the importance of that resource to its economy, the Government was determined to manage its tropical forests rationally, for the benefit of present and future generations, even if that policy called for sacrifices, for it had simultaneously to strive to meet the increasing needs of a growing population. It was thus imperative that the world community should help it to meet those needs and to pursue its environmentally oriented policy.

51. On the alarming question of climate change and global warming, his delegation welcomed the results of the recent Second World Climate Conference. The build-up of billions of tons of greenhouse gases could have devastating effects upon the climate and pose a direct threat to life on the planet. Climate change was now recognized as an environmental problem whose potential consequences for mankind could be extremely serious; the Conference had thus rightly stressed the need for further scientific research and monitoring programmes, in search of innovative solutions.

52. Bearing in mind the need to protect the environment while ensuring sustainable development, the 1992 United Nations Conference must strongly reflect the interdependence between development issues and environmental concerns, which were mutually reinforcing. It must also encourage active co-operation between developed and developing countries.

53. Mr. ADEKUOYE (Nigeria) said that it was very difficult to reconcile the need for sustained or accelerated development with the maintenance of a healthy environment in all countries. As a result of the developed countries' patterns of production and consumption and the unhealthy exploitation of their natural resources by the developing countries, mankind now faced a serious problem: how to arrest and reverse the process of degradation of the environment that was threatening life-sustaining systems. Greater international co-operation was needed in order to solve that problem.

54. Dramatic improvements in the international political climate opened up the prospect of a world united in a common endeavour to preserve a healthy environment and to guarantee a common security for present and future generations. The end to the conflicts should make it possible to release resources that would be devoted to protection of the environment.

55. The United Nations system must be in the forefront of that process and co-ordinate the efforts of the international community. In that context, the Conference on Environment and Development should enable it to demonstrate that it was capable of dealing effectively with the problems, transcending all differences, particularly between more developed and less developed countries.

56. Developing countries were extremely vulnerable to environmental degradation, because they were poorly equipped both financially and technologically to combat the negative impact of such factors as climate change, depletion of the ozone layer, transboundary pollution, or dumping of toxic waste. In addition, some

(Mr. Adekuoye, Nigeria)

cultivation systems and traditional practices also caused environmental degradation in many developing countries, contributing to soil erosion, deforestation and desertification (shifting and fallow cultivation methods, excessive use of wood fuel, overuse of forests, for example). Developed countries must promote ecologically sound policies to ensure sustainable development both for themselves and for developing countries.

57. For example, there was an urgent need for all countries to establish effective standards for disposal of toxic waste. The transboundary movement of such waste must also be rigorously regulated, and it must not be sent to countries technologically incapable of safely disposing of it. In that context, his Government had recently established the Federal Environmental Protection Agency. It also placed increasing importance on combating desertification, and additional resources had been allocated for reforestation projects. Nigeria's coastal regions had suffered from pollution caused by oil prospecting, and oil pollution had depleted living marine resources. Some areas had suffered flooding after sudden increases in sea level. The Government was taking vigorous measures to address those problems but, because of the high cost, it had requested assistance from the competent United Nations agencies and the international community.

58. The 1990s should be a decade of international co-operation in development and environmental protection. That co-operation should, however, respect national goals and priorities and take into account the efforts of States to protect their environment.

59. In developing countries, urgent measures for natural resource conservation were required. Development assistance and international economic co-operation should address that aspect of the problem, which so far had been neglected and which affected the least developed countries in particular.

60. Over the past 10 years, the gap between developed and developing countries had widened greatly. Because of inequities in international economic relations, developing countries had suffered a decrease in the resources available to devote to the environment. That impoverishment was at the root of the increase in environmental degradation. There was an urgent need, therefore, to create a positive synthesis between economic and environmental imperatives, and to provide additional financial and managerial resources to developing countries.

61. Regional co-operation organizations gave higher priority to environmental problems. For example, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) currently incorporated into its programmes measures to promote environmentally sound development. With regard to bilateral co-operation, Niger and Nigeria had made a joint request for external assistance for anti-desertification projects.

62. The 1992 Conference should recognize the need to elaborate on a wide variety of environmental policies, particularly concerning drought and desertification control, preservation of tropical rain forests, protection of certain species on the brink of extinction, and conservation of biological diversity. Environmental

(Mr. Adekuoye, Nigeria)

protection activities must be intensified at all levels. Nigeria welcomed the solidarity demonstrated by all members of the international community in the search for solutions to environmental problems.

63. Ms. DUEÑAS de WHIST (Ecuador) said that environmental problems, which threatened the well-being of mankind, had for some time been the subject of countless analyses, studies and reports from the most diverse sources. The environment had become a fashionable topic. She wondered how many trees had been felled to produce the paper needed to publish all that literature.

64. The difficulty with development was that it must be lasting, or, in the words of the Brundtland report, a process of change ensuring harmony between exploitation of resources, direction of investments, orientation of technological progress and institutional change, increasing the present and future potential in order to meet the needs and aspirations of mankind.

65. Environmental degradation was an evil which must be detected and treated in time, before it became irreversible. The first diagnosis dated back to the 1972 Stockholm Conference on the Human Environment. Since then, it had been amply demonstrated that sustainable development must be based on conservation and on the protection of nature, and its non-renewable resources, including those resources believed to be inexhaustible such as air, water and even climate.

66. Environmental damage was becoming an irreversible process, and that had led the deputy secretary of the Smithsonian Institute to say that the battle for the environment would be won or lost during the 1990s. Since the 1972 Conference, many theoretical and practical principles had been established in regard to environmental protection, but for the most part they had never been applied at the local or regional level, not to mention the global level. For that reason, the international community must urgently take the measures required. Inaction would be tantamount to deliberately causing a catastrophe of unimaginable scope.

67. The relationship between man and nature had been studied sufficiently already, and it was time for action. The United Nations had an exceptional responsibility in that area; furthermore, its mandate was sufficiently broad to allow it to take the lead. The representative of Bolivia had stressed that fact when he had spoken on behalf of the Group of 77; the delegation of Ecuador fully supported his statement.

68. The best way to resolve serious environmental problems in developing countries was through appropriate execution of integrated economic and social development plans which respected the environment without limiting the potential of various population sectors. Any error could have serious consequences: erosion was an example.

69. Three basic factors were needed for short-term solutions. It was clear that the first two, knowledge and means of action, already existed, and she hoped that the third, collective and individual commitment, existed as well. In common with

(Ms. Dueñas de Whist, Ecuador)

the forthcoming United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, the United Nations had fundamental responsibility for rapid implementation of solutions in that area and for starting the process towards implementation.

70. Mr. SEPELAK (Czechoslovakia) said that the world community was fully aware that if solutions were not found rapidly to environmental problems, the very existence of mankind would be threatened.

71. In view of the devastation caused by the former, totalitarian régime, his Government had made rehabilitation of the environment a priority. During the transition period to a market economy, the economic reforms introduced took into account the internationally accepted concept of sustainable and ecologically sound development.

72. The United Nations Conference on the Human Environment, held in 1972 at Stockholm, had attempted to define global problems relating to the environment; the Conference on Environment and Development planned for 1992 would have to examine practical proposals for solutions to those problems. Considering the growing threat of an ecological catastrophe, it was imperative that the meeting should mark the beginning of joint action by the international community.

73. His delegation evaluated with a certain degree of optimism the conclusions of the recent Bergen regional conference regarding the report of the World Commission on Environment and Development, and the conclusions of the Preparatory Committee for the Conference on Environment and Development at the substantive session recently held at Nairobi. At the Conference, participants should make specific commitments to the environment, taking into account the capabilities of the developed countries and the needs of the developing world. The Preparatory Committee had taken a first step in that direction, proposing three objectives for the Conference: issuance of an Earth charter as a statement of commitment to action to promote environmental protection and sustainable development; elaboration of a programme of action for the 1990s and the twenty-first century; and drafting of conventions on climate and biological diversity.

74. The debate, however, indicated that it would not be possible to attain the objectives of the Conference without prior clarification of general principles and fundamental concepts. While there was a common understanding that the world environment could be preserved through ecologically sound development, the very definitions of that concept and of other basic principles, such as accurate evaluation of environmental risks or the notion of critical loads, were still far from being universally agreed. At the same time, the preparatory work was vital for the drafting of the above-mentioned conventions.

75. For that purpose, Czechoslovakia advocated the establishment of a third working group, on legal and institutional questions, which would also be entrusted with elaborating the basic principles concerned. It was ready to take the initiative in such work. It also hoped to make a concrete contribution to the elaboration of the concept of the environmental aspects of security, conscious as it was of the growing identity of views on that issue.

(Mr. Sepelak, Czechoslovakia)

76. At Nairobi, the Preparatory Committee had also rightly pointed to another significant component of the action to be taken in support of sustainable development, namely, ecological education. Democratic institutions and society as a whole - and especially young people - must be involved in that process. For that purpose, Czechoslovakia had proposed the establishment of an "Ecological Academy", which might be a part of the World Ecological Academy to be established in Switzerland in accordance with the proposal of UNEP.

77. The Preparatory Committee had an important role to play in preparing for the Conference, whose success would largely depend on the Committee's efforts. Non-governmental organizations should also participate actively in the process and contribute to the implementation of specific measures in that field. It was also essential to establish constructive and effective co-operation between the Committee, UNEP and the Secretariat, and also between the United Nations system, national Governments and independent sectors.

78. The complexity of the documents to be prepared pursuant to resolution 44/228 also necessitated a strengthening of the mechanisms and institutions involved in management of the environment, in order to enable them to examine systematically all issues pertaining to the environment, including the linkage with development. In particular, the effectiveness of UNEP as a catalyst and co-ordinator of system-wide activities relating to the environment must be enhanced.

79. The question of protection of global climate rightly occupied a prominent place in the cluster of issues under consideration. It was fortunate that deliberations in that sphere were intensifying, and that there was recognition of the need to develop co-operation between developed and developing countries in order to halt negative trends which were liable to have serious consequences for the global environment. Czechoslovakia's accession to the Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer and the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer was a concrete example of its positive approach to the solution of that issue.

80. The report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, the results of the second special session of the UNEP Governing Council and the recent World Climate Conference had provided new information and contributed to the practical preparation of the framework convention on that subject.

81. His country reaffirmed that it would exert its best efforts at the regional and international levels in order to contribute to the preservation of the environment.

82. Mr. HASSAN (Pakistan) noted that the international community was becoming increasingly aware of the devastating effects on life-support systems caused by deterioration of the environment, and of the fact that, to halt that process, concerted action was required.

83. General Assembly resolution 44/228 listed the basic environmental issues to be addressed and comprehensively laid down the objectives of the 1992 Conference.

/...

(Mr. Hassan, Pakistan)

Countries must commit themselves to protection and enhancement of the environment through national action and international co-operation. By joining the consensus on the resolution, his country had undertaken to contribute to the implementation of its objectives.

84. His delegation supported the efforts being made to implement the decisions and resolutions recently adopted by the Governing Council of UNEP, and welcomed the results of the deliberations of the Preparatory Committee for the Conference, which were also contributing to the implementation of resolution 44/228.

85. In adopting the new International Development Strategy, the international community had recognized that the process of environmental degradation was closely linked to economic development. Poverty aggravated the problems of deforestation and desertification, thus proving that degradation of the environment could not be discussed in isolation; any strategy on the environment must take into account the development process. The problem was complex, and required the co-operation of the international community. The developed countries, as the major source of pollution, bore the primary responsibility in that field. However, the developing countries must participate fully in the debate and must decide on their own strategies for confronting the problem.

86. The developing countries must be given the wherewithal to anticipate and address environmental threats and emergencies; the technological means available to them were outdated. The transfer of technology must therefore be accelerated in order to assist them in combating pollution, and particularly industrial pollution. The co-operation of the developed countries in that field would facilitate the introduction of a global strategy to halt deterioration of the environment.

87. His delegation supported the efforts of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, whose first report offered useful information on the possible elements to be included in the convention on climate change. It was, however, of the utmost importance to enable the developing countries to participate fully in the deliberations of the Panel.

88. Pakistan faced the problems of desertification, waterlogging and salinity, soil degradation and water-borne diseases. His Government had taken concrete steps which indicated its concern, and it intended to prepare a comprehensive environmental-protection policy. It had introduced a national conservation strategy with the aim of maintaining essential ecological processes and life-support systems, and of preserving biological diversity.

89. The preparatory process for the 1992 Conference should be fully consonant with the letter and spirit of resolution 44/228. By maintaining that process within the limits established by the resolution, a contribution would be made to the success of that important meeting.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.