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DEVELOPMENT AND INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC CO-OPERATION:
LONG-TERM TRENDS IN SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Report of the Second Committee (Part VII)*

Rapporteur: Mr. Martin WALTER (Czechoslovakia)

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The Second Committee held a substantive debate on item 82 (see A/43/915, para. 2). Action to be taken on sub-item (f) was considered at the 43rd, 47th and 48th meetings, on 21 November and 6 and 9 December 1988. An account of the Committee's general discussion of the item is contained in the relevant summary records (A/C.2/43/SR.43, 47 and 48).

II. CONSIDERATION OF PROPOSALS

A. Draft resolutions A/C.2/43/L.51 and L.73

2. At the 43rd meeting, on 21 November, the representative of Poland introduced a draft resolution (A/C.2/43/L.51) entitled "Examination of long-term trends in economic and social development", which read as follows:

"The General Assembly,

"Recalling its resolutions 3508 (XXX) of 15 December 1975, 32/57 of 8 December 1977, 34/57 of 29 November 1979, 37/249 of 21 December 1982 and 40/207 of 17 December 1985,

* The report of the Committee on this item will be issued in nine parts (see also A/43/915 and Add.1-5 and Add.7 and 8).

"Recognizing that reactivation of the economic and social development process of the developing countries is indispensable for the harmonious growth of the world economy and global well-being,

"Considering that the elaboration of an international development strategy for the fourth United Nations development decade, called for in its resolution 42/193 of 11 December 1987, would greatly benefit from the examination of long-term social and economic trends, and their forecasted interaction, on the eve of the decade,

"Conscious of the expediency to continue, in this juncture, the identification of potential problem areas and critical issues in the world economy, especially those of external debt and development, as well as persistent imbalances among developed countries,

"Convinced that conclusions emanating from the research on these trends may strengthen the capability for anticipating potential world economic problems and provide impetus to international and domestic policies and decision-making processes to deal with them before they become unmanageable,

"Aware of the role that the United Nations is mandated and capable of playing in the stimulation of changing perceptions, formation of ideas and policy concepts in the social and economic sectors, as well as in the generation of future-oriented common approaches to key international economic and social issues,

"1. Takes note of the report of the Secretary-General on the overall socio-economic perspective of the world economy to the year 2000; 1/

"2. Requests the Secretary-General to update and modify, where appropriate, the overall socio-economic perspective of the world economy to the year 2000, in co-operation with the Secretary-General of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, in the light of the debate at the forty-third session of the General Assembly and preceding discussion in the second regular session of 1988 of the Economic and Social Council, as well as the recommendations of the Committee for Development Planning, so as to increase its utility as a background material for the preparation of the international development strategy for the fourth United Nations development decade;

"3. Invites the Committee for Development Planning to examine conceptual aspects of the overall socio-economic perspective of the world economy to the year 2000 to make it as useful an instrument as possible to bring about global rationality and equity into the world economy, and to avert potential perils indicated in the report of the Secretary-General;

"4. Decides to update regularly the overall socio-economic perspective of the world economy to the year 2000 and prepare on that basis every five years a comprehensive report while selecting for topic-oriented studies the areas of common concern which warrant the special attention of the international community."

3. At the 47th meeting, on 6 December, the Vice-Chairman of the Committee, Mr. Ejeviome Eloho Ootobo (Nigeria) introduced a draft resolution (A/C.2/43/L.73), submitted on the basis of informal consultations held on draft resolution A/C.2/43/L.51.

4. At the same meeting, the Committee adopted draft resolution A/C.2/43/L.73, without a vote (see para. 12, draft resolution I).

5. In the light of the adoption of draft resolution A/C.2/43/L.73, draft resolution A/C.2/43/L.51 was withdrawn by its sponsors.

B. Draft resolution A/C.2/43/L.56 and Rev.1

6. At the 43rd meeting, on 21 November, the representative of Tunisia, on behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the Group of 77, introduced a draft resolution (A/C.2/43/L.56) entitled "International co-operation for the eradication of poverty in developing countries", which read as follows:

"The General Assembly,

"Recalling its resolutions 3201 (S-VI) and 3202 (S-VI) of 1 May 1974, containing the Declaration and the Programme of Action on the Establishment of a New International Economic Order, 3281 (XXIX) of 12 December 1974, containing the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States, and 3362 (S-VII) of 16 September 1975 on development and international economic co-operation,

"Recalling also Economic and Social Council resolution 1988/47 of 27 May 1988 on extreme poverty,

"Aware that the deepening of the economic crisis in developing countries, resulting from large structural imbalances in the world economy, has seriously impeded the development process in those countries and their capacity to undertake social and economic programmes for, inter alia, the eradication of poverty,

"Deeply concerned that a significant percentage of the world population lives in conditions of absolute poverty,

"Concerned that the deterioration of the terms of trade, the net transfer of real resources from developing countries, intensified protectionism on the part of industrialized countries, high real interest rates, unstable exchange

rates, malfunctioning of the international monetary system, the collapse of commodity prices and the heavy burden of external debt in developing countries have retarded development and aggravated poverty in developing countries,

"Aware that the eradication of poverty is made more difficult by the absence of growth and development in developing countries, owing to the adverse international economic environment, which threatens their social and political stability and aggravates the problem of poverty,

"Deeply concerned that structural adjustment programmes in developing countries have exacerbated poverty in those countries and have limited their ability to attain their socio-economic objectives,

"Emphasizing the need for new and imaginative approaches to the eradication of poverty in developing countries as an integral part of the reactivation of growth and development in those countries,

"1. Urges the developed countries to tackle the structural imbalances in the world economy and achieve, as a priority, a supportive international economic environment for growth and development that will enable developing countries to reactivate their development process and eradicate poverty;

"2. Requests the regional commissions, in accordance with their mandates, to contribute to the strengthening of regional and subregional co-operation and to study options, including new approaches oriented towards the reactivation of growth and development in developing countries, in order to enable them to address effectively the eradication of poverty;

"3. Requests the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its forty-fourth session a report analysing the impact of the economic crisis in developing countries on the intensity of poverty in those countries and containing recommendations for effective international policy measures for the urgent and permanent eradication of poverty in accordance with the present resolution."

7. At the 48th meeting, on 9 December, the Vice-Chairman of the Committee, Mr. Ejeviome Eloho Otobo (Nigeria), made a statement in which he informed the Committee of the outcome of the informal consultations held on the draft resolution.

8. The representative of Tunisia, on behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the Group of 77, introduced a revised draft resolution (A/C.2/43/L.56/Rev.1) and proposed the following revisions:

(a) Deleting the eighth preambular paragraph, which read as follows:

"Deeply concerned that negative effects of structural adjustment programmes in developing countries have exacerbated poverty, particularly among vulnerable groups in those countries, and have limited their ability to attain their socio-economic objectives";

(b) Inserting the words "in support of their national efforts" after the words "international community", in operative paragraph 3.

9. Following statements by the representatives of the United States of America, Tunisia (on behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the Group of 77), Morocco, Norway and Iraq, the representative of Tunisia (on behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the Group of 77) withdrew the proposed revisions mentioned in paragraph 8 above, and instead revised the draft resolution by replacing operative paragraph 3, which had read:

"Requests the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its forty-fourth session a report analysing the impact of the adverse economic situation of developing countries on the intensity of poverty in those countries and containing recommendations for effective international co-operation and concrete measures to be undertaken by the international community for the eradication of poverty in those countries"

with operative paragraph 3 of the original draft resolution (A/C.2/43/L.56) (see para. 6 above).

10. Following statements by the representatives of Canada, Greece (on behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the European Community), Iraq, Tunisia (on behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the Group of 77) and Italy, the Committee then adopted draft resolution A/C.2/43/L.56/Rev.1, as orally revised, by a recorded vote of 97 to 1, with 19 abstentions (see para. 17, draft resolution II). The result of the voting was as follows: 2/

In favour: Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Angola, Argentina, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burma, Burundi, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Czechoslovakia, Democratic Yemen, Djibouti, Ecuador, Egypt, Ethiopia, German Democratic Republic, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Jamaica, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lesotho, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Qatar, Romania, Rwanda, Sao Tome and Principe, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Singapore, Somalia, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Swaziland, Thailand, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of

2/ The delegation of Nepal subsequently indicated that, had it been present at the time of the voting, it would have voted in favour of the draft resolution.

Soviet Socialist Republics, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela, Yugoslavia, Zaire, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

Against: United States of America.

Abstaining: Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Federal Republic of, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

11. After the adoption of the draft resolution statements were made by the representatives of Greece (on behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the European Economic Community), the United States of America, Canada, Denmark (on behalf of the Nordic countries), Austria and Colombia (see A/C.2/43/SR.49).

III. RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE SECOND COMMITTEE

12. The Second Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft resolutions:

DRAFT RESOLUTION I

Examination of long-term trends in economic and social development

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 3508 (XXX) of 15 December 1975, 32/57 of 8 December 1977, 34/57 of 29 November 1979, 37/249 of 21 December 1982 and 40/207 of 17 December 1985,

Recognizing that restoration of the economic and social development process of the developing countries is indispensable for the sustained growth of the international economy and world-wide well-being,

Considering that an examination of long-term social and economic trends, and their forecasted interaction, would be useful in the elaboration of an international development strategy for the fourth United Nations development decade, called for in its resolution 42/193 of 11 December 1987,

Conscious of the expediency of continuing to identify potential problem areas and critical issues in the world economy in order further to strengthen the capability for anticipating and responding to them by means of mutually supportive, co-ordinated policies,

Aware of the role that the United Nations is mandated to play and capable of playing in the formulation of future-oriented common approaches to key international economic and social issues,

1. Takes note with interest of the report of the Secretary-General on the overall socio-economic perspective of the world economy to the year 2000; 3/

2. Requests the Secretary-General to update, as appropriate, the report on the overall socio-economic perspective of the world economy to the year 2000, in co-operation with the Secretary-General of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, taking into account the debate in the General Assembly at its forty-third session and the preceding discussion in the Economic and Social Council at its second regular session of 1988 as well as the views expressed by the Committee for Development Planning, so as to enhance its utility as one of the background documents for the preparation of the international development strategy for the fourth United Nations development decade;

3. Also requests the Secretary-General to prepare a comprehensive report, on the basis of the updated overall socio-economic perspective of the world economy and in time for the middle of the decade, and to consider the preparation of a subsequent report towards the end of the decade while selecting for topic-oriented studies the areas of common concern which warrant the special attention of the international community.

DRAFT RESOLUTION II

International co-operation for the eradication of poverty in developing countries

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 3201 (S-VI) and 3202 (S-VI) of 1 May 1974, containing the Declaration and the Programme of Action on the Establishment of a New International Economic Order, 3281 (XXIX) of 12 December 1974, containing the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States, and 3362 (S-VII) of 16 September 1975 on development and international economic co-operation,

Recalling also Economic and Social Council resolution 1988/47 of 27 May 1988 on extreme poverty,

Aware that the adverse economic situation of developing countries, exacerbated by large structural imbalances in the world economy, has hindered the development process in those countries and their capacity to undertake social and economic programmes for, inter alia, the eradication of poverty,

Deeply concerned that a significant percentage of the world population lives in conditions of absolute poverty and that, in developing countries, poverty can be a threat to their social and political stability,

Stressing that the eradication of poverty is one of the most important development objectives requiring action by the international community at all levels,

Noting the importance of achieving effective international co-operation designed to support national efforts aimed at the eradication of poverty,

Aware that the eradication of poverty is made more difficult by a range of factors in the international economic environment that impede growth and development in the developing countries, inter alia, the worsening in the terms of trade, intensified protectionism, high real interest rates, depressed commodity prices and the heavy burden of external debt,

Deeply concerned that negative effects of structural adjustment programmes in developing countries have exacerbated poverty, particularly among vulnerable groups in those countries, and have limited their ability to attain their socio-economic objectives,

Emphasizing the need for new and imaginative approaches to the eradication of poverty in developing countries as an integral part of the promotion of growth and development in those countries,

1. Urges the international community to achieve, as a priority, a supportive international economic environment for growth and development that will reinforce the efforts of developing countries to revitalize their development process and eradicate poverty;

2. Requests the regional commissions, in accordance with their mandates, to contribute more effectively to the strengthening of regional and subregional co-operation and to study options, including new approaches oriented towards the revitalization of growth and development in developing countries, in order to enable them to address effectively the eradication of poverty;

3. Requests the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its forty-fourth session a report analysing the impact of the economic crisis in developing countries on the intensity of poverty in those countries and containing recommendations for effective international policy measures for the urgent and permanent eradication of poverty in accordance with the present resolution.