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New York

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## SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 43rd MEETING

Chairman: Mr. BURKE (Ireland)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 78: UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT (A/46/48 (vols. I and II), A/46/86-S/22226, A/46/264, 293, 308, 315, 336, 344, 423, 501/Rev.1, 520 and 598; A/C.2/46/4)

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

1. Mr. STRONG (Secretary-General, United Nations Conference on Environment and Development), referring to the report of the Preparatory Committee for the Conference on its third session (A/46/48 (vol. II)), said that 32 decisions had been adopted at the session. Those decisions would guide the Secretariat in preparing documentation prior to the Preparatory Committee's fourth and final session, to be held in New York from 2 March to 3 April 1992. Many of the decisions also represented strides in building areas of agreement on some issues and defined some of the basic elements contained in General Assembly resolution 44/228. In establishing the structure and organization of Agenda 21, the Preparatory Committee had provided input to the Secretariat on the incorporation of development-related issues such as human settlements, poverty, sustainability and demographic pressures, health and education, and integrated environmental accounting. Its decisions, which marked the introduction of a significant political dimension into the preparatory process, stressed both the role of women, youth, indigenous peoples and local communities in Agenda 21 and the importance of action at the international, regional and national levels.

2. At its third session the Preparatory Committee had focused on the cross-sectoral issues of financing, technology transfer and institutions. Consensus on those issues would be vital to the success of the Conference. There was almost total agreement on the need for additional financial resources from external sources in order to support developing countries' efforts to achieve sustainable development and prevent global risks. However, the problem of how to obtain those resources was still being considered. The Conference secretariat, which had been requested to estimate the cost of implementing each programme area of Agenda 21, hoped to provide some broad indications in that regard.

3. Significant progress had been achieved on the question of technology transfer. In that area, support was increasing for the promotion of endogenous capacity-building in developing countries through the strengthening of human resources and institutions. Multilateral and bilateral institutions and the private sector could all play a significant role in the process.

4. While the Preparatory Committee had not had sufficient time to focus on specific institutional matters, it had adopted certain broad positions which could be further developed during the final preparatory session. Institutional measures included in the follow-up to the Conference should be

(Mr. Strong)

not only international, but also regional, subregional, national and local in scope. They should move the United Nations forward in its quest for a new brand of multilateralism based on partnership, and they should be consonant with the restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations in the economic and social fields. The decisions taken at the Conference could strengthen the role of the United Nations as the centre-piece of democratic global governance, for the Conference would explore the very premises of cooperation among Governments, societies and peoples. Indeed, some premises might have to be redefined in the light of the recent dramatic changes in the concepts of government and international relations. Since the Earth Summit must forge a partnership of people as well as institutions, he attached great importance to the participation of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in the fourth session of the Preparatory Committee and in the Conference itself. Thus far, the response of NGOs, indigenous peoples, women and youth to invitations to participate had been extremely encouraging. Indeed, NGO activities in support of the Conference had proliferated. For example, a conference would be hosted by the Government of France in December 1991, and a Global Forum, planned by the International Facilitating Committee in conjunction with the Brazilian NGO Forum, would take place simultaneously with the Conference itself. The results of those meetings would be communicated to the Conference as part of the sector-related activities taking place at the Riocentro convention facility.

5. The work of the Conference secretariat had been greatly facilitated by exceptional cooperation within the United Nations system, and by regional and national preparations. At the second Regional African Preparatory Conference held recently in Abidjan, the Abidjan Declaration on Environment and Development and an "African common position on environment and development" had been adopted. The African regional conference had stressed the need for additional strong commitments to Africa in such crucial areas as desertification, food security and water. Future regional or topic-oriented conferences which would doubtless enrich Agenda 21 included the Symposium on Sustainable Development - From Concept to Action, to be held in The Hague, Netherlands; a conference on an "Agenda for Science for Environment and Development into the Twenty-First Century" (ASCEND-21) to be held in Vienna; a joint meeting of aid and development ministers, to be held in Paris under the auspices of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD); an International Conference on Water and the Environment to be held in Dublin; a proposed meeting of ministers of developing countries in Kuala Lumpur in April 1992; the special session of the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), to be held in February 1992; and consultations among a small, high-level group of financial and policy leaders on financing global environment and development needs to be held in Tokyo in April 1992.

6. Reports on national experiences would also be reflected in Agenda 21. Intergovernmental negotiations were expected to produce conventions on the protection of climate and biological diversity for signature at the Conference. While significant progress had been achieved in the negotiations, there was still much work to do in the relatively short time remaining.

(Mr. Strong)

Working Group I had made headway in the elaboration of principles on the management, conservation and development of all types of forests. The Preparatory Committee had also adopted a decision on the provisional agenda, organization of work and provisional rules of procedure of the Conference, which it hoped the General Assembly would approve.

7. Preparations were proceeding on schedule in Brazil, where the Brazilian authorities, the Resident Representative of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in Brazil - who was also the representative of the Conference - were cooperating closely. At the United Nations Secretariat in New York and the United Nations Office in Geneva, a Conference Management Committee had been established.

8. Referring to Preparatory Committee decision 3/12 on the adequate and full participation of developing countries, he noted that the resources available in the voluntary fund amounted to only \$11,000. As more than \$1 million would be needed to finance the participation of developing countries in the fourth session of the Preparatory Committee, he appealed to all Governments to contribute generously to the fund.

9. Not much time remained to synthesize the many proposals for an Earth Charter or Declaration. It was therefore encouraging that the final session of the Preparatory Committee would be a negotiating session, which would open with discussions of cross-sectoral issues, such as financial resources and the transfer of technology. Agreement must also be reached on institutional matters and Agenda 21 so that a set of recommendations could be submitted to the Conference. Since the remaining issues to be worked out were extremely complex, it might be advisable for Ministers to participate towards the end of the final session of the Preparatory Committee. Formal invitations to the Conference had been issued to Governments and to heads of State or Government, all but one of whom had indicated that they would attend. Special arrangements were being made for the participation of heads of State or Government during the final two days of the Conference. It was his hope that, at that time, some of them would announce unilateral initiatives in support of the decisions taken by the Conference.

10. Mr. CUTAJAR (Executive Secretary, Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee for a Framework Convention on Climate Change) said that the remarks just made by the Secretary-General of the Conference, particularly on financing and technology transfer, were encouraging. The political visibility of the Conference and the prospect of summit-level participation would doubtless encourage Governments to agree on a framework convention on climate change for signature in Rio de Janeiro. The report of the Secretary-General on the protection of global climate for present and future generations of mankind (A/46/602) summarized the follow-up to General Assembly resolution 45/212. Since the report had been issued, two new documents had been submitted in preparation for the fourth session of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee. The documents, submitted by the Officers of Working Group I and the Co-Chairmen of Working Group II, contained elements for a draft convention

(Mr. Cutajar)

based on previous submissions and discussions at the third session of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee. The first document contained elements for the preamble of a convention, guidelines for implementation of a convention, and a statement of objectives and commitments by individual parties on short-term or long-term cooperation with respect to sources and sinks of greenhouse gases, transfers of financial resources and technology, and responses to the special circumstances of developing countries. The second document dealt primarily with mechanisms for implementing the commitments undertaken and various legal provisions. Referring to paragraph 8 of the Secretary-General's report, he noted that economic concerns had become increasingly important to countries participating in the climate change negotiations. The long-term growth potential of those countries in a warming world; their access to the necessary technology to that end; future consumption of their coal and oil resources; the impact of warming on their agriculture, fisheries and exports; and their achievement of energy efficiency were all economic concerns. The shift in the focus of the climate change discussions - from the realm of science to that of economics - must be adequately reflected in the composition and strength of delegations.

11. Thus far, developing countries had been able to send only one-person delegations to the sessions of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee. That was because the Secretariat had been able to offer financial support to only one delegate from each of some 100 developing countries, including all the least developed countries and most of the small island developing countries, thanks to generous contributions to the voluntary fund. However, \$500,000 would be needed and half of it in the first few weeks of 1992 - in order to defray the cost of participation in the fifth session of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (para. 12).

12. At its current session the General Assembly would have to take two administrative decisions relating to the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee. The first concerned the calendar of meetings for 1992 (para. 5), and whether a fifth session should be scheduled in New York in February 1992, followed by a brief resumed session in April. The second concerned budgetary arrangements for the secretariat of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (para. 19). The United Nations Controller had authorized ad hoc arrangements in order to make provision for the secretariat in 1991, taking into account the requirement that no additional appropriations from the United Nations regular budget should be made in 1991. It was to be hoped that the General Assembly would approve new arrangements for the provision of adequate funding from the regular budget in 1992.

13. Mr. RIPERT (Chairman, Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee for a Framework Convention on Climate Change) said that the Executive Secretary of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee had just outlined some of the facts which the Second Committee might take into account when drafting its resolution on the work of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee. The task of completing the proposed framework convention prior to the Conference would be difficult and complex, but not beyond the bounds of possibility,

(Mr. Ripert)

provided that the secretariats of the Conference and the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee continued their close and fruitful collaboration and that an appropriate timetable was strictly adhered to. The text bringing together the various elements worked out by the two working groups established by the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee to deal with commitments and mechanisms should be available in time for the Committee's fourth session, to be held at Geneva from 9 to 20 December 1991. In addition to the fifth session planned for February 1992, a resumed session, which would take place in April 1992, was being contemplated.

14. The Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee's deliberations had greatly benefited from the work of the UNEP/WMO Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, which was preparing an update of its First Assessment Report (1990).

15. At the same time, many difficult issues remained to be resolved, and it was essential to ascertain the views of Member States so that negotiations could proceed on a balanced basis. In particular, adequate participation by the developing countries must be ensured. He therefore appealed for additional financial resources to make that participation possible.

16. One positive consideration was that a substantial number of countries had, on their own initiative, committed themselves to a policy of counteracting the adverse impact of gas emissions. No one would dispute that the industrialized countries bore the major responsibility for such emissions, but it was important to establish what they should do in the short term, while ensuring sufficient flexibility in the long term to tackle a problem which was cumulative in its effect. The field was one in which forecasting was subject to uncertainty, and its complexity was compounded by issues which embraced not merely the meteorology of the ozone layer but social and economic issues as well. Key sectors must be identified, bearing in mind that not all aspects of the problem could be tackled at once, and that protocols might be needed to supplement the proposed convention in the longer term.

17. Mr. KUFUOR (Ghana), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77, said that it had been gratifying that at the Preparatory Committee's third session it had been agreed that the following development-related issues should be incorporated into all Agenda 21 programme documents: (a) poverty, economic growth and environment; (b) international trade and environment; (c) structural adjustment and environment; (d) commodities and environment; (e) external indebtedness, resource flows and environment; and (f) large industrial enterprises, including transnational corporations, business practices and environment.

18. Means of implementation of the programmes were also to be specified. In particular, ways and means of providing new and additional financial resources were to be clearly identified, in addition to action-oriented proposals for favourable access to and transfer of environmentally sound technology, especially to the developing countries, and for the promotion of endogenous capacities for development. Moreover, the respective responsibilities of developed and developing countries were to be clearly stated.

(Mr. Kufuor, Ghana)

19. The industrialized countries bore the main responsibility for remedying the environmental problems confronting the world today, since they were the principal source of pollution of the planet. General Assembly resolution 44/228 made that point quite clearly.
20. The Group of 77 had also made specific and detailed proposals relating to new and additional resources and the transfer of environmentally sound technology to developing countries. Unfortunately, however, the developed countries had not been prepared to engage in substantive discussions of those proposals, an attitude which had been in contrast to the willingness of the developing countries to discuss such issues as forests, biological diversity, and the protection of the atmosphere, the oceans and freshwater resources, which had enabled the Preparatory Committee to make good progress in those areas. In effect the developed countries had come prepared to discuss issues in which they were seeking environmental concessions from the South, but had not been prepared to consider issues on which they themselves must also make concessions. At future sessions, the Group of 77 would make sure that parallel progress was made on all issues, in order to assure a balanced outcome.
21. Although negotiations must be reserved for the fourth session of the Preparatory Committee, it was important to restate the basic principle that environmental protection could not be undertaken at the expense of the development objectives of developing countries. The South had a right to adequate "environmental space" for its current and future development needs. The concept of sustainable development did not simply mean that the needs of the present must be met without prejudice to those of the future: it also implied that the needs of the North should be met in ways that did not compromise the satisfaction of the current and future needs of the South. All resources within the territorial domain of the developing countries were the national heritage of those countries and could not be transmuted through any device, legal or otherwise, into "global commons".
22. In the negotiations relating to the protection of the atmosphere, developed countries must make firm commitments to reduce and stabilize their current excessive levels of greenhouse gas emissions. Discretionary arrangements that allowed the developed countries to do as they pleased with regard to the levels of their emissions were unacceptable. It would be wrong and counter-productive, for example, for poor forest dwellers to be removed from their habitat in the interests of forest conservation so that unsustainable consumption patterns in the developed countries could be maintained. It was therefore important that the developed countries should not seek to shift the burden of environmental protection onto the south. The developing countries were prepared to cooperate for the protection of the environment of the planet, but only on an equitable basis. Why was it that a convention on biological diversity was being negotiated, while there was no corresponding convention on biotechnology?
23. Institutions to be established after the Conference must be based on

(Mr. Kufuor, Ghana)

democratic principles in which all had an equal opportunity to participate in the decision-making process.

24. The full participation of the developing countries was essential to the success of the Preparatory Committee, and he therefore echoed the appeal for extra funds to enable them to participate fully.

25. Mr. VAN SCHAİK (Netherlands), speaking on behalf of the States members of the European Community, said that the Conference represented a crucial opportunity for focusing world-wide efforts to halt and reverse environmental degradation and to pave the way towards a new and full integration of environment and development.

26. Over the past year, in the preparatory process leading up to the Conference, the Community and its member States had made great efforts to reconcile environmental requirements and development imperatives. As outlined during the third session of the Preparatory Committee, their basic approach consisted of three elements. Firstly, the industrialized countries, recognizing their global responsibility, must considerably increase their commitment to limiting the burden they imposed on the planet's ecosystem to their legitimate share. Secondly, there must be equal partnership with developing countries, based on mutual trust and equity in negotiations and decision-making in the field of environment and development. Thirdly, they must substantially increase their support to the developing countries and economies in transition in the effort to achieve sustainable development, recognizing both the sovereignty and the responsibilities of the countries in question.

27. Both poverty and affluence had so far led to environmental deterioration and to depletion of natural resources. The rich, who were mainly but not exclusively to be found in the industrial countries, utilized a disproportionate share of the world's renewable and non-renewable resources, discharging their waste into the environment in quantities that exceeded the ecosystem's capacity for absorption. At the same time, the poor, who were mainly though not exclusively to be found in developing countries, were forced to overexploit their resource base. The efficient use of scarce natural and financial assets lay at the heart of the negotiations within the framework of the Conference.

28. The States members of the European Community expected the General Assembly at its current session to endorse the Preparatory Committee's report and to appeal strongly to all parties to commit themselves fully to achieving consensus at the Preparatory Committee's fourth session in 1992: with only one remaining session to overcome the many fundamental differences, a strong political impetus was required. It was therefore desirable that delegations should participate at a decision-making level. The fourth session should be an opportunity for an effective negotiation session, focusing on concrete proposals and texts. The States members of the European Community appreciated the input provided by non-governmental organizations in the Preparatory



(Mr. Van Schaik, Netherlands)

Committee's deliberations and the active participation of indigenous peoples in its work. The latter had an important responsibility for safeguarding the environment, and full account should be taken of their knowledge, resource management and conservation practices.

29. The States members of the European Community welcomed the fact that the Preparatory Committee had now designated human settlements as a distinct programme under Agenda 21, and urged that adequate time should be allocated to substantive negotiations on that issue.

30. The European Community and its member States expected the Conference to achieve the following specific results: firstly, the adoption of an Earth Charter containing key principles and general rights and obligations in the field of environment and development; secondly, the adoption of Agenda 21 in the form of a global programme of action with specific objectives, targets and timetables; thirdly, the signature of conventions on biological diversity and climate change, and a global consensus on forests which should form the basis for a future convention; and, fourthly, well-defined recommendations for the strengthening and further development of institutional arrangements in the field of environment and development and in respect of financing and technological cooperation.

31. The European Community and its member States were in the process of developing a common position on the issues under consideration, both among themselves and in consultation with others, with a view to full participation in the Conference and its outcome. Major initiatives in that process would have to emerge from the OECD ministerial meeting on environment and development to be held in early December and from meetings of the Council of the European Community in the months to come. In particular, the evolving Global Environment Facility should play the leading role in helping developing countries to tackle global environmental policies. In addition, the Community would actively participate in various expert and sectoral meetings, including the International Conference on Water and the Environment, to be held in Dublin in January 1992.

32. Agenda item 21 should include specific recommendations to further strengthen participation of women in environment and development. Policies had neglected the essential role of women in primary environmental management through their roles as caretakers, producers and providers for their families.

33. Countries had a common but differentiated responsibility in addressing climate change. Agreement on stabilization of carbon dioxide emissions at 1990 levels by the year 2000 by the industrialized countries was a crucial part of the preparations for the framework convention on climate change, and the European Community reaffirmed its commitment to that target. Simultaneously, developing countries should adopt strategies to keep future greenhouse gas emissions to the lowest possible level compatible with their development aims. Developed countries should strengthen cooperation with

(Mr. Van Schaik, Netherlands)

developing countries through the provision of financial resources and appropriate transfer of environmentally sound technologies. The framework convention on climate change would involve complex issues without simple solutions, and the European Community was committed to an open and constructive discussion.

34. Developing countries required special support to address the issue of conservation of biological diversity. Substantial progress in negotiating a convention on biological diversity could be achieved if all partners worked together, taking into account each other's capabilities and problems. Every effort should be made to ensure that measures to conserve biological diversity were integrated into current and future development strategies. Indeed, GATT had recently decided to convene a working party on trade and the environment and one of the topics on the working party's preliminary agenda was the relationship between trade principles in existing multilateral environmental conventions and the principles and provisions of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade. The best possible environmental protection must be linked with a dynamic and open multilateral trade system.

35. The Earth Summit would test the will of Governments, both developed and developing, to address urgent problems relating to environment and development, as well as the capacity of the United Nations to address effectively vital issues of global concern.

36. Miss SAAD (Egypt) said that, because of the political significance of the Conference, it would not be surprising if the Second Committee's negotiations and discussions at the current session of the General Assembly were somewhat restrained, since delegations were awaiting the final Preparatory Committee session. As a result of global political change over the past two years or so, confrontation between East and West had yielded to a détente, interests and axis had shifted, and the fear of marginalization haunting the third world had been heightened significantly.

37. Her delegation argued that the Conference, rather than the United Nations itself, represented the forum for change, owing to the significant scope of its mandate and its timing at the beginning of a new era in international relations. It was not actually a summit on environment or development, but a conference on global governance, covering all areas formerly addressed by United Nations Charter bodies such as the Security Council, the General Assembly, and the Economic and Social Council. It represented an opportunity to restructure and reorder priorities, and also to define a new role for Charter bodies. The United Nations had been established 45 years earlier by the countries which had emerged from the Second World War in positions of world leadership. Currently, the equation was unbalanced, with the industrialized North on one side and the relatively disadvantaged South on the other. The significance of the Conference lay in the fact that as an intergovernmental forum it was of the same value as the United Nations itself. Almost every issue or process currently under discussion, whether substantive or structural, awaited the outcome of the Conference.

(Miss Saad, Egypt)

38. It appeared that the substantive preparatory work for the Conference was being conducted on the periphery of the Preparatory Committee, whether in the context of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee, the negotiations on biological diversity, or expert group meetings sponsored by United Nations organs and, most significantly, by NGOs. The preparatory process had been voided of its tasks. As a result, the Conference would be witnessing the peak of political deliberations on a new consensus on international relations, and new avenues could be opened for economic cooperation based on the assumption of the corrective capacity of the free market mechanism in dealing with issues relating to environmental degradation.

39. If at the Conference, insufficient emphasis was placed on man's responsibility for his fellow man and on needs here and now, and if East-West confrontation was replaced by North-South confrontation, then the third world had every reason to be worried. However, the worst scenario would be if the process of change was stalled - if the Conference was stalled and handicapped.

40. Mr. ESTRADA OYUELA (Argentina) said that the common task of protecting the environment could be fulfilled only through close cooperation allowing developing countries access to sufficient resources to sustain their efforts. His Government had based its hopes for the future on the abilities of its people and its rich natural resources, which would be preserved for the use and well-being of future generations. In addition to natural disasters such as volcanic eruptions, his Government was concerned by man-made problems such as damage to the ozone layer and global warming. It had demonstrated its commitment to environmental protection by ratification of the recent Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer and the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movement of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal.

41. Environmental protection and economic development must be complementary. Development undertaken without due regard for the conservation of natural resources was inevitably unsustainable, but without economic development it was equally impossible to achieve conservation. Unbridled consumption and absolute poverty were equally damaging to the ecosystem. There had been much discussion of the negative effects of clearing forests to obtain agricultural land, but it must also be pointed out that in developed countries agricultural subsidies encouraging intensive cultivation and extensive use of agricultural chemicals and mechanical methods not only caused soil deterioration and water contamination but also market distortions. If that trend was not halted, it would result in a widespread decline in food production. Only balanced economic development and environmental protection could provide the security that mankind hoped for.

42. The Conference had raised great expectations among the members of the international community. Its final document would contain a declaration of basic universal principles on development and environment and an ambitious programme known as "Agenda 21". It was also hoped that two important conventions would be opened for signature: the convention on climate change and the convention on biological diversity and biotechnology. More rapid

(Mr. Estrada Oyuela, Argentina)

progress was required on the convention on climate change. Agreement on the stabilization of greenhouse gas emissions must be based on specific commitments. A clear understanding of the function of the oceans was also required, because the current tendency was to overemphasize rainforest protection. The convention on biological diversity and biotechnology must create appropriate conditions for access to animal and plant species found mainly in developing countries, sharing the costs and benefits of access to biotechnology, and ways to assist the developing countries with the cost of conserving natural habitats.

43. All those questions were related to the availability of resources and access to technology, without which the goals of Agenda 21 could not be met, emissions of greenhouse gases could not be controlled and biological diversity could not be preserved. Developed and developing countries must work together to find financial, political and institutional formulas to give developing countries access to new and additional resources that would enable them to deal with environmental problems, which were of a global nature. The transfer of environmentally sound technologies to developing countries should be a non-profit undertaking, since it would ultimately benefit all countries.

44. The Argentine and Brazilian delegations had submitted to the Preparatory Committee a position paper (A/CONF.151/PC/93) on the financial resources needed for Agenda 21, in which they had specified that such resources should not be applied solely to global problems, but should also be made available for local and regional ecological needs. With respect to the transfer of technology, the principle that market mechanisms should be used to encourage environmental preservation and to discourage environmental degradation suggested that market mechanisms should also be applied to stimulate the transfer of environmentally sound technologies and to penalize the transfer of environmentally hazardous technologies. Both financial resources and the transfer of technology for environmental protection would require the negotiation of effective formulas to avoid useless confrontations in a matter which, by its nature, called for solidarity.

45. Ms. RODRIGUEZ (Uruguay) said that, although the international community had learned much about the causes and prevention of environmental degradation over the past 20 years, some environmental hazards had worsened, and new environmental challenges had arisen. At the first session of the Preparatory Committee, her delegation had stressed the need to approach environmental problems with due regard to their socio-economic aspects.

46. She welcomed the new spirit of international cooperation in environmental matters, particularly the development of transboundary cooperation, in which countries applied common environmental policies in border areas. However, enhanced economic cooperation was also necessary, since environment and development were closely linked. Many developing countries had lost ground over the past decade, owing to such factors as external debt, the use of inappropriate technologies, a general decline in commodity prices and deteriorating terms of trade. Since sustainable and environmentally sound

(Ms. Rodriguez, Uruguay)

development required a favourable international economic climate, environmental protection efforts must not take the form of "ecological protectionism" by creating new conditions for economic aid and new barriers to international trade.

47. At the Conference and in subsequent forums, the international community must address four basic issues: (1) the establishment of environmental protection principles in the form of a convention; (2) the obligations and rights of States with respect to the environment under multilateral conventions; (3) criteria for the establishment of a legal system to settle environmental disputes and to impose penalties for violations of environmental principles; and (4) criteria to determine responsibility for such violations, including those involving the export of dangerous substances from industrialized countries to developing countries.

48. The link between the environment and disarmament must also be addressed. The environmental impact of the production of military equipment and of such military activities as nuclear testing was obvious, while the environmental situation in the Persian Gulf region demonstrated the ecological consequences of military conflict. The link between the environment and disarmament had been explored in the Secretary-General's report on the potential uses of resources allocated to military activities for civilian endeavours to protect the environment. Her delegation had sponsored a draft resolution in the First Committee (A/C.1/46/L.7/Rev.1) which requested the Secretary-General to submit that report to the Preparatory Committee and to arrange for its reproduction as a United Nations publication. In addition, Uruguay was taking steps to accede to the Convention on the Prohibition of Military or Any Other Hostile Use of Environmental Modification Techniques, which had been one of the first instruments to recognize and regulate the link between the environment and military activities.

49. Uruguay had just signed an agreement with the European Economic Community in which it undertook to cooperate in the protection and improvement of the environment. At the national level, Uruguay had established the necessary legal framework for the elaboration of an environmental policy, and had adopted an environmental plan of action. Its position on environmental issues was both pragmatic and principled, and the Uruguayan Government reaffirmed its commitment both to the Conference and to international cooperation in environmental protection.

AGENDA ITEM 83: INTERNATIONAL DECADE FOR NATURAL DISASTER REDUCTION  
(continued) (A/C.2/46/L.39)

50. The CHAIRMAN announced that Finland had joined the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.2/46/L.39.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.