

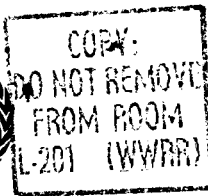
United Nations
**GENERAL
ASSEMBLY**

THIRTY-SEVENTH SESSION

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SECOND COMMITTEE
21st meeting
held on
Thursday 28 October 1982
at 10.30 a.m.
New York

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SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 21st MEETING

Chairman: Mr. FAFOWORA (Nigeria)

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Distr. GENERAL
A/C.2/37/SR.21
3 November 1982

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1. Mr. AL-HADDAD (Democratic Yemen) said that the world crisis was affecting the developing countries particularly severely, since they had to cope both with the problems inherited from the colonial era and with the capitalist countries' domination of development and international economic co-operation. UNCTAD was doing what it could to deal with the obstacles set up by capitalist interests, and the developing countries therefore attached great importance to the sixth session of UNCTAD. Preparations for that session should take place at the regional and interregional levels.
2. The developing countries themselves and the relevant organizations were endeavouring to strengthen economic and technical co-operation among developing countries in order to ensure the success of the new international economic order. His country supported the United Nations in its efforts to strengthen UNDP's capacity for promoting technical co-operation among developing countries, in accordance with recommendation 34 of the Buenos Aires Plan of Action and with particular reference to the Plan's provisions on establishing training centres.
3. International co-operation and the exchange of information should also be strengthened in the field of communications and transport, and subregional activities should be supported at the regional and interregional levels. Account should be taken in that connection of the programme of action adopted by the African Ministers of Transport. Consideration must also be given to the basic plans prepared by the Economic Commission for Western Asia for integrating the communications systems of that region. His Government had stepped up its programmes to train transport personnel. The developing countries' endeavours to strengthen their transport and communications networks were prompted by their desire for national and collective self-reliance.
4. There was a need for a far-reaching restructuring of the economic and social sectors of the United Nations, with a view to establishing a new international economic order. That goal should be reflected more clearly in the guidelines prepared for United Nations agencies and bodies, in order to achieve the widest possible participation by the developing countries at the decision-making level in all bodies in the United Nations system. The resolutions of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council on the restructuring of United Nations bodies and their programmes of action should be given careful consideration by the Committee.
5. Even though it was facing enormous problems, his country was doing everything within its power to improve the population's standard of living and to achieve an equitable distribution of the benefits resulting from the population's labour. Its economy had been severely affected by world inflation, the rising cost of manufactures and the imbalance in international trade. The implementation of the Substantial New Programme of Action for the 1980s for the Least Developed Countries could ease the burden placed by the international economic crisis on his country, including its severe payments deficits. His country advocated price stabilization for the developing countries, as far as consumer goods were concerned.
6. The tragic situation of Palestinians living under Israeli occupation had had an adverse effect on Middle Eastern economic development as a whole. The relevant

(Mr. Al-Haddad, Democratic Yemen)

report of the Secretary-General (A/37/238) described the deterioration that had taken place in the standards of living of the Palestinian people and gave a clear picture of the Israeli authorities' coercive practices in the occupied territories.

7. The establishment of a new international economic order must lead to the affirmation of the principles of justice in international relations and enable all peoples to choose their own way of life, in accordance with their own requirements. It must also enable them to take advantage of international support while remaining free from foreign domination. At the United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, in 1981, his delegation had stressed the need to achieve a more equitable distribution of the world's wealth. The implementation of the Substantial New Programme of Action adopted at that Conference was the only way of attaining the goals set for those countries.

8. Mr. COELHO (Portugal) said that, to a great extent, steady economic growth depended on a greater volume of productive investment, increased productivity and an open trading system. It was in the interest of all countries that world trade should expand. His delegation was concerned at the adoption of protectionist measures affecting the export products of developing countries and countries, such as his own, that were at an intermediate stage of development. His country was engaged in a successful process of diversifying its international trade flows with a view to opening up channels of co-operation in the field of trade to a greater extent.

9. With regard to the important question of commodity price stabilization, the Integrated Programme for Commodities had yielded disappointing results, particularly regarding the conclusion of commodity agreements. However, his country had signed the Agreement establishing the Common Fund for Commodities and hoped that the Common Fund would soon be operational.

10. It was to be hoped that the Ministerial Meeting of GATT in November 1982 would lead to important decisions in the area of trade liberalization. It was also desirable that the sixth session of UNCTAD should consider fundamental questions relating to trade and development.

11. His country was extremely preoccupied, as all energy-importing countries were, with problems relating to the energy crisis. The international community must not lose sight of the goals it had set in that connection. His delegation supported the conclusions reached by the Conference on New and Renewable Sources of Energy and the Nairobi programme of action. It hoped for rapid progress in the process already set in motion at Rome at the meeting of the Interim Committee.

12. His country had noted with satisfaction the outcome of the Conference on the Least Developed Countries. The Substantial New Programme of Action could make a major contribution to improving the situation of those countries. However, it was essential that there should be effective monitoring of its implementation, and the work of the initial round-table meetings was therefore encouraging. His country wished to increase the development assistance it provided, with particular emphasis on assistance to the least developed countries.

/...

(Mr. Coelho, Portugal)

13. His delegation was pleased to note the progress made by the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat). It was in favour of the designation of an International Year of Shelter for the Homeless, and in that connection it endorsed the conclusions reached by the Commission on Human Settlements at its fifth session, as set forth in Economic and Social Council resolution 1982/46 (B). His delegation was happy to note that the guidelines on the financing and holding of international years would be respected.

14. Mr. NANDOE (Suriname) said that the report of the Trade and Development Board (A/37/15, Vols. I and II) made a helpful contribution to the understanding of the current international crisis, particularly with respect to the role of external events in producing the current situation in the developing countries. The developing countries could not be held responsible for that situation, which had been caused by the industrialized countries' policies and the current unjust economic order. The recent decline in interest rates and inflation in some industrialized countries, though welcome, would have to persist for some time before it would produce any benefit for the developing countries. As matters stood, no energetic remedial measures were envisaged to compensate for the developing countries' losses resulting from low commodity prices, and their indebtedness had reached such proportions that it was having an adverse effect on the relationship between debtors and creditors. Those circumstances confirmed the need for a review of the organization and working methods of the international financial and economic institutions and of the operations of the transnational corporations. His delegation supported the effort to achieve full participation by the developing countries in the decision-making process of the World Bank and IMF and to have new rules and procedures adopted for GATT.

15. His delegation looked forward to the forthcoming ministerial meeting of GATT and to the sixth session of UNCTAD. The existing international trade system had been unable to cope with the strains generated by new conditions and patterns of international trade, production and consumption, and a complex system of trade barriers had emerged as a result. GATT should aim at reducing trade barriers and draw up rules that were in keeping with the interests of all countries. It was likewise essential that the developing countries should consider their development problems as a whole and devise a collective strategy prior to the sixth session of UNCTAD. His delegation therefore welcomed the preparatory meeting of the developing countries, which was to take place at Buenos Aires in the first half of 1983.

16. A set of specific and coherent measures was set forth in the Caracas Programme of Action for Economic Co-operation among Developing Countries adopted by the Group of 77 in 1981. The current economic situation and the impasse in the North-South dialogue meant that, more than ever, the developing countries needed to concentrate on close economic and technical co-operation among themselves. Initiatives should be based on the principle of mutual benefit and should be adopted on a bilateral, subregional and regional level in a variety of fields, not only in the field of trade. Moreover, the private sector could provide an excellent starting-point for the intensification of trade relations. However, South-South co-operation should

(Mr. Nandoe, Suriname)

not replace North-South co-operation and did not relieve the developed countries of their obligations towards the developing countries. His delegation endorsed the recommendations on those matters which had recently been approved at the ministerial meeting of the Group of 77.

17. Mr. KAZIM (Afghanistan) said that the economic situation of the developing countries was continuing to deteriorate as a result of the trade policies pursued by a number of capitalist countries. There was a need for a time-bound programme aimed at removing all barriers to imports from developing countries imposed by Western countries, with provisions for monitoring, for evaluation of action taken and for the preparation of programmes of action to put into effect structural adjustments in specific sectors.

18. Implementation of the Integrated Programme for Commodities was slow, and it was regrettable that the Common Fund was not yet operational. It was to be hoped that at the sixth session of UNCTAD all the key issues in the field of trade and development and related areas would be dealt with adequately. The Ministerial Meeting of the Contracting Parties to GATT in November would also provide an opportunity to improve the existing system, and it was to be hoped that the developing countries' problems would be treated as priority issues. His delegation reaffirmed the principles underlying the generalized system of preferences, which should be a permanent element of the policies of the capitalist developed countries. On the other hand, it opposed the concept of gradualism with respect to differential treatment in the granting of preferences. His delegation welcomed the Ministerial Declaration on the Global System of Trade Preferences among Developing Countries, which, if implemented, would promote trade among the members of the Group of 77, and it supported the draft resolution on protectionism and structural adjustment (A/C.2/37/L.4).

19. The activities of foreign private institutions and transnational corporations in the developing countries resulted in considerable financial losses for those countries. The developing countries had a right to supervise, exercise authority over, regulate and nationalize transnational corporations through their national legislation. The Economic and Social Council should undertake a study of the outflow of financial resources from developing countries through transnational corporations.

20. Economic and technical co-operation among developing countries was an appropriate way of using the developing countries' resources. His delegation noted with satisfaction the progress made in implementing various programmes of economic and technical co-operation among developing countries and supported the idea of harmonizing the Action Programme for Economic Co-operation of the Non-Aligned Countries with the Caracas Programme of Action for Economic Co-operation among Developing Countries adopted by the Group of 77. It was to be hoped that the Fund for Economic and Social Development would become operational and that steps would be taken to establish a Bank for developing countries. A specific time-table should be set for the implementation of all those action programmes, and he called for greater political will and commitment to that end.

(Mr. Kazim, Afghanistan)

21. The restructuring of the economic and social sectors of the United Nations system was vital in order to enhance the capacity of the United Nations system in the field of co-operation and development and make it more responsive to the requirements of the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States and of the Declaration and Programme of Action on the Establishment of a New International Economic Order. The restructuring process was an integral part of the general effort to ensure equitable, full and effective participation for the developing countries in the formulation and implementation of decisions relating to development and international economic co-operation. He hoped that the Assembly would be able to focus, in the near future, on those major global issues.

22. Housing and human settlements were a major problem for developing countries. Human settlements activities could contribute significantly to development and, because of their magnitude, they required co-ordinated action. The United Nations Centre for Human Settlements had done much useful work but it had not done nearly enough, and he hoped that it could step up its activities. He welcomed Economic and Social Council resolution 1982/46 on that subject and looked forward to its full and speedy implementation. The decision of the General Assembly to designate 1987 as the International Year of Shelter for the Homeless would undoubtedly increase public awareness of the problem at all levels and lead to a significant improvement in the situation.

23. His delegation viewed with concern the energy problems of the least developed countries because an adequate supply of energy was vital to development. The rapid depletion of traditional energy resources, combined with other critical problems, placed serious constraints on the development goals of the least developed countries. He urged that immediate steps should be taken to implement the Nairobi Programme of Action, with particular reference to the measures for the least developed countries. All developed countries, multilateral financial institutions and developing countries in a position to do so should provide financial and technical assistance for research into and the exploration and development of energy resources in the developing countries. The General Assembly should take the necessary decisions at its current session with regard to organizational matters so as to provide the required impetus for the implementation of that Programme.

24. His delegation strongly urged that immediate steps should be taken to ensure that the Substantial New Programme of Action for the least developed countries was fully implemented, so as to help the least developed countries to reach the point at which development would be self-sustained.

25. Finally, he said that the enormous amounts of resources being squandered on the arms race could very usefully be devoted to development activities and international economic co-operation. Accordingly, he hoped that the General Assembly would take effective measures to end the arms race.

26. Mr. LIEBIG (Observer for the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance) said that, despite the fact that economic development in the socialist countries had recently become more complicated, owing to the attempts of Western imperialist circles to undermine the economic might of socialism, the member countries of CMEA

(Mr. Liebig)

continued to enjoy more dynamic development than any other group of countries. In 1981, for example, the growth of production in the CMEA countries as a whole had been twice that of the industrialized capitalist States. Trade among member countries accounted for 55 per cent of their total foreign trade. That was particularly important at a time when the imperialist countries were trying to introduce discriminatory trade practices directed, in particular, against the socialist countries. As matters stood, only the socialist countries were capable of ensuring full employment and improving the living conditions of their people thanks, in large measure, to the emphasis they placed on planning. The advantages of planning were gaining wider recognition, with more and more nations drawing on the experience of the socialist countries in planning the management of their economies.

27. In the energy sector the CMEA countries, recognizing the increasingly capital-intensive nature of the energy industry, were pooling their efforts to provide their economies with energy. The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics was playing a major role in that co-operation because it was supplying 80 per cent of the CMEA countries' oil and petrochemicals import requirements and 99 per cent of their natural gas. Special emphasis was being placed on increasing the share of electricity produced from nuclear energy sources, and special attention was being given to the manufacture of equipment to ensure safe and reliable operation of nuclear power stations. Member countries had harmonized their programmes for the long-term development of energy up to the year 2000.

28. The member countries of CMEA believed that the Nairobi Programme of Action constituted a positive contribution to the solution of world energy problems. Development of the energy industry was closely interrelated with the maintenance of peace and the adoption of concrete measures in the field of disarmament, inasmuch as the vast resources currently being spent on the arms race could, if the arms race was halted, be diverted to development.

29. The socialist countries were prepared to co-operate with all countries in tackling current problems relating to science and technology. They firmly believed that international co-operation in dealing with energy problems, environmental protection, rational use of natural resources, expansion of the food potential and the peaceful uses of the oceans and of outer space would contribute to scientific and technological progress in all countries. In that connection he cited the fruitful co-operation established in that field between CMEA and a number of organizations of the United Nations system, including UNESCO, IAEA, UNEP and the regional economic commissions.

30. Multilateral and bilateral co-operation in the area of food production was of particular importance. Such issues as the exchange of information, application of advanced technology and construction of joint projects relating to food production were to be discussed at the forthcoming session of CMEA in 1983.

(Mr. Liebig)

31. The efforts of the imperialist forces to exacerbate tensions, step up the arms race and blackmail the socialist countries were regrettable and alarming; those attempts had become more pronounced in connection with events in Poland. The CMEA countries had repeatedly condemned the use of economic or any other discriminatory measures as a means of interfering in the internal affairs of a State and an instrument of political pressure. Action of that kind was a flagrant violation of the principles of the Charter and of the Final Act of the Helsinki Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe and constituted a threat to international peace.

32. The socialist countries were willing to enter into mutually advantageous trade, scientific and technical relations on an equal footing with all countries of the world and had long been engaged in such co-operation with the newly independent countries. Their assistance to the newly liberated countries was not accompanied by any political strings or demands for unilateral advantages. Imperialist propaganda tried to prove that the amount of the aid provided by the socialist countries was not commensurate with their economic potentials but it should be remembered that trade and economic co-operation between the socialist countries and the majority of developing States had not been possible until after the fall of the colonial system. Between 1950 and 1980 trade between the CMEA countries and developing countries had increased 32-fold and the expectation was that it would continue to grow. Similarly, between 1962 and 1982 the total volume of aid had increased more than 10-fold. As of 1 January 1982, over 5,000 CMEA-assisted projects had been built or were under construction or in the pipeline in Asia, Africa and Latin America. Such projects covered key branches of the economy and contributed to its diversification. Moreover projects built with CMEA assistance were the property of the developing States concerned. The socialist countries extended credit on extremely soft terms and did not repatriate the profits derived from those projects.

33. It was obvious that, from the economic and political standpoint, the imperialist States were not providing development assistance in the proper sense of the word. Their so-called financial aid and the investments of transnational monopolies were designed to intensify the exploitation of the developing countries, as was demonstrated by the latter's growing external debt. The co-operation of the socialist countries with the developing nations could not be compared with the so-called assistance provided by the imperialist Powers.

34. The member countries of CMEA also provided much assistance to developing States in the training of national personnel. He pointed out that 4,143 CMEA scholarship-holders from 57 developing countries had been admitted to institutions of higher and secondary education and the further specialized on-the-job training of another 523 specialists had also been financed by the CMEA scholarship fund.

35. Finally, he said that the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance intended to continue to develop its ties with specialized agencies of the United Nations, regional economic commissions and numerous international organizations.

36. Mr. ARAPI (Albania) said that the just struggle that all progressive and peace-loving countries were waging to free international economic relations from any form of discrimination, diktat or foreign pressure was being resisted and opposed by the imperialist Powers. The fact was evidenced, by inequities in international trade relations, the growth of protectionist measures and other barriers to exports from developing countries and the great disproportion between the prices of raw materials and those of manufactured goods. In those circumstances, it was futile to try to change the international economic situation through discussions, structural reforms and the good will of the imperialist Powers. Experience had shown that all the meetings, talks and actions at the world level on establishing a new international economic order had produced no tangible results.

37. One of the major international economic problems was trade in raw materials. The discriminatory policy of the capitalist and revisionist countries, applied through multinational corporations, had inflicted colossal damage on the developing countries. In the late 1970s, those countries had secured only \$30 billion for exports of raw materials, while the total value of raw materials sold by multinational corporations to other regions had reached \$200 billion. The developing countries suffered great losses annually owing to inequitable trade relations and price manipulation. The imperialist Powers had ignored or opposed the just demands of the developing countries for an end to the great gap between the prices of finished goods from the industrialized countries and those of raw materials from the developing countries. From 1975 to 1980, the developing countries had lost in that way between \$3.5 billion and \$4 billion every year, and the protectionist policy of the industrialized countries had deprived them of over \$7 billion in 1980.

38. The restructuring of international economic relations on a fairer basis was not to be viewed as a concession that the developed capitalist countries might make to the developing countries. The just demands of the developing countries were based upon their legitimate rights to end, once and for all, the injustices in international economic relations imposed by the imperialist Powers since the era of colonial domination. What worried the developing countries was that those relations had recently deteriorated further as a result of current economic and financial problems which, in turn, had their origin in the intensification of the expansionist and hegemonist policy of the imperialist Powers, and especially of the United States and the Soviet Union, not only in particular regions but throughout the world. International economic relations had likewise been gravely affected by the contradictions and trading struggles within imperialist blocs and alliances: the United States had accused its allies of protectionism, tricks and fraud, whereas its own trading policy was the worst example of such manoeuvres.

39. One field in which those contradictions were clearly reflected was that of trade in agricultural products. In 1981 alone, through the export of agricultural products, the United States had made a profit of \$28 billion, some of it at the expense of the European Common Market. In finance, likewise, on the pretext that it was the most open country in the world for financial services, the United States was asking other countries to open up their financial systems. The current

(Mr. Arapi, Albania)

tendency of the European Community, however, was to oppose United States diktat, to restrict its expansion into the markets of its member countries, to compete in United States markets and to expand its own.

40. The Soviet social imperialists had the same neo-colonialist intentions and used similar methods to penetrate countries economically. The "aid" that they offered to developing countries was but an attempt to plunder their economies, to prop up the shaky Soviet economy and to alleviate the burden of its arms expenditure. The hegemonist and neo-colonialist intentions and practices of the Soviet Union were very clearly reflected in its economic and trade relations with the countries of the "socialist community". Through the process of economic integration, devised in the Kremlin, the Soviets intended to turn the countries of that community into appendages to the Soviet economy and to apply the notorious Brezhnevian theory of limited sovereignty to the vassal countries. Even within the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA), however, that process was not developing smoothly, and complaints by the CMEA countries often appeared in their press.

41. His delegation supported the legitimate demands of progressive and peace-loving countries for control over their national assets and opposed all the neo-colonialist practices used by the major Powers in international relations. Relations between States, large and small, should be devoid of any form of economic, political or military diktat. His country traded with many States and regions. Its trade relations were conducted on the basis of give and take - of mutual advantage. It did not confuse trade transactions with foreign aid and credits. Albania's greatest victory in foreign trade had been to ensure balanced trade and the financing of imports by exports. The structure of exports had been greatly improved over the years: by 1985 processed goods would constitute 77 per cent, by value, of all exports, compared with 70 per cent in 1980. The development of the economy and foreign trade had been based on the country's own strength and its material and financial resources, without dependence on the outside world or the use of foreign loans. Many countries, including some in Europe had accepted a great many credits and accumulated debts of billions of dollars on which they were unable to pay the interest.

42. Mr. AL-MANSOURI (United Arab Emirates) said that the world was facing a most serious crisis caused by the interaction of several factors, including recession/stagnation and trade and currency fluctuations; the result for developing countries was negative, economic growth, balance-of-payments deficits and increased external indebtedness. Moreover, the use by industrialized countries of protectionist measures which adversely affected the sale of products from the developing countries was growing. Those problems required the international community to take action to mitigate their effects. The action needed lay in the political, economic and financial fields, and had, above all, to be comprehensive. The approach required was defined in the Declaration on the Establishment of a New International Economic Order, the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States and the General Assembly resolution calling for global negotiations. A commitment to the objectives set forth in those documents would bring about a radical change

(Mr. Al-Mansouri, United Arab Emirates)

in the structure of international institutions which would enable all States to participate as equals in planning their institutions' policies and would lay the foundations for a new international economic order.

43. In a world where huge amounts of money were being spent on means of destruction, over 250 million people were suffering from malnutrition; for many of them hunger was an endemic affliction. The international community must take steps to alleviate that alarming situation. Everyone must co-operate in devising stock and distribution policies which would stress the needs of the developing countries.
44. Technical co-operation was one of the most important subjects on the agendas of many international bodies. The developing countries needed assistance to accelerate their development processes. Similarly, the importance for the developing countries of the transfer of science and technology was obvious, and his delegation was sure that the international community would overcome all of the difficulties it involved.
45. There had been serious problems with the activities of transnational corporations in their host countries, but ways of enabling the host countries to realize their own potential and to participate in the activities of those corporations had been found, which was encouraging.
46. The report of the Secretary-General (A/37/238) shed new light on the deterioration of the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied territories. The Israeli occupying authorities were continuing to change the demographic and geographical character of the occupied territories, and for that reason they had refused access to United Nations experts who had intended to study the living conditions of the Palestinian people. His country considered that refusal to be a challenge to the international community, which must condemn all such arbitrary acts by the Israeli occupying authorities.
47. His Government was fully aware of the need for every country to participate in the efforts to overcome the world economic crisis, and it had endorsed all the resolutions of the United Nations and other international bodies on that subject. The United Arab Emirates had participated in international meetings on the world economy and was striving, through the Group of 77, to consolidate South-South dialogue and economic co-operation with a view to achieving collective-self-reliance.
48. Mr. SHARAFH (Yemen) said that the basic reason for the world economic crisis, which was affecting the developing countries so adversely, was the negative attitude of certain developed countries, especially those which influenced the world economy. It was the least-developed countries which were suffering most, owing to their lack of resources and the weakness of their infrastructures, which prevented them from making the best use of the meagre assistance they received. His country had been adversely affected by the emigration of over 1.5 million

(Mr. Sharafh, Yemen)

citizens and the export of its convertible currency to other Arab countries. Prospects for the future were dim, but some countries were striving to fulfil their responsibilities by giving bilateral or multilateral aid.

49. With regard to agenda item 71 (o), he said that his country was in constant contact with the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development with a view to arranging consultations in pursuance of the Substantial New Programme of Action for the 1980s for the Least Developed Countries. The technical device of linking the beneficiary and receiving countries through UNCTAD would enable the developing countries to discuss many aspects of the Programme with the supplier countries and would help them to meet the priority needs of their populations.

50. The Secretary-General's report in document A/37/238 stressed the tragic situation of the Palestinian people in the occupied territories and detailed the efforts of the Economic and Social Council and the United Nations to help them. However, two United Nations experts had been prevented by the Israeli authorities from visiting the area. Those authorities had, in other words, tried to camouflage their shameful Nazi-style practices in the occupied territories. The report also stressed that the living conditions of the population - in housing, health, education and all that was required for the development of a people - had deteriorated since 1967. Israel was responsible for yet another calamity in that part of the world. By occupying West Beirut for more than 50 days and depriving the population of water, electricity and basic health care, Israel had committed one of the greatest crimes in modern history and had caused tens of thousands to leave Lebanon in order to escape the ravages of the war. The Israeli massacres were proof of the unprincipled conduct of the clique of Zionists currently in power. Those acts could not have been committed without assistance from the United States in every field. Despite the current adverse situation, however, his delegation trusted that the aspirations of the Palestinian people would ultimately be fulfilled.

51. Mr. GADAL HAK (Egypt) said that, despite the commendable efforts of the United Nations Environment Programme to implement the Plan of Action to Combat Desertification, desertification remained a major problem. Increased resources were required and should be combined with increased efforts at the national, international and regional levels. Primary responsibility for implementing the Plan of Action should be assumed by those countries in which desertification was a problem. Their efforts should, however, be reinforced by outside assistance and they should be helped to formulate national plans to combat desertification. In that connection he pointed out that his Government was trying to stop the slow encroachment of the desert by establishing green belts, reclaiming portions of the desert and planting it, and establishing settlements on such land. His delegation appreciated the co-ordination established between UNEP and UNDP in the preparation of the latter's Regional Programme for Africa (1982-1986) and he paid tribute to the United Nations Sudano-Sahelian Office and other United Nations bodies for their efforts. The resources needed for implementing the Plan of Action should be made available before 1984 when a general assessment of the progress made in implementation of the Plan was to be undertaken.

(Mr. Gadal Hak, Egypt)

52. The United Nations Conference on New and Renewable Sources of Energy had marked a turning point in the consideration of the energy problem. However, the results of the recent meeting in Rome of the Interim Committee on New and Renewable Sources of Energy had been somewhat disappointing. Nothing should be allowed to delay efforts to develop such energy sources.

53. Turning to the report of the Secretary-General on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territories (A/37/238), he said that the two experts entrusted with preparing the report had not been permitted to enter the occupied Palestinian territories and had had to rely for their information on secondary sources. Ever since Israel had occupied the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, and the Gaza Strip, the living conditions and the economic and social situation of the population in those territories had been deteriorating owing to the oppressive policies and practices of the occupying Power. Its efforts to eradicate the Arab characteristics and the Palestinian entity were in contravention of relevant United Nations resolutions and international conventions which required the occupying power not to change the demographic, geographical or cultural features of the population.

54. The decline in employment opportunities in the Palestinian territories was not surprising. The account given in document A/37/347 was not correct inasmuch as the use of Palestinian labour in Israel served Israel's economy, not that of the occupied territories. There could be no real improvement until employment opportunities were created in the territories themselves, and that would not happen so long as Israel continued to occupy them. Moreover, one third of all Palestinian lands had been usurped by the occupying forces for military purposes or for building new settlements, and agriculture had been adversely affected by the rigid measures governing the use of water by Palestinians; the population of the illegitimate settlements, it should be noted, were allowed to use water freely. Other effects of the policy of oppression could be cited in the field of education and health.

55. He said that, notwithstanding the account given in document A/37/347, which was in effect a counter-attack, the conditions of the Palestinian people could never improve under the system of occupation. The international community must assume a special responsibility for removing that system.

56. Mr. ZHONG Shukong (China) said that the grave world economic situation had had an adverse impact on international trade. In 1981 the value of world trade had declined in real terms for the first time since 1958, the terms of trade had deteriorated further for the developing countries and the economies of the developed countries were facing the worst difficulties since the great depression of the early 1930s. In that context, his delegation saw two problems relating to the foreign trade of the developing countries which called for an immediate solution.

57. Although many factors had contributed to the decline in world trade, protectionism was undoubtedly one of the most important. Access of the products of the developing countries to the markets of developed countries had been made

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increasingly difficult owing to unilateral restrictions imposed by the developed countries, and the Generalized System of Preferences had been jeopardized. Those practices ran counter to the objectives of the Tokyo Declaration and had impaired the rights and interests of the developing countries. It had been shown that protectionism impeded not only the exports but also the industrialization of the developing countries. Unfortunately, little progress had been made either in curbing protectionism or in promoting structural readjustment. That showed that the existing regulations, rules and institutions of international trade were out of keeping with the times and must be reformed. His delegation supported the draft resolution on protectionism and structural readjustment submitted by the Group of 77. Protectionist measures practised by the developed countries should not be equated with the justified steps taken by the developing countries to protect their newly-emerging industries, because without such protection, those industries would not survive.

58. The second pressing problem was the stabilization of the export earnings from commodities and the improvement of the terms of trade. A large number of developing countries still relied on exports of raw materials and agricultural goods for most of their foreign exchange earnings. However, using their economic superiority and their monopoly over markets, the developed countries had long manipulated and controlled commodity prices, and the developing countries had been subjected to plunder and exploitation. As things stood, commodity prices were at their lowest levels, in real terms, for 45 years. In 1981 there had been a further drop of 15 per cent in the export price index of the commodities of the developing countries (excluding crude oil), resulting in a sharp increase in their trade deficits, external debts and debt-servicing costs. The implementation of the Integrated Programme for Commodities so far had been unsatisfactory: the Common Fund had not been established as scheduled, the negotiations on individual commodity agreements had made very little progress, the participation of the developing countries in the processing, marketing and distribution of commodities had been obstructed and the conditions for the use of the IMF compensatory financing facility for short falls in export earnings remained harsh. If that scenario continued to prevail, the economic performance of the developing countries would deteriorate further and the world economy would not recover. His delegation therefore hoped that all parties concerned, and particularly the major developed countries, would make further efforts to ensure the early establishment of the Common Fund, thereby enabling the Integrated Programme for Commodities to be implemented comprehensively.

59. The sixth session of UNCTAD was particularly important in view of the prevailing world economic situation and should be taken seriously by all the parties concerned. The basic objective of the session should be to promote the revival of the world economy and to furnish the necessary impetus for the establishment of the new international economic order. Accordingly, it should give priority to solving the major economic problems confronting the developing countries and should give due consideration to the structural readjustment of the existing international economic system. Only in that way could the satisfactory development of the economies of the developing countries be ensured. His delegation hoped that the major developed countries would demonstrate political

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will and accept the reasonable demands of the developing countries so that the sixth session of UNCTAD could contribute to the improvement of North-South relations and to the reinvigoration of the world economy.

60. Although the Substantial New Programme of Action for the 1980s for the Least Developed Countries had been adopted in September 1981, a few developed countries had not yet complied with their obligations, as stipulated in that Programme, and his delegation urged them to do so.

61. Turning to agenda item 71 (e), he said that, owing to the negative attitude of a few developed countries, progress on the establishment of the United Nations Financing System for Science and Technology for Development had been very slow. It should have begun operations in January 1982, but had been postponed for a year. Furthermore, pledges to the Interim Fund at the March 1982 pledging conference had amounted to less than \$5 million and those made by some countries, when measured against their economic and technological capacities, were far from adequate. It was time to conclude a final agreement for submission to the General Assembly so as to enable the Financing System to come into force at the beginning of 1983. The establishment of the Financing System was essential to the implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action and was an important step towards strengthening the scientific and technological capacities of the developing countries and restructuring the existing irrational pattern of international economic, scientific and technological relations. It should therefore be viewed not as a matter of merely donating money, but as an important component of the efforts to promote international economic co-operation and improve North-South relations. By providing assistance to the developing countries in science and technology for development and by joining in exchanges in that field on the basis of equality and mutual benefit, the developed countries would be furthering their own interests and promoting the recovery of the world economy.

62. His delegation agreed in principle with the major conclusions contained in the report of the Interim Committee on New and Renewable Sources of Energy (A/37/47). The Interim Committee's recent session had given new impetus to the implementation of the Nairobi Programme of Action and had reaffirmed that that Programme was the basic frame of reference for action by the United Nations system in the field of new and renewable sources of energy. Institutional arrangements had not yet been worked out, but his delegation hoped that that problem could be solved at the current session. In view of the importance of and the unique conditions involved in the implementation of the Nairobi Programme of Action, his delegation agreed that the intergovernmental body and its secretariat should enjoy some measure of independence, but it held that proper consideration must be given to fuller use of the existing experience, expertise, bodies and mechanisms of the United Nations system so as to avoid unnecessary duplication.

The meeting rose at 1.10 p.m.