



SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 16th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. OUDOVENKO (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 86: SPECIAL PROGRAMMES OF ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE: REPORTS OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (continued) (A/42/354, 359, 381, 411, 422 and Add.1-2, 442, 553)

1. Mr. N'GREGAI (Central African Republic) said that the development of the Central African Republic, which was listed among the least developed countries, was seriously hampered by structural weaknesses. After the adoption of General Assembly resolution 41/200, his Government had focused its activity on the sectors crucial to development, namely, health, education, agriculture and road infrastructure. Externally, it had increased contacts with its partners. A "round table" had been organized under UNDP auspices, and structural adjustment agreements and a development plan had been concluded with the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. The general objective of the adjustment programme was to ensure the growth of gross domestic income during the period 1987-1990, while at the same time reducing the deficit in the current operations account.

2. Despite its efforts at recovery, the Central African Republic was facing enormous obstacles, notably the collapse of the prices for its principal exports and a 23-per-cent reduction in its export earnings. If it was to put into effect its structural adjustment programme and its development plan, it would need sizeable external funding on favourable terms in the coming years and, in particular, a considerable amount of aid. The efforts which his Government had already made should spur the international community to increase its contribution. His delegation had already made an appeal to that effect during the general debate, while expressing its gratitude to the donor countries. It hoped that the Committee could again include the Central African Republic among the recipients of special economic assistance.

3. Mr. GAJENTAAN (Netherlands), referring to assistance to Lebanon, expressed the hope that the Secretariat would find a satisfactory solution that would ensure United Nations representation and improved methods of assistance co-ordination in that stricken country. Regarding special assistance to front-line States and other bordering States, the Netherlands was fully aware of the need for a generous response by the international community. Indeed, in 1986 his Government had provided bilateral development assistance equivalent to \$250 million, an increase of 30 per cent over 1985. The fact that it was maintaining that level of assistance in 1987 reflected its commitment to responding to the special needs of the countries of the region.

4. His delegation hoped that in future reports a more comprehensive - though not necessarily a longer - account could be given of assistance by the international community. It should be possible to do so by consulting the field offices of the Resident Co-ordinator and the international and regional organizations concerned, such as the Southern African Development Co-ordination Conference (SADCC), the World Bank and the European Commission. The Netherlands shared the concern regarding Mozambique and Angola expressed in report A/42/422 and joined in the appeal of the Secretary-General. At the donor meeting in Geneva the previous

(Mr. Gajentaan, Netherlands)

March, it had pledged an additional contribution of approximately \$10 million for emergency food aid. In addition, it had responded to a UNDP request for support to strengthen the public administration and management sector in Mozambique.

5. The Netherlands, together with its partners in the European Community, had a strong commitment to continue supporting the front-line States and bordering States in order to meet their emergency and development needs. In addition, it was contributing to alleviate the plight of 100,000 refugees from South Africa and Namibia, through UNHCR and other organizations, including non-governmental ones. Furthermore, its firm support for the important role played by UNDP in the round-table process, in conjunction with the consultative groups of the World Bank, was well known. The round-table process, which could be further strengthened, was an excellent tool for ensuring the needed co-ordination between African Governments, as had been recently reaffirmed by the Steering Committee of the Organization of African Unity (OAU).

6. Mr. DIECKMANN (Federal Republic of Germany) said that his Government's development assistance in southern Africa had focused on the SADCC countries. During the period 1980-1986, the Federal Republic had pledged a total of approximately \$1.2 billion for bilateral financial and technical co-operation, apart from its multilateral contributions, food aid and humanitarian assistance. In the current year, his Government would be spending more than \$20 million for various emergency assistance programmes in southern African countries, and that special emphasis on those countries would be reflected in the 1988 budget as well. On the occasion of the annual donor meeting organized by SADCC in February 1987, the Federal Republic had indicated that it was prepared to consider project proposals for an additional programme of financial co-operation in 1988. It also anticipated expanding the existing regional programmes in the field of technical co-operation. Sectorally viewed, projects in the field of transport and communications had been given considerable weight in his Government's bilateral co-operation, in keeping with the priorities set by the SADCC member States.

7. Regional co-operation, especially in the field of transport and communications which was characterized by heavy investment, could be reasonably implemented only in the medium term. The allocation of sufficient funds was certainly essential, but diverse forms of co-operation between the countries concerned and improved management methods and personnel training should also be encouraged. Viewed from that angle, the results of enhanced co-operation would become tangible only after some years. For that reason, the Federal Republic welcomed the shift of emphasis by SADCC and its member States towards production-oriented investments. It would support the Conference's efforts to encourage the creation of conditions attractive for investments.

8. Mr. TOROU (Chad) said that his country had for a number of years had to deal with the combined effects of natural disasters and the war of aggression imposed on it by the Tripoli régime. For five years, his Government had been devoting itself to promoting the recovery of the main sectors of economic activity, but also and above all to defending Chad's territorial integrity. The international community's

(Mr. Torou, Chad)

input had been decisive for the implementation of the reconstruction programme adopted in 1982; the interim development plan drawn up after the conference of donors had been held in Geneva in 1985 should create a solid basis for national economic recovery.

9. However, the situation remained precarious. The goal of food self-sufficiency would be very difficult to attain because of the uneven distribution of rainfall and invasions by predators. The country had also been hard hit by the fall in world cotton prices; the export of cotton accounted for 35 per cent of its budgetary resources. In addition, it was paying incalculable amounts owing to the war of aggression imposed on it by the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya. Like all occupying forces, the Libyans had destroyed infrastructures, pillaged livestock, set fire to the palm groves, poisoned the water points and mined paths and roads.

10. Mr. EL-ATRASH (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya), speaking on a point of order, observed that political questions did not fall within the purview of the Second Committee. The representative of Chad should restrict his remarks to economic problems.

11. The CHAIRMAN requested the representative of Chad to abide by the rules governing the Committee's deliberations.

12. Mr. TOROU (Chad), continuing his statement, said that his Government wished to express its profound gratitude to the countries and international agencies which had given it such valuable help, and, particularly, to the countries which had supported UNDP's programme for Chad in June 1987. Further assistance from outside the country would nevertheless be needed in order to develop socio-economic infrastructures, increase food resources and facilitate the resettlement of populations from the Boikou-Ennedi-Tibesti region. His Government intended to hold a UNDP-assisted round table with a view to financing a reconstruction programme in that region. It appealed to donor countries and international organizations to participate actively in the round table which would undoubtedly provide an opportunity for international solidarity to manifest itself yet again.

13. Mr. HASSAN (Djibouti) said that many previous speakers had already described the economic problems of the developing countries. The least developed countries shared all those difficulties, often compounded by unfavourable climatic and geographical conditions. Djibouti's problem was well described in the report of the Secretary-General (A/42/442). The country was poorly endowed with natural resources; its population was largely concentrated in the port city of Djibouti, there was a chronic balance-of-payments deficit, industrial and agricultural activities were virtually non-existent and water resources inadequate. Moreover, Djibouti depended on external financial aid and was obliged to import almost all the consumer goods and foodstuffs it required. In addition, recurrent droughts had decimated the livestock, leading to a flow of rural populations to urban centres coupled with an influx of refugees from neighbouring areas also affected by the drought.

(Mr. Hassan, Djibouti)

14. The establishment of the Intergovernmental Authority on Drought and Development would be most welcome as it would enable members to pool their resources and know-how in order to deal jointly with the problems facing East Africa, as well as fostering mutual trust and co-operation. His country wished once again to express its appreciation to donor countries and appealed to the international community to continue to provide assistance to the Intergovernmental Authority so as to enable it to achieve its objectives.

15. His delegation considered that special programmes of economic assistance should be conceived as a means of assisting Governments to overcome their acute socio-economic problems for as long as the causes of those problems persisted. His country had been in the programme since its independence in 1977 because it was unable to pursue its development without external aid. The period since 1977 also coincided with the severe and recurrent droughts which had ravaged sub-Saharan Africa. The arrival of the rains after the latest drought, that of 1984-1985, had hardly brought relief because livestock, already weakened, had been decimated and crops had been devastated by locusts. The region was, moreover, threatened by yet another drought. Under those circumstances, his delegation believed that the special programme of economic assistance should be maintained.

16. Mr. ZUZE (Zambia), speaking on behalf of the front-line States, thanked all the States which, in response to General Assembly resolution 41/199, had provided assistance to the front-line States and other bordering States, as well as those which assisted the implementation of Southern African Development Co-ordination Conference programmes and those which contributed directly to the AFRICA Fund. He also welcomed the role assigned by the Secretary-General to the Office for Special Political Questions and thought that the setting up of an informal inter-agency consultative group should facilitate an increase in resources provided to the countries concerned.

17. The situation in the countries of southern Africa and the front-line States had not changed for the better; as long as apartheid persisted, the future of the region would remain gloomy. The intensification of the aggressive and destabilizing acts of the racist régime of South Africa was causing many deaths and great suffering, forcing thousands to flee, especially from Mozambique and Angola. The countries of the region could not cope with the growing refugee problem. Moreover, the financial cost of destabilization was high - between \$US 25 million and \$US 30 million for the period 1980-1986 - so that scarce financial and human resources had had to be diverted to defence requirements instead of being spent on the necessities of life and economic development. In addition, the debt situation was critical for many of the countries; in particular, Mozambique, Tanzania and Zambia were faced with debt-service requirements amounting to 80 per cent of their export earnings.

18. The front-line States highly appreciated the concerted efforts of non-governmental organizations which were providing the needed assistance and hoped that they would continue and increase their aid. They wished to reiterate the appeals of the Angolan and Mozambican Governments for timely delivery survival

(Mr. Zuze, Zambia)

items to displaced persons. In conclusion, he urged the States and multilateral organizations which had made commitments to the front-line States to honour their pledges and to maintain their support, and appealed to the international community not to link its assistance to the structural adjustment programmes being undertaken by the front-line States with the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank.

19. Mr. PAYTON (New Zealand) welcomed the important role played by the United Nations system in assisting developing countries confronted by catastrophes and noted with satisfaction the efficient operation of the guidelines for those programmes set out in General Assembly resolution 41/192.

20. His delegation wished to commend Mr. Reed for his statement on the very difficult situation in Lebanon and remarked that the fact that any activities could continue in that country was a credit to the United Nations and its specialized agencies, whose efforts deserved the international community's full support.

21. No region of the world was immune from disasters, as could be seen from the list of countries forming the subject of resolutions on special economic assistance programmes. He proposed, however, to focus his remarks on two cases, that of Vanuatu and that of the Maldives. Only two months after the Assembly had adopted resolution 41/200 on assistance to Vanuatu, which since 1985 had been included among the least developed countries, a cyclone had devastated the island, substantially negating years of development effort. With the assistance of the international community, Vanuatu had responded quickly to the immediate relief needs, but the task of reconstruction was considerable. At its first regular session in 1987 the Economic and Social Council had unanimously adopted a resolution in favour of support for Vanuatu, and the donors' reaction was encouraging. Nevertheless, in view of the country's immense difficulties, his delegation would support Vanuatu's continued inclusion among the beneficiaries of special economic assistance programmes. As for the Maldives, they had been submerged several times during the year by abnormally high seas causing the destruction of much of the country's infrastructure. The Maldives needed and were receiving strong support for relief and rehabilitation efforts. His delegation was pleased to be a co-sponsor of a draft resolution to be submitted under agenda item 86 providing for a special economic assistance programme for the Maldives, and had no doubt that the proposal would receive the Committee's unanimous support.

22. Natural disasters of the kind experienced by the Maldives were far from rare. The Tokelau Islands had had a similar experience at the beginning of 1987. Other countries in the region were vulnerable to them and to other disaster situations. It was thus important to bear that reality in mind when those questions were considered, particularly when the activities of the Office of the United Nations Disaster Relief Co-ordinator were taken up under agenda item 125. The United Nations system had an important role to play.

23. With regard to the situation in the front-line States, whose seriousness was generally acknowledged, New Zealand would continue to give full support to international assistance for those States, which received the major portion of the aid it provided to Africa in a bilateral or multilateral framework.

24. Mr. CHEKAY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) pointed out that, although natural disasters did not spare any continent, it was in the least developed countries that their consequences were most acute, not so much because those countries were located in exposed areas as because they did not have the means to combat disasters and their effects. The question thus could not be viewed separately from the world economic situation and the growing economic difficulties of developing countries, particularly the least developed countries.

25. His country's analysis of the world economic situation and proposals were to be found in document A/42/354 and in the statement given by its representative during the general debate. Specifically, his country's assistance to the least developed countries had amounted to 2 billion roubles for 1986 alone, or an 82 per cent increase in five years. It served no purpose to distort those facts, as document A/42/381, for example, tried to do.

26. His delegation wished to emphasize that it was for the Governments concerned to take measures during and after the implementation of the special programmes of economic assistance, whose main purpose was to play a catalytic role for a limited time and in exceptional situations.

27. The Soviet delegation was concerned about the lobbying activity into which the Office of the United Nations Disaster Relief Co-ordinator was drawn through round-table discussions organized by the United Nations Industrial Development Organization and meetings of World Bank consultative groups, in the course of which the United Nations intergovernmental bodies were circumvented and efforts were made to formulate solutions to serious economic problems and, subsequently, to impose them on Governments. Under the pretext of strengthening "co-ordination", the Western countries were trying to take in hand the economies of young States, to create a favourable environment for investment by transnational corporations and to limit the role of the public sector and, in general, of the Governments of the recipient countries. Some sought to endow the Office with the duties of an executing agency, to the detriment of its co-ordination role, which was contrary to its mandate and led to overlapping with the activities of other organizations of the system.

28. It should be pointed out once again that, pursuant to General Assembly resolution 36/225, the inter-secretariat consultation mechanism on the question of disaster assistance should only operate on an ad hoc basis and at the request of the Governments concerned, and that it could not replace intergovernmental bodies. It was clear to the USSR that such aid must be provided exclusively at the request of the Governments of the affected countries, on the basis of utmost respect for their sovereign rights, and must not provide a pretext for interference.

29. However, international aid would not make it possible to overcome the consequences of disasters and economic difficulties in general as long as the Western States' neo-colonialist policy towards the third world continued. In fact, the special economic assistance provided by the United Nations to the front-line States and Lebanon could not offset the several billion dollars' worth of damage caused by South Africa and Israel in those countries. His delegation thus fully

(Mr. Chekay, USSR)

supported the just demands of the peoples victims of the racist policies of the South African régime and the Israeli aggressors, who demanded not only an end to the acts of aggression but also reparations.

30. Mr. LEWIS (Canada) welcomed the major role played by the United Nations system in emergency assistance to Lebanon, for which Canada would contribute \$1 million in 1987. Moreover, he fully agreed with the comments of New Zealand, which had rightly called attention to the difficulties of the Maldives.

31. The front-line States required assistance for three basic reasons: firstly, theirs were vulnerable developing economies; secondly, they were confronting critical problems peculiar to sub-Saharan Africa; lastly, they were exposed to the continuous and heinous destabilization activities of South Africa. Over the next five years Canada would pay them approximately \$1 billion on a bilateral basis. Since debt-servicing was not only a hindrance to the reconstruction of those countries but also a destructive factor for their economies, Canada had, moreover, recently announced the cancellation of some \$134 million in debts as part of its official development assistance to the Commonwealth countries in sub-Saharan Africa. Its activities within the framework of the Southern Africa Development Co-ordination Conference (SADCC) mainly concern 1 transport, telecommunications and energy, which were the sectors most vulnerable to the depredation of South Africa. As part of country-to-country special assistance programmes for 1987, Canada had decided to contribute an additional \$15 million to the food assistance budget for Mozambique and to double its contribution for food assistance to Zambia.

32. The Conference of Commonwealth Countries, just held in Vancouver had devoted a large part of its debates to the situation of the front-line States. It had been recognized there that, whatever the donor countries had managed to do individually to date, the aid provided was far from sufficient. The Commonwealth countries had been unanimous in their belief that it was urgently necessary to increase assistance to the front-line States and to encourage the international community to do so, in order to help them, given South Africa's systematic destabilization policy, to reduce their economic dependence on that country and to resist aggression. They had thus decided to implement a strengthened, supplementary co-ordinated assistance programme, in accordance with the objectives of SADCC and various aid organizations in the region, particularly the Africa Fund. The programme would focus on the front-line States and the bordering States and on such key sectors as transport and communications. As Mozambique was in a geographically decisive position, the Commonwealth countries had decided to set up an ad hoc fund to provide technical assistance to that country. Moreover, they had recognized that it was indispensable to address fundamental causes, including extreme poverty, underdevelopment and destabilization. In that regard, he regretted that the question of sanctions had not met with unanimous approval in Vancouver. Whereas 47 countries had been determined to strengthen sanctions, the United Kingdom had challenged their indispensable nature.

33. He appreciated the considerable work done by the United Nations system in the region.

34. Mr. KIBADI (Uganda) thanked the representative of UNDP, the Under-Secretary-General for Special Political Affairs and the Co-ordinator of Special Economic Assistance programmes for their presentation of the Secretary-General's report on special programmes of economic assistance (A/42/442), and said that his country would have liked more information on the resources mobilized for Uganda pursuant to resolution 41/195.

35. While recognizing that such programmes had initially been conceived to provide short-term assistance, his delegation nevertheless considered that in view of the acute problems faced, such an approach should be applied flexibly and should take account of the gravity of the problems. It was to be hoped that UNDP, to which the administration of the special economic assistance programmes had been transferred and with which Uganda had enjoyed a fruitful relationship for many years, would arrange without delay a round-table meeting for granting emergency relief.

36. Recognizing that the economic recovery of the country would primarily depend on the effort of the Ugandan people themselves and that external assistance could only supplement that effort, his Government had put into place the Rehabilitation and Development Plan 1987-1991 with the aim of building an independent, integrated and self-sustaining economy. The Plan placed emphasis on a full utilization of existing productive capacities, the rehabilitation and maintenance of transport infrastructure, the enhancement of the electric power system, the rehabilitation of social infrastructure and the improvement of public administration. In order to combat inflation and encourage domestic saving and investment, the public authorities, in close consultation with the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, had put various fiscal and monetary policies into effect.

37. The international community had reacted favourably to the Rehabilitation and Development Plan, as shown by the pledges made in Paris and Kampala, and it could rest assured that his Government would continue to live up to its responsibilities and take effective measures to rebuild the Ugandan economy.

38. Mr. VILCHEZ (Nicaragua) said that Nicaragua had first asked the international community for special economic assistance at the thirty-fourth session of the General Assembly so as to meet the enormous economic problems created by the war against the Somozan dictatorship. Eight years later, the economic situation had worsened further because of the international economic situation and the war of destabilization: in 1986, the drop in the prices of exports and the growth in the external debt, combined with the low level of foreign exchange reserves, had led to a decline of 0.4 per cent in the gross domestic product. The economic programme for 1987, which called for a 45 per cent increase in exports, sought to maximize production while taking into account the resources available and the priorities set, so as to achieve a new minimum of economic activity and maintain investments. But lower coffee prices and the large trade deficit would certainly affect the implementation of that programme.

39. Fluctuations in the international economic situation and the policy of destabilization conducted by certain powerful countries had put Nicaragua in a critical situation and were forcing it, albeit reluctantly, to appeal to the international community in order to overcome, at least partially, the existing

(Mr. Vilchez, Nicaragua)

problems. Nicaragua was very grateful to the Governments and to the bodies within the United Nations system that had already provided it with material, financial and technical assistance, but the gravity and magnitude of the problems were such that, like the other countries of Central America, it was currently more than ever in need of aid from the international community in order to advance the peace process in the region.

40. Mr. EL-ATRASH (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) expressed the hope that the work of the Committee would yield tangible results and would permit the suffering of Lebanon to be alleviated and the economies of the front-line African States and other developing countries in the region to be reinforced. It was important to continue the efforts being made by the Secretary-General to solve those problems. The international community must continue to help Lebanon and to support the front-line African States so that they could resist the aggression of racist South Africa, from which they were sustaining substantial economic losses. The best way to save the front-line States from South African hegemony and oppression was to prepare a regional economic development and co-operation strategy to enable them to exploit their own resources and find new markets for their products. Only then would they be able to put a rapid end to their dependency on racist South Africa. His Government was convinced that the creation of the Southern Africa Development Co-ordinating Conference (SADCC) was a constructive measure. However, if the work of that organization was to be crowned by success, the international community and the United Nations must provide sustained material and financial support. The international community must also help strengthen the individual and collective capacity of the front-line and other States in the region.

41. As an African country, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya had unceasingly transformed its solidarity with those States into concrete acts and co-operated with them in all fields. In particular, it had contributed \$10 million to the AFRICA Fund of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, in addition to other grants made bilaterally to most of those countries. Within the limits of its modest means and despite the economic difficulties that it currently was experiencing, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya had, in the framework of South-South co-operation, spared no effort in contributing effectively to the implementation of the economic assistance programme for Africa, both through international, regional and inter-regional financing bodies and through its own financial institutions. As part of its bilateral co-operation, it had attempted to assist African countries to free themselves from the control of multinational corporations, which wanted the African continent to remain a reservoir of raw materials and a source of sure profits for foreign monopolies. Over the past few years, his Government had contributed more than \$1 billion to those countries, or about 48 per cent of all its spending on economic co-operation abroad. By so doing, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya hoped to attenuate the ills and problems afflicting the African region.

42. Mr. TANIGUCHI (Japan) said that although the financial, economic and technical support provided by Member States and the specialized agencies and other organizations of the United Nations system had helped to eliminate a number of problems, many countries continued to face grave economic and financial

(Mr. Taniguchi, Japan)

difficulties, certain of which were due to an economic environment and various ecological factors over which they had no control. But the international community should not become resigned to such difficulties. There could be no prosperity for any country without world prosperity, and Japan accordingly was making every effort to revitalize the world economy and provide assistance to developing countries. With regard to the latter, Japan would advance by at least two years the original target in its third medium-term expansion programme, and official development assistance would amount to \$7.6 billion by 1990. That programme was to be undertaken together with the \$20 billion recycling programme announced earlier and a grant to sub-Saharan Africa and other least developed countries amounting to approximately \$500 million over the next three years.

43. With special reference to the operation of the United Nations system, it was necessary to enhance the efficiency of the special programme of economic assistance by limiting them as recommended by the Secretary-General, to countries genuinely in need of them and to countries subject to special circumstances falling outside the regular programmes of the United Nations system.

44. Out of concern for the economic difficulties of the African countries, especially the front-line States, owing to the deteriorating situation inside South Africa as well as Pretoria's harassment, Japan was stepping up its assistance to those countries, as indicated in document A/42/422. It was considering increasing its economic co-operation with those States as well as with other developing countries.

45. Mr. CHAN (Malaysia) said that on the few occasions when Malaysia had experienced emergency situations, it had been able to manage from its own resources. Other countries had not been so fortunate; that was why it believed in the value of special programmes of economic assistance as attested by their continually growing number. Although intended primarily to provide short-term assistance, they not only played an important catalytic role, but were often the only means of ensuring the necessary reconstruction and rehabilitation following natural disasters. Malaysia was aware of the criticisms directed at their functioning and therefore welcomed the Secretary-General's decision to assign their administration to UNDP.

46. Most of the countries which had appealed for international assistance in the past had been from the African continent and many of the countries which benefited from the special programmes had been classified as least developed countries. That meant that their economies were both extremely fragile and highly vulnerable to external factors and that, in order to overcome disasters and strengthen their infrastructure, they also needed sustained, long-term assistance from the international community. Natural disasters also occurred elsewhere, especially in America and, closer to Malaysia, Vanuatu and the Maldives. The Maldives, devastated by tidal swells three times since the beginning of the year, had submitted a draft resolution seeking special assistance, which his delegation would sponsor.

(Mr. Chan, Malaysia)

47. Although a small developing country, Malaysia had responded to urgent appeals in the past, primarily through bilateral channels and the efforts of the Malaysian Red Crescent, and would continue to do so within its capabilities. It would also continue to participate in United Nations efforts better to identify and co-ordinate the development assistance required.

48. Mr. GHONDA (Zaire) said that the various reports of the Secretary-General (A/42/553, A/42/422 and Add.1 and A/42/442) contained all the information needed for acting promptly and practically in order to come to the aid of millions of people whose life and future were threatened. The special programmes of economic assistance were generally intended to help the countries whose economies were so fragile that they could not be directed towards tackling situations which seriously threatened their development efforts, and his delegation welcomed the decision to assign to UNDP the responsibility for administering those programmes. However, if UNDP was to succeed in its task, the international community must be prepared to mobilize adequate financial resources.

49. Mr. OMOTOSO (United Nations Development Programme) said that UNDP would be guided in its work by the comments just made by Member States. In reply to the question from the representative of Uganda concerning the level of resources mobilized for executing the Economic Recovery Programme in that country, he referred him to paragraph 198 of document A/42/442 and pointed out that, according to the delegations present at the meeting of the Consultative Group for Uganda, held in Paris in June 1987, commitments for 1987 would exceed the recommended target of \$250 million. In addition, the commitments were said to have reached \$400 million at the meeting of the Afro-Arab consultative group held at Kampala.

50. The CHAIRMAN said that nothing remained for the Committee to do but adopt the draft resolutions before closing the debate on agenda item 86 and appealed for their number to be kept to a minimum, as had been done at the fortieth and forty-first sessions.

AGENDA ITEM 12: REPORT OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL (A/42/3, 137, 138, 176, 227, 232, 272, 288, 289 and Add.1-2, 302, 310, 314, 335, 337, 341, 354, 359, 381, 386, 402, 559; A/C.2/42/4, A/C.2/42/L.4).

51. Mr. MARK (Denmark) speaking on behalf of the States members of the European Economic Community (EEC), said that for a number of years the Economic and Social Council had encountered persistent difficulties which prevented it from effectively discussing international economic issues and discharging its monitoring and co-ordination responsibilities. The efforts to reform and revitalize it made throughout its history clearly indicated general dissatisfaction with its performance. It had been criticized for its over-crowded agendas, unfocused discussions, which duplicated the work of the General Assembly, UNCTAD and other United Nations bodies plus a vast subsidiary machinery. Moreover, the lack of sufficient prestige for ensuring compliance with its decisions had meant that its attempts to achieve greater co-ordination within the United Nations system had been unsuccessful.

(Mr. Mark, Denmark)

52. Those problems had again been noted at the Council's second regular session in July 1987. The discussion (both the general debate and in the Co-ordination Committee) had been long-winded, despite the Chairman's efforts to cluster certain agenda items. Moreover, the resumed second regular session of the Council had been largely procedural, mainly because it had taken place at the same time as meetings of the Second Committee.

53. Corrective measures were thus clearly necessary. EEC welcomed the increased attention being paid to improving the Council's performance. The Secretary-General's report on co-ordination in the United Nations and the United Nations system (A/42/232) contained many practical proposals for overcoming the problems besetting the Council by rationalizing its working procedures and improving its co-ordination function, and EEC supported the general thrust of them all. The role and functioning of the Council was also being scrutinized in the Special Commission on the In-depth Study of the United Nations Intergovernmental Structure and Functions in the Economic and Social Fields, which had indicated that there was a considerable commonality of views in the identification of current problems. Concrete proposals for reform, which should form a fruitful basis for further deliberations, had been submitted to the Commission, in particular by the Group of 77 and EEC. Only pragmatic steps for increasing efficiency would rebuild trust in the Council. The Special Commission was still in the exploratory phase of its work and ideas must be allowed to mature. Meanwhile, as stipulated in its programme of work, it should examine the subsidiary machinery of the Council closely with a view to determining where duplication of efforts occurred and where streamlining would be in order, so that a clearer picture of the situation could be obtained.

54. EEC had not been able to support resolution 1987/93 entitled "Net transfer of resources from developing to developed countries", because the concept of the net transfer of resources had lent itself to a variety of interpretations and involved highly complex economic and financial issues. It was not by aggregating some resource flows between developing and developed countries and ignoring others that their net effect would be realistically assessed. Indeed, since each country faced a very individual set of circumstances, EEC was convinced that reliable conclusions could not be reached by aggregating those flows on a global level. It was regrettable that, owing to time constraints, it had not proved possible to agree on a better conceptual framework but EEC was ready to engage constructively in deliberations on that question.

55. EEC also regretted not having been able to support resolution 1987/90 entitled "Food and agricultural problems", especially since there was a long-standing tradition for adopting resolutions on that issue by consensus and informal consultations had shown that there was a genuine willingness on the part of all parties. However, important matters of principle were involved. In particular it was risky to include, in resolutions on food and agriculture, loosely correlated issues which were rightly within the purview of other bodies, because that stood in the way of the desired consensus. Also, in the view of EEC, certain paragraphs of resolution 1987/86 conveyed a somewhat distorted picture of the origins of the current problems faced in the food and agriculture sector.

56. Mr. LAVROV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that, while virtually all countries and top officials of the Secretariat felt that the Council's role should be strengthened in developing international co-operation and co-ordinating economic and social activities within the United Nations system, there were still important differences between the Council's role, as defined in the Charter, and its actual role. It was clearly time to act in order to make the Council an effective forum for co-ordinating approaches for solving the most urgent problems of the world economy, and a forum capable of responding in full measure to the realities of the economic interdependence of all States.

57. The discussion in the Council on the Secretary-General's report on co-ordination in the United Nations and the United Nations system (A/42/232-E/1987/68) had provided the opportunity for submitting interesting proposals and was a step in the right direction. The Council should exercise the powers conferred on it by the Charter with a greater sense of purpose and on a more regular basis, especially with regard to reports from the specialized agencies, making recommendations to them, receiving reports on the implementation of those recommendations, etc. That procedure should cover all organizations of the system, including IMF and the World Bank. While IMF and the World Bank had, like the other specialized agencies, specific features, terms of reference and their own points of view, the multitude of opinions in the United Nations system could, with due co-ordination, help the world community to find balanced approaches to solving economic problems for the benefit of all States, which would contribute to the achievement of United Nations goals.

58. It was also necessary to strengthen the role of the Council in the actual co-ordination of all United Nations operational activities at the intergovernmental level, by adopting guidelines for the expansion of those activities. The Council's practical importance would also be enhanced if it were to help devise measures that would enable the Organization to respond promptly, on a regular basis, to non-military and non-political threats to international security; the Secretary-General had mentioned the need for such a response in his report on the work of the Organization. The Council's co-operation with non-governmental organizations and public movements should be more productive and the world's scientific and intellectual potential should be better used for exploring the most important social and economic problems. In that regard, the Soviet Union would actively seek to ensure that the work of the Special Commission on the In-depth Study of the United Nations Inter-Governmental Structure and Functions in the Economic and Social Fields resulted in the adoption of substantial recommendations.

59. The second regular session of the Council showed that a constructive approach to discussing critical problems of international economic relations was gradually ousting confrontation, which was an important political achievement. There was also reason for congratulation on the adoption of resolutions on co-operation in food and agriculture, science and technology, the prevention of AIDS, ways of developing human resources, eradicating illiteracy, etc. It was also encouraging that members of the Council had adopted by consensus Decision 1987/162 on the Secretary-General's report on the concept of international economic security.

(Mr. Lavrov, USSR)

Adoption of a resolution on that subject at the current session would make a significant contribution to enlarging and strengthening a basis of consensus in the economic agencies of the United Nations system. Decision 1987/57, on the earliest possible convening of the Commission on Transnational Corporations with a view to finalizing the code of conduct for transnational corporations, was also extremely important.

60. The Council had not adopted all those resolutions by consensus. The Soviet Union hoped, none the less, that the gravity of the problems dealt with in those resolutions, and their growing influence on international relations, would encourage all countries to join in the world community's effort to ensure their earliest and just solution.

61. Better use should also be made of the Committee for Development Planning (CDP). The recommendations adopted by CDP to the effect that GATT and IMF should continue more to the stabilization of international economic relations deserved consideration. CDP's activities should contribute considerably to the establishment of a system enabling economic problems to be rapidly identified so that States could take concerted action.

62. The International Conference on the Relationship Between Disarmament and Development had had the effect of stimulating interest in that issue which was receiving increasing attention from economic and social bodies and from other bodies of the United Nations system. The Economic and Social Council should try to co-ordinate the activities of the United Nations system with the aim of putting the recommendations of the Conference into practice.

The meeting rose at 6.10 p.m.