

authorization in its Action Plan for the Human Environment to the Executive Director to assist Governments in dealing with their environmental concerns. In order to minimize the costs of implementing that programme, the services of the specialized agencies should be employed. All environmental programmes were in fact interrelated, and co-ordination with other agencies was therefore essential. His delegation also welcomed the decision to establish liaison units with each of the regional economic commissions so that they played a greater part in environmental protection. He also noted with satisfaction the establishment of the Earthwatch monitoring programme.

76. His delegation supported draft resolution A/C.2/L.1312, calling for a Conference-Exposition on Human Settlements.

Organization of the Committee's work

77. The CHAIRMAN said that the General Assembly had reached a stage of its work where it wished to receive as many reports from the Main Committees as possible; accordingly, the Second Committee had been urged to complete its consideration of item 51, concerning UNCTAD, as soon as possible. The Committee must therefore adhere to its decision to dispose of that item on Monday, 26 November. It must also endeavour

to complete the discussion of the agenda item concerning UNEP by Tuesday, 27 November, so that it could devote its attention to the long list of questions under item 12 (Report of the Economic and Social Council) and to the three further items which remained to be considered. Accordingly, he had reluctantly concluded that, in order for the Committee to progress in its consideration of UNEP, it must take one of three courses of action: it must hold a night meeting that evening, a morning meeting on Saturday, 24 November, or a night meeting on Tuesday, 27 November.

78. Mr. HEMANS (United Kingdom) said that all of those alternatives were undesirable. His delegation had no objection to pressing on with action-oriented work on draft resolutions; however, ritual loquacity could hardly be considered work. Accordingly, he appealed to the 31 delegations which were still scheduled to speak on UNEP to consider whether they really needed to address the Committee, to consider circulating their statements for information instead, or to keep their statements very brief. The Chairman should inform the Committee of the situation at the beginning of the afternoon meeting, at which time the Committee could decide how it wished to proceed.

The meeting rose at 1.25 p.m.

1567th meeting

Friday, 23 November 1973, at 3.10 p.m.

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

A/C.2/SR.1567

AGENDA ITEM 50

United Nations Environment Programme (*continued*)
(A/9003 and Corr.1, chap. XIII; A/C.2/L.1305/Rev.1, A/C.2/L.1312, A/C.2/L.1316):

- (a) Report of the Governing Council (A/9025, A/C.2/L.1315);
- (b) Criteria governing multilateral financing of housing and human settlements; report of the Secretary-General (A/9163, A/9238, A/C.2/L.1314)

1. Mr. OMAR (Libyan Arab Republic) said that his delegation had listened with great interest to the introductory statement of the Executive Director of UNEP at the 1563rd meeting and welcomed his efforts to perform the tasks set by the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment, held in June 1972 at Stockholm. He was glad that a developing country such as Kenya had been able to solve effectively the problems posed by the establishment of UNEP headquarters at Nairobi. The report of the Governing Council on its first session (A/9025) demonstrated the important role which UNEP was called upon to play in environment matters. Its establishment showed that the international community had recognized the need to tackle the problems of environmental protection on a global basis and to bear in mind the relationship between preservation of the environment and economic and social development. The environmental problems facing the developing countries were primarily erosion, aridity,

poverty, malnutrition, drought, illiteracy, insanitary conditions and poor housing; those problems were therefore very different from those of the developed countries. Furthermore, the international community had acknowledged that the main responsibility for the contamination of the environment lay with the industrialized countries.

2. The major task of the Governing Council of UNEP should be to set priorities among the many requests for assistance and to play a primary role in the planning and co-ordination of all environmental programmes carried out under the auspices of the United Nations. It should, by establishing a firm link between development and the environment, help the developing countries to avoid the mistakes of the developed countries.

3. The policies of the developed countries were responsible for the various types of pollution found in the world. The international community must especially condemn acts of aggression and war aimed at destroying human life and the natural environment. For example, one of the greatest obstacles confronting the Libyan people in their development efforts was the minefields left from the Second World War. The lack of co-operation from the countries responsible for their existence and the lack of maps and technical know-how for locating them had seriously impeded government action. The international community should therefore be more actively involved in seeking a solution in that regard.

4. His delegation endorsed the principle of the United Nations Conference-Exposition on Human Settlements, because it would assist the international community in ensuring the same quality of life for all; for that reason, it was one of the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.2/L.1312.

5. The Governing Council of UNEP had requested the Executive Director to collect information on the problem of the world's energy crisis for presentation at its next session. His delegation hoped, in that connexion, that the Executive Director would take into account all the resolutions adopted by the United Nations regarding the permanent sovereignty of States over their natural resources. It was well known that certain States, by proclaiming the existence of an energy crisis, intended to prevent the petroleum-producing States from preserving and exploiting that resource for their benefit. No Power had the right to prohibit those countries, including the Libyan Arab Republic, from exploiting their petroleum wealth as they saw fit. The energy crisis was a myth which certain highly industrialized countries were using as an excuse to interfere in the internal affairs of the petroleum-producing countries in order to safeguard their own interests and to continue to plunder the resources of the developing countries, thus hoping to retain their position as masters of the world. If those countries decided to take retaliatory measures, they would be violating the Charter of the United Nations which stipulated that each country had sovereignty over its natural resources.

6. His delegation hoped that the Governing Council of UNEP would not lose sight of that principle in attempting to solve the so-called energy crisis, and that the action undertaken by the United Nations as a whole would be in accordance with the provisions of the Charter and the resolutions which affirmed the sovereignty of States over their natural resources.

Mr. González Arias (Paraguay) took the Chair.

7. Mr. HAQ (Pakistan) said that the first session of the Governing Council had been primarily an organizational session elaborating the main objectives and priorities of UNEP and laying down the procedures governing the operation of the Fund of the United Nations Environment Programme. His delegation was satisfied that the Governing Council had been able to resolve the basic issues by consensus; that demonstrated the international community's awareness of the environment problems facing it.

8. The problems which the developing countries had to face differed, both in nature and in intensity, from those faced by the developed countries. The latter were in fact responsible for many of the environment problems in the world. Pollution, for example, had not been caused by the developing countries but by the industrialized societies which, by their heedless use of natural resources, had all but destroyed the environment. For that reason, the developed countries must not call on the developing countries to slow down the growth of their consumption, because their levels of consumption were already abysmally low and simply must be raised. The industrialized countries had to achieve a basic change in their attitudes and their way of life and to stop considering that the resources of the planet were limitless.

9. The much more prosaic problems faced by the peoples of the developing countries should not, however, be forgotten. That was why his delegation was gratified that the Governing Council of UNEP had given the highest priority to the question of human settlements. That was a matter of great urgency for the developing countries: while, at present, the vast majority of their populations lived in villages, large-scale internal migrations towards the urban centres were beginning and by the end of the century the urban populations were expected to quadruple. Even if those migrants were able to obtain employment, there was little prospect that they would find in the towns the better living conditions which they were seeking. Because of their lack of skills and education, their earnings did not enable them, in general, to afford decent accommodation; that explained the proliferation of slums and shantytowns in the developing countries and the baneful effects of that phenomenon on the health of the occupants and on the environment. His delegation therefore hoped that the United Nations Conference-Exposition on Human Settlements to be held at Vancouver would concentrate on that aspect of the problem and produce models which were easy to construct and maintain and which, at the same time, would give the inhabitants a feeling of pride and dignity. It supported the resolution on the human environment as it relates to human settlements, adopted by the Committee on Housing, Building and Planning at its eighth session¹ which recommended that the wide range of expertise available in that Committee be utilized by the Preparatory Committee of the Conference-Exposition and that the Centre for Housing, Building and Planning be made responsible for presenting the various methods already discovered for solving the problem of human settlements. His delegation also supported draft resolution A/C.2/L.1312.

10. The Government of Pakistan attached great importance to the question of the environment and was currently drawing up a comprehensive plan of action with a view to overcoming existing problems and forestalling impending problems. The assistance which UNEP could provide in that connexion would be of critical importance. Finally, his delegation felt that the work of the Governing Council at its first session had been very fruitful.

11. Mr. HAIDAR (Lebanon) thanked the Executive Director and the President of the Governing Council of UNEP for the positive results achieved by that body during its first year of existence.

12. Improvement in the quality of human life had become a major concern of the international community. As U Thant had said, "To produce at any cost, without due consideration to effects on the environment, can no longer be the central preoccupation of man." Innumerable dangers awaited mankind: 25 per cent increase in carbon monoxide by the year 2000; runaway growth in population, which would reach 4.5 thousand million in 1980; and, finally, air, land and water pollution. Furthermore, at a time when whole regions of the developing world were hard hit by the spectre of famine owing to drought, hundreds of millions of hectares of arable land were deteriorating through erosion and two thirds of the forests of the world were being lost. There were, how-

¹ See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, Fifty-sixth Session, Supplement No. 2, chap. XI.*

ever, even more alarming phenomena, such as the pauperization of the international community, and industrial urbanization which was increasingly pervasive and increasingly unbalanced and disturbing. The Stockholm Conference had stressed the need for all countries to work individually and together, in the very terms of paragraph 72 of the International Development Strategy for the Second United Nations Development Decade (General Assembly resolution 2626 (XXV)) "to arrest the deterioration of the human environment and to take measures towards its improvement, and to promote activities that will help to maintain the ecological balance on which human survival depends". It was for that reason that UNEP had been established and expanded; heavy responsibilities and great hopes had been vested in it. Lebanon had played an active role within the United Nations ever since the concept of the environment had first been broached. Nevertheless, it could not but subscribe unreservedly to the idea already expressed in the Second Committee that the environment should in no way serve as a bugbear to slow down the progress of the developing countries. He hoped that the machinery evolved by the United Nations would go beyond the paradoxical alternative of environment or development. The essential task of UNEP could be stated as follows: to develop the environment while maintaining development. The choice of Nairobi as the headquarters of that body could not but make it responsive to that task.

13. His delegation, like others, wished to warn UNEP against spreading itself over too wide an area and duplicating the activities of other United Nations organs. The only valid approach to the question of the environment, both at the national and international levels, was a global approach.

14. UNEP should not simply be a research organization; it should also be active. Its complex vocation was to be both a catalyst and a repository, to co-ordinate and diffuse information, to transfer appropriate technologies and promote specific and relevant projects. Lebanon was prepared to continue its loyal assistance to the Governing Council of UNEP, if it was invited to become a member again.

15. For Lebanon, which was a country for tourism and holidays, a healthy environment was a prerequisite for prosperity and economic equilibrium. Obviously, the Lebanese Government attached great importance to the task of preserving and improving the quality of life, which was the supreme goal of environment work at all levels. The Beirut Charter marked the happy outcome of a regional environment endeavour and was the prototype for similar achievements in other regions. The Mediterranean, which was the cradle of the religions and civilizations of the world, deserved a privileged place on the list of priorities not only of the peoples along its coast but of the international community as a whole.

16. Lebanon was relatively little exposed to the harmful effects of pollution. However, it shared its borders with a State which defied the most elementary environmental standards. That State was responsible for the existence of camps and shantytowns in Lebanese towns where several hundreds of thousands of refugees whom it had driven from their homes were massed together in conditions of poverty and humiliation giving rise to acute environmental problems in Lebanon.

Furthermore, during the past few years, that country had not ceased to increase its aggression against Lebanese human settlements, crops and infrastructure. Israel would do better to cleanse its geographical and human environment and recognize the inalienable right of its victims, the Palestinian people, to return to their homes.

17. His Government had instructed its National Council for Scientific Research to deal with the environment problem as a priority matter. A national association for the environment, recognized as being in the public interest, had been established to inform public opinion and to alert the public authorities. Lastly, his Government had already made the necessary arrangements for the Fund of UNEP to receive its contribution regularly and promptly.

18. In conclusion, he reserved the right to revert to item 50 when the Committee considered the draft resolutions before it.

19. Mr. CHATENAY (International Bank for Reconstruction and Development) said that since the report of the Secretary-General on criteria governing multilateral financing of housing and human settlements (A/9163) had been issued, the Boards of Directors of IBRD and IDA had approved three more projects strictly concerned with urbanization, in addition to the general programmes for such urban infrastructures as water supply, sewerage and electricity. Those new projects consisted of a \$35 million IDA credit to India for slum redevelopment in Calcutta, a \$42 million IBRD loan to Iran for urban transport in Teheran, and an \$11 million IBRD loan and a \$7 million IDA credit to Tunisia for urban planning and public transport in the district of Tunis.

20. The new Urban Project Department of IBRD had prepared a tentative programme of activities related to the urban sector for the period 1972-1976, which listed some 40 projects in about 30 urban centres and envisaged about \$700 million of World Bank Group financing. The World Bank would thus become the largest source of financing for international urbanization programmes. Those lending operations showed the importance that IBRD attached to the problems of housing and human settlements, in line with General Assembly resolution 2998 (XXVII), particularly paragraph 1, in which the General Assembly recommended that the Bank should give high priority to housing and human settlements. The Bank Group, in line with the spirit of that resolution, was constantly adapting the terms of its lending to the special circumstances of the projects it financed. Housing and human settlements were no exception. As to the terms of loans, it should be noted that the IDA credits granted to Senegal, Nicaragua and India, as well as that for part of the project in Tunis had been made with no interest. The Bank loans for the Teheran project and the other part of the Tunis project were for 15 years and 22 years respectively with four-year periods of grace. The conditions granted by the Bank Group were therefore sufficiently flexible to be tailored to the particular conditions of each country and each project.

21. Projects to improve the conditions of life in squatter settlements in several countries had reached an advanced stage of preparation. Since it was practically impossible to find a generalized solution to that problem, programmes adapted to each case must be pre-

pared. In most cases, it was necessary to prepare programmes comprising many elements and to relate them to over-all development patterns, rather than to attack an isolated component.

22. If the housing requirements of the developing countries were to be financed even partially from external resources, the volume of foreign capital required would be considerably in excess of current and contemplated capital flows. Thus, the Bank had been forced to concentrate its efforts on low-cost labour-intensive housing projects which mobilized local resources. Thus, the Bank's contribution as a supplier of foreign capital, despite all its efforts, could be only relatively small in comparison to the considerable needs of the countries involved, because of the very nature of the projects which entailed essentially the use of local inputs.

23. Referring to draft resolution A/C.2/L.1314, he said that an attempt to devise criteria to govern all international lending in the sector of housing and human settlements did not correspond to reality. Each investment in that sector, more so than in any other, was a case unto itself because of the absolute primacy of local conditions, whether climatic, financial, administrative or other. Furthermore, it must be remembered that, for the Bank Group, housing was only one element among several within a given project. For example, the Calcutta project included water supply, sewerage, environmental hygiene, urban transport and housing—housing being divided into several components. Consequently, the Bank Group considered that a study to set new financial criteria that would apply to its lending operations in the sole sector of housing and human settlements could lead to no practical results. Moreover, such an additional study might well duplicate two other studies and reports being prepared, which largely covered the ground dealt with in draft resolution A/C.2/L.1314 and which flowed from General Assembly resolutions 2598 (XXIV) and 2999 (XXVII). A third study therefore appeared to be superfluous, and the Bank Group could not afford to be diverted from its essential activities because of research work which would not necessarily give practical results for its own operations. Its loans and credits would continue to be negotiated on the basis of known criteria approved by member countries collectively. Its projects would continue to fit into sectoral priorities laid down by each member country concerned, according to its needs. Obviously, should the Secretary-General ask for the opinion of IBRD on new criteria devised by the Secretariat, the Bank would give its views. But it was doubtful that the Bank would be in a position to participate actively in such a study.

24. Mr. BONNICK (Jamaica) said that for the current session his delegation would like the text of the statement made by the representative of IBRD to be reproduced *in extenso*.

25. Mr. ČABRIĆ (Yugoslavia) said that the Governing Council of UNEP had initiated, at its first session, the implementation of the decisions and principles of the Declaration of the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment² and the Action Plan for the Human Environment³ adopted at Stockholm. He was glad to note that the spirit of constructive co-operation

which had characterized the Stockholm Conference had also prevailed at the first session of the Council. There was growing awareness among States that environmental problems were universal, that they were of great importance both to developing and to developed countries and that their solution consequently required, in addition to the individual efforts of each country, sustained international co-operation. However, it was essential to provide for diversified measures adapted to the specific conditions and characteristics of individual countries and groups of countries. In that respect, the provisions in the sections entitled "General policy objectives" and "Particular policy objectives" of the Action Plan for the Human Environment adopted by the Governing Council in its decision 1 (I) (see A/9025, annex I) constituted very useful guidelines for the establishment of priority areas.

26. However, his delegation emphasized that many environmental problems facing the developing countries, particularly economic backwardness, were extremely grave and had received insufficient attention. They should be accorded high priority.

27. Among the objectives and priorities which the Governing Council had set forth in its Action Plan there were some that should be financed from the resources of the Fund of UNEP. He emphasized in particular the integrated approach to the planning and management of development, including that of natural resources, so as to take account of environmental consequences, to achieve maximum social, economic and environmental benefits as stated in paragraph 1 (b) of decision 1 (I). Such measures would help the incorporation of aspects of the human environment in national development programmes through the UNEP contribution in technical assistance and training. Similarly, it was appropriate that UNEP should study such problems as human settlements, water pollution and the establishment or strengthening of institutions.

28. He emphasized the need to ensure that the extra cost of environmental programmes did not prevent the fulfilment of the basic development requirements of the developing countries. The latter were concerned that some measures taken by the developed countries to protect the environment might make access to the markets of those countries even more difficult as a result of the adoption of non-tariff barriers, thereby further aggravating the position of the developing countries in international trade. He therefore welcomed the objectives outlined in paragraph 12 (d) (i) of decision 1 (I). Furthermore, he felt that the Fund of UNEP should be placed under the control of the Governing Council.

29. His delegation had sponsored draft resolution A/C.2/L.1312 concerning the United Nations Conference-Exposition on Human Settlements because of the importance which Yugoslavia attached to that question. It also supported the other draft resolutions.

30. Some delegations had questioned the motives of the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.2/L.1305/Rev.1. Those motives were clearly set out in the preambular paragraphs, in which the sponsors had confined themselves to speaking of the duty of the international community to adopt measures to protect and improve the environment and of the need for continuous international collaboration to that end, and had emphasized the need to pursue the elaboration of international

² See A/CONF.48/14/Rev.1, chap. I.

³ *Ibid.*, chap. II.

norms conducive to the achievement of those purposes. That was altogether normal and customary. In the operative paragraphs, the sponsors had not attempted to define the standards for the conservation and harmonious exploitation of natural resources common to two or more States, but had merely expressed the opinion that it was necessary to ensure effective co-operation between countries through the establishment of adequate international standards in the context of the normal relations existing between countries. The same applied to a system of information and prior consultation. Consequently, it was only normal to request the Governing Council to report on the measures adopted for the implementation of the preceding paragraphs and to urge Member States to take full account of those decisions.

31. Some delegations had expressed doubts about the appropriateness of discussing such a matter in the context of the environment; it was, however, clear that the exploitation of natural resources shared by two or more States might have adverse effects on all countries involved and should therefore be the subject of co-operation.

32. Contrary to what some had contended, the documents adopted⁴ by the Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries held at Algiers (5-9 September) confirmed the consistency of the policies and activities of the non-aligned countries in their fight for freedom, well-being and peace.

33. Mr. PITKÄNEN (Finland) said that full understanding of the relationship between all man's activities and the environment and the consequent acceptance of the concept of international responsibility would give further impetus to the work of UNEP.

34. The most important achievement at the Governing Council's first session had been the agreement on priorities of work; it was only natural that such priorities should be rather general at so early a stage. His delegation noted with particular satisfaction the emphasis given to the environmental aspects of the total human habitat in paragraph 3 of decision 1 (I). However, as the priority areas were very broad, the next step was a more detailed agreement on priorities. That task required effective interagency co-ordination and a comprehensive attitude on the part of the Council's members.

35. The Executive Director had expressed regret at the slow rate at which contributions to the Programme were being paid. Owing to budgetary technicalities, his Government was not in a position to make long-term pledges. It had therefore made a contribution of \$150,000 for the current year in early June 1973 and was pledging, subject to parliamentary approval, the same sum for 1974, to be paid immediately after the budgetary appropriations became available.

36. Mr. JAIN (India) said that 1973 had been devoted to the translation into a programme of work of the recommendations adopted at the Stockholm Conference. The Governing Council had done very satisfactory work at its first session, and his delegation paid tribute to the role played by the Executive Director.

37. His delegation supported the Governing Council's conclusion that the quality of human life must constitute the central concern of the action programme and

that the highest priority should, therefore, be given to the enhancement of the total human habitat. The Executive Director had therefore been right to emphasize that in order to achieve that goal, and as was stated in General Assembly resolution 3002 (XXVII), priority should be given to accelerating the development of developing countries.

38. The question of human settlements was high on the list of general priorities adopted by the Governing Council. Its position was justified by the fact that millions of people in the developing countries lived in sub-human conditions. His Government supported the proposal to hold a Conference-Exposition on Human Settlements and was willing to support all measures required for that purpose. It intended to participate in the Conference and would exhibit examples of what was being done in India. His delegation would make some suggestions concerning draft resolution A/C.2/L.1312 and, if they were accepted, would ask to be included among its sponsors.

39. The other priority areas selected at the first session of the Governing Council were also important and his delegation would revert to them at the forthcoming session of the Council.

40. In view of the crucial importance of the Fund of UNEP it was regrettable that contributions were coming in so slowly. His delegation supported the appeal contained in draft resolution A/C.2/L.1316 and would like to be included among its sponsors.

41. He agreed that Governments should co-operate to protect the environment. However, certain rich countries were warning the developing countries against imitating their development process. They recommended "zero growth" in order to combat the deterioration of the environment. He emphasized that it was the developed countries which were responsible for pollution, other countries being its victims. Similarly, the developing countries were being cautioned against seeking merely to increase their gross national product without taking into account the quality of life and income distribution. The argument was a specious one which might be valid for the rich countries but was certainly not so for the developing countries; development remained their final goal for, if wealth was to be distributed, it was obviously necessary to increase gross national product.

42. He reserved the right to comment on the other draft resolutions before the vote.

Mr. Gabre-Sellassie (Ethiopia) resumed the Chair.

43. Mr. MUTOMBO (Zaire) said that his delegation fully supported draft resolution A/C.2/L.1312 concerning the United Nations Conference-Exposition on Human Settlements, of which it had become a sponsor in view of the introductory comments of the Canadian delegation. The exchange of views at the meeting of experts held at Vancouver in May 1973, sponsored by the United Nations, had been highly instructive and fruitful, and his delegation would have liked the unofficial report of that meeting to be distributed as an official document. The less urbanized countries could make an important contribution to the success of the Conference-Exposition; it was regrettable, therefore, that only one African country had participated in the meeting. He hoped that UNEP would ensure that the

⁴ See A/9330.

African countries were well represented in the preparations for the Conference.

44. The President of the Republic of Zaire had suggested to the General Assembly, on 4 October (2140th meeting), that the rich countries should finance a study to determine the causes of various forms of pollution in order better to combat them throughout the world. Such a study would enable the countries which were gradually becoming industrialized to avoid the mistakes of the rich countries. The latter were far better equipped than the poor countries to undertake such a study; furthermore, some intergovernmental organizations were already considering the question, and he hoped that UNEP would make full use of their results for the benefit of all countries, both rich and poor.

45. Zaire attached great importance to UNEP and had willingly contributed to it an amount that was substantial in relation to its resources.

46. His delegation had become a sponsor of draft resolution A/C.2/L.1305/Rev.1 and hoped that it would receive the Committee's unanimous support.

47. Mr. MÜEZZINOĞLU (Turkey) said the question before the Committee was that of improving the quality of human life—indeed, of ensuring the survival of mankind. Urgent measures were necessary and, the problem being by its very nature world-wide, international co-operation was essential. However, due consideration should be given to the economic needs of the developing countries so that an international environment policy would not have negative effects on their development efforts.

48. In view of the urgency of the questions involved, he welcomed the rapidity with which the UNEP secretariat had been established at Nairobi and the first session of the Governing Council organized. Despite the urgent needs, however, it was important to bear in mind that the differing conditions in each country made it necessary to proceed step by step and with a realistic approach in order to avoid creating new problems. Moreover, the secretariat of UNEP should co-operate closely with the other United Nations bodies in order to avoid duplication.

49. His delegation took note of the guidelines adopted at the first session of the Governing Council on the Action Plan and welcomed the work done on the monitoring and referral components of the Earthwatch project. It also welcomed the establishment of the Fund of the United Nations Environment Programme.

50. Turkey had given considerable attention to the question of the environment in preparing its third Five-Year Development Plan. At its current stage of economic development, Turkey's main concern, in dealing with environmental problems, was to avoid any adverse effects on its economic development prospects. Turkey was also following with great interest international efforts in connexion with marine pollution, and his Government had offered to establish an institute for environmental engineering in Turkey, as part of the United Nations University.

51. His delegation supported draft resolution A/C.2/L.1312 and intended to participate actively in the Conference-Exposition on Human Settlements. However, the comments of the representative of France concerning the establishment of a preparatory commit-

tee and the expenditures involved deserved careful consideration.

52. Draft resolution A/C.2/L.1305/Rev.1 advanced new concepts of international co-operation and embodied some of the principles considered at the Conference of Algiers. However, his delegation had reservations with regard to both the procedure and the substance of the draft. A number of United Nations bodies, including the International Law Commission and the Committee on Natural Resources, were to consider certain aspects of the question; the Second Committee should therefore refrain from taking hasty decisions which might prejudice the work of those bodies.

53. As to the substance of the draft resolution, the sponsors had not clearly reflected the balance established in the Stockholm Declaration between the rights of States and their duties. Paragraph 1 took account of the need to establish international standards for the conservation and harmonious exploitation of natural resources; although international standards might, in fact, be established eventually, his delegation felt that such a step was premature and feared that the establishment of environmental standards might hinder the efforts of the developing countries.

54. In paragraph 2, a reaffirmation of the sovereign right of States over their natural resources was needed to improve the balance of the text.

55. In its relations with neighbouring countries, Turkey, for its part, maintained a policy of non-intervention in their internal affairs and of respect for their sovereign rights with regard to the natural resources which it held in common with them. Turkey had established joint committees with its neighbours and was co-operating with them in order to ensure that all parties concerned derived the maximum benefit from the exploitation of those resources.

56. Mr. BATCHY (Gabon) said that environmental problems varied from one country to another and according to the stage of national development reached. Because of the lightning pace of its industrial development, Gabon was being forced to grapple with a number of environmental problems. The exploitation of its uranium deposits was giving rise to fears of river and marine pollution.

57. One of the principal measures to be taken to deal with environmental problems was to train qualified personnel within the context of local working conditions, although that would not preclude exchanges of information between countries. Furthermore, the natural and acquired habits of the population could create a conflict between development needs and the environment. A food cannery, for example, could cause a plague of flies because of the carelessness of consumers in throwing the cans away. If environmental problems were to be overcome, the measures taken should be part of an over-all plan. Such a plan was worth considering if human settlements were to be well managed and natural resources rationally exploited. However, too often the planner forgot man's place in development.

58. International aid, while necessary, should take account of the wishes of the requesting countries. He welcomed the fact that priority had been accorded to human settlements. Gabon relied on aid from friendly countries and the United Nations, but such aid must be compatible with the specific conditions of the country.

In conclusion, he stated that his delegation unreservedly supported draft resolution A/C.2/L.1312 on the organization of a Conference-Exposition on Human Settlements to take place at Vancouver.

59. Mr. KUMI (Ghana) said that the damage caused by man to the marine environment, the cradle of life, was only one aspect of the activities of mankind which had made the Stockholm Conference necessary. At that Conference, in a spirit of co-operation, the participating countries had agreed on a number of basic principles and norms for the rehabilitation of the human environment. The Governing Council of UNEP was the main operational tool available to Member States for that purpose.

60. His delegation supported the objectives and priorities listed in section III of the Governing Council's decision 1 (I). In particular, his delegation noted with satisfaction that environmental problems attributable to industrialization and those resulting from under-development itself were given due attention. Undoubtedly, the implementation of the far-reaching programme adopted by the Governing Council would be a long-term undertaking. In putting the programme into effect, a number of basic principles, norms and rules had to be borne in mind: first, environmental programmes must not replace development programmes; secondly, protection of the environment must not hinder economic and social progress, but must complement development efforts; finally, the Action Plan could not meaningfully be carried out unless UNEP had adequate financial resources.

61. His delegation was gratified to note that the Governments of both the developed and the developing countries had replied positively to the appeals for contributions to the Fund of UNEP. His Government, too, was considering making a contribution. It should, however, be made quite clear that those mainly responsible for pollution should bear the greater part of the financial burden. His delegation supported the general procedures governing the operations of the Fund and the appropriation of \$5.5 million, as mentioned in the Governing Council's decision 3 (I).

62. For the developing countries, the problems engendered by industrialization were less serious than those caused by lack of health facilities and by malnutrition. The people of those countries needed, in particular, decent housing, having modern sanitary facilities and strongly constructed to resist natural disasters. His delegation therefore welcomed the decision to hold a Conference-Exposition on Human Settlements in 1976. That Conference-Exposition would afford every country the opportunity of sharing its experience in housing construction. It was because many communities were unable to provide each family with a home that human settlements were undergoing such a serious crisis. As long as the number of houses supported by a sound environment was inadequate, the settlements crisis would remain a problem for mankind. His Government considered that question to be of vital importance, as evidenced by the housing programmes in progress in Ghana. If those programmes were selected as demonstration projects, the Ghanaian Government was prepared to share the fruits of its experience with other developing countries.

63. Mr. HABIB (Syrian Arab Republic) said that the report of the UNEP Governing Council on its first

session illustrated the interrelationship between man and his environment in the contemporary world and in the future. The unequal development of the rich and the poor countries was one of the major consequences of the industrial revolution. Accordingly, in considering the question of the environment, a distinction had to be made between the environment of developing countries and that of the technologically developed countries. The developing countries should not follow the example of the industrialized countries. They should take into account the positive and negative aspects of any production process in order to avoid damaging their own environment as the industrial countries had done.

64. Protection of the environment should not be used as a pretext for slowing down the economic progress of the developing countries at a time when technological change had become a necessity. The developing countries therefore needed to work in two directions at the same time: to protect their environment from the consequences of modern technology and to solve environmental problems caused by under-development, which manifested themselves in lack of education, unhealthy housing conditions, shortages of food and over-population. To solve those problems, scientific research into environmental problems must be promoted at both the national and multinational levels in all countries, and in particular in the developing countries. That would be possible only if the developing countries were kept informed of the latest scientific and technological discoveries.

65. From the economic point of view, it was impossible to separate environmental problems from the development process. Environmental elements must be an integral part of economic and social development. Moreover, solving existing environmental problems was a prerequisite for development. Since many environmental problems were the result of civil and military industries in the industrialized countries, those countries must take appropriate action and assume their responsibilities. They must make efforts, individually and collectively, to stop the further deterioration of the environment in their territories; to share with the developing countries the full responsibility in their effort to save their environment; to apply scientific and technological research concerning the human environment, and avoid further pollution of the oceans and of space; and to translate co-operation among developed and developing countries concerning the environment into deeds. Such co-operation should be given priority in the future activities of United Nations organizations directly concerned with environment questions.

66. His delegation strongly supported draft resolution A/C.2/L.1312, regarding the United Nations Conference-Exposition on Human Settlements. The Syrian Arab Republic had already undertaken a number of studies concerning environmental problems evolving from the construction of the Euphrates dam, and similar studies were planned on the impact of the agricultural and industrial revolution which the dam was intended to launch.

67. On 14 June 1972, the Syrian delegation to the Stockholm Conference had announced the Syrian Government's strong desire to establish a regional centre for the Middle East for environmental questions at Damascus. The Syrian representative in the Second Committee at the twenty-seventh session had renewed

that request on 30 October 1972 (1474th meeting). The Syrian representative in the Governing Council of UNEP had confirmed the request in June 1973, at Geneva, and had announced that his Government had decided to offer a piece of land free of charge as a building site for the Centre. He now requested once again, on behalf of his Government, that an environmental centre for the Middle East should be established at Damascus; his Government would do everything to facilitate the success of so important a project.

68. Mr. ROSSIDES (Cyprus) congratulated UNEP and its Executive Director on the appreciable results already obtained in one year. The Programme should be encouraged to persevere in its task, not with words but with deeds. All countries, whatever their level of development, must take part in the common environmental protection effort. Unfortunately, the energy crisis feared by the developed countries was a new threat to the environment. There was talk of relaxing the standards which had been established in recent years, the effect of which would be a further degradation in the biosphere.

69. Environmental problems were linked to all aspects of life. Nuclear tests were to be deplored. More than 10 years after the signing (5 August 1963) of the Treaty Banning Nuclear Weapon Tests in the Atmosphere, in Outer Space and Under Water, testing was proceeding without thought for the environment. The problem of war and peace was one of the main concerns of the United Nations. But that problem had now become an environmental problem, for what made war so dangerous was the fact that nuclear weapons, because of their radio-activity, had a disastrous effect on the environment, and their use would seriously threaten the continuation of life on earth. It was clear that the environmental problem was the key problem of the present age.

70. Ten years previously, the word "environment" had been practically unknown. Today it was on everybody's lips, and yet men still had only a glimmering of the importance of the question. It was no longer possible to undertake projects detrimental to the environmental without endangering life itself. To avoid catastrophe, planning the world level and the means of implementing such planning were necessary. All Member States must therefore undertake unreservedly to support UNEP, which should be given the place it deserved in the work of the Second Committee.

71. In conclusion, he announced that his delegation had become a sponsor of draft resolution A/C.2/L.1312 and supported draft resolutions A/C.2/L.1305/Rev.1 and A/C.2/L.1314.

72. Mr. AL-EBRAHIM (Kuwait) said that UNEP was still in its early stages and its future depended on the machinery it would have and the resources placed at its disposal. Environmental problems were becoming more acute in many parts of the world. It was particularly important to solve the problem of pollution of the ocean, which threatened seafood, an important source of protein.

73. The environmental problems of the developing countries were due to lack of development. The five-year plans of developing countries should pay sufficient heed to environmental factors, and economic planning should be used to eliminate environmental problems. UNDP should encourage countries to include some

environmental projects in their country programmes, and it should also co-operate with UNEP.

74. Soil erosion and sand-storms were the main concerns of his Government. Through the planting of trees and appropriate architectural design, their harmful effects had been restricted to some extent. The exodus from rural areas was also the source of many environmental problems. His delegation believed that the time had come to define the problem with a view to finding solutions. It agreed with the Executive Director of UNEP that the enhancement of the human habitat and the study of environmental problems having an immediate impact on man should be given the highest priority.

75. At the 1565th meeting, the representative of Iran had questioned the ground for revising the geographical names which appeared in paragraph 30 of the report of the Governing Council (A/9025). The delegation of Kuwait insisted that the appellation used in paragraph 30 should be maintained, because it was the result of a delicate compromise.

76. He regretted that he must comment briefly on natural resources. His delegation wondered what was meant by references to energy and the request for a detailed report on world energy to be submitted to the Governing Council of UNEP at its next session. His delegation hoped that the Executive Director would take into account the United Nations resolutions concerning the permanent sovereignty of States over their natural resources, and pointed out that whatever detailed information was collected should deal only with environmental questions. It rejected any reference to the energy crisis during a discussion on the environment. Perhaps UNEP could present a detailed study on the effects of nuclear sources of energy on the environment.

77. His Government rejected any attempt to exercise any control whatsoever over its natural resources, and believed that no one was in a position to offer any advice on how to manage or administer its resources. He was aware that other countries needed the mineral resources that it possessed, and its policy was to ensure continued mutual benefit. It was clear that any attempt to impair the sovereignty of Kuwait over its natural resources could only have harmful effects.

78. Mr. DIAW (Mali) thanked the Executive Director of UNEP for his statement introducing the report of the Governing Council.

79. Noting that the environmental problem differed according as developed or developing countries were involved, he pointed out that in the latter group of countries the threat was not yet imminent, given their low level of industrialization, and that they must, above all, take measures to ensure that their development proceeded without disturbing the environment. He deplored the fact that, while some developing countries which already had numerous problems were victims of imperialist and colonial aggression, their arable land being burnt by napalm and other defoliants, their flora destroyed and their fauna decimated, others had to cope with natural disasters of various origins such as floods, earthquakes, cyclones and drought. UNEP must not only discover the multiple origins of such natural disasters, but also take the necessary steps to prevent and neutralize them. His delegation welcomed the scientific and technical progress of the modern era,

the level of which attested to man's determination to dominate nature and natural phenomena so as to improve his conditions of existence, but it also considered that all countries had a common destiny, that the earth belonged to all and that the progress of each country depended on the progress of all others. In that connexion, he referred to the current drought in the Sudano-Sahelian region, and commended the efforts made by several countries and by the international community as a whole to assist the countries of the region, but pointed out that those efforts might be in vain if the medium-term and long-term action programmes devised by the countries concerned, with the assistance and participation of several international organizations, were not implemented. Since development was inseparable from the environment, UNEP must not fail to join its efforts to those of UNDP in order to arrest the disaster.

80. Finally, he reaffirmed his delegation's complete support for the Economic Declaration adopted by the Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries at the Algiers Conference, and expressed the hope that draft resolution A/C.2/L.1305/Rev.1, of which Mali was a sponsor, would be approved by the Committee.

81. Mr. AL-KHUDHAIRY (Iraq) commended the Executive Director for the competence with which he had presided over the organization of UNEP. He stressed the importance of the first session of the UNEP Governing Council, during which it had been possible to lay sound foundations for future action, and said that his delegation was pleased to note the list of major functional tasks assigned to the Programme by the Governing Council. However, for a developing country like Iraq, it was problems relating to the health and well-being of the people which should have first priority, followed immediately by the problems of water quality and supply, the soil and human settlements. If solutions could not be found to those problems, development plans would always be only half fulfilled. The vital element in any development plan was man, but if he was not healthy and physically fit, the whole development process would slow down.

82. Although water quality was essential for the health of the people, water supply was also critical, because in most developing countries agriculture was the principal sector of the economy. Like other countries in the Arab world and many other developing countries throughout the world, Iraq suffered from the problems of salination, erosion, desertification and laterization of the soil. It considered soil degradation to be a major constraint on agricultural production and soil utilization, since fertility was declining while salination was increasing. The Government of Iraq had undertaken large efforts to drain the land but was facing enormous problems, and the high cost of operations would inevitably consume much of the sum allocated to development for the next decade. The target was to drain 2 million hectares, but the estimated cost of the undertaking was \$1,300 million, and even if Iraq allocated to it all its capital investment for development it would require 10 years to complete the operation. Since many countries undoubtedly faced the same problem, it would be useful to undertake, within the framework of international co-operation, scientific research work in order to make any such operation more effective and less costly. His delegation therefore hoped that UNEP

would give special attention to the question of the management and conservation of soil and water resources.

83. As for the question of human settlements, his Government believed that it should be dealt with in the context of national economic planning. The annual rate of population growth in Iraq was 3.2 per cent for the country as a whole, but in the urban centres it was more than 6 per cent. The migration to the cities had led to the creation of large slum areas, with all the resulting economic and social problems. To tackle those problems, the Government of Iraq had taken fundamental measures, one of which was the implementation of national housing policies over the next 10 years at an approximate cost of \$35 million per year. His Government was, of course, looking forward to the Conference-Exposition of Human Settlements, which, as the Executive Director had said, must be pragmatic and solution-oriented. As that event was not to take place until 1976, it would be useful to take advantage of the intervening period and to begin taking some action immediately.

84. His Government attached special importance to the exchange of information and data on environmental matters, and believed that such an exchange should include, *inter alia*, research and information of a legislative, administrative and technical nature.

85. It also attached great importance to regional projects, provided that they were directly linked to policies and actions at both the national and the international level. It was pleased to learn that consultations had already taken place between UNEP and certain regional intergovernmental organizations active in the environment field. Moreover, the programme for the establishment of liaison units with each of the regional economic commissions was an encouraging augury of positive co-operation between UNEP and the commissions.

86. His delegation commended the Governing Council of UNEP for authorizing the Executive Director to provide assistance to Governments in dealing with their environmental concerns. However, it believed that such co-operation should mainly take the form of technical assistance, training, development of institutional capability, mobilization of additional financial resources and development and dissemination of environmentally and economically sound technologies. Since many developing countries lacked the required scientific, economic and managerial skills, his delegation hoped that UNEP would give due attention to the training of national personnel in various disciplines.

87. His delegation, which believed that UNEP would have its greatest impact on the various environmental problems through its activities on the regional level, commended the Executive Director for the arrangements which he planned for the establishment of regional units; it hoped that several of those units would be set up in Arab countries. Iraq had already set up a national committee for the purpose of co-ordinating research work on the environment. It had also established a University Institute for Higher Studies, known as the Centre of Urban and Regional Planning. In that connexion, his delegation was convinced that development was not incompatible with the maintenance of environmental quality. It believed that development itself was the primary means of improving the environment and thus bettering the quality of life for the major-

ity of mankind. It therefore categorically rejected any argument that used the excuse of environmental problems to hamper or delay in any way the economic and social progress of the developing countries.

88. His delegation was disturbed at the trend being taken by the discussion of the energy question and its effects on the environment. It was alarmed at the fact that the energy question was being used to advocate political arguments and positions. His delegation wished to make it clear that under no circumstances could it accept any measure, argument or logic that directly or indirectly threatened the principle of sovereignty of States over their natural resources. It categorically rejected any attempt to limit or circumscribe in any manner or under any pretext the sovereign rights of States to exploit and utilize their natural resources for the benefit and well-being of their people in conformity with their policies and national objectives and aspirations. That right could not be the subject of any bargaining. His delegation therefore viewed with extreme suspicion calls for "more sharing", "responsible stewardship" or "just distribution" of raw materials and natural resources. It was essential to make sure that the problems of the environment would not become political issues. The so-called energy crisis, which was currently being exaggerated by some countries and was perhaps even created by them, could not be considered an environmental problem, for it was more of a political problem. His delegation therefore asked that the study which the UNEP secretariat would be carrying out on the energy question should concentrate solely on the environmental aspects of energy, or in other words, on pollution and its hazards to the health of mankind. The study must not under any circumstances be used to advocate the policies or positions of certain countries on the problem of energy in its wider aspects.

89. On the subject of the reference by the Iranian representative at the 1565th meeting to the terminology concerning the Arabian Gulf used in paragraph 30 of the report of the Governing Council (A/9025), he said that, although the words used were not entirely satisfactory to him, the paragraph should not be amended.

90. In conclusion, he said that the factors seriously endangering the environment included aggression, occupation, exploitation, war, racial discrimination and colonization. Unless serious and active steps were taken to eliminate those negative factors, mankind would never attain any valuable or lasting results. The case of Palestine and the plight of Palestinians who had been uprooted and were living, whether as refugees or captives, in tragic misery and disgrace, could be taken as a striking example of human environmental problems.

91. Miss NAVANI (Thailand) said that only a year earlier the General Assembly had taken action on the report of the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment, the results of which had surpassed all expectations. Progress had certainly been made since then, including the unanimous agreement by the Governing Council of UNEP on the general policy objectives and programme priorities for action. Her delegation fully supported the principle that the quality of human life should be the central concern of UNEP, and believed that the enhancement of the total human habitat and the study of environmental problems having

an immediate impact on man should therefore be given the highest priority in the over-all programme. Her delegation attached great importance to the regional activities of UNEP and welcomed the Executive Director's planned arrangements for the establishment of regional units in close co-operation with the regional economic commissions and other regional bodies. Economic and social development affected the environment and vice versa; the regional economic commissions accordingly had an important role to play in the global environmental endeavour, as had, indeed, been recognized in paragraph 4 of section IV of General Assembly resolution 2997 (XXVII).

92. Her delegation was pleased to note that the Governing Council had adopted general procedures for conducting the operations of the Fund of the United Nations Environment Programme and that 16 Governments had already contributed a total of \$4.4 million. It welcomed the Executive Director's statement that the Fund might well exceed its initial target of \$100 million for the period 1973-1977. While her delegation hoped that that expectation would be fulfilled, it felt compelled to reiterate the recommendation of the Stockholm Conference that assistance for environmental action should not have the effect of reducing development assistance and that additional finance for environment programmes should be found in such a way as not adversely to affect assistance to the developing countries.

93. Her delegation was one of the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.2/L.1312 on the Conference-Exposition on Human Settlements. The Canadian Minister of State for Urban Affairs had pointed out, on introducing the draft resolution, that by the year 2000 the population of the developing countries was expected to double and their urban population to increase fourfold. Most developing countries, however, were already suffering from the problem of urban migration and for them immediate action by the international community in the field of human settlements was of critical importance.

94. On the subject of draft resolution A/C.2/L.1312, paragraph 5 of which referred to the establishment of a Preparatory Committee for the Conference-Exposition, her delegation held that membership of the Governing Council of UNEP should not be a prerequisite for participation in the work of that Committee. The Committee on Housing, Building and Planning should, in view of its terms of reference, have a key role in the Preparatory Committee.

95. It followed from the fact that her Government gave great importance to the construction of low-cost housing that her delegation would support draft resolution A/C.2/L.1314 on criteria governing multilateral financing of housing and human settlements. Similarly, because her Government had given great prominence to that question in its third five-year plan, her delegation had welcomed resolution 2998 (XXVII) in which the General Assembly had recommended, *inter alia*, that all development assistance agencies should in their activities give high priority to requests from Governments for assistance in housing and human settlements. Her delegation regretted that the report of the Secretary-General (A/9163) gave no evidence of the identification or establishment of new criteria for granting loans on more favourable terms and conditions and believed that it was appropriate to request the

Secretary-General to undertake, as a matter of priority, the comprehensive analytical study envisaged in that resolution.

96. Those who might have wished to see more progress and more practical achievements should bear in mind that UNEP had been in existence for only a year. Her delegation hoped, however, that UNEP would go ahead and undertake the main functions and responsibilities entrusted to it by resolution 2997 (XXVII).

97. Mr. GONZALEZ ARIAS (Paraguay) thanked the Executive Director of UNEP for his introductory statement and commended the Governing Council on the work it had accomplished at its first session. His delegation saw the Stockholm Declaration as a symbol of the determination of the Member States of the United Nations to find a way of reconciling development efforts with the preservation of the environment, and believed that the time had come for action to meet national and, in some instances, regional aspirations, while at the same time taking account of world-wide co-operation programmes.

98. He had some comments to make on draft resolution A/C.2/L.1305/Rev.1 from the point of view of Paraguay, a developing country whose future depended to a large measure on the rational utilization of its natural resources, and in particular its water resources, for which it was dependent on a great international river basin, the River Plate basin. In order to ensure the independence of its economy, his country had endeavoured to conclude co-operation agreements with its neighbours and during the 1960s had signed the River Plate basin treaty, in which the countries of the region had devised arrangements which took account of their individual ecological, social, economic and political conditions within a large-scale co-operation programme that was indicative of their political maturity. The draft resolution before the Committee was based on the idea of a "system of information and prior consultation" with a view to regulating the conservation and exploitation of "natural resources common to two or more States". He found that wording regrettably lacking in clarity and objectivity, and pointed out that in the case of the River Plate basin a clear and precise distinction had been made between natural resources common to several States and natural resources subject to the exclusive sovereignty of one State: decisions concerning the former were subject, not only to consultations but to very specific agreement, whereas in the case of the latter no interference by a third State was permitted. Accordingly, the establishment of a system of consultations, as contemplated in the draft resolution, to regulate the utilization of the resources of an international river basin which included waterways forming the frontier between two countries and waterways running from one country to another would be equivalent to a negation of permanent sovereignty, would facilitate interference in the internal affairs of countries and would engender continual disputes. In that connexion, he pointed out that the Sixth Committee's decision at its 1415th meeting on 15 October, to refer the question of the law of the non-navigational uses of international watercourses to the International Law Commission related only to an isolated and limited aspect of the general problem of shared resources, namely, the law of international watercourses, which

involved a number of elements, including the environment. In that context the question of prior consultations was essentially a legal one, since the system would involve a series of rights and obligations for all States; accordingly, it was not for the General Assembly to settle that issue, which was to be considered by a specialized body.

99. His delegation was therefore unable to agree to the establishment of the contemplated system of consultation, especially as most natural resources could be classified as shared resources if it was borne in mind that petroleum and natural gas deposits were not confined to the territory of a single country, that some species of fish migrated from one area to another, and so on. The development of the less advanced countries was almost always based on the exploitation of their natural resources, and they certainly could not be expected to defer in the execution of their own plans to the good pleasure of other countries, with the added possibility of a veto which that would involve. Such a course would be merely a pretext to justify interference by the richer countries in the internal affairs of other countries.

100. In view of the particular geographical situation of Paraguay, whose frontiers were almost entirely delimited by rivers and other waters, it was in the interest of that country to avoid any interference with the river system on which its economy was largely dependent. As almost all of that river system was shared with the neighbouring countries, it was important that the principle of responsibility should be respected within the framework of international co-operation. Since 1958, Argentina and Paraguay had been carrying out joint studies and were conducting negotiations with a view to the signing of a treaty on utilization of the rapids of the Parana River in the vicinity of Yacyretá and Apipé islands for the production of electric power, the facilitating of navigation and the prevention of flooding—in other words, for promoting the development of a vast region extending over the territory of both countries. Paraguay had also recently concluded with Brazil, under conditions of complete equality, a treaty under which the energy potential belonging to the two countries could be utilized, thus making possible a complete transformation of the Paraguayan economy. That was a sovereign decision by two countries concerning resources which they shared exclusively under their sovereign rights, and that decision could not be prejudicial to any third country for the simple reason that the resources in question resulted from a topographic configuration that belonged exclusively to those two countries. Paraguay was also in the process of drawing up joint plans with Bolivia and Uruguay under the provisions of the River Plate basin treaty; those plans would be of benefit to the region in view of the need to develop and conserve its natural resources.

101. His delegation therefore regretted that, under the pretext of giving practical effect to the provisions of the Algiers Declaration, the Second Committee was again taking up a problem which had been adequately dealt with by the General Assembly in its resolution 2995 (XXVII). In the opinion of his delegation, it was for each region, in the light of its particular circumstances and in conformity with proper legal procedures, to seek to determine what forms of settlement respected the sovereignty of each State in each case.

102. Mr. SADEK (Egypt) said that the Governing Council of UNEP, by setting the main directions for its activities at its first session, had significantly contributed to the future endeavours of the United Nations in the different sectors of the environment.

103. As a developing country, Egypt was happy to note that it had been recognized that the environmental problems related to development in those countries were usually a direct result of under-development and that solving such problems required more economic and social development rather than limitations on it. UNEP had, moreover, made provision for assisting countries in incorporating environmental aspects in their national development programmes.

104. A suggestion had been made by some developing countries a few years ago regarding the possible advantages of locating certain industries in those countries as a means of reducing pollution dangers in the developed countries and of benefiting developing countries by extending their productive capacity, increasing their income and enabling them to avail themselves of the transfer of technology. His delegation was gratified to note that the Executive Director had proposed to undertake research on that subject.

105. It was possible that the environmental policies of the developed countries would further worsen the deterioration of the terms of trade of the developing countries by causing the prices of the products originating in the developed countries to rise and by erecting new non-tariff barriers to international trade which would be particularly unfavourable to the products of the developing countries. His delegation was impatiently awaiting the results of the studies undertaken by UNCTAD in implementation of its resolution 47 (III),⁵ as well as the results of the studies and research concerning synthetic and natural fibres and the controls which might be used as a pretext for applying protectionist policies.

106. The developing countries were finding it difficult to face their environmental responsibilities because the limited resources available to them, which were already committed to development, were constantly deteriorating in terms of real value by reason of the international monetary crisis and growing inflation in the industrialized countries. Consequently, his delegation hoped that the Fund of UNEP would play a decisive role in that regard and that its assistance would be rendered in addition to the assistance devoted to development under the International Development Strategy. Overpopulation contributed greatly to environmental degradation in the developing countries and either slowed down or nullified the benefits derived from economic growth. His delegation was of the view that the relationship between population growth and the environment needed more attention and could be one of the topics taken up at the World Population Conference and at the Second United Nations Conference on the Human Environment.

107. His delegation noted with satisfaction that provision had been made by the Governing Council of UNEP to support co-operation among countries which faced environmental problems of a geographical character.

⁵ See *Proceedings of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, Third Session*, vol. I, *Report and Annexes* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.73.II.D.4), annex I.A.

Egypt and other countries would need UNEP aid to solve some acute problems of that kind, such as the pollution of the Mediterranean, which was becoming a matter of increasing concern to the States bordering on that sea and had resulted in the signing of the Beirut Charter for safeguarding and developing the Mediterranean. Another such problem was caused by the unmarked minefields which dated from the Second World War in some parts of North Africa. All sorts of activity were paralysed, and human lives were being lost every day as a result of not obtaining the relevant maps from the parties concerned.

108. Turning to the question of natural resources shared by two or more States, he said that his delegation had voiced its opinion at Stockholm and, more recently, at the Algiers Conference. It had become a sponsor of the draft resolution dealing with that issue (A/C.2/L.1305/Rev.1). It must be stressed that harmonious exploitation and conservation of shared natural resources could be achieved only through the co-operation of all parties concerned within the framework of the normal relations existing between them. Such co-operation necessitated the establishment of adequate international standards and the development of a system of information and prior consultation.

109. Many countries had gained experience of the problems of human settlements, and the Conference-Exposition on Human Settlements, which was to be held at Vancouver in 1976, would enable them to share the results of that experience and would help Governments and international organizations to choose the most appropriate solutions. His delegation hoped that draft resolution A/C.2/L.1312, of which it was a sponsor, would be adopted unanimously by the Committee. Egypt attached great importance to the codification and development of environmental law and considered that to be one of the main responsibilities of the International Law Commission.

110. His delegation supported the request made by the representative of the Syrian Arab Republic for the establishment of a regional environmental centre at Damascus.

111. Mr. SMIRNOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) deplored the fact that no notice of meetings of the Second Committee for Monday, 26 November had been given in issue No. 5815 of the Russian version of the Journal of the United Nations. He had already had occasion to point out an omission of that kind and had been given the assurance that such a regrettable incident would not occur again. It was extremely difficult for the Soviet delegation to participate effectively in the proceedings if it was not accurately informed of the scheduling of meetings.

112. Mr. CORDOVEZ (Secretary of the Committee) said that he had already sent a communication to the responsible quarters, who had assured him that they would take care to ensure that an error of that kind did not occur again. It should, however, be pointed out that only the Journal for the actual day of the meeting could be relied upon for the meeting schedule.

113. Mr. SHEMIRANI (Iran), speaking in the exercise of his right of reply, reaffirmed his delegation's position regarding the terminology used in