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Chairman:

Mr. BURKE

(Ireland)

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AGENDA ITEM 78: UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT (continued) (A/46/48 (Supplement No. 48, vol. I and II), A/46/86-S/22226, A/46/264, A/46/293, A/46/308, A/46/315, A/46/336, A/46/344, A/46/423, A/46/501/Rev.1, A/46/520, A/46/598 and A/C.2/46/4)

AGENDA ITEM 79: PROTECTION OF GLOBAL CLIMATE FOR PRESENT AND FUTURE GENERATIONS OF MANKIND (continued) (A/46/602, A/46/264, A/46/273, A/46/283-E/1991/114, A/46/336, A/46/344, A/46/345, A/46/501/Rev.1, A/46/520 and A/46/598)

- 1. Mr. FORTIER (Canada) commended delegations on the efforts made during the third session of the Preparatory Committee for the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, which had marked a turning-point and stated his country's determination to take up the challenges of the fourth session, at which difficult decisions would have to be taken in order to set priorities on the many environment and development issues.
- 2. Since there was a relatively long time before the fourth session of the Preparatory Committee, his delegation believed that there should be an exchange of information and ideas about approaches to the numerous issues on the agenda of the Conference, with a view to achieving a consensus and facilitating the negotiations at the fourth session. In particular, it commended the effort made to keep the members and observers of the Second Committee informed about the work done by the Preparatory Committee's working groups on such questions as the structure of Agenda 21, the text of the Earth Charter, and financing and transfer of technology, as well as about the intergovernmental discussions held subsequent to the meeting.
- 3. In reviewing the report of the third session of the Preparatory Committee (A/46/48, vol. I and II) his delegation had noted that, in addition to the Committee's documents, several delegations had requested the reports of the relevant international meetings, and it would therefore like the Conference secretariat to clarify the situation with respect to documentation, especially since at the last session of the Preparatory Committee valuable time had been lost simply because some documents had not been available or because they had been available only in some languages something which must not happen again. His delegation was willing to agree that the secretariat should produce first the documents of highest priority, i.e. those which formed the basis for the substantive negotiations, and then the documents which contained background material.
- 4. It was a matter for satisfaction that at its third session the Preparatory Committee had come to a quick agreement about the rules of procedure of the Conference and the arrangements for the accreditation of non-governmental organizations, for it was to be hoped that an active part would be taken in the Conference by Governments, international organizations

(Mr. Fortier)

and representatives of young people, women, indigenous peoples, business and industry, labour, the world's cities, and universities and scientific associations. There was a need for an open and constructive dialogue between the non-governmental organizations and the other participants in the Conference, and for all sides to listen to each other and be prepared to compromise.

- His country had been taking stock of the progress made with respect to 5. the content and structure of Agenda 21 and it was committed to addressing the issues raised therein, not only internationally but domestically as well. was therefore examining the implications of Agenda 21 for Canadian legislation. Given its resources and geography, Canada had a special interest in such issues as forests, fisheries management, protection of the marine environment, and the quantity and quality of fresh water, and it wished to draw up principles and agreements to protect the environment and promote sustainable development, of which the Earth Charter and the other documents to be signed at the 1992 Conference would be key elements. It recognized the unique relationship between indigenous peoples and local ecosystems, the key role played by women in their interaction with the environment to produce food and nurture their families, and the impact of population growth on the quality of life and the pace of development. The success of the Conference in solving all those problems would ultimately determine the financial, technological and institutional framework for the twenty-first century and beyond. priorities would have to be set, but it would be important to solve the problems in an integrated manner.
- 6. His delegation supported the proposal that, in order to facilitate the discussions at the fourth session of the Preparatory Committee, the resolutions on the subject adopted by the General Assembly at its current session should be only procedural. It was also open to the possibility of adopting to resolutions but rather a decision, although it was understandable that delegations should wish to address the question of participation in the Conference. However, it reiterated its commitment to ensuring that the Rio Conference was open and transparent and that all the participants would have an opportunity to listen to and learn from each other.
- 7. With respect to the preparation of a framework convention on climate change, the resolution on protection of global climate for present and future generations of mankind, which would shortly be taken up, might present the Committee with an opportunity to indicate its clear support for the work of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee. It would be particularly helpful for the draft texts prepared by the working groups to be made available, for it would thus be possible for the Intergovernmental Committee to conduct detailed negotiations at its December session and prepare an integrated negotiating text. With a view to securing the broadest possible participation in that process, Canada would also like to contribute in good time to the special voluntary fund for the participation of developing countries.

- 8. Mr. SINGH (India) said that the international community, alive to the urgent need to address environmental concerns, had united its efforts to achieve the objectives which it had identified in that area. Global environmental action must be based on consensus and it demanded an understanding of diverse interests, a willingness to address them jointly, and the determination to commit the resources needed for the purpose. The Earth Charter to be drafted at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development must take into account both the planet and the beings which inhabited it and had such a great, and often negative, influence on its future
- 9. Similarly, Agenda 21 should not be regarded as a doctor's prescription but as an instrument which incorporated all the relevant factors. Ecological cooperation required an understanding of the mutuality of influences and interests and the consequent need for mutuality in action in accordance with the priorities and capacities of all concerned.
- 10. His country's primary environmental concerns stemmed from its experience and capabilities as a developing country. Many years ago it had set up a Ministry for the Environment, and before that there had already been several non-governmental organizations active in the field; it therefore had extensive knowledge of its environmental protection needs, which related more to underdevelopment rather than to overdevelopment. In the first place, India had a large population which exploited finite, and in many cases diminishing, natural resources. Secondly, countries such as India invested almost all their resources in development plans designed to improve the health. nutrition, education, social care, housing and other needs of their population. If environmental requirements were to take on national importance, they must be integrated in those plans, and that demanded financial and other resources which the developing countries usually did not Thirdly, the topic of global environmental problems usually covered only the degradation resulting from industrial and commercial overexploitation. Underdevelopment bore part of the blame for environmental degradation, but current ecological damage was due largely to the overexploitation imposed by growth, and it would therefore continue unless the principles of respect for the environment were incorporated in people's lifestyles.
- 11. Although it was difficult to decide whose responsibility it was to ensure that change, it was appropriate to note that those who were better placed in terms of resources and opportunities were in the best position to do so. Thus, it was not possible to impose complete equality in global environmental efforts to protect the environment. The developed world bore a special responsibility, both in terms of taking corrective action and in terms of enabling the developing world to play a meaningful role in those efforts. The concept of sustainable development meant that the needs of those who were better off should be met in ways that did not limit the current and future needs of the less fortunate, and that the former would assist the latter in establishing that equilibrium.

(Mr. Singh, India)

- 12. In the deliberations on the various issues to be discussed at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, it had been stated that the ability of the developing countries to confront environmental problems required additional financial resources, the transfer of environmentally sound technologies on favourable terms and the establishment of institutions to guarantee those measures. With regard to environmental conditionalities in aid-giving, that receiving countries recognized the importance of taking environmental factors into account when utilizing aid, but it was not reasonable to exact ecological guarantees as a condition for providing additional resources.
- 13. Furthermore, his delegation had consistently argued that the distinction between national and global environmental problems was forced. The solution to problems such as deforestation, land degradation and desertification would yield substantial global benefits in the areas of global warming and biodiversity. Environment and development must be addressed in an integrated manner, and problems should not be categorized as "ours" or "theirs". Accordingly, a serious rethinking of international economic cooperation was in order, for it would provide the foundation for the success of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development.
- 14. As to the transfer of technology, the developing world had been the grateful recipient of the products of the ingenuity, industriousness and creativity of the developed world, but at the same time it had been the unwary and horrified recipient of technologies discarded by the developed world because they damaged the environment. The time had come to think in terms of transfers that were beneficial from the standpoint of health, and his delegation hoped that at its next session the Preparatory Committee for the Conference would finalize the necessary parameters for that purpose.
- 15. With regard to climate change, considerable emphasis was placed on data that sought to transfer responsibility for emissions of greenhouse gases, when it was abundantly clear that the environment was harmed by excessive, not normal, emissions. Similarly, it was claimed that while biodiversity was a global issue, the availability of the biotechnologies it produced should be limited. His delegation urged the abandonment of such one-sided theses in order to permit the global dialogue on environment and development to yield concrete results.
- 16. In the discussions leading up to the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development and a framework convention on climate change, or any other such instruments, it was necessary to study the foundations on which it was proposed to establish global cooperation. The planet could not be safe if some of its inhabitants lived in poverty, nor could there be sustainable development without resources and technology. General Assembly resolution 44/228 remained the international community's most important expression of its commitment to work together to preserve the planet; it was now time to further those objectives through a joint effort, nurtured by common concerns and galvanized by the common strengths of nations.

- 17. Mr. RAZALI (Malaysia) said that his delegation hoped that all delegations participating in the Second Committee's deliberations on the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development and on the protection of the global climate would do everything possible to ensure progress in the negotiations on those issues. His delegation had had the impression at the third session of the Preparatory Committee for the Conference that the countries of the North had come only to listen to the proposals of the countries of the South, but not to state their views explicitly or adopt any decisions on the world's problems in the field of environment and development. During both the preparatory meetings for the Conference and the negotiations on climate change and biological diversity, it had been amply demonstrated that all the issues related essentially to problems between the North and the South. the close link between environment and economic development was becoming increasingly more obvious. The Conference to be held at Rio de Janeiro represented an attempt to correct the oversights of the 1972 Stockholm Conference by incorporating development and environment issues in a joint agenda to resolve what were two aspects of the same problem. The countries of both the North and the South had accepted that concept, which had been clearly enunciated in General Assembly resolution 44/228. The essence of that resolution was that the developing countries must respond positively on environmental issues, while the developed countries must help to resolve development issues, whose solution was essential to promote the sustainable economic growth of the developing countries.
- Nevertheless, it seemed to his delegation that as the negotiations proceeded, the original compact was being deliberately blurred. been too many instances of retreat that could be interpreted as a dilution of commitments. Thus far the development dimension had not elicited any categorical response from the developed countries. On the other hand, the developing countries had come under substantial pressure, governmental as well as non-governmental. The developing countries had little influence on the course of events, for example, in the trade negotiations of GATT, which affected 85 per cent of the total volume of world trade. Yet the pressures mounted, on military spending, national programmes and population control programmes. In the case of UNCED, the pressures were evident in regard to issues such as forestry, the preservation of biological diversity and population, without any corresponding response on how to solve problems relating to markets and the international economic environment, compensatory financing or access to technology. The stock answer was that those issues were being dealt with in other forums or, in the case of technology, that it was a matter for consideration by the private sector. If the South did not rapidly adopt a position on that issue, the Rio de Janeiro Conference would take up only corrective measures which the South must adopt to clean up the global environment. However, the pollution and degradation of the environment were primarily the result of the unsustainable policies and unrestricted consumption patterns of the counries of the North. It was fitting to ask how the South could mount pressure on the North to take corrective measures.

(Mr. Razali, Malaysia)

- 19. While the 1970s had been marked by a series of national initiatives to address environmental problems, the 1980s had witnessed increasing global awareness about those problems. In the 1990s, it would be possible to carry out a comprehensive rescue plan for the global environment and to promote international cooperation. Protection of the environment required a comprehensive set of measures, including protective measures for damage prevention and control, restorative measures and measures for the development of environmentally sound and energy-efficient technologies, as well as measures to promote environmental awareness. There was also an urgent need to develop capabilities for responding promptly to environmental disasters and to forestall such occurrences through the constant monitoring of the environment. Rapid advances in technology had opened up new possibilities for understanding and meeting the environmental challenge. Public concern about environmental issues and measures to remedy them was constantly growing. recent years, an increasing number of heads of State and Government, economic and political organizations and experts had begun to address environmental concerns.
- The report on global economics and environment, prepared under the auspices of the Council of Foreign Relations, referred to the global bargain between developed and developing nations that could emerge from the Conference and subsequent negotiations. The report considered that the developing countries could promise to address the population question with new determination and sharply curtail deforestation and other environmentally destructive practices. In exchange, the countries of the North would reduce atmospheric pollution in order to achieve overall greenhouse stability even as developing countries increased their emissions enough to advance their growth rates. In addition, the North would have to provide assistance to alleviate the problems of debt, trade and investment facing the countries of the South. It was clear that, at the current stage of preparations for the Conference, the principal issue was to determine to what extent the North was prepared to provide assistance. The major industrialized countries continued to adopt contradictory decisions on those issues. In order to ensure the success of the Conference, the Preparatory Committee would have to address all the critical issues, including the negotiations on climate change and biological diversity on which the Earth Charter and Agenda 21 would be based. regard, the fourth session of the Preparatory Committee, which would be held in New York in March 1992, would be of paramount importance. His delegation did not believe that all the issues could be resolved at the fourth session of the Preparatory Committee. Many other issues would have to be dealt with between the fourth session and the Conference. His delegation noted with interest the initiative taken by Japan to convene a meeting on financing in April 1992. Malaysia was taking the necessary steps to hold, in April 1992, a conference on environment and development at the ministerial level similar to one that had been held in Beijing in June 1991.
- 21. Mr. SHCHERBAK (Ukraine) said that, in a famous photograph of the Earth taken from outer space, the planet looked like a shining pearl. That photograph did not reveal the frontiers that divided countries. The Earth

(Mr. Shcherbak, Ukraine)

seemed to be a perfect creation. However, everyone knew that the planet was ill. In order to save it, it was necessary to halt the flagrant violations of the ecological balance, which were the result of developed civilization.

- 22. His delegation was pleased that humanity had become aware of the need to preserve the environment. The global nature of environmental problems required the concerted action of all countries, irrespective of their economic and social systems and level of development. The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development would help strengthen multilaceral cooperation to solve the world's critical environmental problems. Ukraine would participate actively at the Conference and, in that regard, it had prepared a report on the grave state of the environment in Ukraine. His delegation attached great importance to the preparation of the Earth Charter, which would constitute a global strategy for cooperation to preserve the environment. The adoption of the Charter, which would contain the basic rules of environmental conduct, would be one of the most important results of the Conference.
- 23. The Preparatory Committee of the Conference should take great care in preparing Agenda 21. Likewise, the documents to be prepared for the fourth session of the Preparatory Committee should not only be informative but should also contain sound and balanced recommendations that could be included in Agenda 21. The Conference should not only focus on global and environmental problems but should also consider the special problems of each region and country.
- Ukraine had suffered for decades from the colonialist exploitation of its natural resources by the central authorities of the former Soviet Union. Ukraine, which accounted for 3 per cent of the territory of the Soviet Union, had provided 50 per cent of the country's iron ore, 25 per cent of its coal and a significant amount of its agricultural products. For decades, Ukraine had suffered from the overexploitation of its resources, which had caused great damage to its environment. Millions of Ukrainians had suffered the consequences of that process. The state of health in Ukraine had deteriorated and mortality and morbidity had increased. For the first time in the history of Ukraine, in 1991 there had been more deaths than births. had prompted the Ukrainian Parliament to declare Ukraine an ecological disaster area. Every year in Ukraine, 17.5 million tons of pollutants and toxic substances were emitted into the atmosphere. The water of Ukraine was also polluted, and the drinking water supply had become a serious problem. Formerly fertile lands were polluted by more than 100 million tons of pesticides, chemical products and other pollutants. Moreover, an even more tragic event for Ukraine had been the disaster at the Chernobyl nuclear power The long-term effects of that grave accident were not yet known. Chernobyl was a global problem that affected millions of people. therefore not surprising that the international community had taken measures to deal with that problem and that the General Assembly had adopted resolution 45/190 on international cooperation to address and mitigate the consequences of the accident, or that the issue was being considered by the General Assembly at its current session.

(Mr. Shcherbak, Ukraine)

- 25. The Preparatory Committee should consider the problem of Chernobyl. The Chernobyl disaster should serve as a warning to future generations that nuclear energy should not be used without reliable technology, and that humanity could destroy life on earth without even making use of nuclear weapons.
- 26. The Conference should conclude global conventions on climate change, biological diversity and forests. In order to do so, it was necessary to speed up the negotiations currently in progress. The final document of the Conference should include such issues as technological and scientific cooperation to protect the environment. A global strategy and coordinating mechanism should be established in order to achieve environmental security and ensure the use of environmentally sound technologies. In that regard, the Preparatory Committee should consider the possibility of establishing global and regional scientific centres and data banks for the exchange of sound technologies. The Conference should adopt its decisions by consensus, since that would guarantee the successful outcome of its work and would be the starting-point for ensuring a sound environmental future for the earth. With respect to the protection of the global climate for current and future generations, Ukraine attached great importance to the work on climate change being carried out by the United Nations.
- 27. The World Climate Conference, held in 1979, and the Eighth World Meteorological Congress, which had adopted the World Climate Programme, were important events for the international community.
- 28. It should be recalled that, in its resolution 45/212, the General Assembly had shown that the international community universally recognized the complexity of the measures that needed to be taken in order to reduce the adverse consequences of climate change and global warming to a minimum.
- 29. At the present time, the task of preparing a framework convention on climate change was of major importance. To achieve that goal, scientific and juridical knowledge were required in order to move away from haphazard development towards a process with well-defined objectives, which included precautionary measures related to the economy, as well as on-site inspections and appropriate technology.
- 30. In preparing the framework convention, the international community should take as its point of departure the premise that the climate issue was related to many other factors, in particular the balance between the earth, the sea and the atmosphere, as well as the interaction between man's productive activities and nature, including the use of natural resources. The relationship between man and nature should be the main concern in order to reconcile economic development with preservation of the environment. Ukraine would do everything within its power to cooperate with the international community in that area.

- 31. Ms. TIMPSON (Deputy Assistant Administrator, United Nations Development Programme) said that, as the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) drew closer, there were concrete signs that it would be successful. The enormous groundswell of public opinion in defence of the earth was most encouraging. The growth of "green" movements around the world, coinciding with the end of the cold war, portended a global consciousness that the most important struggle was for sustainable development. New environmental non-governmental organizations were springing up and thousands of such groups would be represented at the forum for non-governmental organizations, which would be held at Rio de Janeiro parallel to UNCED.
- 32. From its vantage point in the field, UNDP had seen tremendous activity at the national level. Over 75 countries had submitted national reports on the environment to the UNCED secretariat; about 30 countries had progressed to the stage of concrete environmental action plans and strategies; and there were Ministers of the Environment in 136 countries.
- 33. Environmental issues transcended national boundaries and required supranational solidarity. Latin America and the Caribbaan had produced the document entitled "Our Own Agenda"; regional environment and development strategies were being developed in Asia and Africa; the Arab States and Europe were launching a centre for environment and development; and donor Governments had made funding available to the Global Environment Facility for projects aimed at reducing the threats to climate, biodiversity, the ozone layer and international waters. UNDP was co-managing the Facility together with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the World Bank. UNDP was also an active supporter of many other initiatives, thanks in large part to special contributions from Japan, Norway, Sweden and the United States of America. In many instances, UNDP was promoting the involvement of the private sector and non-governmental organizations.
- The preparations for the Conference were already bringing about major changes in the perception of the problem. More than ever, people thought of the environment in a global context and there was deeper understanding of the inextricable links between development and the environment. It was now known that the only way for poorer countries to address environmental issues was through the development process. It should be borne in mind that over a billion people lived in absolute poverty, that 40 per cent of the world's population faced constraints due to lack of water, that 400 million people, half of them children, were severely undernourished and that environmental conditions for those people were deteriorating radically owing to the pressures which they were forced to put on natural resources in order to survive. Naturally, in the face of those daily survival issues, longer-term crises, such as climate change and global warming, which ranked high on the agenda of the industrialized countries, appeared less urgent. However, both in the North and in the South, current needs were being satisfied by exhausting the resources which would be needed by future generations.

(Ms. Timpson)

- 35. While UNDP accepted as natural the fact that the countries of the North and South might have differing perspectives, it also maintained that there were more areas of converging interests than there were of opposition. The role of UNDP was that of a builder of bridges on which cooperation could be forged between North and South, between developing countries, between Governments and non-governmental groups, between central authorities and local governments, and between powerful groups and minorities who had no voice.
- 36. In preparing for UNCED, the two issues of funding and the transfer of technology were of key importance. But behind those issues was another question of equal importance; the need to strengthen indigenous capacity to deal with environment and development issues. For sustainable development to have a chance, countries must be able to absorb and adapt technologies or to develop their own. They must be able to identify and build on traditional systems which were sustainable. At the same time, they must be aware of the environmental implications of their actions and be able to adopt alternative practices where necessary.
- 37. It was time to move beyond abstract discussions about technology and funding and to proceed more pragmatically to define the specific needs of a more sustainable development. The international community should ask what it would take to develop sustainable agriculture; to build cities that would not add to environmental pollution, and to develop industries in an ecologically benign way. UNDP had initiated such efforts in collaboration with the countries which it served and it hoped to be able to present some initial findings in time for the fourth session of the Preparatory Committee for the Conference.
- 38. When it became clearer what precisely would be required, the mechanisms for funding, for the development of appropriate technology and for capacity-building should become more apparent. It should be possible to channel the money and scientific talents that had previously been used in creating armaments into productive technology which would be ecologically sound.
- 39. Now that the super-Power confrontation was ending, a new concept of global survival was emerging in its place. It was necessary to promote biodiversity, reforestation and soil protection with a view to generating new sources of income, enhanced food production and a better quality of life.
- 40. However, there remained little time. The transition to sustainable lifestyles in the North and sustainable development in the South must take place over the next 10 to 15 years. If it did not, the damage to the world to be inherited by future generations might be irreparable.
- 41. There was need to create a compact for a new world with contributions from all sides. The Conference should be used as an opportunity to unify and mobilize countries in a continuing effort to forge that compact. The fourth session of the Preparatory Committee was the forum in which the task of defining specific needs could begin.

- 42. Mr. KJELLEN (Sweden), speaking on behalf of the Nordic countries, said that the United Nations Conference on Human Environment, which had been held in Stockholm nearly 20 years earlier, had been a breakthrough for world-wide environmental cooperation and the linking of environment to development. With the report of the World Commission on Environment and Development, in 1987, sustainable development had become an issue at the top of the international agenda. As a result, the Rio de Janeiro Conference would examine the two integrated issues of environment and development.
- 43. UNCED should demonstrate how environmental concerns in all countries could be integrated into economic and sectoral policies at all levels in order to secure sustainable development and thus prevent environmental degradation. Energy policies needed to be revised in order to satisfy energy needs and to safeguard the environment. Forestry and industrial policies also needed to be revised to ensure that while industrial development was promoted, pollution from industry was reduced. Agricultural policies, for their part, should be designed to ensure food security and, at the same time, counter soil degradation.
- 44. The Conference should focus on poverty-related environmental problems in order to alleviate poverty and safeguard the environment. In the area of soil degradation, there was a need for farming policies and methods that sustained the long-term livelihood of farmers and prevented land degradation and desertification. Likewise, there was a need for integrated approaches in coastal areas and much more efficient use of scarce fresh water resources in order to satisfy all needs, including safe water and sanitation in poor housing areas. Furthermore, the environmental and health problems associated with rapid population growth and urbanization, particularly in developing countries, had to be addressed. The fourth session of the Preparatory Committee should give particular attention to those problems. In that connection, it was important to promote local initiatives and participation.
- 45. Countries which enjoyed a high standard of living had to demonstrate that they could significantly reduce the burden which they imposed on the environment. Industrialized courtries, for example, had to stabilize and reduce their carbon dioxide emissions by combining energy efficiency and the use of renewable energy sources on the basis of rapid technological development and cost-effective methods. In the transport sector, which was of key importance, it was necessary to satisfy needs and minimize the negative impact on the environment. Sweden had proposed the convening of a special United Nations conference on transport and the environment within the framework of Agenda 21. It was hoped that that issue would be given further consideration at the fourth session of the Preparatory Committee.
- 46. Economic relations between industrialized and developing countries also had to be addressed, particularly with regard to trade, debt, and the transfer of financial resources and environmentally sound technologies. He hoped that the outcome of the Uruguay Round would pave the way for increased trade to benefit all countries and, in particular, for greater access for products from

(Mr. Kjellen, Sweden)

developing countries to the markets of industrialized countries. Current discussions on debt alleviation for the poorest countries within the framework of the Paris Club should lead to an agreement on debt reduction, which was urgently needed. The question of the transfer of financial resources and environmentally sound technologies should be viewed within the broader context of the resources needed to implement the measures set forth in Agenda 21.

- 47. There were expectations that the developing countries would contribute to the solution of global environmental problems, for which they had little responsibility. At the same time, they needed to adjust their policies and priorities and mobilize increased resources to solve their own environmental problems. Developing countries clearly needed to be assisted by industrialized countries through ongoing development assistance and the transfer of new and additional financial resources. In that regard, he expressed regret that the vast majority of the member countries of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) had not reached the United Nations ODA target of 0.7 per cent of GNP.
- 48. An improved Global Environmental Facility could play an important role because it was a joint effort between the World Bank, UNDP and UNEP, even if the roles of those three organizations had to be further defined. The Facility, which had already attracted considerable support from the donor community, could serve as the financial instrument for international conventions. The possibility of extending it to other areas could be explored.
- 49. Other arrangements for transferring new and additional financial resources to developing countries and increased exchanges of debt for natural resources were being discussed. Many countries had not yet finalized their positions with regard to the financial issues, although those were matters of the greatest urgency, and considerable progress would have to be made at the fourth session of the Preparatory Committee.
- 50. With regard to the institutional field, all relevant organizations of the United Nations system had to deal with environment and development in an integrated way within their spheres of competence, which had to be reflected in their programmes and budgets. There was a clear need to strengthen the system as a whole with regard to issues pertaining to sustainable development. At the intergovernmental level, the strengthening of the UNEP Governing Council would make it possible to deal with such integration from an environmental point of view. At a higher United Nations level, intergovernmental deliberations on the integration of all economic and social development factors had to take environmental factors much more into account and that should be reflected in the institutional arrangements agreed upon, possibly involving the Economic and Social Council. At the inter-agency level, proper arrangements for intensified cooperation and coordination were also needed in order to ensure full integration of environment and development.

(Mr. Kjellen, Sweden)

- 51. The protection of the global climate for current and future generations was an issue relating to environment and development. The effects of climate change might impede development, and measures to limit climate change would have a considerable bearing on government policies. Efforts should be stepped up to finalize the framework convention on climate change so that it would be ready for the Rio Conference. The convention should provide for strict commitments, cost-effective measures and efficient machinery for ensuring implementation. The political declaration on the stabilization of carbon dioxide emissions and other greenhouse gases not controlled by the Montreal Protocol should become legally binding. The convention should also address the question of conservation of ecosystems, including forests.
- 52. The negotiations on a convention on biological diversity had likewise adopted the proper developmental approach. Biological diversity could be preserved only through careful use of biological resources for development. In view of the very extensive preparatory work, the negotiations should move forward more vigorously.
- 53. The sixteenth session of the UNEP Governing Council clearly demonstrated that the Programme was committed to integrating environment and development. In that regard, he referred to the decisions on desertification, the protection and development of the oceans and coastal areas, the possible adverse effects of a rise in sealevel, the transfer of environmentally sound industrial production technology and steps to integrate environment and development into the programme of UNEP. The Nordic countries urged the Programme to increase its contribution to the preparatory process for the Rio Conference and noted with satisfaction that UNEP was continuing to carry out its original mandate as well as many programmes of increasing importance.
- 54. So far, the preparations for the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development had been relatively satisfactory. His delegation also appreciated the contributions by non-governmental organizations, whose active participation in the preparatory process and the Conference itself should be further promoted. There were only six months until the Conference and it was necessary to be realistic about the complexity of the issues. Not everything could be solved in Rio de Janeiro. The negotiating objectives should be defined so that the results justified the efforts made.
- 55. A new era of concrete negotiations, which would be a central feature of international life, had begun. The following results were expected from the Rio Conference: (a) an Earth Charter that spelled out fundamental guiding principles in the field of environment and development; (b) effective conventions on climate change and biological diversity; (c) guiding principles on forestry which could serve as a basis for negotiations on a convention on forests; (d) an Agenda 21 with clearly defined objectives, activities, timetables, responsibilities and effective means of implementation, including the transfer of financial resources and environmentally sound technologies; (e) institutional recommendations that ensured effective and coordinated national and international follow-up to the Conference.

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- 56. Mr. AMAZIANE (Morocco), speaking on behalf of the States members of the Arab Maghreb Union, said that environment had become a priority issue for the international community and the United Nations system. The magnitude of the threats to the ecosystem required concerted global action. In order to avoid global warming and its disastrous effects, the greenhouse effect, climate change and the depletion of the ozone layer must be dealt with as a matter of urgency. Every year, millions of hectares lost their biological diversity, desertification threatened two fifths of Africa, Asia and Latin America, and forests were disappearing at a rate of 15 million hectares a year. At that rate, by the year 2000, 40 per cent of the developing countries' forests would have disappeared.
- 57. Water problems were of great concern to all countries: the water table was being depleted and groundwater and surface water were polluted by all kinds of waste. The deterioration of marine resources was due to unsound exploitation and pollution that was attributable, in particular, to the developed countries. It was therefore necessary to increase cooperation to protect the oceans, including such enclosed seas as the Mediterranean, and to ensure their rational use.
- 58. Everyone recognized that environmental problems were due to the pattern of production and consumption in industrialized countries. Those countries produced 90 per cent of greenhouse gas emissions, as well as hazardous wastes, which they exported to the developing countries. In the developing countries, endemic poverty, population growth and a lack of financial and technical resources were major causes of environmental degradation.
- 59. Consequently, the entire international community should be responsible for environmental protection, although distinctions should be made in accordance with each country's level of development. In applying the concept of environmentally sound development, it was necessary to bear in mind the relationship between environment and development. The development model of the consumer society was not viable because of the damage it caused to the environment. The North should seek systems that guaranteed a decent life to citizens integrated into the natural environment. With the support of the international community, the South, should tackle the problem of poverty and control population growth by adopting policies that made maximum use of resources, in particular, human resources, and especially women.
- 60. The countries members of the Arab Maghreb Union reaffirmed the provisions of General Assembly resolution 44/228 regarding the need for a supportive international economic climate, a free multilateral trading system and the reduction of the external debt of the developing countries. They also reaffirmed the provision of General Assembly resolution 45/210, according to which environmental protection activities should not serve as a pretext for creating unjustified barriers to trade.
- 61. East-West <u>détente</u> could help make the concept of disarmament for development a reality and channel resources towards activities that generated employment and wealth, especially in the developing countries, which would strengthen international concord.

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- 62. With respect to the question of desertification and drought, the countries of the Maghreb had established a working group on the environment and water resources. The Maghreb strategy to combat desertification should also be mentioned. For many African countries, desertification was an environmental problem as well as a problem of economic and social development. Development programmes for affected regions should therefore include measures to combat desertification and drought. Initiatives to mitigate the effects of drought on development and fragile ecosystems would be successful only if an approach was adopted that emphasized the need to adapt behaviour and development processes to the conditions imposed by the natural environment.
- 63. Drought and desertification were threats that went beyond the frontiers of the affected countries and were becoming a global problem that could be arrested only through the concerted efforts of the entire international community. The countries of the Arab Maghreb Union welcomed the priority that had been given to that problem in General Assembly resolution 44/228. Morocco had been a sponsor of Assembly resolution 44/172, entitled "Plan of Action to Combat Desertification", in which the Assembly invited the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development to deploy all means necessary to halt and reverse the process of desertification which hindered the economic growth and development of the affected countries.
- 64. In the same resolution, the General Assembly requested that studies should be undertaken in order to enable the Preparatory Committee to submit to the Conference a coherent strategy to combat desertification and drought. The countries of the Arab Maghreb Union hoped that those studies would be submitted to the Preparatory Committee at its fourth session.
- 65. With regard to item 78, the countries of the Arab Maghreb Union reaffirmed General Assembly resolution 44/228 and encouraged the international community to implement it. At its previous sessions, the Preparatory Committee had not achieved tangible results, and he welcomed the decision to devote the last session to negotiations on the agenda. The Preparatory Committee should devote an adequate amount of time to intersectoral matters so that a satisfactory agreement could be reached. The countries of the Arab Maghreb Union were prepared to consider the adoption of Agenda 21 proposed by the Secretary-General of the Conference, and hoped that their concerns would be borne in mind when the Earth Charter was considered. However, doubts about certain provisions of Assembly resolution 44/228, especially the provision contained in paragraph 15 regarding additional financial resources and developing countries' access to environmentally sound technologies, could hinder the process.
- 66. With regard to item 79, the countries of the Arab Maghreb Union considered that the framework convention on climate change should take account of the "polluter pays" principle. It would be useful to establish a mechanism to define the responsibilities of countries in that area depending on the

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threat that they posed to the atmosphere and on the basis of an annual assessment of current levels of greenhouse gases and gases that damaged the ozone layer. He accepted the idea that, by the year 2000, the developed countries should stabilize harmful gas emissions at 1990 levels. It was currently impossible to set a precise goal for the reduction of such emissions; that would have to be done as new information became available.

- 67. The countries of the Arab Maghreb Union supported the establishment of another fund, that was not the global environment fund, to finance the additional costs that developing countries would incur by carrying out measures to mitigate climate change. The countries of the Union considered that the framework convention on climate change should allow developing countries to increase their energy consumption depending on their growth needs, paying special attention to those countries whose economies depended on the use of fossil fuels.
- 68. He reaffirmed the provisions of General Assembly resolution 44/228, according to which the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development should identify ways and means of providing new and additional financial resources to developing countries that would enable them to finance their environment programmes, and should consider ways of transferring technology on concessional terms. The framework convention should also take account of the special situations of island developing countries, the least developed countries and countries affected by desertification and drought.
- 69. The countries of the Arab Maghreb Union considered that the success of the Conference would depend on the achievement of consensus on issues of vital importance to the developing countries, namely additional financial resources and the transfer of environmentally sound technologies on concessional terms. They also considered that the emergence of a global consensus on global environmental problems demonstrated that solidarity among nations could help avoid what would otherwise be an inexorable fate. If that willingness to safeguard the world's common heritage resulted in equitable agreements, the sacial or economic nature.

The meeting rose at 5.05 p.m.