



Chairman: Mr. Narciso G. REYES (Philippines).

GENERAL STATEMENTS (*continued*)

and

AGENDA ITEM 12

Report of the Economic and Social Council [chapters III to VII, VIII (sections A to E), IX to XIV, XXI and XXII] (*continued*) (A/8403)

1. Mr. DALYANOGLU (Turkey) said that 1970 and 1971 had been lean years for the developing countries whose share in world trade had continued to decline. High tariffs, non-tariff barriers and fluctuations in commodity prices had prevented their exports from expanding, and the net flow of financial resources from developed countries had been insufficient. The developing countries were obliged to utilize a large proportion of their resources to meet the basic needs of their rapidly increasing populations, and they continued to be beset with the problems of unemployment, underemployment and haphazard urbanization. If properly directed, industrialization could prove an effective instrument to reduce unemployment, but the developing countries lacked capital, production techniques and skilled personnel and were faced with a steadily increasing burden of debt.
2. The results of the Second United Nations Development Decade had so far fallen far short of expectations, and during the coming months the international community would demonstrate whether it really had the political will to make the Decade a success.
3. One of the important items on the agenda for the third session of UNCTAD, to be held in Santiago in 1972, would be the question of tariff preferences for developing nations. A generalized, non-discriminatory system of tariff preferences for the exports of developing countries had been worked out after long and difficult negotiations. However, some of the preference-giving countries had excluded a number of developing countries from their lists of beneficiaries and their action constituted discriminatory treatment against those countries.
4. The Economic and Social Council had stated that export promotion efforts were essential if developing countries were to take full advantage of the generalized, non-discriminatory scheme of tariff preferences. His delegation believed that the regional economic commissions and the UNCTAD/GATT International Trade Centre could play a useful role in providing assistance to developing countries in that field.
5. His delegation noted with satisfaction the preparations for the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment, to be held at Stockholm in June 1972. Many environmental problems knew no national boundaries and the problems of the deteriorating environment affected developed and developing countries alike, although the developing countries would have the greatest difficulty in coping with the problem. His delegation was confident that the recognition by the General Assembly of the needs of developing countries in that field would be reaffirmed at the Conference and that the problems of the environment could be effectively tackled on a world-wide basis.
6. Mrs. THORSSON (Sweden) felt that it would be appropriate to consider the question of the implementation of the International Development Strategy for the Second United Nations Development Decade in the light of current events on the international scene.
7. The world monetary crisis was a source of particular concern at a time when the gap in living standards and the well-being of people in rich and poor countries continued to widen and flows of financial resources from rich to poor countries were stagnating. Unemployment, malnutrition and even famine continued to afflict the rapidly increasing population of the poorer countries and in recent years a number of catastrophes of staggering dimensions and far-reaching repercussions had aggravated the already serious situation. Disruption in world trade could be particularly serious for the developing countries in their efforts to bring about sustained economic growth and social justice. The tendency to allow balance-of-payments difficulties in the rich countries to affect the flow of development assistance could also lead to grave repercussions in the countries of the third world. The developed countries should ensure that assistance programmes were not used as instruments in the short-term adjustment process.
8. The Committee was not required to find a solution for the present crisis, but it had a general interest in the outcome of negotiations which should, by establishing and strengthening a viable monetary system, ensure a new period of expansion and stability for the world economy.
9. In order to avoid economic nationalism and protection in the developed countries, it was of the utmost importance to restore a situation of full employment. In the developed countries with expanding economies unemployment could be controlled by effective economic measures such as retraining or relocating workers. However, in the developing countries between 20 and 25 per cent of the labour force was permanently unemployed or underemployed. Such structural unemployment was a loss of productive, human capital in a situation where all the resources should be

mobilized for an economic take-off, and efforts should be directed towards an increased use of labour-intensive and efficient technologies. The widespread recognition of the need for small-scale industries with substantial development effects in rural areas was therefore to be welcomed. In addition, a new integrated approach to rural and urban development might well require a comprehensive set of measures, including the redistribution of land holdings, to improve conditions of life in rural areas. Although the decisive criterion for appraising the effectiveness of any economic policy was its success in creating employment opportunities, even effective employment policies would not be enough. The rich countries must recognize the legitimate desire of developing countries for economic independence, structural change and modernization. Ultimately, all efforts made towards development necessarily implied a shift in the structure of power in the international system.

10. The third session of UNCTAD would be the first step on the road towards the goals of the Decade. The failure by some countries to implement the general scheme of preferences agreed in 1970 or to reach agreement on the untying of aid would constitute major setbacks. Some tangible evidence by developed countries that the official development assistance target of 0.7 per cent of gross national product could be attained by the middle of the Decade would improve the prospects for a successful conference.

11. The developing countries could not remain unaffected by the present environmental concern in industrialized countries since increasingly rigorous environmental standards, which would affect international trade, were being enforced. The developed countries should make a serious attempt to reach a workable balance between their commitments to their own citizens to create the most qualitative standard of life possible, and their commitment, within the framework of the Strategy for the Second Development Decade, to eliminate existing types of barriers, tariffs or non-tariffs, to imports from developing countries. The growing concern about the pollutive effects of synthetics industries in developed countries might also result in a decline in the current rate of substitution of synthetics for natural resources from developing countries, and might, in turn, open up opportunities for many of their natural products.

12. The transfer of science and technology to the developing countries was another important element of the Strategy. If environmental measures in the rich countries created problems for exports from the countries of the third world, the industrialized countries should recognize their responsibility to place scientific and technological resources at the disposal of countries adversely affected by those environmental measures, in order to overcome possible new obstacles to trade. Some 98 per cent of total world expenditure on research and development was made in the rich countries and less than 1 per cent was specifically aimed at solving problems of direct interest and importance to the developing countries. If properly applied, science and technology could be decisive in solving contemporary problems.

13. Her delegation considered that the review machinery already existing at various levels of the system should

continue to perform those tasks for which it had been established. At the same time, it should be adapted or correlated to the review process for the Second Development Decade. A common conceptual framework for the review activities of the United Nations system was essential. What was needed was a set of social and economic indicators which would reflect in simple and concise terms the general progress made. The organs of the United Nations should accelerate and complete their work on sectoral strategies which would be mutually interdependent and designed to broaden the frame of the Strategy and to bring out within each sector a few fields of action accorded high priority by developing countries. The aim underlying the idea of a common conceptual approach would be the promotion of a common methodology, a rational division of labour and a suitable timing of the whole operation.

14. With regard to the institutional framework for the global review, her Government believed that an expanded and strengthened Economic and Social Council, assisted by the Secretary-General, would form the natural focal point for the whole review exercise in view of the role entrusted to the Council by the Charter and of the interdisciplinary nature of the Strategy. Moreover, such an approach would facilitate the task of the Assembly and enable it to concentrate on the main policy aspects. The interests of UNCTAD would in no way be affected, since that organization was instrumental in drafting two vital parts of the Strategy concerning trade and aid, and it would undoubtedly continue to play a most active follow-up role. Her delegation was therefore prepared to support what had been called "the package deal" recommended by the Council in its resolution 1621 (LI).

15. It supported the idea of establishing two committees under the Council, one to deal with the review and appraisal of the Strategy, and the other with matters relating to science and technology. It also endorsed the proposal that those committees, as well as the sessional committees of the Council, should have a larger membership than the Council. Her delegation considered it logical that an integrated consideration of development problems should replace the present compartmentalization of different aspects of development at the Assembly level.

16. Her delegation wished to stress the absolute need to strengthen the resources of the Secretary-General with regard to the preparation of the biennial reviews at the regional and global levels. The objective of the reviews was to identify shortfalls in achieving the goals of the Strategy, to recommend positive measures, including new goals and policies, as needed, and thus, to ensure the dynamic character of the process ahead. The preparatory review work should make it possible for him to advise and assist in the general identification of appropriate remedial measures. Moreover, he would play an important role in facilitating the co-ordination and expansion of the various United Nations bodies in connexion with the Decade and in following up the implementation of the unified approach to development. The resources currently at his disposal did not seem in any way commensurate with his heavy and important tasks.

17. She was therefore happy to inform the Committee of her Government's decision to place the sum of \$1 million at

the disposal of the Secretary-General for activities related to the implementation of the Strategy for the Second Development Decade.

18. Her delegation believed that the regional economic commissions should play a key role in preparing for effective regional co-operation and a regional division of labour as well as in co-ordinating all United Nations efforts and resources in their areas. However, it felt that the structure of the entire United Nations system at the regional level would have to be rationalized and streamlined, and it therefore welcomed the recommendation by the Economic and Social Council to strengthen regional advisory services through additional resources.

19. With regard to advisory services to developing countries for development planning, her delegation felt that greater emphasis and increased resources should be given to the plans to establish an adequate number of United Nations multinational, interdisciplinary development advisory teams which would be of particular assistance to the least developed among the developing countries. When preparing to implement the Strategy, the international community should focus on the special problems of those countries, and, in particular, that of mass poverty. The problems of the least developed countries did not seem to be of an overwhelmingly quantitative nature since the population of the 25 countries identified by the Committee for Development Planning did not appear to exceed 189 million people. The Committee for Development Planning should be allowed to continue its work in that field, along the lines indicated in its report on its seventh session (E/4990) with a view to providing the international community with suggestions for approaches to action. Action would have to take the form of intensified programmes to tackle underdevelopment and in that field UNDP and the International Development Association (IDA) had a special responsibility and would have to be given the necessary resources. What was urgently needed, however, was the universal mobilization of the political will to give high priority to the problems of the least developed countries, in a spirit of world-wide solidarity.

20. Mr. MOJSOV (Yugoslavia) said that the acute crisis in the international monetary system could not be attributed simply to the weakness of the machinery regulating it and the structure upon which it rested. It was the consequence of a series of post-war developments, including changes in economic power in the largest and most industrialized Western countries, an uneven rate of economic development, the arms race which was consuming enormous material resources, armed conflicts in various parts of the world, the absurd integration, by way of neo-colonialistic practices, of the newly liberated under-developed countries into the world market, and the exclusion from the world market of the socialist countries of eastern Europe and Asia. Those developments had rendered the international monetary system unworkable in contemporary conditions. Therefore, his delegation believed that a solution should not be sought in a radical transformation of the foundations of the world monetary system but in its adaptation to the changes which had emerged in world economic relations. Without minimizing the particular role and importance of industrially developed countries in solving current economic and monetary difficulties, his delegation believed

that the developing countries should not assume the role of passive observers but should play a more active part in seeking ways of reducing the gulf between the developed and the developing countries. Unless attention was paid to the special situation of the developing countries, their position could deteriorate further. Reduced export capacity, coupled with the prevailing stagnation in the flow of financial resources from developed countries, would further reduce the financial resources of the developing countries and have a direct impact upon the rate of economic growth and further compound the mounting burden of external indebtedness which undoubtedly was one of their most acute problems. His delegation fully supported the request made by the developing countries at the eleventh session of the Trade and Development Board that monetary problems should be placed on the agenda for the third session of UNCTAD and that a study of monetary questions, elaborating those elements of a new monetary system which would protect the interests of the developing countries, should be prepared (see A/8415, part III, annex II).

21. One year had passed since the adoption of the International Development Strategy for the Second United Nations Development Decade. The Strategy constituted a challenge to the international community and a test of its political readiness to seek solutions to pressing world problems in a manner which would take into account the interdependence of States and scientific and technological progress. However, at the very moment when all available resources were to be channelled towards the attainment of the objectives of the Strategy, the world was confronted with one of the gravest post-war crises which threatened to compromise the noble ideals of the Strategy and the accelerated integration of the developing countries into the world economy.

22. The industrialized countries and part of the international community were showing decreased interest in the problems of the developing countries and were proclaiming that the general progress of the developed world was vital to the successful and speedy growth of the developing countries and that, consequently, all development efforts should be concentrated to that end. Should such thinking prevail, it would constitute a grave historical error, for the basic problem continued to be the disparities which divided the developing from the developed world, while the existing international monetary crisis was only one aspect of a broader issue. It was therefore essential, despite the current crisis, that all available resources should continue to be pooled to attain the objectives of the Strategy.

23. Turning to specific matters of strategic importance, he said that the economically advanced countries, in endeavouring to provide annually to developing countries financial resource transfers of a minimum net amount of 1 per cent of their gross national product, should also improve the quality of such transfers, in particular by substantially increasing the public assistance component, and eliminating certain categories of transfers which could hardly be termed development assistance.

24. He welcomed the decision of the Trade and Development Board at its eleventh session to give priority to a comprehensive action-oriented programme of measures to be taken in favour of the least developed among the

developing countries and to be incorporated in the International Development Strategy. The Board had also approved a preliminary list of 25 least developed countries, 16 of which were African nations.

25. Of great concern to the developing countries was the growing tendency among the industrialized countries to form closed economic groups and adopt strong protectionist measures, such as those recently taken by the United States. Such measures had a serious impact on the developing countries and practically nullified the achievements attained over the years in various forums through greater international economic co-operation.

26. In view of the prevailing situation, the process of review and appraisal of the objectives and policies of the Strategy, particularly its global aspects, was gaining in importance. Every effort should be made to reach a broad consensus on the review and appraisal process in the General Assembly. Particular attention should be paid to further expanding mutual contact and co-operation among the developing countries, as called for in the Strategy and the Declaration on non-alignment and economic progress issued following the Third Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries, held at Lusaka in 1970.

27. A number of major conferences on international economic co-operation would be held in the coming months. Conferences of Ministers of Asia, Africa and Latin America were now under way. His delegation attached particular importance to the forthcoming conference of the Group of 77, to be held in Lima, which should serve as a preparatory meeting of the developing countries for the third session of UNCTAD. It would also deal comprehensively with matters of immediate interest to the developing countries. The Lima conference should also lead to a political consensus and a concerted programme of action regarding negotiations to be conducted with a view to achieving major objectives. The third session of UNCTAD would also be of major importance. It had originally been conceived as the starting-point for the implementation of the International Development Strategy; now, in the light of the monetary crisis and other disturbances in international economic relations, it was being envisaged as a broad international gathering which would deal with development problems and strategies as a whole.

28. Mr. MIHAI (Romania) said that a major problem that confronted the United Nations in its efforts to promote the economic and social progress of the international community was the task of eliminating obstacles to development and encouraging unhindered co-operation for the benefit of all nations. It went without saying that the ultimate objective of a solution to economic and social problems was the establishment of peace.

29. Although some minimal progress had been achieved, most of the Organization's objectives had remained mere aspiration. The President of the Economic and Social Council had called attention, at the Council's fifty-first session, to the economic and social problems faced by the developing countries and the ever-widening gap between them and the developed countries. It was thus all the more important for the United Nations to make increased efforts

in all spheres of activity in order to attain its noble objectives and, in particular, to close the gap. To that end, the United Nations, its specialized agencies and international programmes as a whole should support the efforts being made by the developing countries themselves. Action taken on their behalf ultimately would redound to the benefit of the entire international community.

30. Romania had concentrated its efforts on industrialization, which was the basis of economic progress. The current five-year plan called for an annual increase of 12 per cent in industrial production and it was hoped that by 1975 industry would account for approximately 65 per cent of the national income. Romania recognized, however, that much remained to be done, for nearly half its working population was still employed in agriculture. Manufactures accounted for a very low percentage of its exports, particularly those sent to the developed countries.

31. Because Romania had experienced problems similar to those faced by the developing countries, it sought to ensure in its collaboration with them that nothing interfered with their efforts to attain their development aspirations. Romania's economic relations with all countries, regardless of their social system, was based on the fundamental and universally accepted principles of respect for national sovereignty and independence, non-interference in domestic affairs, full equality of rights and mutual advantage.

32. The United Nations and UNCTAD rightly promoted trade as an essential element of economic growth. Romania was also convinced of its importance and conducted an increasing volume of trade with 110 countries. While its main trading partners were naturally the socialist countries, it expected to increase its trade steadily with the developing countries. In the past decade, exports from Romania to those countries had increased fourfold, whereas total exports had increased approximately 2½ times. Imports from the developing countries had increased more than fivefold in value during that period, while total imports had registered a threefold increase.

33. Romanian trade with the developed capitalist countries was hampered by discriminatory treatment, trade restrictions, quotas, customs barriers and other practices, which prevented Romania from exporting goods to them and restricted Romania's capacity to procure the funds required to cover the increased imports which it would welcome from their markets. It was therefore essential that such practices be abolished and that measures be adopted to stimulate trade between the developing and the industrialized countries; in particular, a scheme of generalized, non-reciprocal, non-discriminatory preferences should be established. It was of the utmost importance for the United Nations to ensure that the scheme was based solely on economic criteria.

34. Because the current monetary crisis affected all aspects of international trade relations, it was incumbent on the United Nations to ensure that the measures adopted to remedy it did not favour a small group of States at the expense of the legitimate interests of others, particularly the developing countries, and that they left the way open for expanded international co-operation. His delegation therefore agreed with the Under-Secretary-General for

Economic and Social Affairs that measures affecting the community of peoples should be the subject of collective decisions.

35. His delegation could not reiterate too strongly the importance of co-operation among States, the objective of which was to support efforts to reduce the gap in their economic and social conditions. Such co-operation could take many forms, including the use of science and technology for development and the transfer of modern technologies. In fact, progress in science and technology was unprecedented and its application to economic processes had become one of the most dynamic forces of production. His delegation had faith in the capacity of the United Nations to meet the new requirements generated by rapid changes in that field. A draft resolution initiated by the Romanian delegation at the last session and subsequently adopted as General Assembly resolution 2658 (XXV) offered the possibility of concrete action to strengthen economic, technical and scientific co-operation among States. He wished to draw particular attention to the importance of enlisting computer technology in the service of development and of ensuring that that field was given ample attention in co-operation programmes sponsored by the United Nations.

36. Although his delegation acknowledged the contribution of the United Nations and other international bodies in supporting the efforts of the developing countries, it could not help but share the legitimate concern which had been expressed regarding delays in the implementation of measures adopted to attain the objectives of the International Development Strategy. In that connexion, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Romania had stated in the 1954th plenary meeting of the General Assembly, on 6 October 1971, that it was incumbent on the United Nations to translate into action the measures adopted on behalf of all developing countries, irrespective of their social system or geographical location.

37. Mr. GATES (New Zealand) said that his delegation had been reluctant to comment on the world economic situation until the meetings of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) had been concluded. Some progress had been made at those meetings, but the situation which had caused instability and disorder in currency and trade relationships still continued. The only change appeared to be that, as a result of the meeting of the Board of Governors of IMF, the major industrial powers had perhaps a better idea than before of the views of smaller countries. In addition, the climate should be more favourable for negotiations on the necessary short-term and long-term measures. A number of useful steps had been taken: the Executive Directors of IMF had been requested to report to the Governors without delay on measures for improving or reforming the international monetary system, and member States of IMF had been called upon to collaborate with the Fund and with each other in an effort to reverse the tendency to maintain and extend restrictive trade and exchange practices.

38. The Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs had rightly pointed out at the 1369th meeting that while the International Development Strategy for the

Second United Nations Development Decade created no binding commitments on Governments, many countries, including New Zealand, had hoped that it would generate a climate during the decade in which Governments would seek to solve their problems in a spirit of mutual co-operation. Although the Group of 10 had met to consider the monetary situation, there had been little opportunity for wider-ranging discussions. His Government acknowledged that the economic weight of the major industrial Powers must inevitably mould the shape of the international monetary system, and that those Powers should rightly take a leading role in negotiations aimed at bringing about more fundamental and long-term changes in it. However, New Zealand, like 95 per cent of the Member States of the United Nations, was a small country whose economy was affected by the economic actions of the major Powers. As a so-called developed country, New Zealand was perhaps more able than many other small countries to withstand some of the worse effects of upheavals in international currency and trade. However, it had, like the developing countries, encountered difficulties in recent months. Eighty per cent of its exports were agricultural products and two major items, dairy products and beef, were already severely restricted in the United States by import quotas. Its other two major exports to the United States, lamb and wool, were now subject, in addition to a tariff, to a 10 per cent import surcharge. New Zealand's currency exchange rate had not contributed to the current disorder, and it was regrettable that the recent economic measures had been taken without consultation, and apparently with very little recognition of the interests of small countries.

39. Although those measures which had been taken should help the United States balance of payments, the situation in which the international community now found itself was in some respects as difficult as the earlier one. If trade and currency restrictions were to be removed, there must be a major realignment of exchange rates. His delegation was concerned that the longer the realignment was delayed the more difficult it would become to dismantle the restrictions; it was to be hoped that the trade restrictions introduced to meet the immediate problem did not become another step in a more general slide towards protectionism.

40. The result of the expected currency realignments would be a significant reduction in international liquidity. If the present relationship between the major currencies and gold was maintained, the value of Special Drawing Rights would also be reduced; it would be disappointing if, so soon after its creation, such an imaginative contribution to international liquidity came under pressure caused by fluctuations in national currencies. Consideration must be given to restoring the volume of international liquidity, and in that connexion, his Government would be prepared to contemplate a variation in the price of gold relative to Special Drawing Rights.

41. Those were the urgent short-term problems whose solution was mainly the responsibility of the major industrial Powers. The longer-term problem, affecting all countries, was to build out of the current disorder a new or refined system which would serve the world community as well in the future as the Bretton Woods agreements had done in the past; the machinery established by those

agreements should not be rejected, but the challenge of adapting it to present circumstances must be met. All countries, whatever their economic system or stage of development, must acknowledge the need to take a constructive approach towards re-establishing stability in international monetary and trade transactions. Disparaging comments about the alleged defects of the developed market economy system made no contribution to solving the problems of the world.

42. In its report, the Economic and Social Council referred to its efforts to create institutional machinery for the over-all review and appraisal of the Second Development Decade. The Council was clearly competent to perform that function, and the decisions it had taken in the course of 1971 gave every ground for optimism about its future. Extremely significant decisions relating to science and technology, natural disasters, advisory services, natural resources, export development and the monetary situation had been taken. The Council had shown awareness of economic and social problems and of readiness to take any steps within its competence to remedy them. A number of delegations had expressed the conviction that the Council would be better equipped to perform its functions during the coming decade if it was more broadly representative of the membership of the United Nations. It would be futile to create review and appraisal machinery which did not enjoy the confidence of both developed and developing countries. The dynamism which that machinery was expected to give to the Decade would not be apparent unless there was substantial agreement on the institutional framework. His Government therefore supported the enlargement of the Council as a basic means of restructuring it to meet the challenges of the Second Development Decade.

43. The arrangements for global and regional review were encouraging. Useful progress was also being made in the implementation of the generalized scheme of preferences; his Government was drafting legislation which it hoped would enable the scheme to become effective in New Zealand on 1 January 1972. New Zealand also participated fully in international development efforts; its contributions to multilateral agencies approached 20 per cent of its total development assistance, and it also had a comprehensive and effective bilateral aid programme. Much of its assistance went to the countries of South-East Asia, particularly the small territories in the Pacific Ocean; it was to be hoped that multilateral organizations would in future be able to channel a greater volume of assistance to that area. The growth of mutual co-operation in the South Pacific area was particularly encouraging; there had already been a meeting of Heads of State or Government of Western Samoa, Nauru, Tonga, Fiji and the Cook Islands, which had dealt particularly with economic development and had made arrangements for a forthcoming meeting of trade officials.

44. His delegation welcomed the new format of the report of the Economic and Social Council, which should greatly facilitate the Committee's work.

45. Mr. N'DIAYE (Senegal) said that what his Government was most preoccupied with in the present world situation was the problem of the sea. Since its independence, Senegal had acceded to many multilateral interna-

tional conventions, including those which had resulted from the Conference on the Law of the Sea, held at Geneva in 1958. That Conference had been unable to reach agreement on two important questions, the breadth of the territorial sea and exclusive fishing zones. With regard to the question of the territorial sea, it had recommended that the General Assembly should convene another conference to settle outstanding questions. That Conference had met in 1960, but had still been unable to resolve the matter. With regard to exclusive fishing zones, the 1958 Conference had referred to the situation of States whose population depended on coastal fishing for their economic development, and had appealed to other States to recognize their priority needs. The fate of coastal developing countries had thus been left to the discretion of other States.

46. The resulting situation, with regard both to the territorial sea and to fisheries, had always been a matter of concern to his Government. The waters off the coast of Senegal were frequented by an increasing number of fishing vessels from wealthy industrialized States, which recognized no right on the part of the adjacent coastal State—which was impoverished by their activities—to exercise any authority over those activities. They fished without regard for conservation and with no concern for the future of the resources of the sea.

47. Senegal had hoped that an international agreement would be reached, establishing the breadth of the territorial sea, ensuring the necessary protection for the marine environment and guaranteeing the conservation of fisheries over which the coastal States enjoyed rights, especially when the latter were developing countries. That hope had been disappointed. The attitude of the wealthy industrialized countries was that the high sea must remain an area in which their superior financial and technical resources would allow them almost exclusive control over resources. The freedom of the high seas was beneficial to the wealthiest and best equipped, and not to the underdeveloped and poorer countries.

48. Naturally, Senegal maintained its support for the principle of freedom of the seas, which justified that unfortunate situation. However, the principle must be interpreted differently; its application to navigation was indisputable, but it could not apply in like manner to the resources of the sea. Recent developments in the definition of the continental shelf and the exploitation of the resources of the sea-bed could not be disregarded. There was indeed a basic contradiction in the results of the 1958 Conference in that they applied a different régime to the exploitation of sedentary and non-sedentary species of living resources of the sea. Current international law gave no assurance of the conservation of fisheries or of the protection of the special rights of coastal States, to the detriment of those developing countries whose advancement depended to a large extent on the exploitation of the resources off their coasts. Those countries whose fishing fleets operated off the coast of West Africa took an annual catch of between 2 and 4 million tons. A representative of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations had stated in Accra in May 1971 that signs of the exhaustion of the living resources of the area had been noted. The coastal States of West Africa were placed in an impossible situation, since they did not yet possess the



necessary vessels and equipment for large-scale fishing, and when they had advanced to that stage the fisheries would already have been exhausted as a result of the activities of industrialized countries.

49. Senegal would thus be deprived of one of its possible channels for industrialization, since not only would it be unable to fish its coastal waters, but it would not be able to develop industries for canning, marketing and transport of fish, oil extraction or the construction and repair of fishing vessels. It was thus compelled to establish an exclusive fishing zone beyond its territorial waters. That step was based on the legal principle formally recognized by the International Court of Justice in its decision of 20 February 1969 on the North Sea Continental Shelf Cases.<sup>1</sup> Developing countries had a legal right to claim the application to them of special rules which would encourage their development; that principle was recognized in international customs agreements and in the arrangements for international loans. Senegal had thus been led to reconsider the principle of its accession to the Geneva Convention on Fishing and Conservation of the Living Resources of the High Seas<sup>2</sup> and the Convention on the Territorial Sea and the Contiguous Zone.<sup>3</sup> It found it difficult to remain a signatory of the Convention on Fishing, which prohibited it from establishing exclusive fishing zones for the purpose of conservation and from discriminating against the vessels of other States, as well as of the Convention on the Territorial Sea, which allowed the vessels of the industrialized States, in the absence of any established definition of national and international waters, to drain the natural resources of its waters. Senegal had accordingly denounced the two Conventions.

50. The Canadian Government had been authorized by Bill C-203, amending the Territorial Sea and Fishing Zone Act of 1964, to establish exclusively Canadian fishing zones

<sup>1</sup> *North Sea Continental Shelf, Judgement, I.C.J., Reports 1969*, p. 3.

<sup>2</sup> United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 559 (1966), No. 8164.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. 516 (1964), No. 7477.

beyond its 12-mile territorial waters. Forty-five States had established the breadth of their territorial waters at 12 miles, and 57 States at a distance of higher than that figure. The Montevideo declaration of 8 May 1970, signed by nine Latin American States, justified a limit of 200 miles, and claimed for coastal States the right to exercise their sovereignty over vast expanses of water. It was clear that the two Conventions were outmoded as works of codification, and Senegal thus had further justification for denouncing them. The fact that they contained no denunciation clause was irrelevant, since the States participating in the 1958 Conference had felt that the right of denunciation existed anyhow under customary law. That question was dealt with in the report of the International Law Commission on the second part of its seventeenth session and on its eighteenth session.<sup>4</sup>

51. Senegal hoped that its initiative would have the effect of clarifying efforts aimed at establishing multilateral regulations concerning fishing zones as well as at defining national and international waters. Its action in no way freed it from its obligations under the general international law of the sea, some of which, in particular those relating to the right of innocent passage, were covered by the Conventions.

#### *Organization of the Committee's work (continued)*

52. The CHAIRMAN said that the general debate would continue until 12 October. On 13 October the Committee would consider agenda item 43 and on 14 and 15 October item 44.

53. He wished to draw attention to the text of a letter addressed to the President of the General Assembly by the Chairman of the Fifth Committee (A/8455). Members should pay due heed to the contents of that letter when decisions having financial implications were taken.

*The meeting rose at 12.35 p.m.*

<sup>4</sup> *Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-first Session, Supplement No. 9.*