

which were already to a large extent out of date. The notion of a world which would be very different should inspire mankind with new strength to tackle the burning issues of the present, and to endow the ideal of co-

operation with the meaning and instruments of a true community.

*The meeting rose at 4.45 p.m.*

## 1517th meeting

Friday, 28 September 1973, at 11.20 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. Zewde GABRE-SELLASSIE (Ethiopia).

A/C.2/SR.1517

### *Election of the Vice-Chairmen and the Rapporteur*

1. Mr. HOSNY (Egypt) nominated Mr. Jan Arvesen (Norway) for the office of Vice-Chairman.

*Mr. Arvesen (Norway) was elected Vice-Chairman by acclamation.*

2. Mr. TARDOS (Hungary) nominated Mr. Luis González Arias (Paraguay) for the office of Vice-Chairman.

*Mr. González Arias (Paraguay) was elected Vice-Chairman by acclamation.*

3. Mr. SIDDIQ (Afghanistan) nominated Mr. Chusei Yamada (Japan) for the office of Rapporteur.

*Mr. Yamada (Japan) was elected Rapporteur by acclamation.*

4. Mr. RANKIN (Canada), as Chairman of the Committee at the twenty-seventh session, congratulated the officers of the Committee on their election.

### GENERAL DEBATE

5. Mr. FRAZÃO (Brazil) said that the heavy inheritance of a past whose structure had rested on economic colonialism, commercial exploitation and deterioration of the terms of trade had led the United Nations to proclaim two successive international Development Decades whose ultimate goal was the establishment of international peace and security through economic and social development and international co-operation. The results of the first Decade had been very disappointing. The second had drawn on the experience, the failures and the omissions of the first; the International Development Strategy which had been adopted (General Assembly resolution 2626 (XXV)) had recognized that development was the foremost objective, and its results should now be appraised.

6. It could hardly be denied that from a global perspective the world economy had shown some significant gains in 1971 and 1972. The spectre of a recession in the developed countries seemed to have been checked temporarily and their affluence had heated the process of industrial production to a point where raw materials, provided mainly by the developing countries, had gained in nominal prices. However, the developing countries had concurrently added imported inflation to their own. The Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs had stated, at the preceding meeting, that the rise in commodity prices was more than enough to nullify the effect of depreciation of the

two reserve currencies and to offset the increase in the cost of industrial goods purchased in the world market. Yet he (the Under-Secretary-General) was the first to admit that that balance was precarious.

7. There were two concurrent trends in world economic relations: a trend towards more closed market arrangements and a trend towards a transnational approach to the process of production. As a result, international power now seemed to be gravitating not only towards recognized political centres but also towards technological and economic conglomerates. It was clear that the world was going through a period of transition and, naturally, the new realities were arousing perplexities in many countries, which could resolve them only after a careful study of the technological options and consumption requirements that would best fulfil national aims.

8. A most disheartening characteristic of the beginning of the Second United Nations Development Decade was the disparity between the performance of the industrialized world and that of developing countries. There had been no change in the relative position of the least developed among the developing countries, and the average rate of growth of the gross national product (GNP) of developing countries as a whole had been lower in 1971 and 1972 than at the end of the First Decade. The cause of development certainly deserved a stronger commitment on the part of the international community. The responsibilities of developing countries themselves could not be over-emphasized. However, responsibility for the low rate of development observed globally fell mainly on the industrialized world. As the Under-Secretary-General had pointed out, "self-reliance" should be accompanied by a still greater effort of solidarity on the part of the international community; otherwise, the very coherence of the Strategy would be destroyed. The idea of collective economic security should, therefore, exert a major influence on the broad design of international economic co-operation in the current Decade.

9. It seemed that the very notion of development was at present undergoing a profound change. The idea of the unified approach to economic and social development has been followed by environmental concern as a factor in over-all development planning and by concern with a more equitable distribution of income within countries. That same concern should apply to the distribution of income among nations because, in the end, the latter might condition the former. It was clear, therefore, that development could not be conceived as a static ideal.

10. The Committee for Development Planning had explored the question but, in stressing the idea of income distribution, had apparently failed to realize that income distribution could succeed only within the dynamic context of policies geared to increased production, full employment and over-all development. The essentially distributive approach left a number of crucial questions to be answered. To what extent, for instance, would it be possible to reverse or modify progressively labour-saving technological trends which as a rule were conducive to greater income disparities? Would it be possible to devise in the developing countries a process of industrialization which, by incorporating in the active labour force a larger proportion of the population, would enhance its effective purchasing power? Assuming that the answer to both questions depended to a large extent on research and technological advance, a further question could be posed as to the role that should be assigned to foreign investments in the creation of indigenous research and development. It should perhaps be ascertained to what extent foreign assistance might itself have helped to freeze an unjust international division of labour.

11. In preparation for the 1975 review of the International Development Strategy, it might be advisable for the General Assembly to request the Committee for Development Planning, through the Economic and Social Council, to entrust a special group of social analysts, economic planners and political scientists with the task of trying to answer the questions raised in the debates in the Economic and Social Council and the Committee for Development Planning.

12. While it was important to update the instruments of analysis and planning in order to keep pace with emerging realities, it was also essential not to neglect the implementation of the policies and measures embodied in the Strategy, since they constituted the bare minimum of any scheme for development. At the same time, additional policies and measures must be adopted, since the experience of the first years of the Decade had shown adjustments to be indispensable. The short-comings in the development performance of the developing countries at large in 1971 and 1972 were due in large measure to the quantity and quality of the industrialized countries' support measures. The developed world had seemingly espoused the idea that an artificially compartmentalized economy could ensure indefinitely rising levels of prosperity for its own sake. That selfish attachment to the idea of an unshared prosperity stressed a piecemeal approach to development policies that considerably weakened, and in some cases even nullified, the impact of sectoral measures and ran counter to an over-all policy within the context of a reformed framework for international economic co-operation which alone could in real terms improve the competitive position of developing countries. The monetary crisis and the clear necessity of improving the world trade system made it obvious that the problems of development must be systematically equated.

13. The necessary rapid increase in the presence of developing countries in international trade should result from the inner dynamics of their economies. However, an increase in the share of such countries in international trade would be possible only if support was given to them as part of a global strategy designed both to remedy the defects of their internal structure and to facilitate their access to the life-stream of the world

economy. An increase in the trade of the developing countries being one of the conditions for world stability; account must be taken in multilateral trade negotiations of the need for measures to ensure that all participants would make their voice heard; only then could international commerce prosper. That was the only way to avoid periodic crises harmful to the rich and destructive to the poor countries. It was therefore necessary to enlarge the framework of preferences so as to encompass trade in commodities and in processed agricultural products, while at the same time removing safeguard clauses. He hoped that the multilateral negotiations at the ministerial meeting of GATT at Tokyo (12-14 September 1973) and the resumed negotiations during the joint annual meeting of IBRD and IMF at Nairobi (24-28 September 1973) on the reform of the international monetary system would not lead solely to the normalization of relations among industrialized countries but would produce innovative ideas in the field of international economic co-operation, causing the disappointments of the first three years of the second Development Decade to be forgotten.

14. The first over-all review and appraisal of the International Development Strategy (agenda item 46) would provide the opportunity for the General Assembly to assert the interest with which it was following those negotiations and to impart to them a conceptual uniformity. The need for appropriate policy measures and for interaction between development financing, transfer of technology, international trade and shipping must be stressed in that exercise. The balance of interests arrived at by the Economic and Social Council at its fifty-fifth session gave hope that international economic co-operation for development would be increased.

15. The Economic and Social Council, having taken on a new lease of life, was now in a position to play its role as policy co-ordinator—which could only improve sectoral activities—and to become, within its own field of competence, an effective forum for dialogue and negotiation. At its fifty-fourth and fifty-fifth sessions, the Council had shown that it was capable of performing its role to the advantage of all parties concerned. Even more important, however, was the fact that Member States had realized they could use the Council as an instrument of negotiation aiming at consensus on the crucial areas of economic relations. It was with the new prospects of the Economic and Social Council in mind that Brazil had ratified the amendment to the Charter adopted by the General Assembly (resolution 2847 (XXVI) of 20 December 1971) which would increase the Council's membership.

16. The problems to be solved were global in dimension and, if the Second Committee failed to reach a consensus on questions relating to economic peace and security, the efforts being made by other committees of the General Assembly would be sapped and it would be impossible to resolve the issues on which world peace, security and solidarity depended. Fully conscious of the global nature of the problems, his delegation had taken the initiative, three years previously, of reviving the concept of collective economic security. That concept represented the synthesis of the aspirations for a new world order, in which global development and expansion would be truly viable. His delegation hoped

that the Economic and Social Council would be able to make an in-depth study of the concept and that later it would be possible to consider institutionalizing it. The Brazilian Minister for External Relations had suggested on 24 September (2124th plenary meeting) a study of ways of enabling the United Nations to launch economic peace-making and peace-keeping operations to prevent or remedy critical situations. By exploring that possibility—without infringing on the competence of the specialized agencies and other United Nations organs—the Organization would make its work more dynamic and enhance the role of one of its main bodies, the Economic and Social Council.

17. Millions of human beings lacked food, shelter, employment and education, and the models of international economic co-operation should be constantly and pragmatically reviewed and adapted to the needs of developing countries; concepts of planning and management should be refined in the light of new technological developments; account should be taken of the emergence of new realities of economic power within the international fabric of production and consumption; maximum benefit should be extracted from the current climate of *détente*, and economic co-operation for global development should be increased; in short, collective economic security should be ensured through greater international economic equity. Those were the challenges that faced the current generation of policymakers and the Second Committee. He hoped that the Committee would be equal to its task.

18. Mr. JOSEPH (Australia) commended the Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs for drawing attention to the deterioration in the world food situation. The Australian Government was studying with deep interest the proposal of the Secretary of State of the United States (2124th meeting) for the convening of a world food conference in 1974 and the rather similar proposal made at Algiers by the Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries (5-9 September 1973). Having noted with satisfaction the increased emphasis being given in the United Nations system to the problems of mass poverty, unemployment and unsatisfactory distribution of income, Australia had decided, first, to direct its development assistance programme increasingly to activities that spread social and employment benefits, and, secondly, to increase substantially the scale of its assistance. He was pleased to record that Australia's financial flow to the developing countries had exceeded 1 per cent of GNP in two of the last three years and that his country was very close to achieving the target for official development aid of 0.7 per cent of GNP set in the International Development Strategy. Australia had recently increased by 20 per cent the budget appropriations for official development aid, which would continue to be provided on a largely untied basis and in the form of non-repayable grants. Under its programme for 1974, Australia would increase its contribution to UNDP by 43 per cent, its contribution to UNICEF by 29 per cent and its contribution to the United Nations Fund for Population Activities by 33 per cent. It would also take up a fair share of the next IDA replenishment.

19. Australia had always taken a cautious approach to the question of the link between special drawing rights (SDRs) and development finance, but the present Australian Government would be prepared to consider

sympathetically a formula that provided developing countries with a larger share of SDR allocations than they received on the current basis of IMF quotas. Of course, the need to insulate the SDR against over-creation remained, and it might be best to establish the SDR in its new role as the hub of a new monetary system first, before considering precisely what kind of link to establish between the issue of SDRs and additional development finance.

20. Australia had recently instituted a new system of tariff preferences which went far beyond the system applied since 1966 and would cover virtually all manufactured and semi-manufactured products, including processed primary products which were of great concern to many developing countries. The preferential treatment for developing countries would be superimposed on a 25 per cent across-the-board cut in all tariff rates, announced by the Australian Government in July. If the two recent revaluations of the Australian dollar were taken into account, it would be seen that developing countries could now export their products to Australia under conditions more favourable than in any previous period.

21. The Australian Government felt that the time had come to consider the possibility of establishing a code of conduct to govern the operations of multinational corporations; that should not lead to the conclusion, however, that Australia accepted all the criticisms hurled at those corporations of late. None the less, it recognized the need to establish rules of behaviour which would encourage the positive and minimize the negative features of the activities of those corporations.

22. The question of natural resources was related to that problem; it was of special concern to Australia, mainly because the latter ranked among the five leading producers of certain minerals. However, the exploitation of Australia's natural resources was being carried out increasingly by foreign companies and the Australian Government considered that such a situation was no longer tolerable. While it had no intention of retroactively changing the ground rules and would scrupulously fulfil existing contracts and undertakings, it was nevertheless determined that the high proportion of foreign companies active in the country's minerals industry should not increase further and that it should be gradually reduced as circumstances permitted.

23. With regard to the world economic situation, his delegation fully agreed with the view expressed by the Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs at the preceding meeting in his analysis of the problems of global inflation and the reasons for that inflation, and wished to congratulate him on his courageous words with regard to the international monetary system. At a time when it was conventional to deprecate or denounce floating exchange rates, the Under-Secretary-General had not hesitated to state that in his opinion floating exchange rates might not be as harmful as was claimed, that they had not acted as a brake on the extraordinary expansion of international trade and that, despite all the predictions, the necessary expertise to adapt to them had materialized. The Under-Secretary-General had also noted that floating exchange rates might have greatly reduced the swings in speculative capital movements and that he felt that the continuing backwash on the exchange markets might even be the consequence of some elements of

rigidity introduced into it by the European regional policy.

24. Although his delegation agreed with the Under-Secretary-General on several other points, it took a different view on the matter of the commodity boom, which Mr. de Seynes regarded as likely to be short-lived. His delegation conceded that such might be the case but felt that it was by no means certain, since in its opinion, the boom was dependent on the evolution of demand. The economy of the developing countries was highly dependent on the broader trends in the international economic scene; since the developed countries were the major markets for their main primary products, it followed that the level of economic activity in the developed nations influenced prices and the demand for those products. The interdependence of the world economic system was therefore obvious. In his delegation's view, it should be a concern of United Nations bodies to encourage the industrialized countries to put their own economic houses in order, since their stability and expansion formed the best guarantee of rapid and unimpeded progress in the developing countries.

25. The question of commodity prices was the most significant economic phenomenon of the decade. For a number of years commodity prices had soared so rapidly as to shift the balance of world trade in favour of the developing countries.

26. In 1972 the collective trade balance of the developing countries with the developed countries had shown a surplus of \$3 thousand million, whereas in 1971 it had shown an approximate balance only. Figures for the first six months of the current year showed an even stronger advance. The developing countries, of course, continued to have substantial deficits on invisibles, but those deficits were being more than offset in 1972 by massive inflows of capital which had helped generate an unprecedented over-all balance-of-payments surplus for the developing countries of more than \$8 thousand million. Moreover, the subsequent near doubling of commodity and raw material prices would mean an even greater boom in the export figures of the developing countries during the current year.

27. It seemed that there was some reluctance within the United Nations to view the upsurge in commodity prices as a positive phenomenon which was in fact helping the developing countries. That at least was the impression given by the statements by the Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs, the President of the Economic and Social Council and the Secretary-General of UNCTAD. However, Mr. de Seynes himself had conceded that "the rise in commodity prices has been more than enough to nullify the effect of the depreciation of the two reserve currencies and to offset the increase in the cost of industrial goods purchased in the world market" (1516th meeting, para. 20).

28. Of course, the unprecedented rise in commodity prices had not helped the developing countries only. The increase in the demand for wheat and grain had been sufficient in itself to rectify the trade balance of the United States, while Australia's earnings from the export of primary products and minerals had increased by 40 per cent. Moreover, among developing countries it was the richest that had gained the most. No one, for example, had benefited more than the oil-producing or

copper-producing countries, while on the other side of the coin, a number of countries—including it seemed most of the least developed—had largely not benefited from the commodity boom. However, the advantages of the price increases for the developing country group as a whole were undeniable and constituted grounds for satisfaction. The point to underline was that the advantages derived by developing countries from higher commodity prices had far exceeded the benefits they could derive from international aid or even generalized preferences.

29. In the light of those factors, his delegation wondered whether the conclusions reached by the Economic and Social Council after its review and appraisal exercise had not been overtaken by events. It was true that the statistical inputs on which the exercise was based related to 1970 and 1971, which were slump years and certainly did not reflect the current situation. His delegation felt that a more meaningful approach to promoting the targets of the International Development Strategy would be to try to determine the reasons for the current buoyancy of the market for commodities exported by the developing countries and to see how it could be sustained.

30. He felt that the sudden rise in commodity prices could be explained by a number of often unforeseeable factors, such as the drought and bad harvests in the Soviet Union and other countries and the strikes in some of the major copper-producing countries. Furthermore, as had often happened on previous occasions, speculators had also stepped in and had pushed prices higher. The point to be noted was that, in view of the disorder in the currency markets, commodities could provide a haven for capital seeking to avoid internal or external depreciation. The predominant factor was certainly the general cyclical upswing in demand in the industrialized countries which, as Mr. de Seynes had pointed out, had spurred a "staggering increase" in the demand for commodities and raw materials of all kinds. The economic boom which the industrialized countries were experiencing and which had been most marked in Japan and the United States, the two largest market economies, had rapidly led to a shortage of raw materials.

31. The problem was that the phenomenon had not been subjected to any kind of control and that the increase in output had been accompanied by a sharp rise in prices and costs. Economies had become overheated and the risk of a serious breakdown persisted. Preliminary projections already suggested a slackening of growth rates as the major economic powers had now reached full employment ceilings.

32. There remained the question whether the industrialized countries would be able to control their current economic boom in time to avert a sharp recession and to ensure a pattern of stable growth. Unfortunately, most experts had doubts in that regard.

33. It was also in the interest of the developing countries for the developed countries to solve the problem of economic management, if their exports of commodities were to continue to increase rapidly. But if the current policy of deceleration pursued by the industrialized countries should over-shoot its mark and lead to a recession, the outcome would be catastrophic for the commodities and raw materials markets.

34. The urgent need to take action to cope with the inflation afflicting all industrialized countries made it difficult to achieve that deceleration. In recent months, price increases in the two dozen OECD countries had been nudging a yearly average of 10 per cent, more than twice the average of the 1960s. In the United States, Japan, Europe and his own country the inflation was without post-war precedent.

35. Rising prices of imports associated with exchange rate depreciation had given added impetus to price pressures, and many Governments thought that their fight against inflation had been neutralized by the sky-high prices they had to pay for their commodity imports. In the industrialized countries inflation had seemingly become institutionalized, reflecting not merely disequilibrium between demand and supply, but such factors as the interplay between employers and trade unions, and the rising share of public spending and social programmes in national expenditures. Thus, inflation had existed in those countries even in times of slack demand and persistent unemployment.

36. Diagnosis was, of course, much more simple than prescription. Each country had its own problems and the necessary policies would differ from case to case. To buttress their fiscal and monetary policies, Governments would need to give serious consideration to measures such as policies relating to prices, incomes, manpower and so on. It was encouraging to note that many countries had in particular been making use of incomes policies.

37. Particularly unnerving in the current situation was the explosion of interest rates, which had reached and exceeded 10 per cent in many industrialized countries. That phenomenon might well bring about a reduction in productivity and demand, eventually inducing economic stagnation, as in 1969-1971, without any slowing down of the inflation. If, as was a reasonable bet, the industrialized economies soon experienced a recession, the developing countries too would be in trouble—and of a kind that no amount of review and appraisal would be able to correct.

38. Discussion of inflation led logically to international monetary issues, the persistence of inflation being one of the factors contributing to the difficulty in preserving stability in the foreign exchange markets. It was probably inevitable that markets which had suffered so many crises should continue to be nervous; that certainly explained the speculation which had led to the fall of the dollar and the pound sterling. It seemed, however, that the situation had stabilized since mid-July. The dollar had strengthened somewhat and most people thought it was now undervalued. United States exports had been greatly helped by the devaluation of the dollar, and that country's trade balance would move sharply into the black in 1974. The foreign holders of dollar balances would regain confidence and would have less compulsion to unload them at the slightest sign of instability. It would, however, be wrong to think that confidence in current parities would mean an end to the current system of floating exchange rates, which, as the Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs had noted, could prove to be the most

effective technique for managing the international monetary system.

39. As Mr. de Seynes had said, the flexibility in exchange rates had certainly not harmed trade, which had expanded during the first six months of 1973 at the remarkable annual rate of 13 per cent. The developing countries had beyond doubt benefited from that phenomenon. His own Government, like most others, considered that exchange rates should be fixed but adjustable, but it was realistic enough to recognize that for some countries floating rates could provide a very useful technique in particular situations.

40. Nor did it seem that developing countries had been materially affected by the currency realignments. In fact, although the purchasing power of their reserves had decreased by 4 per cent, their debt burden had also been cut by 3 per cent, leaving their external balance-sheet virtually unchanged. According to IMF, the over-all effects of the currency changes on the trade account could be to add \$2 to \$3 thousand million to the annual export earnings of developing countries.

41. Of course, no one was suggesting that such flexible exchange rates were very comforting. The developing countries were in fact more vulnerable than developed countries to such erratic changes. But the flexibility in exchange rates had perhaps helped to hold together the world trading and monetary system, whereas an effort to cling to fixed exchange rates would have torn it asunder, with adverse consequences for developed and developing countries alike.

42. If fixed exchange rates were to be maintained, steps must be taken to eliminate the enormous volume of liquid funds—largely the legacy of the United States balance-of-payments deficits of the past—which could be moved from one financial centre to another by a single telephone call. The exact value of that liquid capital had never been satisfactorily estimated, but it was thought that it might exceed \$250 thousand million. The IMF Committee of 20 had moreover given priority in its agenda to consideration of the problem, with a view to determining ways of neutralizing the effects of the huge volume of liquid capital.

43. Consideration of monetary problems was closely linked to the negotiations on multilateral trade liberalization. The negotiations, which had just been formally launched at Tokyo, would differ from previous GATT negotiations in that they would focus much more keenly on the liberalization of trade in primary products and the removal or amelioration of non-tariff barriers. His country supported such liberalization while recognizing that special arrangements might be appropriate for some agricultural commodities. However, agricultural trade, like trade in manufactured goods, must provide opportunities for outside suppliers to compete with local goods on the basis of efficiency and comparative advantage. In 1972, 70 per cent of the goods imported by his country had been exempt from all duties, and in future protective tariffs would be reduced still further. Unlike many other countries, Australia did not have recourse to non-tariff barriers when it encountered difficulties. It was ready to make concessions commensu-

rate with the over-all advantages it was likely to receive with regard to agricultural products as well as manufactured goods. But it recognized the need to apply non-reciprocal concessions in the trade negotiations with developing countries.

44. In conclusion, he stressed the need to proceed to negotiations with a view to reaching conclusions on essential points before the end of 1975.

*The meeting rose at 1.05 p.m.*

## 1518th meeting

Friday, 28 September 1973, at 3.45 p.m.

*Chairman:* Mr. Zewde GABRE-SELLASSIE (Ethiopia).

A/C.2/SR.1518

### GENERAL DEBATE (*continued*)

1. Mr. KARHILO (Finland) said that the true potential of the United Nations lay in the area of economic and social affairs. However, as the Secretary-General had pointed out in the introduction to his report on the work of the Organization, "in the economic and social fields the United Nations . . . has become increasingly involved at so rapid a pace that institutions created in 1945 often no longer correspond to current needs".<sup>1</sup> His delegation was convinced that the steps already taken to reassert and strengthen the role of the Economic and Social Council were steps in the right direction, but there was still much to be done. "Aggressive progressiveness" was needed to stir feelings in favour of change. In that connexion, there was a specific role for the Second and Third Committees of the General Assembly; those Committees formed a direct link between the policy-making forces of Member States and the United Nations machinery for shaping and implementing policy decisions—in which the Economic and Social Council had its part to play.

2. One of the most important items with which the Second Committee would be concerned at the twenty-eighth session was the review and appraisal of the progress made in implementing the objectives of the International Development Strategy for the Second United Nations Development Decade (General Assembly resolution 2626 (XXV)). For that reason, his delegation urged that that item should be given the thorough and constructive exchange of views it deserved. To that end a working group, informal or formal, but open-ended, should be set up as early as possible. A frank and realistic exchange of views was necessary to spotlight those areas where additional efforts were called for in order to maintain the momentum for renewed endeavours towards the goals of the Strategy. The Third Committee also had a great responsibility in the review and appraisal process, which made it all the more necessary to begin the work as soon as possible. The Committee should not forget that it was establishing the basis for the mid-Decade review.

3. While reserving the right to revert to the item in question at a later stage, his delegation wished to point out that negative trends in the statistics should not overshadow a number of non-quantifiable favourable developments in international co-operation. His delegation had consistently stressed the need to view de-

velopment as a true interaction between economic and social policy. Recent discussions on the problems of mass poverty in developing countries had been focused on policy measures, such as income distribution, employment policies and rural development. That new awareness was a favourable development which should be duly noted in the review and appraisal exercise.

4. The word "interdependence" had recently begun to crop up frequently in discussions in United Nations bodies. The meaning of interdependence was being dramatically demonstrated by such global phenomena as threats to the human environment, the risks of overpopulation, the scarcity of natural resources and the impending food shortage. Nevertheless, his delegation concurred with the Secretary-General's optimism, based as it was on the obvious political will of the international community to tackle those problems, which only a few years earlier had been the preoccupation of a relatively small number of scientists. His delegation hoped that the World Population Conference at Bucharest in 1974, would be the signal for action in the field of population as the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment at Stockholm in 1972 had been in the case of the environment.

5. The scarcity of natural resources might not be an imminent problem, but nevertheless, serious and immediate attention should be paid to it. The food shortage was probably the most serious question from the short-term point of view, and one which called for the immediate marshalling of all the means available to the international community. As a first step, the institutional machinery envisaged in the concept of world food security should be organized, taking into account the variations from one country to another in surpluses and shortages of agricultural stocks. During the fifty-fourth session of the Economic and Social Council his delegation had pledged its readiness to participate in a workable scheme for minimum world food security. He renewed that pledge, and expressed his support for the proposal for a world food conference with the widest possible participation.

6. The ministerial meeting at Tokyo, from 12 to 14 September 1973, had adopted a set of principles to guide the new round of trade negotiations under GATT. His delegation welcomed the plans for the active participation of as many countries as possible in the negotiations and for efforts to secure additional benefits for the developing countries. Furthermore, it had noted with satisfaction that the least developed among the developing countries would be given special treatment,

<sup>1</sup> See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-eighth Session, Supplement No. 1A*, sect. II.