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PREPARATORY COMMITTEE FOR THE UNITED
NATIONS CONFERENCE ON NEW AND
RENEWABLE SOURCES OF ENERGY
Fourth session
8-26 June 1981
Agenda item 5

ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE PREPARATORY COMMITTEE

DRAFT REPORT

Rapporteur: Mr. Richard H. O. OKWARO (Kenya)

Chapter I. Opening statements

1. The Secretary-General of the Conference reviewed the progress made in the preparations for the Conference. He stated that four documents were being submitted to the Preparatory Committee for its consideration.

(a) Preliminary draft of a Programme of Action; 1/

(b) An overview of ongoing and planned activities of the United Nations in the field of new and renewable sources of energy; 2/

(c) Summary of the main recommendations for action emerging from the national papers; 3/

(d) Synoptic table of the contributions from the regional groups. 4/

2. He indicated that the draft Programme of Action consisted of an introduction and four chapters, and represented the culmination of a complex process of

1/ A/CONF.100/PC/51, Add.1 and 2 and Add.2/Corr.1.

2/ A/CONF.100/PC/52, Add.1 and 2.

3/ A/CONF.100/PC/49.

4/ A/CONF.100/PC/48.

preparations. He was of the view that those documents would not only give political impetus to the entire preparatory process, but would also serve as a basis for future international co-operation.

3. He pointed out that the first chapter of the draft Programme of Action, entitled "The challenge", reflected the main observations made in the course of the general debate of the third session of the Preparatory Committee regarding both the role of new and renewable sources of energy in the energy transition and their direct relationship to the social and economic development of developing countries. Chapter II, entitled "Framework for national action", emphasized that policies for accelerating the use of new and renewable sources of energy must conform with national economic and social objectives and be implemented alongside policies for maximizing the use of all indigenous sources of energy and policies directed at energy conservation. Chapter III, entitled "Objectives of the Programme of Action" identifies the principal objectives to be achieved. "Measures for concerted actions" contained the principal recommendations emerging from the process of technical preparations, including an illustrative list of the measures appropriate for particular sources of energy. The final chapter, entitled "Implementation", consisted of three sections. He said that the first section identified three priority areas, that is, assistance to strengthen national capability, support for the demonstration and application of available technologies, and assistance for rural energy programmes. The second section proposed measures concerning international mechanisms needed for transforming the programme into specific action, while the third section will propose measures for the mobilization of the necessary financial resources.

4. The Secretary-General of the Conference then gave an account of some of the complementary activities that had been carried out since the Committee's third session: (a) about 55 national papers had already been received and additional papers were expected; (b) several important preparatory meetings had been held, in particular: a seminar on non-technical obstacles to the use of new energy sources in developing countries, organized by UNESCO with the assistance of various non-governmental organizations in Bellagio, Italy; a high-level specific seminar organized by the Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics at Moscow; and a high-level North-South Round Table, organized by the Society for International Development with the assistance of the Government of Italy at Castelgandolfo; (c) a number of high-level missions, headed by eminent persons, had visited various countries and regions to disseminate information and to promote the objectives of the Conference; (d) the Government of Kenya was continuing to carry out the preparatory work for the holding of the Conference with great dedication and efficiency; (e) so far 13 countries had announced their decision to participate in the exhibition. In addition, he indicated that the Secretariat, with the co-operation of the Department of Public Information, was intensifying the final phase of publicity for the Conference.

5. In conclusion, the Secretary-General acknowledged the co-operation received from Governments in all the preparatory tasks, as well as the financial assistance received from some Governments and from UNDP. He also expressed his gratitude to the agencies of the United Nations system, to the intergovernmental and

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non-governmental organizations for their goodwill and support and to the Chairman and Bureau of the Preparatory Committee for their constant assistance to the Secretariat and dedication to the Conference.

6. In his opening statement, the Chairman of the Preparatory Committee stated that the finalization, during this last session, of the draft Programme of Action to be adopted by the Nairobi Conference, was the Committee's most important task. He expressed his appreciation of the efforts of the Secretariat to publicize the objectives of the Conference to the international community. The Chairman stated that the UNESCO meeting on the non-technical constraints of new and renewable sources of energy, held at Bellagio, was very successful and that the North-South Round Table held at Castelgandolfo had made valuable recommendations to the Conference. He also expressed his appreciation to the Government of Kenya for its extensive and efficient preparations for the Conference.

7. The Chairman summarized his views on new and renewable sources of energy in the context of economic and social development, particularly of developing countries. He believed that the Nairobi Conference was only the beginning of a long journey towards the solution of the over-all energy problem and the first effort of the United Nations to this end. He stressed that the Committee should be modest and realistic about the outcome of the Conference, taking the Programme of Action as a guideline for actions needed at the national, subregional, regional and international levels. He said that energy resources for rural development should be priority concerns, and that co-operation at the subregional or regional levels would be critical. He also said that the Programme of Action should focus on measures to promote the transfer of available technology from developed to developing countries and between developing countries.

8. The Chairman declared that the preliminary draft of a Programme of Action submitted by the Secretary-General was a sound basis for the deliberations of the Committee and made the following comments. Chapters I, II and III were generally well drafted and treated the energy sources in the over-all context of the energy transition, but they should be amalgamated into one or two more concise chapters. He recognized that chapter IV was difficult to draft, but he said that it was not substantial or specific enough. It needed to be supplemented with concrete measures based on the work of the Technical Panels, the ad hoc groups of experts and the Synthesis Group. As for the funding and institutional issues of chapter V, it was premature to judge them before the final stage of the Programme of Action, particularly in the light of the prevailing antipathy towards the proliferation of new institutions and funds. There was, however, a definite need for an effective and efficient follow-up mechanism to implement the Programme of Action. Funding was also a crucial factor, but before the utilization of existing or future funds could be contemplated, a careful study of the extent of the financial requirements needed to be carried out. Finally, the Chairman stressed the need to define who in the United Nations system would be responsible for implementing the Programme of Action, and requested the full co-operation of all to complete the preparations assigned to the Preparatory Committee before the agreed deadline.

9. Several agencies indicated that their governing bodies had adopted resolutions which dealt specifically with new and renewable sources of energy. The Commission

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on Human Settlements, in decision 4/23 adopted at its fourth session, endorsed the report entitled "Renewable sources of energy" (E/1981/82) and requested the Executive Director to submit it to the Preparatory Committee with a view to having specific recommendations included, as appropriate, in the draft Programme of Action. The Trade and Development Board adopted resolution 230 (XXII), on the transfer, application and development of technology issues in additional sectors and other areas of critical importance to developing countries which, inter alia, covered energy. The Governing Council of UNEP decided to appeal to the Preparatory Committee to give sufficient emphasis and attach high priority to the use of new and renewable sources of energy, which would make it possible to tackle the major problem of fuelwood.

10. Representatives of IBRD, IFAD, the ILO, UNCHS, UNCTAD, UNEP and UNESCO referred in their statements to the Preparatory Committee, to the extensive consultations which had taken place between their respective organizations and the secretariat of the Conference during the preparation of the preliminary draft Programme of Action. They described the various elements of their organization's actions as they related to the concern emerging in the preliminary draft Programme of Action and they referred the Preparatory Committee to the documents which their organizations had submitted in response to decision 7 (II) of the Committee. In addition, many of those representatives commented that the interagency meetings which had taken place had been very useful.

11. The Administrator of UNDP stated that UNDP had prepared a substantive study on the development of new and renewable sources of energy in developing countries, the main findings of which were clearly in line with the proposals of the draft Programme of Action. Steps had been taken for the assessment of the needs for technical co-operation and for the mobilization of the necessary additional financial resources. Different studies have been conducted in this field by UNDP, which stands ready, in answer to the directive of the Nairobi Conference, to respond to the needs of developing countries in new and renewable sources of energy. In the framework of the new programming cycle of technical co-operation for 1982-1986, the UNDP resident representatives had been requested to assist Governments in identifying high-priority projects in the energy field. In conclusion, he said, the Action Programme should be specific and concrete while flexible enough and subject to periodic reviews.
