



Chairman: Mr. Bruce RANKIN (Canada).

*In the absence of the Chairman, Mr. Gobba (Egypt),
Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.*

AGENDA ITEM 47

United Nations Conference on the Human Environment:
report of the Secretary-General (*continued*) (A/8688,
A/8691, A/8703/Add.1 (Part II); A/8783 and Add.1;
A/CONF.48/14 and Corr.1; A/C.2/L.1227,
A/C.2/L.1228, A/C.2/L.1229/Rev.1; A/C.2/L.1230-
1234)

1. Mr. HALÁSZ (Hungary) said that in the modern world, in which all nations were so closely interdependent, all had to live in the same environment and there was no escape from joint responsibilities. The biological, social and psychological aspects of the environment could not be solved on an individual basis. Action was needed at all levels: the individual, the family, the enterprise, the city, the State and the international community. The problems of the protection, conservation and restoration of the human environment were truly universal since they affected all human activity, concerned all States without exception and required international action. Hence, it was indispensable to apply the principle of universality to action in that field. Co-operation would lead to genuine results only if all States, regardless of their political and economic systems, could participate in it on an equal footing.

2. During the extensive discussions on the human environment, his delegation had consistently called for broad-based and genuine co-operation without discrimination of any kind. It had, from the very outset, supported the proposal for the convening of the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment. It had been convinced that the Conference and all future efforts required the participation of all States without exception. Since all nations were deeply concerned about the human environment and its protection, their interests must not be sacrificed to the narrow political prejudices which in 1971 had caused the General Assembly to exclude the German Democratic Republic and, as a result of that decision, a number of other States from participating in the Conference. The exclusion of the German Democratic Republic, a highly industrialized European sovereign socialist State, had undermined international co-operation and weakened the Conference and its recommendations.

3. Hungary had not been in a position to participate in the work of the Stockholm Conference because the

Conference had not had the universal character expected of it (see A/8688). It could therefore assume no responsibility for the recommendations and decisions taken at Stockholm. Its position did not mean, however, that it was indifferent to international co-operation in matters concerning the human environment. On the contrary, it attached great importance to environmental questions both at the national and international levels and had taken steps to preserve its own natural environment. Its present environmental problems arose mainly as a result of industrialization and urbanization. The main air-polluting factor was heating with coal, especially with poor quality coal with a 2 to 4 per cent sulphur content. In its densely populated areas, air pollution from heating, combined with industrial and traffic pollution, was a major problem. However, the most important environmental problem was to satisfy the demand for water, both in quality and in quantity, since 96 per cent of Hungary's surface water originated outside its national boundaries. His Government had recently taken measures to reduce air and water pollution and to eliminate other environmental hazards harmful to human life.

4. At the international level it would strive, both bilaterally and multilaterally, to promote the solution of environmental problems. Hungarian experts were currently engaged in examining the final documents of the Conference and would make their views known at a later stage.

5. Mr. BREITENSTEIN (Finland) congratulated the Government of Sweden and its representatives at the United Nations on their initiative which had led to the successful conclusion of the Stockholm Conference. It could only be regretted that circumstances beyond the control of the host country had not permitted the Conference to deal with the problems on a universal basis. His delegation was confident, however, that as work began on the action process the problems of environmental preservation and control would be attacked on the truly universal basis they so obviously deserved.

6. His delegation considered that the Conference had been a success and that it had achieved its two main objectives of providing the framework for intergovernmental action and creating greater public awareness and support for such action. It was highly significant that at the Conference environmental problems had been discussed and decisions taken at the highest political level. The unanimous recognition of the dangers facing the world and the consequent recognition of the universality of responsibility in the management

of resources were indeed of great importance. His delegation attached particular importance to the realization, so unequivocally expressed at Stockholm, that planning for the management of the world's resources could not be done in isolation but only within the existing environmental framework.

7. At Stockholm his delegation had taken an active part in the deliberations and had had the considerable satisfaction of seeing most of its proposals adopted. It associated itself with other delegations which had expressed the view that during the twenty-seventh session the General Assembly should endorse the results of the Conference, bearing in mind that they constituted only a point of departure and a basis for the future work of the permanent machinery. In that context, his Government wished to participate from the outset in the work of the new permanent machinery.

8. One aspect of the future work which was of immediate concern to the Committee was the relationship between the preservation of the environment and the improvement of economic and social conditions. It was clear that, on the basis of present knowledge, quantitative criteria and measurements for the evaluation and implementation of development plans were not sufficient to present a reliable picture of development. Economic measurements, useful as they were, could be seriously inadequate because they did not reveal much about what was happening to the individual lives of great masses of people in developing countries, whereas the improvement of individual life was the real aim of development. The same applied to the environment, because discussions on its preservation ultimately led to discussions on the quality of life of the individual in the industrialized and the developing countries alike. The Conference, with the full support of his Government, had explicitly emphasized the close link between environment and development. However, it was quite clear that for many people the environment was not at present a relevant concept, because of the lack of economic opportunities for enjoying it. The Finnish delegation at Stockholm had stressed that the well-being of man in his immediate environment should be included in the concept of environmental promotion and that, *inter alia*, the enhancement of the working environment should be explicitly recognized in the preamble of the Declaration on the Human Environment and in the relevant recommendations of the Action Plan for the Human Environment (see A/CONF.48/14 and Corr.1, chaps. I and II). His Government would continue to stress that "man-centred" concept as one of the main objectives of the United Nations in the field of the environment.

9. Recognition had been given to the need to tackle the problems of environmental protection on a global basis and to bear in mind the relationship between environmental preservation and economic and social development. However, it had also been recognized that a number of environmental problems occurred at the regional level. The protection of the Baltic Sea was a case in point and, as a coastal State, Finland was seriously concerned with those problems and considered that measures to solve them were urgently

needed. In such cases of a regional nature, co-operation and exchange of information (*ibid.*, chap. III) could and should be established for the benefit of all.

10. His delegation fully supported draft resolution A/C.2/L.1228 on the institutional arrangements, but agreed with those who had stressed that a resolution should not lead to a reduction of the role of the Economic and Social Council. It also attached great importance to effective interagency co-ordination in the field of the environment. Furthermore, it fully supported the establishment of the Environment Fund and his Government intended to submit a proposal to Parliament for a contribution of \$150,000 for 1973.

11. While his delegation appreciated the generous offers made by a number of Governments (see A/8783/Add.1), it had reached the conclusion that the environment secretariat should be situated in the European Office of the United Nations. That position had already been endorsed by all the Scandinavian Ministers for Foreign Affairs at Helsinki in September 1972.

12. His delegation supported draft resolution A/C.2/L.1229/Rev.1. With regard to draft resolution A/C.2/L.1227, his delegation welcomed the efforts of the sponsors to reach a compromise on the question of co-operation between States in the field of the environment, which had been left open at Stockholm. However, it was disturbed because the draft could be interpreted as going beyond the Stockholm mandate and was somewhat categorical in its approach. It therefore shared the concern expressed by a number of delegations and joined in the appeal that the revised text should be worked out in the spirit of Stockholm.

13. While his delegation appreciated the objectives of the sponsors of draft resolutions A/C.2/L.1230, A/C.2/L.1231 and A/C.2/L.1234, it felt that such new initiatives could perhaps best be taken up by the proposed environment machinery itself.

14. In view of the extreme urgency of the environmental problems facing the world, the Committee should complete its consideration of the item by adopting the various recommendations and resolutions by consensus.

15. Mr. DE RIVERO (Peru) said that his delegation wished to express its gratitude to the Secretary-General of the Conference and to the Swedish Government for their part in organizing the Conference and bringing it to a successful conclusion.

16. Until recently the fundamental problems confronting international society had been considered in the context of man's struggle against nature, but the Conference had added a new factor, namely, the harmonization of human activity with its ecosystem. That new factor not only involved the problem of the use of new technology against contamination but also marked the start of an entirely new philosophical and moral approach which would have an incalculable political impact on the economic and social structure of national societies and the international community.

17. The Action Plan for the Human Environment, with its 109 recommendations, was a commendable and realistic attempt at international co-operation for the preservation of the ecosystem. His country had supported it and was ready to co-operate fully in its implementation.

18. Although the Conference had marked the beginning of a more comprehensive approach to the economic and social problems created by human activity, it had not been able to provide a clear-cut picture of the inter-relationship between the affluent societies, the deterioration of the environment and increasing under-development.

19. The Declaration on the Human Environment, which represented a major effort since its 26 principles reconciled the position of a large number of States, dealt with the problem not as an interrelated whole but piecemeal, which made it impossible to discern the historical structural relationships between the accumulation of capital in consumer societies, the deterioration of the environment and the growing poverty in the third world. The Action Plan had necessarily been focussed in a pragmatic, technical, positive and realistic manner on the urgent problem of counteracting the haphazard exploitation of natural resources and contamination and on establishing auxiliary machinery to attain those objectives. Hence it could hardly bring out the relationship between affluence, under-development and the deterioration of the environment.

20. Nevertheless, both the Declaration and the Action Plan formed useful bases on which the permanent machinery could, in co-operation with scientific and intellectual circles, proceed to supply criteria which would assist in promoting an understanding of the true magnitude of the relationship between the problems of the human environment, the accumulation of wealth and increasing poverty. More than ever before, a conceptual and global awareness of the problems being dealt with in the United Nations was needed. A mere technical and pragmatic approach to environmental problems would be a grave mistake and would mean that, in a few years, the permanent machinery would deal with the subject without appreciating its full magnitude and outside the real context of international relations between States at different levels of development and with differing economic and social structures.

21. The establishment of the permanent machinery coincided with the widening of the gap between developed and developing countries and with the current crisis in international co-operation for development. In the view of his delegation the problem of the human environment should be viewed against the background of the structural relationship between the concentration of international wealth, the deterioration of the environment and the growing poverty of the third world.

22. A number of United Nations, World Law Fund and university studies indicated that the third world

was increasingly becoming a peripheral zone exporting capital to the developed countries. By 1975, the trade and financial deficit of all the developing countries would amount to between \$17,000 million and \$26,000 million, at least half of which would be accounted for by the outflow of capital in the form of profits paid to foreign private investors, debt servicing and the deterioration in the terms of trade. In compensation, the developing countries were receiving inadequate financial assistance, to which political conditions were attached and which was designed to maintain the minimum level of growth without development. The draining of resources had led to large concentrations of capital and technology and, in turn, the emergence of a consumer society. That process resulted in the deterioration of the human environment in both the developed societies and the developing world—in the latter owing to the creation of under-development, the draining of natural, financial and human resources and the adoption of the consumption patterns of affluent societies by the privileged classes.

23. The process of draining off capital from the periphery and the indiscriminate use of technology to obtain ever-higher profit margins had characterized the evolution of the consumer society and had made those living in such societies the major agents of contamination and depredation of the environment. Prominent scientists and ecologists had warned that another 50 years of unplanned economic growth would lead to the dislocation of the world's ecosystem.

24. Many people were therefore wondering how to meet the urgent need for accelerated growth and development in the third world without endangering the planet. If the countries of the third world used the economic and social model of the consumer societies, the dislocation referred to would ensue. Growth would have to be limited. From a logical and structural standpoint, the question of the deterioration of the environment and the exploitation of the third world and disregard for its problems could not be solved just by creating a new technology or a system for monitoring the environment or educational programmes, and even less by limiting economic growth, but by questioning the economic and social structures underlying the philosophical and ethical system and the scale of personal and social values of industrial societies, in which consumption was controlled or induced by a few or by a "techno-bureaucracy".

25. For those reasons, for the countries of the third world and for the youth of developed industrial societies, the problem of the environment was beginning to acquire broader political significance than the fight against pollution. Only the rejection of a social model whereby production and capital were concentrated in the hands of a minority would enable the developing countries to end their internal and external dependence, redistribute income, reform their structures and involve their peoples in the development process.

26. The problem of the environment and that of the distribution of wealth were therefore one and the same

and should be viewed as such. Therefore the institutional machinery established by the Conference should, from the outset, operate with close attention being paid to development problems. With that in mind his delegation supported draft resolutions A/C.2/L.1228 and A/C.2/L.1229/Rev.1.

27. His delegation felt that part of the research activities covered by the Action Plan and the functions of the Governing Council for Environmental Programmes and of the environment secretariat should be focused on the conceptual interpretation of the relationship between affluence, poverty and environmental deterioration. It was necessary to examine the optimum social models of industrial production which did not have serious consequences for the ecosystem and the over-all development of mankind. Studies should not be confined to ways and means of creating a new technology that was oriented towards countering the effects rather than the causes of the problem. Studies and research on the environment covered a field that extended beyond the purely technical aspects and encompassed anthropology, sociology and economics. A meeting of high-level scientists and intellectuals should be convened, with the collaboration of UNESCO and UNITAR and under United Nations auspices, to study the various social models which would enable a balance to be struck between industrial production, income distribution and the preservation of the ecosystem.

28. As far as co-operation for the immediate future was concerned and bearing in mind General Assembly resolution 2849 (XXVI) of 20 December 1971 and the relevant resolutions adopted by the Conference, the permanent machinery should view its work in the context of the International Development Strategy. Accordingly, his delegation supported draft resolution A/C.2/L.1234, although it felt that it was extremely limitative because it addressed itself to only one of the problems relating to the environment and the Strategy, namely, the transfer of technology. The discussions on international monetary reform, the forthcoming GATT negotiations, the IBRD policies and all the regional programmes in the environmental field should be taken into account and the scope of the draft resolution should be broadened.

29. The absence of many European socialist countries from the Conference had been a matter of concern for his Government, which had supported the participation of the German Democratic Republic. For the sake of the principle of universality and in order to achieve effective results and ensure a broad basis for the permanent machinery to work on, the understanding of all parties was required. Nothing could be more disastrous than inflexible positions or political prejudices; his delegation attached considerable importance to the problem and felt that, unless it was solved, any joint action in the United Nations would be inadequate.

Mr. Rankin (Canada) took the Chair.

30. Mr. GETMANETS (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic) said that the Ukrainian SSR, like a number

of other States Members of the United Nations, had not participated in the Conference because of the violation by a number of States of the principle of universality, which must form the basis for international co-operation on the environment. His delegation was therefore in no way responsible for the decisions adopted by the Conference and would state its views on them later, when it had had time to study them in detail.

31. However, its forced absence from the Conference did not mean that the Ukrainian SSR underestimated the urgency and importance of the environmental problems facing mankind, or the need for international co-operation on a basis of equality with the participation of all States concerned. His delegation had always stressed the need for a collective effort to prevent further deterioration of the environment, and had stated its readiness to participate on both a bilateral and a multilateral basis in any such effort.

32. In the socialist countries all natural resources, factories and other enterprises were the common property of society. Those countries were not motivated by the impulse for maximum profits inherent in capitalism, which led private companies to plunder natural resources without regard for the interests of society as a whole and to treat the human environment barbarically. Production in the socialist countries was aimed at meeting to the fullest extent the growing material and cultural needs of man, and concern for the environment was one of the most important functions of the State. While adopting measures to accelerate scientific and technological progress, the Party and the Government ensured that they were accompanied by a thrifty attitude to natural resources and the human environment, in order to prevent the development of technology from polluting the air, water and land. In the socialist countries the contradiction between the social nature of production and the usurpation of the fruits of labour by private capital did not exist, which meant that the forces of production could be developed according to plan, with a rational use of natural resources accompanied by measures to keep the environment healthy. Concern for the environment was one of the guiding principles in the planning and siting of new enterprises and the reconstruction of those already in operation.

33. Protection of the environment had been a priority concern since the first days of Soviet power. The elimination of private property had afforded an opportunity for applying scientific measures to ensure the rational use of natural resources and to protect and improve the environment. One of the first legislative acts of the new Republic had been the adoption, on 26 February 1919, of a Decree on the protection of forests. Over the years, the legislation had been altered in the light of the increasing needs of scientific and technical progress and had led to the Act on the protection of the environment in the Ukrainian SSR currently in force. The legislation in force also included land and water codes regulating the use of those resources for the greatest economic effect. The Supreme Soviet of the Ukrainian SSR had established a permanent com-

mission to ensure that legislation relating to the environment was complied with. There was also a State committee of the Council of Ministers on the protection of the environment, which was responsible for implementing the relevant legislation. The Ukrainian society for the protection of nature and the promotion of the development of natural resources played an important part in supervising activities relating to the preservation of nature: it had a membership of more than 7 million, and aimed at inculcating in the population a careful attitude towards natural resources and involving the people more actively in environmental protection. It made wide use of the public information media and of other educational aids such as lectures and exhibitions.

34. A series of measures was being implemented in the Ukrainian SSR to ensure that natural resources were used, on the basis of the latest achievements of science and technology, to ensure the rapid development of the economy, while preventing or reducing to a minimum the undesirable consequences which must inevitably result from man's action on nature. The wide range of climatic conditions in the Ukraine meant that an extensive range of irrigation and land-improvement work was necessary. The legislation relating to quarries and geological sites required that they should be restored to a condition suitable for further use. As a result, large areas were returned to agriculture or became parks or stadiums. Considerable efforts were made to prevent the pollution of rivers, and great attention was also paid to the rational use of forest resources. Every year, two to three times as much forest land was replanted as was cut down. A general plan, involving large numbers of purifying plants, was in operation to purify the atmosphere and prevent pollution by harmful wastes from industrial enterprises. While working systematically to protect its own environment, the Government of the Ukrainian SSR also, to the extent of its capabilities, provided assistance to other countries in solving their environmental problems. Ukrainian industry sent agricultural equipment and machinery, road-building equipment, automobiles, tractors and building equipment to developing countries, thereby enabling them to make more efficient use of agricultural land and to build roads and modern settlements. Ukrainian specialists participated in the building of dams and hydro-electric power stations in Africa and Asia and in building canals and surveying water resources for the irrigation of vast desert areas.

35. Given the complexity of the problems of the environment, action taken at the national level was inadequate. A concerted effort by all interested States was required. If there was only one earth, it had only one environment. Nature ignored the boundaries dividing States; accordingly the actions or failure to act of any State which harmed its own environment would very rapidly affect the environment of other States, especially those adjacent to it. It was thus clear that co-operation on environmental problems, if it was to be effective, must be conducted on a universal basis. The exclusion of any State or group of States from such co-operation would necessarily endanger the

whole enterprise. It was therefore surprising that there were still some who refused the German Democratic Republic its rightful place in international co-operation on the environment. The map of Europe clearly showed how unrealistic that approach was. The German Democratic Republic was one of the most industrially developed States in Europe, situated in the centre of the continent and possessing a long seaboard on the Baltic Sea, and was also contiguous to several other States. Effective measures to preserve the environment in that area, such as a European monitoring system, were therefore unthinkable without its participation. The position of those delegations which used every pretext to place obstacles in the path of participation by the German Democratic Republic in such international co-operation was therefore absurd. What was even more surprising was that the draft resolution introduced by the delegation of Sweden (A/C.2/L.1227), a State which also bordered on the Baltic Sea and was well acquainted with its problems, disregarded the question of such participation by the German Democratic Republic. The position of those who opposed participation by the German Democratic Republic could scarcely be termed objective. It was difficult to reach any other conclusion than that they were opposed to an effective solution to the problems of the environment. His delegation therefore appealed to them again to abandon their unjust position.

36. In conclusion, his delegation stressed the complexity of environmental problems. They could not be reduced simply to problems created by technological progress. They were also the result of decades of social injustice and inequality between the working class, the real creators of all material and cultural values, and the parasitic magnates who usurped the fruits of their labour. The environment consisted not merely of contaminated water and air but also of the poverty of millions of workers, uncultivated lands in areas where the workers had insufficient food, and many other things. The United Nations had only begun to consider those problems. The way that lay ahead was long and, in view of the vast scale and complexity of the problems, mutually acceptable solutions were essential and they were possible only if the interests of all countries were taken into account. The United Nations was called upon to play to the fullest extent its role as a centre for the concerted effort of all States. Success would not be achieved through attempts to disregard the interests of individual States or to impose decisions favourable to any one group or State. In short, the principle of universality must be applied to a subject which was of such universal interest as the human environment.

37. Mr. SCOTT (New Zealand) said that his delegation was satisfied with the results of the Conference, which had demonstrated how much could be achieved on the basis of proper preparatory work accompanied by the political will to take hard decisions on issues of global concern. It was disappointing that an important group of countries had decided not to participate in the Conference, and his delegation hoped that they would accept that its decisions had been taken not for political or sectoral reasons but for the general good

of all mankind. He therefore particularly welcomed the comments by the representative of the Ukrainian SSR on the need for international co-operation to preserve and protect the environment.

38. Perhaps the most significant result of the Conference had been the adoption of the Action Plan. Its recommendations could be classified in three sections: first, a global assessment programme to identify and measure environmental problems of international importance and to warn against impending crises; secondly, environmental management activities to preserve and protect the environment and prevent its further degradation and destruction; and, thirdly, supporting measures such as education and training, public information and organization and financing arrangements. His delegation supported that programme.

39. The most difficult task at Stockholm had been that of drawing up the Declaration. The text was a finely balanced one based on a number of political compromises. His delegation found some aspects of it less than ideal, for example the failure in principle 26 to condemn sufficiently strongly the damage to the environment caused by nuclear weapons tests. Nevertheless, his delegation regarded the approval of the Declaration as a major achievement, and would resist vigorously attempts to upset its delicate balance.

40. His delegation had not supported all the resolutions adopted by the Conference. It had, however, particularly welcomed resolution 3 (I) (see A/CONF.48/14 and Corr.1, chap. IV), condemning nuclear weapons tests, especially those carried out in the atmosphere, and calling upon States intending to carry out such tests to abandon their plans in view of the danger of further contamination of the environment. It was deeply regrettable that a series of nuclear tests in the atmosphere had been conducted on a Pacific island shortly after the adoption of that resolution. His delegation had also supported resolution 1 (I) (*ibid.*, chap. III), on institutional and financial arrangements, and was a sponsor of the resulting draft resolution (A/C.2/L.1228). It had accordingly listened with great attention to those speakers who had claimed that the draft resolution would weaken the role of the Economic and Social Council. New Zealand had always championed the role of the Council and made every effort to strengthen it; his delegation was satisfied that the draft resolution would not have the effect that was feared, and would continue to work to ensure that it was not interpreted in a way that would derogate from the Council's position. It also supported the establishment of the proposed Environment Fund; his Government was prepared to contribute \$320,000 to the Fund for the initial five-year period, and looked forward to taking an active part in the deliberations of the Governing Council. The larger part of the Fund's resources should be used for programme purposes; environmental issues were not solely the concern of rich countries, and his delegation hoped that the Fund would be widely supported by both developed and developing countries.

41. On the proposed site for the environment secretariat, his Government would be guided by the need

for ready access to many of the specialized agencies concerned with environmental issues, for a site where most States already had representation and for the ability to utilize existing United Nations facilities to a large extent. Those considerations indicated Geneva, or alternatively New York.

42. His delegation supported draft resolution A/C.2/L.1229/Rev.1, with the exception of operative paragraph 4 which designated 5 June as "World Environment Day". His Government maintained the view it had expressed at Stockholm that to designate a specific date was not the best approach, since it might conflict with other days of national importance. In New Zealand, 5 June fell in the depth of winter, at a time when it would be difficult to undertake the kind of activities envisaged by the Conference. It would therefore be better for Governments themselves to select a suitable date during the year for the commemoration.

43. His delegation had welcomed the efforts made by the Governments of Brazil and Argentina to secure an understanding of principle 20 of the Declaration and would be pleased when the difference of opinion concerning that principle had been resolved. However, it feared that, in interpreting principle 20, the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.2/L.1227 had severely weakened principles 21 and 22. The resolution in fact called into question the totality of the very delicately balanced package negotiated at Stockholm. Operative paragraphs 1 and 2 used the terms "significant harmful effects" and "significant harm", whereas principle 21 states quite clearly that States had a responsibility to ensure that their activities did not cause damage to the environment of other States. The wording used in the draft resolution was less clear, and would give rise to an endless process of interpretation and clarification about what was harmful and what was significant. His delegation would therefore appreciate a clear statement from the sponsors that their phraseology in no way modified or weakened the equivalent term in principle 21. A further difficulty with the draft resolution was the clear implication in operative paragraph 2 that co-operation between States, particularly that proposed by principles 21 and 22, would be effectively achieved if States merely exchanged information about their activities which might cause pollution. Such inaccurate drafting risked rendering the efforts which had gone into preparing the Declaration, in particular principles 21 and 22, virtually useless. The Declaration called quite clearly for States, when legitimately exploiting their own natural resources, to exercise responsibility so as to ensure that they did not cause damage to the environment of other States. They were also requested to co-operate to develop international law regarding liability and compensation for the victims of pollution and other environmental damage caused outside their borders. Those were serious responsibilities, going to the heart of international co-operation, and could not be discharged merely by the exchange of information. The draft resolution did not refer only to regional problems but affected the responsibilities of all States as provided for by the Declaration. It accordingly upset the balance of the Declaration and called its provisions into question. His delegation sup-

ported the Canadian amendments (A/C.2/L.1233) which were intended to do nothing more than to leave principles 21 and 22 of the Declaration intact.

44. Mr. CHANG HSIEN-WU (China) said that his delegation considered the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment to have been important. The representatives of many developing countries had strongly condemned imperialism for its policies of aggression and war and its crime of destroying the human environment and had advanced a number of reasonable proposals for the preservation and improvement of the environment. The Declaration on the Human Environment was a marked improvement on the original draft and reflected some of the reasonable demands and legitimate aspirations of the developing countries. Some parts of it, however, were not comprehensive and his delegation still had reservations with regard to some of the principles it embodied.

45. At the Conference his delegation had made clear its views on the exclusion of the German Democratic Republic and it wished to reiterate its regret that that country had not been invited to the Conference.

46. The environment in many parts of the world was subjected to contamination and damage and in some areas had become a serious social problem. The peoples of the world urgently desired to preserve and improve the environment. As capitalism had developed into imperialism, monopoly capitalist groups, with a view to making huge profits, wilfully discharged harmful substances in disregard of the safety of the local population, thus polluting the human environment. That was the main cause of pollution in some areas, while in others it was the politics of plunder, aggression and war pursued by the super-Powers which had caused direct and serious damage to the environment. His delegation resolutely supported the peoples of the world in their just struggle against those policies and in their just demand for the preservation of the human environment.

47. Industrial development might cause environmental pollution, and efforts should be made to overcome the problem; but social progress and scientific and technological development created favourable conditions for improving the environment. To ignore the root causes of environmental pollution and impute it to industrial development itself, or to population growth alone, would prevent the correct conclusions being drawn and might even create a pessimistic attitude with regard to the prospects of the human environment.

48. His delegation agreed that the environmental problems facing the developing countries were different in nature from those of the developed countries. It was opposed to certain great Powers practising control and plunder on the pretext of improving the environment, to certain Powers hindering the development of the national economies of developing countries on the same pretext, and to shifting the cost of environmental protection onto the developing countries in the guise of international trade. The urgent task facing the

developing countries was to do away with control and plunder by imperialism, colonialism and neo-colonialism, develop their national economies independently and build up modern industry and modern agriculture in order to achieve economic independence and consolidate their political independence. In that context, it was not only necessary but possible to take positive steps to solve environmental problems. That was fundamentally different from the situation in which a few highly developed countries were affected by serious environmental pollution and had even damaged other countries and harmed the environment of the world as a whole. The contradictions between development and environment could be resolved only in the course of development, not by stagnation or retrogression.

49. Mankind was constantly advancing and economic conditions and science and technology were continuously improving. If the people were fully involved in improving the environment and if the measures adopted were suitable for local conditions, pollution could be overcome without development being abandoned. The attempt to solve the problem of pollution by suspending economic development in the developing countries was contrary to the laws governing social development and was doomed to failure.

50. In China the Government was working to prevent and eliminate industrial pollution and to protect and improve the environment on the basis of over-all planning, rational deployment, multiple use of materials, turning harmful substances to profitable use, and mass participation. If the people were masters of their own country and their Government genuinely served them, the environmental problems arising from industrial development could be solved. China's standards of science and technology were not yet high and it lacked experience in the preservation of the human environment. There was much for it to do and it must learn from the advanced experience of other countries in the improvement of the environment.

51. His delegation agreed that the proposed environment secretariat must be competently administered and highly efficient. The specialized agencies of the United Nations were over-concentrated in the United States and Europe, and adequate consideration was not given to the needs of the developing countries and the regions of Asia, Africa and Latin America. His delegation therefore supported the view that the environment secretariat should be established in a developing country in one of those three continents. A number of such countries, including Kenya, had offered their countries as the site (see A/8783/Add.1). Positive consideration should be given to those offers and there should be extensive consultations to decide the matter.

52. The international preservation of the human environment affected relations among States. All international agreements and actions relating to environmental preservation must strictly respect the sovereign rights of States. With that prerequisite, the problems existing among States should and could be solved reasonably through consultations on an equal footing and in a spirit of respect for each other's interests.

53. Mr. MOHAMMED (Trinidad and Tobago) said that his delegation was unable to accord the decisions and recommendations adopted at the Conference its unqualified support. Unfortunately, the imperfections, gaps and shortcomings of the negotiated settlement reached there all worked to the detriment of the developing countries. The very definition and conceptual approach to problems of the human environment as evolved at the Conference were inadequate. The emphasis had been on the despoliation caused by consumption patterns in the industrially advanced countries and, although preventive measures were envisaged and some operations might be carried out in a developing country, in the last analysis it would be discovered that such action had been taken to further an objective elsewhere.

54. Poverty and under-development were intrinsic elements of the problem of the human environment. The squalor characteristic of human settlements and urbanization in developing countries not only constituted pollution of the physical environment but also struck at the human personality and the country's social, cultural and political fabric. The racism that was so rampant in the world and received the silent and active support of several advanced countries was another type of despoliation of the human personality.

55. His delegation would accept that from an operational standpoint the general attack on poverty and under-development might be more effective if conducted as a separate exercise. The record in that respect, however, was shameful, to say the least; it was clouded with empty promises, hypocrisy and a distinct lack of political will on the part of the developed countries. His delegation was becoming increasingly concerned that development would be put aside and the human environment as conceived by the industrially advanced countries would become the primary area of international activity. A transfer of resources from development to environmental protection could be expected; not only would that mean a slower growth in the financial resources of UNDP, as compared to those allocated for environmental protection, but the changing requirements for and uses of raw materials, the inadequacy of simpler technologies to produce a so-called clean and adequate product and the higher cost of capital equipment, since research costs would be passed on, would perpetuate the present oligarchic structure of international trade. While some existing crude forms of non-tariff barriers would be removed in an ostensible demonstration of willingness to increase the trade of the developing countries, their places would certainly be taken by a changed demand and supply pattern that would leave those countries more disadvantaged and impoverished. In fact, the whole purport of the Conference was the physical and economic improvement of the industrially advanced countries through the techniques known to and developed by them.

56. In agreeing, however reluctantly, to the recommendations of the Conference, his delegation trusted that both in the environment secretariat and in the Governing Council a sincere effort would be directed to the problems of the developing countries.

57. Turning to the draft resolutions before the Committee, he said that draft resolution A/C.2/L.1227, of which his delegation was a sponsor, represented a delicate balance of principles, action and interests which should not be upset. His delegation would support draft resolutions A/C.2/L.1228 and A/C.2/L.1229/Rev.1. As it considered the problem of human settlements to be an integral part of the problem of the human environment, it would support any move to direct practical attention to the matter and it hoped that the sponsors of draft resolutions A/C.2/L.1230 and A/C.2/L.1231 would manage to amalgamate them. Draft resolution A/C.2/L.1234 was relevant and important, despite its apparent elusiveness. In its concern about the trade prospects of the developing countries, his delegation considered it imperative that early and simultaneous action should be taken on science and technology in the developing countries, as was the intention of that draft resolution.

58. His delegation considered that the proposed environment secretariat should be established in a developing country. No capital cities outside the United States or Western Europe would ever be selected as headquarters for United Nations bodies if the argument that the basis for selection was the availability of collateral and subsidiary United Nations facilities was accepted. The advantages offered by Nairobi and New Delhi, for example, more than offset those of New York or Geneva.

59. Mr. OKELLO (Uganda) announced that his country was withdrawing its offer to accommodate the proposed environment secretariat in favour of Kenya. In any event, his delegation would support the majority decision on the matter.

60. The United Nations faced a serious test of confidence in its ability to come to grips with the issues of the contemporary world, which was characterized by social unrest, political powerlessness and a feeling of despair. At times the Organization appeared to skirt problems rather than meet them head-on. At the Stockholm Conference, however, the United Nations had resolutely tackled one of the most serious problems of the day. The next, and most difficult, task was to translate the vision and spirit of Stockholm into the reality of governmental action.

61. There was a danger that the positive results of the Conference might in the long run benefit rich nations more than poor ones, for the link between the concept of environmental hazards on the one hand, and that of poverty, ignorance and under-development on the other, was much too weak. Principle 9 of the Declaration on the Human Environment merely recognized the cause-effect relationship between "environmental deficiencies" and "the conditions of under-development" and offered the same familiar general solution to that aspect of the problem.

62. It was important not to lose sight of the fact that to most people, in developed and developing countries alike, the problems of the human environment were more easily associated with the effects of advanced

technology and industrialization than they were with those of indigence and backwardness. That was illustrated by the highly successful response to the call to establish a special Environment Fund, whereas the idea of a special fund for the least developed countries, or a revolving fund, was repugnant to many delegations. The proposed Environment Fund should be used also to meet the existing particular requirements of the least developed countries in the area of environmental preservation. The environmental problems that arose from under-development were just as serious as those generated by technological progress in advanced societies. It was therefore understandable that his delegation would prefer the site of the environment secretariat to be in a developing country.

63. Although his delegation supported draft resolution A/C.2/L.1228, it would have preferred to see a specific reference to the problems of the least developed countries in operative paragraph 9, which dealt with the uses of the Environment Fund.

64. Draft resolution A/C.2/L.1229/Rev.1 was straightforward and operative paragraph 4 was particularly relevant. His delegation also endorsed draft resolutions A/C.2/L.1227 and A/C.2/L.1231.

65. Mr. AL-MAAMIRY (Oman) welcomed the fact that the United Nations was dealing with the human environment as a separate issue and that the international community had achieved a general consensus that concerted action at the international level was required. The remarkably successful Stockholm Conference had focused on the need for united action and had opened up a new and challenging realm of human endeavour. He paid a tribute to the Government of Sweden and to the Secretary-General of the Conference and expressed the hope that the Conference recommendations would be implemented and that the spirit of Stockholm would be maintained.

66. The Conference represented the first step on a difficult course. If the international community persevered and avoided political and other extraneous elements, it would achieve the objectives of the recommendations of the Conference, which his Government fully supported.

67. His country was particularly concerned about the pollution and erosion of its marine environment, for the seas and oceans which washed its shores were a mainstay of its economic and social life. His Government looked forward to participating with all Governments to prevent the pollution of the seas by oil.

68. The Government and people of Oman were deeply involved in far-reaching development programmes which had already achieved remarkable progress. His Government looked forward to assistance from the United Nations and the specialized agencies, particularly with respect to public housing, sanitation and water supply, and would co-operate to the extent its limited means allowed in all international programmes to preserve the human environment. His delegation welcomed the announcement by some rep-

resentatives of initial contributions by their Governments towards the implementation of the recommendations of the Stockholm Conference. It was his Government's earnest hope that with such a promising beginning, efforts to preserve the human environment would be crowned with success.

Organization of the Committee's work

69. The CHAIRMAN said that, although there appeared to be a consensus in the Committee in favour of draft resolutions A/C.2/L.1228 and A/C.2/L.1229/Rev.1, some delegations still had difficulties, particularly with respect to operative paragraph 1 of draft resolution A/C.2/L.1228. If those problems could be solved before the morning meeting on 27 October, the Committee might wish to take a decision at that time on those draft resolutions, as also on draft resolution A/C.2/L.1227 and the amendments in document A/C.2/L.1233. He announced that there had been an official request for a paragraph-by-paragraph vote on draft resolution A/C.2/L.1227.

70. If a consensus on the remaining draft resolutions could not be reached in informal discussions prior to that meeting, the Committee might wish to allow time for further negotiations and defer consideration of them until the week of 6 November.

71. The Committee had a number of options regarding its decision on the site of the headquarters of the proposed environment secretariat. The major precedent for site selection was the procedure followed at the twenty-first session of the General Assembly to determine the site of UNIDO headquarters, when the various sites proposed had been eliminated in a series of successive ballots until one had obtained an absolute majority of votes. If the Committee wished, he could provide further details.

72. Mr. LISOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) cautioned the Committee against acting hastily. Many substantive comments had been made in the debate, which would not be concluded until the following afternoon's meeting, and many complex draft resolutions were before the Committee. Delegations required more time to consult their Governments and formulate their final position on the draft resolutions.

73. Mr. AL-EBRAHIM (Kuwait) said that more time was needed for consultations on the draft resolutions, particularly on that in document A/C.2/L.1228. The Committee should postpone consideration of that draft resolution until 30 October.

74. Mr. McCARTHY (United Kingdom) said that there was merit both in dealing expeditiously with the draft resolutions on which a consensus could be reached and in allowing further time for consideration of those which could not be dealt with in that manner. The Committee should assess the situation again at the morning meeting on 27 October.

75. Mr. KARUNATILLEKE (Sri Lanka) felt that the Committee should decide at the current meeting

to allow sufficient time for consultations with Governments and for group meetings.

76. Mr. ABDEL-MEGUID (Egypt) said that the Committee's work would be facilitated if it deferred consideration of the draft resolutions until 6 November to allow time for further consultations.

77. Mr. GALLARDO MORENO (Mexico) said that it was his delegation that had proposed a paragraph-by-paragraph vote on draft resolution A/C.2/L.1227 and it maintained that proposal.

78. It had no rigid ideas about the course to be followed in order to allow time for consultations.

79. Mrs. THORSSON (Sweden) agreed that further consultations on some of the draft resolutions might be required, but there had been ample time for consideration of draft resolutions A/C.2/L.1227, A/C.2/L.1228 and A/C.2/L.1229/Rev.1; moreover, the institutional and financial arrangements would have to be referred to the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions and to the Fifth Committee. Her delegation therefore agreed with the United Kingdom representative that the Committee should take stock of the situation again at the morning meeting on 27 October, when it would probably be clear that the time was ripe to take a decision on those two draft resolutions.

80. Mr. DE AZEVEDO BRITO (Brazil) said that, while he understood the concern expressed by the Soviet representative, he agreed that the Committee should be able to decide on 27 October what course to follow. It would facilitate its own work and that of other bodies if it took a decision at least on draft resolutions A/C.2/L.1227, A/C.2/L.1228 and A/C.2/L.1229/Rev.1 at that time.

81. Mr. AJANOVIĆ (Yugoslavia) said that the Committee should have several more days to consider the draft resolutions.

82. Mr. ZAGORIN (United States of America) supported the remarks of the Swedish and Brazilian representatives. Draft resolutions A/C.2/L.1227, A/C.2/L.1228 and A/C.2/L.1229/Rev.1 were basic resolutions which consolidated the excellent work accomplished at Stockholm and there had been ample time to consider their substance. The Committee should take action on those draft resolutions on 27 October in order to facilitate future international co-operation in the field of environment and to enable the Fifth Committee to consider the institutional arrangements.

83. Mr. ARNAUD (Argentina) said that it would be better to defer consideration of the draft resolutions for a few days.

84. The CHAIRMAN said that he recognized the need for time to deliberate and consult on new draft resolutions, but 27 October was allocated for the consideration of those which had been before the Committee for some time, namely draft resolutions A/C.2/L.1227, A/C.2/L.1228, A/C.2/L.1229/Rev.1 and A/C.2/L.1232, and the Committee could take a decision on the matter at the end of its afternoon meeting on 26 October.

85. Mr. LISOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that it was his impression that most delegations which had spoken were clearly not in favour of reconsidering the question of dealing with the draft resolutions the following day.

86. The CHAIRMAN said that after additional deliberation and consultation the Committee might wish to postpone consideration of all the draft resolutions. Since, however, two meetings had been allocated for the consideration of draft resolutions, the Committee could take a decision on the matter the following day.

The meeting rose at 5.30 p.m.