



SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 47th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. NAVAJAS-MOGRO (Bolivia)

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The meeting was called to order at 8.25 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 82: DEVELOPMENT AND INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC CO-OPERATION (continued)
(A/C.2/43/L.31/Rev.1)

Draft resolution on fulfilment of the target for official development assistance
(A/C.2/43/L.31/Rev.1)

1. The CHAIRMAN invited the Committee to resume its consideration of draft resolution A/C.2/43/L.31/Rev.1, as orally amended at the Committee's 46th meeting.
2. Mr. PAXTON (New Zealand), speaking in explanation of vote before the vote, said that his delegation would vote for the draft resolution as orally amended.
3. New Zealand had supported the adoption of General Assembly resolutions 2626 (XXV) and 35/56, each of which had included a target of 0.7 per cent of GNP for official development assistance (ODA) provided by developed countries. Support for that target was a statement of intention rather than a binding legal commitment. His Government was committed to reaching it as quickly as possible subject to the serious economic constraints that it faced. Like other countries, New Zealand was undergoing a process of structural adjustment affecting its entire economy. ODA could not be excepted from that process as the Government strove to reduce its budget deficit.
4. The quality of ODA transfers was particularly important; all of New Zealand's ODA was in grant form and almost all was untied. While ODA transfers were important to sustainable growth and development in the developing countries, the benefit of ODA must be set against the negative impact of the restrictions imposed by many developed countries on trade with developing countries. Protection of domestic markets against imports from developing countries was far more significant in negative terms than the ODA provided by those same countries.
5. Mr. NATHON (Hungary) said that his delegation had doubts as to the usefulness of the draft resolution and had problems with the characterization of certain groups of countries as "developed", "developing", "donor" or "recipient" countries.
6. A recorded vote was taken on draft resolution A/C.2/43/L.31/Rev.1, as orally amended.

In favour: Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Angola, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bahamas, Bahrain, Barbados, Belgium, Bhutan, Bolivia, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burma, Burundi, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Cameroon, Canada, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Djibouti, Ecuador, Egypt, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, German Democratic Republic, Germany, Federal Republic of, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea,

Guinea-Bissau, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malawi, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Philippines, Portugal, Qatar, Romania, Rwanda, Samoa, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Singapore, Somalia, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Swaziland, Sweden, Thailand, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Yugoslavia, Zaire, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

Against: None.

Abstaining: United States of America.

7. Draft resolution A/C.2/43/L.31/Rev.1, as orally amended, was adopted by 121 votes to none, with one abstention.

8. Mr. LUCAS (Guyana) said that, had his delegation been present during the vote, it would have voted in favour of the draft resolution.

9. Mr. MACARTHUR (United States of America), speaking in explanation of vote after the vote, said that his delegation had abstained in the vote on the draft resolution. The United States was not ashamed of its record in providing ODA but could not agree with the idea of targets which it found arbitrary.

10. Mr. MARTIN (United Kingdom) said that, in voting in favour of the draft resolution, his delegation had wished to underline its support for aid aimed at sustainable economic growth in the developing countries. His Government continued to support in principle the target of 0.7 per cent of GNP, and its overseas aid budget would continue to grow substantially in real terms over the next three years. Growth would be 18 per cent in cash terms, considerably in excess of projected inflation. His Government was not, however, in a position to set a time-table for achieving the 0.7 per cent target.

11. His delegation was disappointed that the draft resolution had not contained a reference to the target of 1 per cent of GNP to be devoted to total flows to the developing countries, a target that his country had regularly exceeded. Private flows, particularly direct foreign investment, were also of importance.

12. His Government believed that donor countries and aid agencies should not focus exclusively on quantitative targets. Donors and recipients should work together to find ways of improving the quality and effectiveness of aid. The economic and trade policies of the developed countries affected export credits, foreign direct investment and other financial flows, and determined the extent to which aid contributed to economic growth and development.

13. Mr. PILBEAM (Australia) said that his delegation had supported the draft resolution because it took its commitment to ODA very seriously. That commitment was made clear by its long-term practice of providing all of its aid in grant form.

14. His delegation did, however, have some difficulties with the partial view of resource flows to developing countries reflected in the draft. Aid was important to many developing countries, but for some of them trade was immensely more important. Developed-country protectionism in agricultural trade cost the developing countries more than twice as much as they received in the form of ODA. Trade should therefore be at the centre of the question of resource flows to the developing countries. Protectionism also prevented some donors from being as generous as they might wish to be.

15. His delegation questioned the need for an appeal to donors, in paragraph 3 of the draft, to pursue measures described as "specific". The policy of his Government was specific, and it stood by the ODA target of 0.7 per cent of GDP and endeavoured to maintain its ODA at the target level consistent with its own economic circumstances.

16. His delegation would also like to recall its reservations about criteria under the Substantial New Programme of Action regarding aid to the least developed countries. His country had not accepted the aid targets for the least developed countries, although it had in fact met one of those targets.

17. Mr. BORCHARD (Federal Republic of Germany) said that his delegation had voted in favour of the draft resolution because it accepted the target of 0.7 per cent of GNP for ODA. Greater efforts must be made to achieve that target at a time when more developing countries than ever before were undertaking adjustment programmes and when a great number of the poorest developing countries had to rely on ODA as a major source of external financing.

18. His Government also attached great importance to improving the quality of ODA, and his delegation therefore regretted that the draft resolution adopted neglected that aspect, in particular the need for funds to assist the developing countries in their adjustment efforts, for an intensified policy dialogue and for improved co-ordination of aid to render all aid programmes more effective. The draft should also have addressed itself more to the need to concentrate ODA on the poorest countries, and made it clearer that the efforts of the developing countries themselves were crucial to overcoming economic and social problems. The availability of capital through ODA in itself did not translate into development.

19. Solving the problems of poverty and development could not be reduced merely to the quantitative parameters of ODA. The contribution of a developed country could thus not be assessed only on the basis of its ODA figure, which, due to inherent imperfections, did not provide a complete picture. Adequate account must also be taken of other factors, such as the prime importance of non-inflationary economic growth, sound fiscal policy, the lowering of interest levels and the opening of markets to the developing countries.

20. Mr. KAGAMI (Japan) said that his delegation had voted in favour of the draft resolution. Japan had been making efforts to increase its ODA in a planned manner by setting medium-term targets. With a view to reaching the fourth such medium-term target, his country would aim at increasing the aggregate amount of its ODA during the period 1988 to 1992 to more than \$US 50 billion, thus increasing its ODA to a level corresponding to Japan's share in the GNP of the Development Assistance Committee members. It would, moreover, continue its efforts to improve the ratio of its ODA to GNP.

21. Mr. LU Ruishu (China) said that his delegation was happy to see that there had been near consensus on the adoption of the draft resolution. That reflected a renewed commitment by the international community to the 0.7 per cent target for ODA and would provide new impetus to international co-operation for development.

22. Mr. KUECK (German Democratic Republic) said that his country actively supported the developing countries and national liberation movements in their endeavours for social progress and economic independence. Information on the assistance it provided was available in the relevant documents of the General Assembly.

23. The ODA provided by his country in 1987 represented 0.89 per cent of its national income or approximately 0.7 per cent of GNP. The German Democratic Republic would, within the scope of its possibilities, continue to render assistance to the developing countries and national liberation movements.

24. Mr. GATHUNGU (Kenya) said that, had his delegation been present during the vote, it would have voted in favour of the draft resolution.

25. Mr. KHALIKOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that his delegation had voted in favour of the draft resolution because it believed that assistance to the developing countries and trade relations of mutual benefit with those countries were an important factor in economic development.

26. The Soviet Union provided assistance on favourable terms to the developing countries in order to further the development of various economic sectors, science and technology, the modernization of agriculture and the training of national personnel. In 1987, the total amount of the Soviet Union's assistance to developing countries had been 1.76 billion roubles, or more than 1 per cent of its GNP.

27. Mr. WALTER (Czechoslovakia) said that his country had a long record of co-operation with the developing countries and had therefore found it possible to support the draft resolution. That support did not, however, signify a change in its position regarding quantitative targets for ODA which was reflected in the reservations it had expressed during the adoption of the Second and Third United Nations Development Decades and on other occasions. It was the sovereign right of the donor and recipient countries to agree on the modalities of assistance that best ensured its speedy and convenient delivery to end users. That applied fully to the balance between bilateral and multilateral assistance. Czechoslovakia would

(Mr. Walter, Czechoslovakia)

continue to provide economic assistance to the developing countries to the best of its ability given its economic circumstances.

28. Given the comprehensive nature of economic assistance in its various forms, his delegation would have preferred paragraph 5 to have requested the Secretary-General to report under the item on development and international economic co-operation rather than under the more narrowly defined item on United Nations operational activities.

29. Mr. DJOGHLAF (Algeria) said that there was an urgent need to achieve the target of 0.7 per cent of GNP for ODA given the deterioration in the terms of trade to the detriment of the developing countries and the increasing net transfer of real resources from the developing countries to the developed countries, aggravated as it was by the gravity of the external debt crisis and the decline in ODA in real terms.

30. At a time when the General Assembly was engaged in strengthening multilateral co-operation for development through the preparations for the international development strategy for the fourth United Nations development decade and in its deliberations on the convening of a special session devoted to the reactivation of economic development in developing countries, it was to be regretted that consensus could not be achieved on a question that represented the corner-stone of multilateral co-operation for development.

(b) TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT (continued) (A/C.2/43/L.53, L.55 and L.77 and Corr.1)

Draft resolution on an international conference on money and finance (A/C.2/43/L.53)

31. Mr. OUDOVENKO (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic) said that when the draft resolution had been put to a vote at the 46th meeting, his delegation had voted in favour. However, due to a malfunctioning of the voting apparatus, his delegation's vote had been recorded as a vote against the draft resolution.

32. Mr. GHONDA NAPO MBE LUKUYA (Zaire) said that if his delegation had been present for the vote on the draft resolution, it would have voted in favour.

Draft resolutions on the report of the Trade and Development Board (A/C.2/43/L.55 and L.77 and Corr.1)

33. The CHAIRMAN drew attention to document A/C.2/43/L.77/Corr.1, issued in English only, containing the English text of paragraph 11 of the draft resolution, which appeared in the other language versions of the text.

34. Mr. OTOBO (Nigeria), Vice-Chairman, introduced draft resolution A/C.2/43/L.77, which had been submitted on the basis of informal consultations held on draft resolution A/C.2/43/L.55. During those consultations, a consensus had been reached on the draft text, which he commended to the Committee for adoption.

35. Draft resolution A/C.2/43/L.77 was adopted.

36. Mr. LABERGE (Canada) said that although his delegation had joined in the consensus on the draft resolution, it had serious reservations regarding paragraph 8, which it considered misleading. That paragraph reproduced the text of paragraph 105 (23) of the Final Act of the seventh session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), which took note of a request that had been made to the Trade and Development Board to review and study developments in the international trading system. That request had originally been made in UNCTAD resolution 159 (VI); the UNCTAD secretariat had in fact carried out the study requested, and the results had been reflected in a document of the Trade and Development Board. Consequently, there was no need to refer to the study again in the draft resolution just adopted by the Second Committee.

37. Moreover, developments in the international trading system were being studied by GATT, the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and OECD, and the issue of trade liberalization was being addressed at the mid-term review of the Uruguay Round, which had just begun at Montreal. In addition, delegations at Geneva were currently discussing the proposed agenda for the next session of the Trade and Development Board, and differences of view had emerged regarding the inclusion of an item entitled "the international trading system". It was unfortunate that some delegations to the General Assembly were attempting to determine the work of UNCTAD, a task that was best left to delegations based at Geneva.

38. Mr. PAPADATOS (Greece), speaking on behalf of the States members of the European Community, said that, while those States had agreed to the adoption of the draft resolution, such agreement did not prejudice the position of States belonging to Group B under the UNCTAD system in the discussion being held at Geneva regarding the agenda for the forthcoming session of the Trade and Development Board.

39. Mr. CAHILL (United States of America) said that his delegation, too, had joined in the consensus of the draft resolution. Nevertheless, as a member of Group B in UNCTAD, it believed that the treatment in New York of issues that were better dealt with at Geneva constituted an inefficient use of resources. Such an approach was not productive. The language of the Final Act of the seventh session of UNCTAD had been carefully elaborated and must be read in context.

40. Mr. ELGHOUAYEL (Tunisia), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77, observed that the General Assembly was the supreme organ of the United Nations; it was thus inappropriate to question its competence. The adoption by consensus of draft resolution A/C.2/43/L.77 reflected the importance of that text and underscored the priority which must be accorded to the prompt implementation of the policies and measures agreed in the Final Act of the seventh session of UNCTAD. Both UNCTAD and the Trade and Development Board were mandated to keep the implementation of the Final Act under review, and the Group of 77 was thus disturbed by attempts to diminish that mandate, which was of particular interest to the developing countries, and to reinterpret certain clauses of the Final Act. The attitude implied by such efforts represented a step away from multilateralism and the recognition of growing interdependence.

(Mr. Elghouayel, Tunisia)

41. The representative of Canada's characterization of paragraph 8 of the draft resolution as misleading, when in fact it fully reflected the agreements reached during the seventh session of UNCTAD, could only be interpreted as an attempt to reject those agreements.

42. The CHAIRMAN said that, in the light of the adoption of draft resolution A/C.2/43/L.77, he would take it that draft resolution A/C.2/43/L.55 was withdrawn by the sponsors.

43. It was so decided.

(f) LONG-TERM TRENDS IN SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (continued) (A/C.2/43/L.51 and L.73)

Draft resolutions on examination of long-term trends in economic and social development (A/C.2/43/L.51 and L.73)

44. Mr. OTOBO (Nigeria), Vice-Chairman, said that informal consultations held on draft resolution A/C.2/43/L.51 had produced draft resolution A/C.2/43/L.73, which he recommended to the Committee for adoption by consensus.

45. Draft resolution A/C.2/43/L.73 was adopted by consensus.

46. The CHAIRMAN said that, in the light of the adoption of the draft resolution, he would take it that draft resolution A/C.2/43/L.51 was withdrawn by the sponsors.

47. It was so decided.

(g) LONG-TERM STRATEGY FOR SUSTAINABLE AND ENVIRONMENTALLY SOUND DEVELOPMENT (continued) (A/C.2/43/L.25/Rev.2, L.36/Rev.2 and L.72)

Draft resolution and draft decision on international co-operation in the monitoring, assessment and anticipation of environmental threats (A/C.2/43/L.25/Rev.2 and A/C.2/43/L.72)

48. Mr. FERNANDEZ (Philippines), Vice-Chairman, introduced draft decision A/C.2/43/L.72, which had been submitted on the basis of informal consultations held on draft resolution A/C.2/43/L.25/Rev.2, and commended it to the Committee for adoption.

49. Draft decision A/C.2/43/L.72 was adopted.

50. Mr. WALTER (Czechoslovakia), speaking also on behalf of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, recalled that the delegations of those countries had submitted a draft proposal on international ecological security at the forty-second session and had made that topic the focus of draft resolution A/C.2/43/L.25/Rev.2. The concept of environmental security was relatively new. Many of the proposals emanating from the report of the World Commission on Environment and Development

(Mr. Walter, Czechoslovakia)

and the World Conference on the Changing Atmosphere had approached that issue from the perspective of its implications for international security. Thus the time had appeared right for introducing the concept in the United Nations.

51. The sponsors of draft resolution A/C.2/43/L.25/Rev.2 had endeavoured to negotiate the text with their partners and had found even the most critical observations regarding it to be helpful. Although they had sought to facilitate a consensus on the draft text, a small number of delegations had, somewhat surprisingly, lacked the flexibility needed for a fruitful exchange of views, a situation he hoped would improve in the future. He also hoped that the question of environmental security would be taken up by the Economic and Social Council, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the General Assembly, as it would surely be of use in the preparation of the 1992 conference on environment and development.

52. Mr. LICHTINGER (Mexico) said that the words "a la seguridad" should be deleted from the title of the Spanish version of the draft decision, as they were not reflected in the other language versions.

Draft resolution on a United Nations Conference on environment and development
(A/C.2/43/L.36/Rev.2)

53. Mr. FERNANDEZ (Philippines), Vice-Chairman, announced that Iceland, Jamaica, Maldives, Romania and Samoa had joined in sponsoring the draft resolution. Long and difficult negotiations had been held on the text; he was nevertheless able to commend the text to the Committee for adoption, subject to the following revisions. In the ninth preambular paragraph, the word "current" should be inserted before the word "emission". The tenth preambular paragraph should be replaced with the following text:

"Stressing the importance for all countries to take effective measures for the protection, restoration and enhancement of the environment in accordance, inter alia, with their respective capabilities, while, at the same time, acknowledging the efforts being made in all countries in this regard, including international co-operation between developed and developing countries,".

The revised paragraph should then be inserted before the ninth preambular paragraph.

54. Draft resolution A/C.2/43/L.36/Rev.2, as orally revised, was adopted.

55. Mr. SVENSSON (Sweden), speaking on behalf of the sponsors of the draft resolution, commended the efforts that had led to consensus on the draft text after long and difficult negotiations. That same spirit of consensus must prevail during the preparation of the conference, which would creatively explore ways and means for the effective promotion of environmentally sound development. The need for financial assistance from the international community to help the developing countries solve their environmental problems must also be addressed, and

(Mr. Svensson, Sweden)

consideration must be given to many aspects of environmental research. Above all, the conference must be action-oriented.

56. Decisions regarding such matters as the scope, objectives and title of the conference would be decided by the General Assembly at its forty-fourth session. It was to be hoped that conference preparations would benefit from strong governmental involvement: the preparation of national environment reports, a procedure which had been employed at the 1972 Conference, would be welcome. The venue of the conference must also be decided, and he wished to recall in that connection that Sweden had offered to host the conference.

57. Mr. TAKASHIMA (Japan) said that since the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment in 1972 steady progress had been made throughout the world in the endeavour to protect the environment. However, improvements in the global environment had been limited and, in many areas, the situation had continued to deteriorate. Recognising that, Japan strongly supported both the principle of sustainable development and the proposal to convene a United Nations conference on sustainable development in 1992. It had therefore joined the consensus on the draft resolution just adopted. However, it believed that the purpose of the draft should have been merely procedural, namely to request the Secretary-General to obtain the views of Governments on the matters referred to in paragraph 2 of the text in question. It was regrettable that some of the elements that should have been fully discussed and on which decisions should have been reached at the Assembly's following session had been taken up in the preambular paragraphs of the draft before the Committee at the current session.

58. In order to achieve sustainable development, it was important to understand the nature of environmental problems and their interrelationship with other international problems. It was also important to understand that the purpose of the proposed United Nations conference on sustainable development was to address environmental problems. In 1989, the Committee would hear the views of all countries and organizations concerned on that issue. In that connection, Japan had reservations about the balance of the draft resolution, particularly where the new tenth preambular paragraph was concerned. The proposed conference should not deal just with the issue of the emission of pollutants, since such other issues as that of desertification must also be addressed.

59. Japan would continue its efforts in the field of conservation of the environment both at home and internationally. Every Government had a role to play in achieving sustainable development. It was to be hoped that all Governments would submit their views on the proposal that a United Nations conference on sustainable development should be held in 1992.

60. Mr. NOGUEIRA-BATISTA (Brazil) said that his country had been pleased to sponsor draft resolution A/C.2/43/L.36/Rev.2 owing to its growing awareness of the need to protect the Brazilian environment. A high point in that process of increasing national awareness of the relationship between development and the environment had been reached with the drafting of a new constitution, the

(Mr. Nogueira-Batista, Brazil)

culmination of a long transition to fully democratic political institutions, which declared the environment a national heritage whose protection was the responsibility of Brazilian government at all levels. In a special chapter on environmental questions, the Constitution placed such areas as the Amazon forest and the Mato Grosso Pantanal under special State protection. Moreover, the Brazilian Government had established a national programme designed to add an environmental dimension to the policies and actions of a number of Government agencies, as well as to encourage enterprises to take account of environmental concerns. Brazil's development objectives were compatible with a sound ecological approach and could be achieved through rational use of the country's vast natural resources.

61. In attempting to develop its economy further, Brazil was determined to make the best possible use of the most modern technologies available. In so doing, it would endeavour to avoid the mistakes made by highly advanced nations, which had caused great damage to their own environment and had been depleting the world's natural resources in a most disproportionate manner. There was also much to be gained from the positive experience of other countries. In some instances, environmental policies could have a major transboundary impact. Technological expertise and, in particular, additional financial resources could play a significant role in the execution of national projects. Projects whose environmental precautions resulted in benefits extending beyond national boundaries were a case in point.

62. Another world conference on environmental matters would provide an opportunity to update and to sharpen States' common perception of individual and collective problems in the field in question. It would also be an unparalleled occasion for considering the issue of co-operation in support of both national undertakings and action by the world community to address global problems. For the reasons he had just stated, the Brazilian Government had decided to offer to host the United Nations conference on environmental matters in 1992. His delegation wished to request the Secretary-General to take that offer into account in preparing his report on the subject.

63. Mr. MARTIN (United Kingdom) said that his Government attached the highest importance to the proposed conference, since it believed that stable prosperity could be achieved throughout the world only if the environment was nurtured and safeguarded. The protection of the balance of nature was one of the great challenges of the late twentieth century. The proposed conference would be a crucial milestone on the road to the preservation of that balance.

64. The United Kingdom therefore welcomed the consensus on draft resolution A/C.2/43/L.36/Rev.2 and intended to play an active part in the preparations for the proposed conference. While fully recognizing that it had not been easy for the sponsors of the draft to secure agreement to that complex text, the United Kingdom delegation regretted that the sponsors had been unable to find language for the new tenth preambular paragraph that could command the full support of all members of the Committee. The United Kingdom had serious reservations about that preambular paragraph, partly owing to the sponsors' failure to provide a clear interpretation

(Mr. Martin, United Kingdom)

of it. The United Kingdom had felt unable to agree to wording whose meaning remained obscure.

65. Nevertheless, the United Kingdom wished to make clear its acceptance that the industrial countries were responsible for a large part of current industrial pollution and had a corresponding responsibility to tackle that problem. It had itself made considerable progress in reducing industrial pollution. Moreover, the United Kingdom Government agreed with the assessment of the World Commission on Environment and Development that the ability of developing countries to tackle the environmental problems of industrial development must be strengthened. Major corporations of the developed countries with expertise in tackling such problems on a practical level had a special responsibility to make use of the expertise they had accumulated when operating in developing countries.

66. With a greater spirit of compromise, it would have been possible to reach consensus on the new tenth preambular paragraph. However, all Member States must now look to the future in order to ensure that in preparing for the proposed conference they did not lose sight of their common objective.

67. Ms. GROS (United States of America) said that the United States shared the concern of all countries about the accelerating deterioration of the human environment, which had undergone many changes since the 1972 Stockholm Conference. The conference called for in the draft resolution just adopted was a logical and fully justified next step in addressing the international community's environmental concerns. Despite its reservations about the proliferation of conferences on the environment, the United States believed that the proposed conference could be very productive, particularly if it gave appropriate consideration to the concept of sustainable development.

68. Although the United States supported the underlying purpose of the draft resolution, it had reservations about the text itself. While recognizing the sponsors' difficulties in formulating a text that could meet the needs of all delegations, the United States considered certain elements that remained in the text just adopted to be unbalanced and inappropriate. Where the new tenth preambular paragraph was concerned, the United States believed that it was important to recognize that all countries had the main responsibility for combating pollution originating in their own territory. As a developed country, it recognized the particular role it could and must play in combating pollution. Pollution was a problem of world-wide concern, and all countries needed to address it in a co-operative spirit.

69. Despite those reservations, the United States had not called for a vote on the draft resolution, since it believed that it was important to show unified support for the proposed conference in 1992. It was to be hoped that a spirit of co-operation would prevail in the coming year and that the objectives, context and scope of the proposed conference would be balanced so as to reflect the common interests of all countries.

70. Mr. BORCHARD (Federal Republic of Germany) said that his delegation welcomed the consensus on draft resolution A/C.2/43/L.36/Rev.2. Since his Government was deeply committed to the protection of the environment and, in particular, to strengthening

(Mr. Borchard, Federal
Republic of Germany)

international co-operation in that field, it strongly supported the idea of convening a United Nations conference to address environmental issues in a global context and as a common concern of mankind. Within the global framework, such specific issues as the relationship between development and environment would have to be addressed. It was obvious that the discussion of environmental issues would have to take into account the ideas of the World Commission on Environment and Development, such as the concept of sustainable development. The discussion on the draft resolution just adopted had confirmed his delegation's view that any decision on the substance and possible outcome of the proposed conference needed further deliberation and expert input. The Federal Republic of Germany was therefore pleased that in the preparatory process the views of the Governing Council of UNEP would be sought and the Executive Director of UNEP would be involved. It was to be hoped that in preparing for the proposed conference all Member States would be guided by a commitment to "Our Common Future", in order to overcome the growing problems of environmental degradation in all its forms - not just industrial pollution. It would not be helpful to attribute blame or unilateral responsibility for such problems to certain countries or groups of countries. Instead, Member States should remember that only co-operative action offered hope of improvement.

71. Mr. SHAABAN (Egypt) said that his delegation had become a sponsor of the draft resolution just adopted because it firmly believed in the importance of convening a United Nations conference on the environment and the relationship between the environment and development. Egypt had been giving priority attention to issues relating to the environment, both nationally and at the African level. In fact, Egypt had hosted the first session of the African Ministerial Conference on Environment, in 1985.

72. Mr. DE CATERINA (Italy) said that his delegation had joined in the consensus on the draft resolution before the Committee because it was in favour of convening the conference in question in 1992. Italy was convinced of the importance of maintaining and, if necessary, restoring the environmental balance in all countries and in all regions of the world by combating and preventing pollution at its source. The efforts of all countries were of fundamental importance in that connection. Italy was also convinced that the developing countries should be able to count on active support from the international community in identifying, analysing, monitoring, preventing and managing environmental problems. It was therefore unable to understand the rationale for the language used by the sponsors in the new tenth preambular paragraph, in respect of which it still had strong reservations.

73. Mr. VALLENILLA (Venezuela) said it was gratifying that the draft resolution before the Committee had been adopted by consensus. Although Venezuela would have liked a number of elements that were of major importance to the developing countries to be included in the text, it recognized that that had not been possible.

(Mr. Vallenilla, Venezuela)

74. Venezuela attached particular importance to the new tenth preambular paragraph, which contained the elements of fundamental principles relating to international co-operation in the field of environmental issues that would be of particular relevance at the proposed conference. All countries had responsibilities where the environment was concerned. However, the new tenth preambular paragraph set forth the principle that the developed countries had a particular responsibility regarding efforts to solve environmental problems. The exercise of that responsibility should take the form, *inter alia*, of action in the scientific and technological field and in the financial field. Such action must be taken not only in the territory of the States concerned; appropriate action must also be taken at the international level to repair and prevent environmental damage. It could be said that the preambular paragraph in question was deliberately unbalanced. Although the developing countries had an obligation to deal with environmental problems, it was incumbent on the developed countries to make a yet greater effort. Venezuela was fulfilling its own responsibilities in that respect at the national level, particularly through the adoption of appropriate legislation. At the international level, particularly at the United Nations, it had been taking initiatives in the environmental field that reflected its profound concern. Furthermore, the Uruguay Declaration (A/43/791, annex), which contained the views of seven Latin American heads of State, including the President of Venezuela, reflected the willingness of the countries concerned to make a contribution in the field under consideration, without prejudice to their development.

75. Mr. OULD EL GHAOUTH (Mauritania) said that his delegation had been pleased to join in the consensus on draft resolution A/C.2/43/L.36/Rev.2, which dealt with an important initiative. However, he wished to stress the importance of devoting due attention to such serious problems as those of desertification, drought and erosion.

76. Mr. LABERGE (Canada) said that the adoption of draft resolution A/C.2/43/L.36/Rev.2 marked an important step towards the convening of the 1992 conference. The text represented a delicate balance between various points of view, and its adoption by consensus should ensure optimum conditions for the preparations for the conference.

77. Mr. UTHEIM (Norway) said it was gratifying that, with due flexibility, it had proved possible to adopt the draft resolution by consensus. Indeed, there had been no disagreement on the need to convene the conference in 1992.

78. Mr. WORONIECKI (Poland) said that environmental protection was a global issue for which all States had responsibility. The prospects for ecological security and environmentally sound development had been improved by the adoption of the draft resolution, which would also promote co-operation in other areas of concern to the Committee. His delegation welcomed the initiatives which had led to the submission of the text and the offers to host the conference.

79. Mr. LEMERLE (France) said that while his delegation had joined the consensus, it regretted that the amendments it had proposed had not been accepted. In

(Mr. Lomerle, France)

particular, the new tenth preambular paragraph could be taken as a condemnation of some countries, and it would have been better to have eliminated any scope for misunderstanding. His delegation welcomed the Canadian and Swedish initiative which had led to the submission of the text and the offer by Brazil to host the conference. It was of particular importance to ensure that environmental problems, rather than other related issues, constituted the central element at the conference.

80. Mr. GOPINATHAN (India) said that his delegation attached some importance to the new tenth preambular paragraph as an essential element in any attempt to deal with environmental pollution. Primary responsibility would rest with the developed countries so long as their per capita pollution and their standards of living were higher than those of other countries. An equitable approach must be taken in the preparations for the conference.

81. Mr. NATHON (Hungary) said that his delegation congratulated those responsible for the emergence of a consensus on the draft resolution. His Government strongly supported sustainable and environmentally sound development and had taken action in accordance with the recommendations of the World Commission on Environment and Development. Due account should be taken of regional aspects in the preparations for the 1992 conference.

82. Mr. LICHTINGER (Mexico) said that the question of the environment, and, in particular, the convening of the conference, necessitated international co-operation and understanding. It was important to clearly define the differences between the developed and developing countries in terms of responsibility for environmental damage and protection. Account should also be taken of the financial and technical means available to countries. It was in that light that the ninth and tenth preambular paragraphs should be understood. Ninety-one delegations would note that there was still no satisfactory definition of the concept of sustainable and environmentally sound development. Preparations for the conference would provide an opportunity to reach an understanding on that question and on how such development was to be attained, without imposing further financial or environmental conditions on developing countries, while ensuring respect for development priorities. His delegation welcomed the offer by Brazil to host the conference.

83. Mr. FALL (Senegal) said that the adoption of the draft resolution by consensus testified to the importance attached by delegations to the conference. His delegation supported the views expressed by the representatives of Mauritania and Mexico. In the preparations for the conference, account should be taken of the fact that desertification was the major environmental problem facing African countries.

84. Mr. PINZON (Colombia) said that adoption of the draft resolution augured well for the preparatory process for the conference. His delegation particularly appreciated the efforts of Brazil, Canada and Sweden.

85. Mr. PORTUGAL (Peru) said that the convening of the conference would be one of the main events of the decade and would represent a priority task for the international community inasmuch as it was related to the endeavours of the developing countries to meet their economic and social needs while ensuring sustainable development. His delegation welcomed the adoption of the draft resolution by consensus.

86. Mr. PAYTON (New Zealand) said, with reference to the new tenth preambular paragraph, that his country, while developed, had no responsibility for industrial pollution. The text represented a careful compromise, and his delegation regretted the questioning by some speakers of the basis on which that compromise had been reached. Most countries admitted that pollution was a serious problem, and all countries, developed and developing, must approach the situation seriously. The initiative taken by Canada and Sweden represented a major achievement.

87. Mr. FERNANDEZ (Philippines) said that environmental degradation constituted a major challenge to the international community. His delegation thus welcomed the adoption of the draft resolution by consensus.

88. Mr. ELGHOUAYEL (Tunisia) said that there was an urgent need to update the work of the 1972 Stockholm Conference. Environmental problems had become even more pressing in the interim. The 1992 conference would add a new dimension to international awareness of the need for a balance between development and environmental protection.

89. Mr. DE LA TORRE (Argentina) said that his delegation welcomed the consensus on the draft resolution. The concept of sustainable and environmentally sound development should be further explored at the conference.

90. Mr. GIANELLI (Uruguay) said that attention should now be devoted to ensuring that preparations for the conference went smoothly, rather than wasting time on arguing over the text already adopted.

AGENDA ITEM 84: OPERATIONAL ACTIVITIES FOR DEVELOPMENT (continued) (A/C.2/43/L.42, L.44, L.78 and L.80)

Draft resolution (A/C.2/43/L.78) and draft decision (A/C.2/43/L.80) on operational activities for development

91. Mr. OTOBO (Nigeria), introducing the draft resolution and the draft decision, said that agreement had been reached in informal consultations on the wording of draft resolution A/C.2/43/L.78, which was based on draft resolutions A/C.2/43/L.42 and L.44. Draft decision A/C.2/43/L.80 was part of the compromise package, in that it contained those questions on which no agreement had been reached. With regard to the draft decision, the end of the initial paragraph should read "... the second regular session of 1989 of the Economic and Social Council for further consideration and appropriate action", and the three paragraphs contained in the annex to the draft decision should be placed between square brackets.

92. Mr. LEENSTRA (Netherlands), referring to draft resolution A/C.2/43/L.78, said that, in paragraph 6 (b), the phrase "inter-agency agreements" should be replaced by "inter-agency arrangements". With regard to draft decision A/C.2/43/L.80, in the view of his delegation no agreement had been reached on paragraph 1 of the annex; accordingly, he proposed that the Committee should defer its consideration of the draft decision.
93. The CHAIRMAN said that, if he heard no objection, he would take it that the Committee wished to adopt draft resolution A/C.2/43/L.78, as orally revised.
94. It was so decided.
95. Mr. ELGHOUAYEL (Tunisia), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77, said that draft decision A/C.2/43/L.80 had been the object of consensus during the informal consultations and he was therefore surprised at the statement made by the representative of the Netherlands. He would not object, however, to having further consultations.
96. Mr. OTOBO (Nigeria), speaking as Vice-Chairman of the Committee, said he was appalled at the procedure by which agreements arrived at were permitted to unravel. He would not have submitted a draft decision on which agreement had not been reached.
97. Mr. NATHON (Hungary) said that he too was surprised that the representative of the Netherlands wished to defer consideration of the draft decision.
98. Mr. LEENSTRA (Netherlands) said he saw no reason why reconsideration of the draft decision, simply in order to clear up what appeared to be an unfortunate misunderstanding, should be a problem.
99. Mr. ELGHOUAYEL (Tunisia) said he was prepared to defer a decision pending consultations to resolve any difficulties.
100. Mr. PAYTON (New Zealand) said that the draft decision reflected a carefully crafted compromise which was understandably being questioned because it covered difficult issues on which views diverged very sharply. It was for that reason that the three operative paragraphs were to be placed in square brackets, thus providing a workable, if not ideal, solution conducive to achieving consensus.
101. Mr. LEENSTRA (Netherlands) said that he could accept that proposal and, despite reservations, was prepared to take action on the draft decision.
102. The CHAIRMAN, after a discussion in which Mr. ELGHOUAYEL (Tunisia), Mr. NATHON (Hungary), and Mr. PAYTON (New Zealand) participated, suggested that paragraph 2 of the draft decision should become paragraph 2 (a) and that paragraph 3 should be joined to it as paragraph 2 (b), thus reducing it to two paragraphs to be placed in square brackets.

103. Mr. LABERGE (Canada) suggested the addition of the word "or" after the semicolon concluding paragraph 2 (a) so as to make it clear that an alternative was being presented.

104. After a further discussion in which Mr. NATHON (Hungary), Mr. PAYTON (New Zealand) and Mr. ELGHOUAYEL (Tunisia) took part, the CHAIRMAN said that if he heard no objection he would take it that the Committee decided to defer consideration of draft decision A/C.2/43/L.80.

105. It was so decided.

AGENDA ITEM 86: SPECIAL ECONOMIC AND DISASTER RELIEF ASSISTANCE (continued)

(b) SPECIAL PROGRAMMES OF ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE (continued) (A/C.2/43/L.67)

Draft resolution on assistance to Benin, the Central African Republic, Djibouti, Ecuador, Madagascar and Vanuatu (A/C.2/43/L.67)

106. The CHAIRMAN said that one delegation had requested that reference should be made to its country in the text of draft resolution A/C.2/43/L.67, which had been adopted by the Committee at its 45th meeting, in language similar to that included in General Assembly resolution 42/205. If he heard no objection, he would take it that the Committee agreed to reopen discussion of agenda item 86 for that purpose.

107. It was so decided.

108. Mr. STOBX (Secretary of the Committee) said that, in the title of draft resolution A/C.2/43/L.67, "Democratic Yemen" should be inserted before "Djibouti".

109. A new eighth preambular paragraph should be inserted incorporating the language of the seventh preambular paragraph of General Assembly resolution 42/205, and reading:

"Noting the efforts made by the Government of Democratic Yemen in its rehabilitation and reconstruction programmes in response to the devastating consequences of the floods in 1982,".

110. In the penultimate preambular paragraph, now the fourteenth, "Democratic Yemen" should be inserted before "Djibouti".

111. Mr. PAYTON (New Zealand) said that his delegation welcomed the announcement that Democratic Yemen had been able to join the omnibus text on special economic and disaster relief assistance. It had been somewhat concerned at the significant increase in the number of country-specific resolutions on the item and hoped that more countries would be willing to accept the omnibus text as an appropriate vehicle for the expression of their legitimate development and special assistance needs.

112. The CHAIRMAN said that, if he heard no objection, he would take it that the Committee wished to adopt draft resolution A/C.2/43/L.67 as orally revised.

113. It was so decided.

114. Mr. AL-ALFI (Democratic Yemen) said that he would like to thank the members of the Committee for their readiness to reopen discussion of the item in order to rectify the oversight by which mention of Democratic Yemen had been omitted from the text of draft resolution A/C.2/43/L.67.

AGENDA ITEM 143: RESPONSIBILITY OF STATES FOR THE PROTECTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT AND PREVENTION OF ENVIRONMENTAL POLLUTION AS A RESULT OF THE ACCUMULATION OF TOXIC AND RADIOACTIVE WASTES, AND STRENGTHENING OF INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION FOR THE PURPOSE OF RESOLVING THE PROBLEM (continued) (A/C.2/43/L.23 and L.74)

Draft resolution on responsibility of States for the protection of the environment: prevention of the illegal international traffic in, and the dumping and resulting accumulation of, toxic and dangerous products and wastes affecting the developing countries in particular (A/C.2/43/L.74)

115. Mr. FERNANDEZ (Philippines), Vice-Chairman, said that draft resolution A/C.2/43/L.74 had been the result of painstaking informal consultations on draft resolution A/C.2/43/L.23. In the second line of paragraph 2 of the draft, the word "competent" should be inserted between the words "the" and "authorities".

116. The CHAIRMAN said that, if he heard no objection, he would take it that the Committee wished to adopt draft resolution A/C.2/43/L.74, as orally revised.

117. It was so decided.

118. Mr. OLUKANNI (Nigeria) commended the spirit of compromise displayed by delegations in reaching a consensus that embodied recognition of the problem of the illegal dumping of toxic wastes and the need for co-operation in combating traffic in such wastes. The reference in paragraph 5 of the draft resolution requesting the Ad Hoc Working Group to take cognizance of the resolution was very important. It must be the case that large quantities of toxic wastes were awaiting discovery in many developing countries, and the international community must assist the developing countries in coping with the problem.

119. Mr. CAHILL (United States of America) said that his country had been pleased to join the consensus on the draft resolution. The United States recognized the need for all States to address the illegal international traffic in toxic products and wastes. In connection with paragraph 3 of the draft, the United States supported the principle of prior notification to all countries involved in the transboundary movement of toxic and dangerous wastes. It regarded line 3 of that paragraph, urging all States "to provide all information required to ensure the proper management of the wastes", as applying only to the transboundary movement of such wastes.

120. The CHAIRMAN said that, if he heard no objection, he would take it that, in the light of the adoption of draft resolution A/C.2/43/L.74, draft resolution A/C.2/43/L.23 was now withdrawn by its sponsors.

121. It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 12 20 a.m.