



SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 19th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. AL-ASH TAL (Democratic Yemen)

later: Mr. de ROJAS (Venezuela)

later: Mr. JØNCK (Denmark)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

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

Draft decision on the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States
(A/C.2/41/L.13)

1. Mr. SEKULIĆ (Yugoslavia), introducing the draft decision on behalf of the Group of 77, said that the Group attached great importance to the implementation of the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States. The draft decision was being submitted with a view to assisting the Secretary-General in the preparation of the comprehensive and analytical report requested in General Assembly resolution 40/182 in order to ensure systematic and comprehensive consideration of the implementation of the Charter. However, it gave no new tasks to the Secretary-General, but simply sought to involve Governments in the preparation of the report.

(a) TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT (continued)

Draft resolution on specific measures in favour of island developing countries
(A/C.2/41/L.12)

2. Mr. SEKULIĆ (Yugoslavia), introducing the draft resolution on behalf of the Group of 77, reviewed the content of the text and said that since it was very similar to earlier General Assembly resolutions on the issue, he hoped that it could be adopted without a vote.

(b) FOOD PROBLEMS (continued)

Draft resolution on food and agricultural problems (A/C.2/41/L.11)

3. Mr. SEKULIĆ (Yugoslavia), introducing the draft resolution on behalf of the Group of 77, said that the acuteness of the food problem in many developing countries, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa, had prompted the Group of 77 to address it as an issue of global importance. Food problems were often problems of development. Without adequate economic growth, few developing countries could experience agricultural growth that kept pace with population growth. National Governments required external support in the form of investments, mechanization, fertilizer and pesticides to tackle that problem. Food problems in the developing countries were also related to international trade in agricultural products: surpluses in developed countries where food production was subsidized had a negative impact on food production in developing countries, another reason why an international approach was necessary. After outlining the content of the draft resolution, he expressed the hope that the text as a whole would be unanimously endorsed by the Committee.

(c) NEW AND RENEWABLE SOURCES OF ENERGY: REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON THE
DEVELOPMENT AND UTILIZATION OF NEW AND RENEWABLE SOURCES OF ENERGY (continued)

Draft resolution on the report of the Committee on the Development and Utilization
of New and Renewable Sources of Energy (A/C.2/41/L.10)

4. Mr. SEKULIĆ (Yugoslavia), introducing the draft resolution on behalf of the Group of 77, said that the Group continued to attach importance to the Nairobi Programme of Action for the Development and Utilization of New and Renewable Sources of Energy as a framework for international co-operation in the field of energy. Consequently, the draft resolution before the Committee was action-oriented and designed to stimulate the implementation of the Programme of Action, inter alia, through the preparation of a set of updated or new proposals for consideration by the Committee on the Development and Utilization of New and Renewable Sources of Energy. The conclusions and recommendations of technical panels and meetings of experts should be used in identifying areas for action. Attention should also be focused on the need to mobilize the financial resources required for the development of new and renewable sources of energy; in that connection, the draft resolution invited Governments to increase their voluntary contributions to the UNDP Energy Account.

AGENDA ITEM 12: REPORT OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL (continued) (A/41/3, 118, 123, 179, 315, 319 and Corr.1 and Add.1 and 2, 320 and Add.1, 326, 329, 342, 344, 346, 354, 382, 410, 415, 461 and Corr.1, 462, 474, 588 and Corr.1; A/C.2/41/L.2-4 and L.14; E/1986/68; E/1986/L.30, annex)

Draft decision on protection against products harmful to health and the environment
(A/C.2/41/L.14)

5. Mr. SEKULIĆ (Yugoslavia), introducing the draft decision on behalf of the Group of 77, said that the text was self-explanatory. The Group was submitting the draft decision in the hope that the General Assembly would endorse the decision taken by the Economic and Social Council in its resolution 1986/72.

General discussion (continued)

6. The CHAIRMAN announced that the Executive Secretary of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia would be unable to address the Committee as scheduled. However, the text of his statement would be distributed to Committee members.

7. Mr. WIJewardane (Sri Lanka) said that his country attached great importance to the International Year of Shelter for the Homeless. Although adequate shelter had been universally recognized as a basic human right, approximately one quarter of the world's population lived in extremely unsatisfactory conditions, and the problem was particularly acute in the developing countries. His delegation believed that the provision of adequate shelter should be viewed as a means of promoting social and economic development.

8. According to its biennial programme of work, the Committee was not scheduled to consider the International Year of Shelter for the Homeless during the current session. Nevertheless, he wished to comment briefly on the progress made with

(Mr. Wijewardane, Sri Lanka)

regard to the International Year, given that the General Assembly would not have another opportunity for such a review before the Year began in January 1987. At its ninth session, held in May 1986, the Commission on Human Settlements had adopted a resolution requesting all Governments to submit detailed reports on their activities in the Year to the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements before 31 October 1986. The Commission had also recommended to the General Assembly that it should devote at least two plenary meetings at its forty-second session to issues related to shelter, in observance of the International Year.

9. His delegation endorsed Economic and Social Council decisions 1986/162 and 1986/163 and commended the Executive Director of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements for the work done by his organization in preparation for the International Year. The success of the Year would, of course, depend on the action taken by Governments at the national level and the effective co-ordination of that action at the global level. He welcomed the fact that more than 130 countries and numerous organizations were participating in programmes related to the Year, and that more than 360 projects had been identified. Of the \$4.9 million required to implement the programme for the International Year, \$4.3 million was expected from voluntary contributions, of which \$2.6 million had been pledged to date; he urged those countries which had not yet done so to help make up the \$1.7 million balance still required. Sri Lanka, for its part, had contributed \$1 million, and was also implementing a demonstration project for the Year involving information and training related to low-income shelter programmes. It was to be hoped that the results of that and the other demonstration projects would be disseminated and reviewed during 1987.

10. Sri Lanka had also inaugurated in connection with the International Year an ambitious programme, affecting more than one third of its total population, to build one million low-income housing units by 1989. The use of local building materials and technologies made the programme cost-effective, and was intended to encourage minimal State intervention but maximum State support in the form of legislative and administrative measures and financial assistance. The programme was based on the premise that builders should be encouraged to design and construct their own housing in accordance with their own needs and means. As a result, new technology and expertise were being acquired in Sri Lanka, and unemployment had been reduced.

11. Mr. VALDEZ (Peru) said that certain elements of the report of the Economic and Social Council would be instrumental in determining the future of economic international co-operation for development, and thus called for careful study by the Committee. A dichotomy appeared to exist between the Council's resolution 1986/56, on net transfer of resources from developing to developed countries, and its decision 1986/170, on the role of entrepreneurship in promoting economic development. While the resolution seemed to be focused on the inadequacy of the international model on which the major monetary, financial and trading systems were based, the decision appeared to be proposing that a discussion of the just and legitimate claims of the developing countries ought to be abandoned in favour of a topic that had never been questioned. In calling for an end to the reverse flow of

(Mr. Valdez, Peru)

resources, protectionism, the worsening in terms of trade and the debt crisis, the developing countries were fully aware of the importance of private enterprise in such problems and their solutions. It was for that very reason that they sought to restructure the existing international system and establish effective controls over transnational corporations.

12. The developing countries understood the importance of private enterprise, entrepreneurship and individual initiative in the development process; the Peruvian Constitution in fact guaranteed the existence of a pluralist entrepreneurship. There was thus no dichotomy between private and public enterprise; the dichotomy was to be found in the notion that private enterprise constituted an alternative to the reform of international economic structures called for by the Group of 77. It was in fact private enterprises in developing countries that were being forced to shut down their factories, dismiss their workers or pay them starvation wages because their products were being sold at ever lower prices or prevented from competing by arbitrary protectionist measures.

13. Since 1981, his own country had recorded a real loss equal to two years' worth of exports. That loss had not been caused by a lack of entrepreneurship in Peru, but had seriously damaged private enterprise in the country. His delegation welcomed the adoption of Economic and Social Council resolution 1986/72, which testified to the progress made in the development of the consolidated list of products harmful to health and the environment.

14. Mr. KIURU (Finland), speaking on behalf of the Nordic countries, recalled that the Economic and Social Council had been given a key role to play in the formulation of recommendations for the co-ordination of economic policies and activities within the United Nations system. However, the Council was not serving the international community as fully as it might, given its mandate. The Nordic countries consequently supported the idea put forward in the report of the Group of 18 that an in-depth study should be undertaken to review the organizational structure and working methods of the economic and social sector of the United Nations.

15. While some overlap in the deliberations of various United Nations bodies on economic issues might be unavoidable, it should be limited in so far as possible. Debates in the Economic and Social Council, the Second Committee and the Trade and Development Board had led to frustrations with the concept of multilateralism. He agreed with the Director-General for Development and International Economic Co-operation that the work of those bodies should be more complementary and that their general debates should be fewer and better articulated.

16. During the second regular session of 1986 of the Economic and Social Council, discussions on the priority topic had not produced the anticipated results, perhaps because the topic had been dealt with rather extensively during the preceding year in a number of forums. Nevertheless, the Nordic countries believed that the selection of a priority topic for Council sessions should be continued, although the Council's original role as a policy co-ordinator and guide should be borne in mind in selecting the topic. The Council should also provide political impetus for a renewal of the North-South dialogue.

(Mr. Kiuru, Finland)

17. The dialogue the Economic and Social Council had initiated among the governing bodies of United Nations organizations in the field of operational activities for development was to be commended. However, the General Assembly and the Council must take responsibility for overall co-ordination, if a coherent approach on the part of the United Nations system was to be ensured. Co-ordination required commitment, and there seemed to be much room for improvement in that regard. The Nordic countries consequently looked forward to the report of the Secretary-General on the current functioning of co-ordination in the United Nations system to be submitted to the General Assembly at its forty-second session.

18. The Economic and Social Council and the Second Committee had placed their work programmes on a biennial schedule. It was time for the Council to evaluate the success of that experience to date and recommend further streamlining, if necessary. At its second regular session of 1986, the Council had felt the impact of the financial crisis, yet the fact that it had had less time had not created any problems, indicating that multilateral institutions could be used more effectively if their members so wished. The Secretary-General, in his annual report on the work of the Organization, had proposed that the Council should hold a meeting at the ministerial level, and that that proposal should be considered once the results of the reorganization of the United Nations had been determined and the seventh session of UNCTAD had taken place.

19. Mr. NOWORYTA (Poland) said that the increasing interdependence of the world economy made it necessary to seek international economic security in order to protect the national economic policies of States from unfavourable external conditions. The preoccupation with the external economic environment could be seen in the adoption by the Economic and Social Council of a resolution on confidence-building in international economic relations. The Council should focus attention on the need for improved management of international economic interdependence. The Group of 18 had recommended the establishment of an intergovernmental body to carry out an in-depth study of the intergovernmental structure in the economic and social fields. The point of departure for such a study should be the acknowledgement that the social and economic sectors of the United Nations system needed to adjust, as many Member States had already done, to the changing world economic environment and to increased international economic interdependence.

20. The study should not ignore the growing importance of the links between peace and development. Security must come to mean more than merely liberating mankind from direct, physical threat. It must also comprise the existence of material conditions for the attainment of goals set by individual nations, through, inter alia, their active participation in international economic relations. The Council must play its role in the fulfilment of those objectives.

21. Mr. ZVRZDIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that the Soviet Union was strongly in favour of strengthening the role of the Economic and Social Council in accordance with the Charter; the Council should concentrate its work on key world economic problems and the development of equitable and mutually advantageous

(Mr. Zvezdin, USSR)

economic co-operation, and must, in keeping with its mandate, assume the leading role in co-ordinating the solution of urgent economic problems at both the global and regional level. The Secretary-General's proposal to convene a session of the Council at ministerial level deserved careful study, since it might provide the political impetus which that important body required. The consideration, next year, of the Secretary-General's report on co-ordination in the United Nations and the United Nations system, in compliance with General Assembly resolution 40/177, would provide a good opportunity for strengthening the co-ordinating functions of the Council. The reports of one or two United Nations specialized agencies should be regularly discussed at the Council's summer sessions.

22. With a view to uniting the efforts of States in improving international economic relations, the Soviet Union and Syria had submitted a draft resolution, entitled "International economic security" (E/1986/L.37), to the Council at its second regular session; that draft resolution had been referred to the General Assembly at its current session. The principal goal of the draft was to help determine existing and potential points of contact in the approaches of individual countries and groups of countries to the solution of global economic problems, and to create a safe, equitable and predictable system of international economic relations.

23. His delegation recognized the need to establish within the United Nations a favourable atmosphere for fruitful negotiations on the most important questions of international economic and scientific and technological co-operation in the interests of all countries. The Soviet Union was in favour of increasing the role and effectiveness of the Intergovernmental Committee and United Nations Centre on Science and Technology for Development as well as other scientific and technological bodies within the United Nations system, and, as its Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr. E. A. Shevardnadze, had declared before the Assembly at its current session, the Soviet Union was prepared to develop a comprehensive programme for scientific and technological co-operation within the United Nations.

24. His delegation was in favour of the speedy completion of work on the unresolved provisions of the draft Code of Conduct for Transnational Corporations at a resumed special session of the United Nations Commission on Transnational Corporations. The Commission and the Centre on Transnational Corporations must play an important part in the implementation of Council resolution 1986/56 entitled "Net transfer of resources from developing to developed countries". It was high time for the United Nations to prepare an analytical report of all kinds and forms of outflows of financial resources from the developing countries. In view of the nature of its work, the Commission on Transnational Corporations should continue to hold annual sessions.

25. The Soviet Union supported the proposals of UNESCO on the declaration of a world decade for cultural development (1988-1997) and was in favour of the adoption of a positive decision on that question at the current session of the General Assembly in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1986/69.

(Mr. Zvezdin, USSR)

26. His delegation welcomed the increased attention of economic bodies to the problem of the relationship between disarmament and development. The Economic and Social Council and other economic bodies within the United Nations should increase their contribution to arms limitation and disarmament in compliance with Assembly resolutions 38/188 J and 39/151 E.
27. Finally, political will and a responsible approach on the part of all countries would enable the Council to bring its activities into harmony with the lofty requirements of the Charter.
28. Mr. LABERGE (Canada) said that the other committees of the United Nations should, like the Second Committee, endeavour to emulate the efficient manner in which the second regular session of the Economic and Social Council had been conducted. The United Nations was challenged as never before to manifest the relevance and effectiveness of its activities and the Council must play its full part in that process of reform. Adoption of the recommendations of the Group of 18 should be supplemented by a willingness on the part of Member States to examine their procedures critically and to draw on useful advice from any quarter.
29. Canada welcomed the consensus resolutions concerning the role of women in development and the consensus achieved on the resolution on operational activities for development. Council resolution 1986/64 should make future editions of the world survey on the role of women in development more readable and useful to policy-makers, and Council resolutions 1986/65 and 1986/71 were very important from an institutional standpoint. Canada would be watching closely to see how and to what extent the United Nations system as a whole would implement those resolutions and the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women.
30. A comprehensive resolution had been adopted on operational activities for development, calling not only for adequate resource levels but also for measures to ensure that those resources were deployed through coherent and cost-effective programmes. The debate on that topic had shown what a positive contribution the Council could make when it focused on substantive issues of system-wide interest. The Council's co-ordinative mandate made it a suitable vehicle for dialogue between the United Nations and the specialized agencies.
31. Several proposals had been made for restructuring the emergency and disaster response capability of the United Nations system. Any actions with respect to UNDPRO needed to be set against the backdrop of a comprehensive view of the role of the United Nations in disaster relief and emergency assistance. Proposals in that connection could usefully be considered by the Council.
32. The political and institutional constraints which had too often impeded fulfilment of the Council's mandate needed to be addressed after the adoption of the recommendations of the Group of 18. In the meantime, however, a number of practical measures could be taken to improve the Council's work: there was need to rationalize the consideration of the "basket item" entitled "International co-operation and co-ordination within the United Nations system"; the Council's

(Mr. Laberge, Canada)

item on regional co-operation had been complex and time-consuming, and a more efficient way must be found to address regional co-operation matters. The Council also suffered from repetitive reports and resolutions; the improvements under way regarding the special economic assistance programmes should be encouraged in order to improve the efficiency of deliberations and to ensure that resources were rationally deployed, and the Council should endeavour to improve its performance in the social aspects of its work. Lastly, more extensive informal discussions during the first regular session of the Council in 1987 would help to improve the organization of its work.

33. Mr. de Rojas (Venezuela) took the Chair.

34. Mr. BATAINEH (Jordan) said that his delegation had devoted particular attention in the Economic and Social Council to issues affecting the populations of the Palestinian and other occupied Arab territories. The reports prepared by the United Nations and the various forms of assistance provided to the Palestinian people by the agencies, organs and programmes of the United Nations system deserved commendation.

35. The strangling of economic activity in the Palestinian occupied territories by the Israeli authorities had become a daily element of an organized system of repression. Those authorities had embarked on a deliberate attempt to make the economy of the West Bank and Gaza Strip dependent on that of Israel and to transform the occupied territories into a mere market for Israeli goods and a source of abundant cheap labour, without regard for the national economic interests of the Palestinian population. Israel had also undermined the region's crucial agricultural sector, forcing hundreds of Palestinian families to leave their properties. It had promulgated various laws and regulations designed to hamper agricultural development, including restrictions on the use of water which were imposed on Palestinian families but not on the residents of Israeli settlements. Of the huge areas which had been confiscated by the Israeli authorities, 50 per cent was agricultural land.

36. The occupation authorities had closed a number of factories and workshops whose products had competed with Israeli goods. Other industrial projects had failed as a result of the ban imposed on the export of competing products from the occupied territories to Israel itself. The Israelis also imposed various high taxes on economic enterprises and obstructed efforts to train the local work force. The high rate of unemployment in the West Bank and Gaza Strip which resulted from Israel's arbitrary economic practices had forced tens of thousands of Palestinians to work for Israeli enterprises in return for meagre wages. Those workers were deprived of all social benefits but were nevertheless obliged to pay taxes. The deductions made from their wages for national insurance purposes were used to promote the construction of Israeli settlements.

37. The right to full sovereignty over natural resources was a principle recognized in international law. However, Israel denied that right to the population of the occupied Arab territories and also refused to apply to those territories the provisions of the fourth Geneva Convention of 1949, to which it was

(Mr. Bataineh, Jordan)

a party. Its policy of establishing settlements was in violation of Security Council resolutions. Israel also continued to prevent United Nations fact-finding missions from entering the occupied Arab territories. Its attempts to preserve the status quo in those territories demonstrated its determination to persist in violating the rights of their populations, far from the scrutiny of the international community.

38. His delegation did not believe that progress could be achieved by peoples under occupation, and his country would therefore continue to provide full support to its brethren in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip until a lasting peace was achieved by means of a just and comprehensive solution of the Palestinian problem.

39. Mr. LOPES (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) said that, while it might seem inappropriate to consider the question of culture at a time when a large part of mankind was grappling with the problems of hunger, malnutrition and a severe economic crisis, the level of sensitivity to that plight was itself a cultural attitude, and the desire to put an end to such situations was also motivated by reference to cultural values. Culture was not a luxury. Planners increasingly recognized that their most carefully prepared projects had been unsuccessful due to a failure to take the human element into account. Such failures and waste of human and financial resources were mainly due to the fact that development had been conceived almost exclusively in terms of technological progress and economic and social growth, to the detriment of its cultural aspects. While consideration of the cultural dimension of development was no panacea for mankind's ills, the life of individuals and their societies could not be fully understood if the element of their cultural identity was neglected.

40. The draft Plan of Action for the World Decade for Cultural Development had already been the object of broad consensus within the forums consulted, including the General Conference of UNESCO, and had received the full support of the international community, which had also contributed to its elaboration. The major objectives of the Decade were to promote the involvement of the cultural dimension in development, to affirm and enrich cultural identities, to broaden participation in cultural life, and to promote international cultural co-operation. The Plan of Action laid down the principal orientations of the strategies to be pursued and proposed courses of action which would take into account the number and diversity of the areas to be covered. As the Decade progressed, specific programmes could be elaborated and implemented by Member States or by interested international organizations.

41. Long term planning and sustained effort were required in order to achieve the objectives of the Plan of Action, and the many parties involved and the diversity of the areas covered by the Decade necessitated the establishment of co-ordinating mechanisms at all levels. UNESCO was best equipped to spearhead the implementation of the Plan of Action, and it was ready to assume its responsibilities in that respect without any addition to its regular budget. The Director-General intended to propose at the forthcoming session of the General Conference of UNESCO the establishment of an Intergovernmental Committee and the adoption of an

(Mr. Lopes, UNESCO)

international programme structured around particular co-operation projects. The Executive Board of UNESCO had already expressed its support for the creation of a Permanent Secretariat for the Decade.

42. The objective of the Decade was not to drain the energies and resources of the international community in promoting the arts but rather to change its attitudes towards questions of development in order to bring about a more beneficial utilisation of resources. In order to attain that objective, it was necessary to remove obstacles to the free movement of ideas, people and cultural property within and among nations and to focus particular attention on the role of youth, women and creative persons.

43. An appreciation of the culture of other peoples furthered the cause of peace and understanding. The member States of UNESCO invited the United Nations General Assembly to unanimously proclaim a World Decade for Cultural Development, to begin in 1988.

44. Mr. TARASSENKO (Council for Mutual Economic Assistance) said that at the end of 1985, the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA) had adopted the Comprehensive Programme of Scientific and Technological Progress of the Countries Members of CMEA up to the Year 2000. The implementation of that Programme would make it possible to speed up economic development, achieve qualitative changes in the structure and technological level of the national economy, at least double labour productivity by the year 2000 in CMEA countries and sharply reduce the rate of energy and raw materials consumption per unit of national income produced. In implementing the Programme, the CMEA countries were ready to co-ordinate their activities with other interested countries, on an equitable and mutually acceptable basis. The CMEA countries strongly advocated the broadest possible international co-operation for the exclusively peaceful use of all advances in science and technology, and they had approved a programme of joint measures for the implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action on Science and Technology for Development.

45. One of the priority areas of the CMEA Comprehensive Programme of Scientific and Technological Progress was the accelerated development of nuclear power. The CMEA countries were convinced of the need to develop nuclear power in order to conserve organic fuels, contribute to environmental protection and make electric power production more economical. They were particularly concerned with the safety of nuclear power stations, and supported the development of co-operation among all States to create an international system for safe nuclear power development, including the creation of a mechanism for prompt reporting and information. The International Atomic Energy Agency and the United Nations and its specialized agencies should play a greater role in that area.

46. The CMEA countries paid much attention to environmental protection and improvement and to the rational use of natural resources, and CMEA bodies were co-operating with United Nations bodies in combating the problem of the regional and global spread of pollutants and promoting low-waste and non-waste

(Mr. Tarasenko)

technologies. The CMEA co-operation with international organizations was carried out through the exchange of information on science and technology, the participation of CMEA representatives in international forums, symposia and seminars, and the holding of consultations on various aspects of environmental protection.

47. Mr. HARAN (Israel) expressed satisfaction at the Council's report in so far as it related to the economic questions dealt with by the Second Committee. In its resolution 1986/67, the Council had not only recognized the right of all States Members of the United Nations to be admitted to a regional commission as full members but had also resolved that in 1987 it would take action on the question of Israel's full participation in the regional activities of the United Nations. He earnestly hoped that all members of ECE would recognize the overriding importance of upholding the basic principles of the United Nations, namely universality and sovereign equality, and would support Israel's full membership in ECE, thereby eliminating a flagrant case of discrimination within the United Nations system and contributing to the strengthening of the Organization.

48. Despite all obstacles, Israel would continue to strive for genuine and fruitful economic co-operation with all States in its region and would be willing to share its experience in the agricultural and industrial sectors with them. However, until such time as Israel was admitted to the region to which it belonged, it looked forward to participating actively in the work of the Economic Commission for Europe. It had no intention of dragging into ECE topics extraneous to the European region or the political or related problems of the Middle East, or of interfering in the internal affairs of European States; hence it would not join any political caucus within that grouping. The temporary assignment of Israel to ECE would not mean that Israel had become a European State or that it had lost interest in its own geographical region. It would be done for purely pragmatic reasons with the sole aim of enabling Israel to participate fully in regional co-operation, thus implementing the principles of the universality and equality of States, enshrined in the Charter.

49. With regard to assistance to the Palestinian people, the Secretary-General's report on that question (A/41/319), made it clear that in spite of repeated appeals by the Governing Council of UNDP and the General Assembly for special contributions, most potential contributors had indicated their preference for arrangements whereby the financial base for the programme of assistance was a continuing allocation from Special Programme Resources. In other words, the Arab countries which had claimed that they were keen to help their Arab brethren in the occupied territories had done so for the sole purpose of attacking Israel in the misguided hope that it would not permit the UNDP projects to be implemented in the territories under its administration. The Arab countries had never had any intention of helping the Palestinian Arabs and merely regarded them as cannon fodder in their political onslaught against Israel. When UNDP had asked the Arab countries to participate financially in the economic development programme, they had flatly refused. Some had claimed that Israel had not approved sufficient projects. However, according to an official UNDP publication, only 26 projects

(Mr. Haran, Israel)

were being implemented at a cost of \$US 17.3 million from a project pipeline, approved by all parties concerned, containing some \$50 million worth of potential activities. Moreover, of the \$17.3 million, only \$3 million had been allotted. Those countries which had been so keen to see the programmes begin only a few years earlier would most likely remain silent when the problem of locating further sources of financing was discussed. And yet it could hardly be said that those countries, which participated in the Oil Exporters Fund, were poor.

50. Israel continued to encourage the extension of economic development assistance to the Palestinians. It co-operated with UNDP and also participated in the execution of many projects. Moreover, it was the only country actively engaged in promoting the well-being, safety and economic development of the Palestinian Arabs in Judea, Samaria and the Gaza district. Living conditions there had improved dramatically, as reflected in the large increase in the region's gross domestic product between 1965 and 1986. The case of the Gaza district was quite exceptional since, in 1965, it had met all the criteria laid down for the least developed countries and territories and, in 1986, it had been "promoted" out of that category.

51. Mr. AL-HADDAD (Democratic Yemen) said that the world economic crisis constituted a threat to international peace and security. However, the United Nations provided a credible forum for international negotiation, and he hoped that the current session of the General Assembly would witness a renewed commitment to multilateral co-operation. The decision of the Economic and Social Council to treat questions of money, finance, resource flows, debt, trade, raw materials and development as related issues was an apt one, as was the perception that a new approach should be adopted in dealing with those questions. The current crisis showed that the Bretton Woods institutions were no longer compatible with changed international circumstances. The developing countries were therefore urging a more objective approach, through the holding of an international conference on money and finance for development, without which the current crisis could not be solved. The conclusions drawn by the Secretary-General in document A/40/708 were sound and confirmed the need for a comprehensive reform of the international financial system, rather than an improvement of existing arrangements.

52. With regard to the related issues of debt and resource flows to developing countries, the increased resource flows were an important prerequisite for the restoration of growth and a solution of the debt problem, which, apart from its economic and financial aspects, was also a political and social problem. A demand that adjustments should be made in the policies of debtor countries would do further harm to the development and social progress of the developing countries. Instead, measures should be taken to increase the financial resources available to international development agencies, reduce interest rates, and reschedule the debt. The debt crisis could be solved only if immediate steps were taken to implement those general guidelines, on a basis of shared responsibility between the debtor and creditor countries, the commercial banks and the international financial institutions.

(Mr. Al-Haddad, Democratic Yemen)

53. The United Nations had made a positive contribution to assistance to the Palestinian people, and the proposals contained in document A/41/319/Add.1, would, if implemented, help further to develop programmes of assistance to that people. His delegation looked forward to the implementation of General Assembly resolution 40/169, calling for the lifting of Israeli restrictions imposed on the economy of the occupied Palestinian territories, which had elicited no response from the Israeli occupation authorities.

54. Mr. ELGHOUAYEL (Tunisia), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said, in response to the comment made by the representative of Israel that no Arab countries contributed to the UNDP Programme of Assistance to the Palestinian peoples, that his country had been making contributions to that cause for several years.

55. Mr. HARAN (Israel), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that, in commenting on the lack of Arab participation in the UNDP special programme, he had specifically referred to the oil exporting countries, which did not include Tunisia.

56. The delegation of Democratic Yemen might well have made its comments under agenda item 82, special economic and disaster relief assistance, rather than item 12, since not even a year had elapsed since more than 10,000 Arabs had been killed in 10 days of fighting between rival factions in Aden. The number of casualties resulting from fighting between Arab brethren did not seem to be of concern to some Arab delegations; all that mattered was their pursuit of Israel.

57. In response to the remarks made by the representative of Jordan, he recalled that the West Bank had never been widely recognized as Jordanian, and Israel's claims to it were at least as good as Jordan's. Under Jordanian rule, the West Bank had made little progress in terms of economic development; since 1967, however, the per capita GNP in Judea and Samaria had risen from about \$US 350 to more than \$1,300. It was high time to stop the ridiculous argument concerning economic development, since few countries could show a similar record.

58. The representative of Jordan had said that Israel had illegally taken land from the Palestinians and had cited the Geneva Conventions. Under the Hague Convention, the occupying State was to be regarded as an administrator and usufructuary, which meant that Israel was entitled to enjoy the use of the land. Furthermore, Israel had adopted a policy, which was the law of the land in Jordan, that any vacant land could, with the permission of the authorities be cultivated by anyone needing such land on the condition that it ultimately belonged to the Government. In fact, since 1947 there had been no substantial change in the surface area of cultivated land in the occupied territories as a result of land confiscation.

59. Mr. MAJALI (Jordan), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that Israel was directly responsible for the evacuation of more than 250,000 people from the occupied territories because of economic conditions. The unemployment rate of approximately 4.1 per cent among occupants of the occupied territories had not changed between 1970 and 1984. However, while the number of Palestinians working

(Mr. Majali, Jordan)

in the occupied territories had remained stable, the number working in Israel had risen from 23,000 to 98,000 over the same period, which showed that there had been no real economic development in the territories. On the contrary, Arab workers were being used to strengthen the Israeli economy.

60. Although the gross national product in the occupied territories had risen significantly from 1965 to 1984, as a proportion of Jordan's GNP it had declined over the same period from 37 per cent to 20 per cent. The average per capita income of the West Bank before Israeli occupation had been approximately the same as Jordan's, but at present it represented only 73 per cent of that amount. Per capita income in the Gaza Strip was a mere 41 per cent of the equivalent figure in Jordan.

61. As part of its settlement policy, Israel had seized 1.2 million dunums of private agricultural property, in addition to other lands. As a result, the agricultural sector had been weakened and some Arabs had been obliged to leave the territories. Moreover, Israeli products flooded markets, depriving the Palestinians of an outlet for their goods. The international community had condemned Israel for non-compliance with the fourth Geneva Convention in Security Council resolutions 446 and 452 (1979) and 476 (1980).

62. With regard to industry, according to 1984 statistics, the industrial sector's share of GNP in the West Bank had decreased to 7 per cent and in the Gaza Strip to 12 per cent, and the number of industrial units was lower than in 1967. Moreover, 10.6 per cent of Israel's exports were to Arab markets. In short, Israel was doing its utmost to make the Arabs economically dependent.

63. Mr. HARAN (Israel), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said it was quite true that Palestinians had left the occupied territories for economic reasons. But statistics showed that a large number of Arabs from other countries had also left their countries in search of employment opportunities in the oil-producing States.

64. Since the Gaza district was part of Egypt, any comparison of Gaza's GNP should be made with Egypt and not with Jordan. Figures showed that the per capita GNP in the Gaza district was higher than that of Egypt.

65. Although it was normal to trade with one's neighbours, the representative of Jordan had failed to mention the Arab boycott against Israeli products and even against products produced on Israeli-made machines. With regard to unemployment, according to official United Nations figures, the unemployment rate in the occupied territories was only 3.9 per cent, a desirable figure in any country.

66. Mr. MAJALI (Jordan), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that it was a matter of record that Israel was opposed to development in the occupied territories, since that would help the Palestinians to achieve economic independence and political power and thus enable them to further their nationalist objectives.

AGENDA ITEM 82: SPECIAL ECONOMIC AND DISASTER RELIEF ASSISTANCE (continued)

- (a) OFFICE OF THE UNITED NATIONS DISASTER RELIEF CO-ORDINATOR: REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (continued) (A/41/3, A/41/295)
- (b) SPECIAL PROGRAMMES OF ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE: REPORTS OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (continued) (A/41/3, A/41/308, A/41/369 and Corr.1, A/41/395, A/41/396, A/41/522, A/41/538, A/41/592, A/41/593, A/41/616, A/41/679; A/C.2/41/L.8)

67. Mr. BUFFUM (Under-Secretary-General for Political and General Assembly Affairs) said that the Secretary-General's report (A/41/679) had underscored the uneasy security situation in Lebanon during the past year. In 1983, hostilities had led to the evacuation of internationally assigned personnel, and that development had continued to affect the capacity of the United Nations system to implement major reconstruction and development programmes. As a result, its economic assistance programmes had concentrated primarily on emergency relief measures.

68. The severe depreciation of the Lebanese currency had caused unprecedented deprivation for the Lebanese people. Nevertheless, there were some encouraging signs in various sectors of the economy. For example, several important road rehabilitation projects and telecommunication projects had been initiated. Moreover, foreign commerce had shown improvements in the balance of trade compared to the years prior to 1985, and the central Government had been able to pursue some reconstruction projects in the south and in other areas of the country relatively free from hostilities.

69. It was to be hoped that the continued improvement of conditions in the country would lead to a resumption of much needed bilateral grants of assistance for the implementation of long-term reconstruction efforts. The Government of Lebanon was currently studying additional projects which offered the greatest prospects for early implementation.

70. UNDR0 had reported that, between November 1985 and October 1986, urgently needed relief assistance for Lebanon in cash or kind from United Nations agencies, programmes and bodies had amounted to approximately \$12,470,000. During the same period, UNDR0 had mobilized assistance in cash or kind from intergovernmental organizations in the amount of \$2,658,848, and non-governmental organizations and international voluntary organizations in Lebanon had provided \$6,390,140. In addition, Governments had allocated \$22,687,231 for relief projects in Lebanon. The sum total of commitments during the reporting period had demonstrated the international community's determination to provide additional support to help Lebanon survive the manifold difficulties and disappointments it had experienced.

71. The United Nations Co-ordinating Committee, which had been set up at Beirut in 1979 in accordance with General Assembly resolution 33/146, had held regular meetings and served as a liaison with Lebanese authorities, diplomatic missions and donor countries. The Committee made special efforts to monitor the delivery of assistance on a completely impartial basis.

(Mr. Buffum)

72. Two of the most crucial requirements for the success of reconstruction and development efforts in Lebanon were the re-establishment of some degree of political stability after 11 years of turmoil, and the concomitant growth of the international community's confidence in the future of Lebanon. In that connection, there were signs that the process of national reconciliation had begun. The United Nations would not flag in its efforts to facilitate the rehabilitation, reconstruction and development of Lebanon, a country which deserved the full support of the world Organization and the generosity of the international community.

73. Mr. FAKHOURY (Lebanon) expressed his country's thanks to the Under-Secretary-General for Political and General Assembly Affairs for his tireless efforts in the areas of humanitarian assistance and assistance in the reconstruction and development of Lebanon.

74. Mrs. MBETTE (Cameroon) said that, by its establishment of the Office of the United Nations Disaster Relief Co-ordinator, the General Assembly had provided the United Nations system with a means of alleviating the catastrophic effects of national disasters. The Secretary-General's report (A/41/295-E/1986/65) indicated that, between 1980 and 1985, the number of emergency situations had increased. The Office had been called upon to respond to increasingly complex disasters and exceptionally serious emergency situations. To the classical relief operations of the Office had been added the dimension of disaster preparedness and prevention. Disasters in the developing countries and, in particular, Africa were worsened by the lack of a scientific and technological infrastructure. In his report, the Secretary-General had rightly emphasized the international community's growing awareness of the link between development, on the one hand, and disaster preparedness and prevention, on the other.

75. A month ago, Cameroon had been the victim of a natural disaster which had resulted in the death of more than 1,700 people and heavy losses in livestock. The international community had responded promptly and generously to Cameroon's appeal for assistance, and her delegation wished to thank on behalf of the Government and people of Cameroon all countries which had demonstrated their sympathy and compassion in those painful circumstances. The Government of Cameroon intended to organize an international seminar on the disaster at Yaoundé, in November 1986, and hoped that the seminar would help determine the real causes of the disaster and consider the possibility of its recurrence and means of preparing for it if it could not be prevented.

The meeting rose at 1.10 p.m.