



SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 37th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. DIETZE (German Democratic Republic)

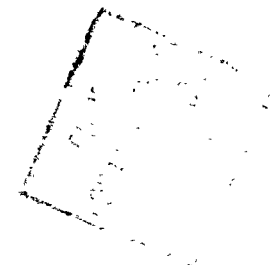
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The meeting was called to order at 3.25 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 81: SPECIAL ECONOMIC AND DISASTER RELIEF ASSISTANCE (continued)

- (a) OFFICE OF THE UNITED NATIONS DISASTER RELIEF CO-ORDINATOR: REPORTS OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (A/38/3 (Part II); A/38/201 and Corr.1 and 2; A/38/202) (continued)
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- (c) IMPLEMENTATION OF THE MEDIUM-TERM AND LONG-TERM RECOVERY AND REHABILITATION PROGRAMME IN THE SUDANO-SAHELIAN REGION: REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (A/38/152, 180 and Add.1) (continued)

1. Ms. FANG Ping (China) said that, since the adoption of General Assembly resolutions 36/225 and 37/144, the work of the United Nations in dealing with emergency situations and disasters had been strengthened. In the past year, the Office of the United Nations Disaster Relief Co-ordinator (UNDRO) had organized and co-ordinated more disaster relief activities than ever before; in addition to such natural disasters as drought, floods, cyclones and earthquakes, the world had also experienced emergencies as a result of internal disorders and military operations, including the exceptional difficulties brought on in some West African countries by the return of several hundred thousand citizens from abroad. The disaster preparedness and disaster prevention activities of UNDRO had also increased. That overall increase in UNDRO activities obviously reflected increases in the number of disasters and emergencies occurring in recent times, but also demonstrated that UNDRO was responding to emergency situations in a more need-specific and timely manner than before. In a time when natural and man-made disasters occurred together, UNDRO constituted an indispensable focal point within the United Nations system for the co-ordination of disaster relief activities. Her delegation hoped that the work of UNDRO would continue to be strengthened so that the Office might become even more effective.

2. The majority of countries mentioned in the reports of the Secretary-General on special economic assistance programmes suffered from adverse climatic or geographic conditions; most of them were least developed countries which lacked funds and technological capacity. Colonial rule and inequitable world economic structures had had a strong negative impact on their economies. Under the current worsening world economic conditions, their single-product economies were the first to be affected. Among those States, the front-line States of southern Africa also suffered from hardships caused by an influx of refugees. Under the circumstances, those countries lacked the capacity to implement their social and economic development plans.

3. In the past year, the relevant United Nations bodies and agencies had done much to mobilize and co-ordinate international assistance and implement technical assistance programmes. Her delegation welcomed the expansion of the United Nations

(Ms. Fang Ping, China)

Sahelian Office (UNSO) in the past year and the excellent co-operative relationships which it had forged with the members of the Permanent Inter-State Committee on Drought Control in the Sahel (CILSS).

4. China's history was similar to that of most developing countries. Since the founding of the People's Republic, the country had endeavoured to overcome all sorts of difficulties; the Government and people of China were well aware of those countries' desire to solve their problems and carry out their economic development. China had chosen to follow the path of bilateral assistance vis-à-vis less well-endowed countries, including the countries of the Sudano-Sahelian region, which had received economic assistance and technical co-operation from China. China had also been a provider of disaster relief; between July 1982 and June 1983, the Chinese Red Cross had provided 31 countries and agencies with emergency assistance in the form of cash and foodstuffs valued at more than \$US 1.2 million. The Chinese Government would continue to do its part in such efforts to the best of its ability.

5. Mr. SMITH (Jamaica) commended the work of UNDR0 in promoting disaster prevention and preparedness measures, and mobilizing and delivering emergency assistance with the aid of various United Nations agencies. Jamaica was situated in a vulnerable region and appreciated initiatives in disaster preparedness; indeed, the Government had established an advanced and well-co-ordinated national emergency relief system with the aid of UNDR0 and the United States Agency for Industrial Development, and its Office for disaster preparedness had formulated a national disaster plan including an emergency communications system and national emergency operations centre; meanwhile, it was concentrating on research into disaster forecasting and preventive and relief measures as well as public education in voluntary work.

6. During the past year UNDR0 had continued to aid the Jamaican disaster office and had sponsored Jamaicans to attend regional and international workshops on topics relevant to disaster relief. That UNDR0 support was complemented by the Pan Caribbean Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Project, involving some 21 Caribbean countries in an integrated approach to disaster preparedness and the management of relief services in an area where a single natural disaster was likely to affect a significant part of the region. During the previous year an emergency telecommunications network had been installed and his Government was now urging further co-operation with UNDR0 in meteorology, seismology and the sharing of information on housing and control of land use, so as to avoid developing high-risk areas within the islands.

7. In a wider context, his delegation welcomed the steps taken towards improving the capacity of the United Nations system to respond to emergency situations, particularly by establishing clearer guidelines and reducing the legal obstacles sometimes encountered in relief delivery. He was gratified to note the international community's response to the work of UNDR0 through increased voluntary contributions, although much more needed to be done.

8. Mr. AARDAL (Norway), speaking also on behalf of Denmark, Finland, Iceland and Sweden, expressed the appreciation of those countries of the increasing efficiency of UNDR0, even though much remained to be done. The Nordic countries attached great importance to the strengthening of UNDR0 disaster prevention and preparedness activities, and one step in that direction would be to establish closer contacts between UNDR0 and other organizations in that field of work. They realized that disaster preparedness activities did not appear to enjoy the priority they deserved either in the programmes of disaster prone countries or in the financial programmes of donors, and the co-ordinator could play a useful part in mobilizing public support in those two categories of countries.

9. He noted with appreciation that a number of preparedness projects had been included recently in UNDP country programmes, and UNDR0 could play a useful role in encouraging development organizations to intensify their prevention and preparedness measures. Since natural disasters often affected more than one country, the Nordic countries favoured UNDR0 support for regional projects.

10. He noted that a number of activities had been streamlined, in accordance with the policy guidelines given by the General Assembly; for example, early warning systems were continuously monitored, and an emergency duty system had been put into operation to enable the Office to react promptly to any disaster alert.

11. It was important that the proposals contained in the Secretary-General's report (A/38/202) should be followed up by appropriate action; one way of ensuring that would be for UNDR0 to invite interested countries to discuss the report. There might also be a need for another, similar report when more experience had been gained in the implementation of General Assembly resolutions 36/225 and 37/144.

12. UNDR0 played a key role as a co-ordinator and source of disaster relief information, and its role should be based on its contacts with non-governmental organizations engaged in disaster relief activities.

13. While the Nordic countries had a positive attitude towards strengthening evaluation systems, they recognized that disaster relief evaluation might present particular problems. However, they were convinced that future work could be improved by the application of lessons learned, such as measures to prevent repetition of a disaster, methods of alleviating damage, and improving the means of supplying disaster relief. However, in saying that, he wished to make it clear that the Nordic countries were not prepared to commit themselves to additional contributions to the Trust Fund; UNDR0 was not intended to engage in operational activities and he failed to see any need to expand the Fund, since if a disaster called for increased contributions, the international community should be able to mobilize the funds required without delay. In that connection, the general positive attitude of the Nordic countries towards UNDR0 activities had been reflected in their response to its appeals.

14. The Nordic countries believed that due attention should be given to the needs of a disaster-stricken population after the initial disaster phase had given place to the long process of rehabilitation and reconstruction.

15. Mr. BITAR (Lebanon) said that for the sixth consecutive year, the report on assistance for the reconstruction and development of Lebanon (A/38/217 and Add.1) was being discussed under the shadow of events that were causing further loss of life, damage to property and an increase in displaced population; they called for greater emergency humanitarian assistance and an increase in the Lebanese Government's programme for reconstruction and development. However, his delegation's main concern was what should be done to help Lebanon regain peace, stability and economic recovery.
16. For the past eight years, Lebanon had been subjected to intervention in its internal affairs under the cover of considerations of the security and interests of countries at odds in the area. Those conflicts had encouraged the divergences in the Lebanese society so that the ensuing war had assumed the semblance of civil war.
17. While the supply of certain types of weapons normally entailed weeks of negotiation, it was their availability in unlimited quantities that was making the situation in Lebanon so unstable. Lebanon's most urgent need was for concerted action by the international community to prevent aggression against the country and its people, and to stop the flow of weapons, armed men and money to finance subversion. Recent events were an additional proof of the wars of others being waged on Lebanese soil.
18. The Lebanese had always displayed considerable tolerance for each other's ways of life and special interests, and thus ensured peaceful coexistence. The recent reconciliation conference in Geneva was another proof that the Lebanese, if left to themselves, could reach an agreement.
19. The Secretary-General's report (A/38/217 and Add.1) and the statement by the United Nations Co-ordinator for the Reconstruction and Development of Lebanon gave a realistic picture of the progress already achieved and the problems which Lebanon continued to face in its reconstruction phase. Many projects had been completed and the rest of the Lebanese Government's programme was either being executed or awaiting financing. His Government placed high priority on restoring its economy and rehabilitating the social sector but those priorities were conditioned by what was possible rather than merely desirable.
20. The past 12 months could be divided into two periods: the first, one of progress and confidence in the future, and the second, one which was daily being described in the news media. During the first period, distinct progress had been achieved, starting from the unanimous election of Lebanon's President. No effort had been spared to accelerate the execution of reconstruction and development projects with the help of international, regional or local institutions. Those efforts had soon borne fruit: Beirut had been united physically and the Government had extended its control over and beyond the greater Beirut area; the Government's revenues from customs duties had more than tripled; economic activity was recovering; confidence had been regained and the value of the Lebanese pound had appreciated by over 25 per cent. That had not been achieved by the Lebanese alone. The prompt and generous help by the international community had set an example of international co-operation.

(Mr. Bitar, Lebanon)

21. However, as stated in the report, the launching of a full-scale reconstruction and development programme could only be undertaken when the authority of the Lebanese Government had been fully restored throughout the country (A/38/217, para. 3). The Lebanese Government was confident that the international community would continue to support Lebanon in its reconstruction and development efforts, and his country longed for the day when it ceased being a beneficiary of assistance and became a contributor.

22. Mr. DON NANJIRA (Kenya) said that victims of disasters and negative social and economic situations had never questioned the fact that primary responsibility in tackling their problems rested with themselves. However, they needed assistance not only to alleviate their immediate suffering and losses but also to improve their social and economic conditions in the long term. The donor nations were expected to provide such assistance not merely on moral grounds but above all because of their fundamental obligations as Members of the United Nations.

23. The significance of special programmes of economic assistance, as conceived by the United Nations, lay in the provision of the financial, technical and material assistance necessary for certain countries to keep their critical economic situations under constant review or to enable them to meet their short-, medium- and long-term needs with respect to their reconstruction, rehabilitation and development.

24. Certain issues in the mandate of UNDRO called for urgent action by the Second Committee. The competence with which UNDRO had performed its functions in all the disaster-prone and disaster-stricken areas throughout the world had proved beyond doubt its ability to serve as a lead entity in disaster relief activities. UNDRO had developed and rightly emphasized the concerted approach to disaster relief activities, which required the participation of all the relevant organs of the United Nations system, as well as of national and international voluntary agencies concerned with emergencies and disasters. That was why co-operation between those agencies and UNDRO was essential to the efficient functioning of the United Nations system in that field. Substantial financial and other resources must also be forthcoming.

25. UNDRO required increased financial resources because the number of disasters was constantly increasing, from 12 in 1980 to 35 in 1982. The frequency of disasters had led the international community to recognize the need for preventive and remedial concerted action in the short and the long term and at the national and international levels. Moreover, the responsibilities given to UNDRO by Governments had steadily increased, especially after the adoption of General Assembly resolutions 36/225 and 37/144. The constraints facing UNDRO would certainly grow unless its increasing responsibilities were matched by financial support and technical expertise. His delegation therefore endorsed the requirements set forth in the Secretary-General's report (A/38/201) and urgently appealed for increased contributions to disaster-stricken countries and to UNDRO.

(Mr. Don Nanjira, Kenya)

26. It also hoped that all countries would pay serious attention to the observations and recommendations contained in the comprehensive report requested under General Assembly resolutions 36/225 and 37/144 (A/38/202) and work for their timely implementation. Although the latter report had been prepared after intensive consultations with pertinent agencies and a number of donor countries, it would have been preferable for the recipients of aid and the disaster-prone countries to have been included. General Assembly resolution 36/225 had recognized the special role of UNDR0 in disasters and emergencies. Primary responsibility on the part of international agencies should not be taken to mean responsibility which was exclusive of other relevant bodies, because an integrated approach was essential.

27. The report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ) (A/38/476) described the financial situation of UNDR0 as critical and gave sound reasons why its financial resources should be increased. It stated in annex II, paragraph 14, that more than three months before the end of the biennium, UNDR0 had been unable to make the usual emergency assistance grants to four countries. On the basis of past experience, it was estimated that in those three months four additional disasters could give rise to requests for emergency assistance and that an additional \$240,000 would therefore be required during the second half of 1983. Paragraph 10 of the report itself listed three options open to the General Assembly, the most appropriate of which would be that given in paragraph 10 (b), namely, to appropriate an additional amount of \$240,000 under section 22 of the budget, thus bringing the level of regular budget participation up to \$600,000 for 1983 and \$960,000 for the biennium 1982-1983.

28. The role of UNDR0 needed strengthening, especially with respect to its co-ordinating capacity, system of collecting and disseminating information, competence and managerial skills and above all its financial situation through increase in the allocation of funds from the United Nations budget, as well as voluntary contributions on an assured basis. Its system of delivery of services and goods and its efficiency and rapidity in dealing with emergency and disaster situations must also be strengthened. Its role of lead entity, especially in complex disasters and emergencies of exceptional magnitude, must be emphasized and there must be a better framework for interagency action in disaster situations. In that connection, the interagency and inter-secretariat systems of meetings of the disaster units must be strengthened and a more centralized, comprehensive, computerized information system on disasters and emergencies instituted.

29. Such a global information programme would involve the strengthening of the existing early warning systems, the creation of a data bank and inventory of equipment and expertise within and outside the United Nations system, the intensification of the system of conferences and seminars on various aspects of disasters and the making available of the results of such meetings to Governments and pertinent United Nations bodies and non-governmental organizations for follow-up action.

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(Mr. Don Nanjira, Kenya)

30. One way of strengthening the working relationship between UNDRO and voluntary agencies was to assign a certain role in disaster relief to those agencies. That would lead to regular consultations with UNDRO, perhaps through a standing panel of leading personalities from non-governmental organizations who would serve in an advisory capacity. His delegation was ready to discuss that idea with any interested delegations.

31. The UNDRO concept of concerted relief programmes which called for the co-operation of all types of disaster relief should become general practice. Focal points to deal specifically with disasters and emergencies at national and international levels must also be created or designated.

32. The action required of the General Assembly at the current session was therefore to endorse the Secretary-General's comprehensive report (A/38/202), to request the Secretary-General to submit to it at its thirty-ninth session specific proposals for the implementation of the recommendations and conclusions of that report; in the meantime, to request Governments and the relevant United Nations agencies and other entities to submit their comments or proposals concerning the comprehensive report for consideration by the Economic and Social Council in 1984 and by the General Assembly at its thirty-ninth session; and to authorize the Secretary-General to allow UNDRO to respond to requests for emergency disaster assistance up to a total of \$600,000 in any one year.

33. The overriding moral imperative of the global responsibility of the United Nations lay in the premise that the "haves" should help the "have nots". It was therefore immoral and irresponsible for some States to be spending vast sums on the arms race while the great majority of mankind were dying of poverty, chronic hunger and disease.

34. Kenya was situated in perhaps the most disaster-prone continent and suffered from serious drought. That was why it and many other African countries required massive resources and appealed for external aid to supplement their own efforts. As a disaster-prone country, Kenya would work tirelessly for the strengthening of UNDRO.

35. Mr. FARAH DIRIR (Djibouti) noted with appreciation that the Secretary-General's report (A/38/216) had directed attention to the gravity of the precarious economic situation in Djibouti. He expressed gratitude to the Secretary-General for his part in mobilizing resources for a programme of financial, technical and material assistance to those developing countries which benefited from the special economic assistance and disaster relief programme.

36. Djibouti's serious economic situation had been compounded by the presence of refugees and victims of the prolonged drought which had displaced one third of the Nomadic population. Djibouti, an arid land with an extreme climate and very little agricultural or industrial potential, had to rely on a service economy for its survival, and the existing services called for considerable improvement. Because of its limited natural resources and the ineffectual exploitation of those that

(Mr. Farah Dirir, Djibouti)

existed, Djibouti had been unable to cope with its balance-of-payments deficit without continuous external financial support. The lack of agricultural and industrial production in the country necessitated importing almost all food, fuel and raw materials, with high freight costs. Such factors had led to rising inflation and considerable unemployment.

37. However, despite its economic difficulties, the national policy of Djibouti was to ensure that everyone could enjoy social, economic, political and religious freedom in a climate of collective self-reliance and self-sufficiency.

38. Its economic difficulties were due partly to the fact that the existing service economy was entirely dependent on external trade and international traffic movements which were beyond the control of Djibouti, and it was for that reason that the Government had embarked on a comprehensive programme of modernizing the existing service economy and establishing a healthy base for a diversified economy through the promotion of light industry, agriculture, animal husbandry, fisheries and artisanal centres.

39. Although Djibouti was one of the least developed countries, its Government, in an effort to cope with its economic difficulties, had embarked on a modest development strategy with the aim of making Djibouti a major port, combating rural and urban poverty, increasing industrialization, and reducing dependence on imported supplies of food and energy. However, such a strategy required the all-round support of the international community. The Government, with the help of UNDP and the World Bank, was organizing a pledging conference to be held shortly in Djibouti, and had invited some 40 Member States and 40 international organizations to attend. He hoped that the traditional mutual co-operation between Djibouti and friendly Member States would ensure the success of the conference, and would lead to the launching of the socio-economic development programme, thereby enabling Djibouti to play its full regional and international role in the promotion of peace and stability.

40. Mr. LICHILANA (Zambia) noted that the Secretary-General's report on special economic and disaster relief assistance (A/38/219) made no mention of Zambia, because the Government had asked the Secretary-General to omit Zambia from future reports of that kind. In the first place, the political atmosphere in the region had completely changed since 1973, when Zambia had first approached the international community for assistance. At that time, its neighbours Angola, Mozambique and Zimbabwe had been engaged in fierce battles to liberate themselves from colonialism, and Zambia had thus been denied the use of its road and rail links to the sea. All those countries had since become independent sovereign States with which Zambia had established normal economic and political relations.

41. In the second place, the aid which Zambia was currently receiving from the United Nations system was being integrated into its development plans and thus could no longer be called "special" aid. He took the opportunity of expressing his Government's gratitude to the Secretary-General and all the organizations of the United Nations system for their assistance.

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(Mr. Lichilana, Zambia)

42. The removal of Zambia from the list of countries needing special economic assistance did not in any way prejudice the cause of the other countries on that list. Some of them had aided Zambia in the past and deserved the help of the international community in their current economic difficulties.

43. In the matter of disaster relief, his Government was aware of the problems of delivery and distribution; in Zambia, those problems were linked to variable internal factors, but it was common for disaster areas to be inaccessible by surface transport and lacking in storage facilities. The Government was doing what it could to make the delivery and distribution of disaster relief supplies more efficient.

44. Miss COURSON (France) said that the report on the strengthening of the capacity of the United Nations system to respond to natural disasters and other disaster situations (A/38/202) demonstrated that General Assembly resolutions 36/225 and 37/144, supplemented by the decisions of the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination, provided a satisfactory basis for co-ordinating the emergency relief operations of the United Nations system. Accordingly, it was necessary to use the mechanisms of that system.

45. At the same time there were gaps in the mechanisms - particularly in the area of transport and delivery of relief supplies - and they should be filled. For example, the suggestions concerning the establishment of concerted relief programmes and the introduction of united appeals for funds should be implemented. It would be useful to reflect on ways of improving existing mechanisms for transporting the emergency relief while taking into account what was done elsewhere. Several countries had concluded agreements designed to facilitate the delivery of relief supplies in emergencies. The issue should be examined carefully in co-operation with other concerned agencies and bodies. Government experts must participate in such an exercise.

46. In defining and establishing new machinery, prudence was of the essence. She had noted the interesting proposal concerning what UNDRO could do to fill the gaps left by other organizations, but she recalled that UNDRO must not turn into an organization responsible for executing operational tasks.

47. She welcomed the improved operations of UNDRO. It was particularly effective in co-ordinating information on disasters, and she welcomed the effort made to establish an early-warning system. Her Government would continue to support UNDRO activities in that area and was ready to share its experience, particularly in the area of space research and the applications of such research to disaster prediction.

48. Turning to the special economic assistance programmes, she said that, while it was true that the needs of Chad, Ghana and Sierra Leone were very great, the proposed programmes appeared somewhat ambitious.

49. Mr. KELLY (United States of America) said that his delegation was becoming increasingly troubled by the growing tendency to place too much stock on the efficacy of emergency assistance. Disaster-related aid was the current fad of the

(Mr. Kelly, United States)

international community. The impression given was that if donations were made quickly and in large sums human misery could be curtailed quickly or even prevented. In fact, however, emergency assistance could do little about the underlying causes of severe misery and poverty because it concentrated on immediate, symptomatic problems. In addition, it could be wasteful.

50. He did not mean to suggest that the world could do without disaster programmes. The efforts of UNDR0 and of voluntary relief organizations should be supported. His remarks were directed at others who were increasingly sounding the emergency alarm in situations which called for longer-term development strategies. The growing reliance on imported food in areas reportedly stricken by drought was particularly disquieting. It had been suggested, with reference to Africa, that the main effect of the drought might have been to obscure the fact that Africa's food problem was continent-wide and had deep political and economic roots. In some countries, farmers were being kept idle so that the cost of living of city-dwellers could be kept low: scarce foreign exchange, which could have been used for spare parts or fertilizer, was being used to purchase food. In such situations, emergency food shipments could worsen the situation by relieving policy-makers of the need to make difficult policy changes. Moreover, countries which received such shipments risked becoming dependent on surplus-producing countries.

51. His Government would continue to play the leading role in furnishing food assistance to impoverished countries under emergency as well as regular programmes. However, he pointed out that, whereas the carefully orchestrated news media events of the past 10 years had in some instances brought temporary relief, they had also distracted the energies of those - in recipient and donor countries alike - who should have been working out food security strategies to reinforce sagging food production systems. It was essential that the international community work together now to avert a catastrophic failure of food production in Africa.

52. Mr. RAKOTONAIVO (Madagascar) welcomed the considerable efforts made to strengthen the capacity of the United Nations system to respond to disasters and noted with satisfaction the establishment of an early-warning system which would enable UNDR0 to react effectively to requests for assistance. The measures taken in implementation of General Assembly resolutions 36/225 and 37/144 to improve co-ordination of relief had contributed significantly to the success of the programmes.

53. Delivery of relief supplies to the disaster sites had always been a major concern of developing countries. He noted with interest that UNDR0 had given serious consideration to the subject. The relevant proposals contained in the report of the Secretary-General (A/38/202) deserved further study. Although international organizations were prepared to provide the necessary technical assistance, the material and financial means to be used remained a problem. As the Secretary-General had pointed out in paragraph 96 of his report, there was a need for a mechanism which would provide the system with the capacity to meet such costs.

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(Mr. Rakotonaivo, Madagascar)

54. It was encouraging to see what steps UNDRO had taken to strengthen the system's capacity to evaluate damage and assess relief needs, and to see that it continued to attach particular importance to disaster preparedness. The prevention and support services provided by UNDRO were of definite interest to disaster prone countries. The experience gained should be disseminated at the various seminars and other meetings referred to in the Secretary-General's report (A/38/201) and the same should be done with respect to the early-warning and prediction systems involving the application of space technology. He expressed the hope that more detailed studies would be made on the economic impact of natural disasters.

55. He endorsed the Secretary-General's comments regarding what the role of UNDRO should be after the emergency phase. In order to speed up the rehabilitation and reconstruction process, UNDRO could serve as a direct link between potential donors and the affected countries and should communicate to the potential donors the expressed needs.

56. Noting that UNDRO still needed \$240,000 to meet new requests for assistance up to the end of the current biennium, he said that, since one of the obligations related to a purely humanitarian mission, he believed that no delegation would oppose the allocation of such additional funds. In order to avoid a recurrence of the situation in the near future, the Committee should endorse the recommendation contained in paragraph 8 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1983/47.

57. The proposal contained in paragraph 103 of the Secretary-General's report (A/38/202) deserved particular attention. The establishment of a general purpose fund would make it possible to meet certain expenses for which no provision was now made.

58. Ms. GOETSCH (Austria) noted that recent UNDRO achievements had been made with limited staff resources, which demonstrated that a dedicated staff of high calibre was essential to an agency's overall output. Especially impressive was UNDRO assistance to Ethiopia and Chad. As no other United Nations agency had a specific mandate covering the transport and distribution of emergency supplies, UNDRO was expected to fill a serious gap in that respect. The fact that transport and distribution problems continued to exist in Ethiopia and Chad despite UNDRO efforts had led the Austrian Government to contribute 1 million schillings to the Ethiopian Relief and Rehabilitation Commission for the purchase and repair of trucks.

59. Austria had co-sponsored Economic and Social Council resolution 1983/47; if the General Assembly endorsed that resolution, it would be possible to give full effect to paragraph 5 of General Assembly resolution 37/144 through a redeployment of resources available from the regular budget, should voluntary contributions to UNDRO fall short. Even then, the resources made available to UNDRO would not be commensurate with the responsibilities allocated to the Office in General Assembly resolutions 36/225 and 37/144. Consequently, UNDRO would have to use its resources economically. She urged that special attention should be paid to the question of general-purpose funding and that the recommendations in document A/38/202 should be thoroughly discussed so that Member States might contribute to UNDRO more willingly.

(Ms. Goetsch, Austria)

60. Her delegation noted with satisfaction from the Co-ordinator's statement at the 34th meeting that a draft international convention on expediting the delivery of emergency relief had been prepared by an expert group, and welcomed his intention to convene a meeting of governmental experts to consider the expert group's report. In addition, further efforts to improve UNDRO information systems might be undertaken by Governments, UNDRO and other agencies within the United Nations system.

61. She drew attention to the need for effective co-ordination of the activities of all participants in relief efforts. In adopting resolutions 36/225 and 37/144, the General Assembly had intended to make UNDRO the central co-ordinator in that field; its role needed to be enhanced by the strengthening and possible institutionalization of consultations between UNDRO and non-governmental relief organizations. To that end, a consultative committee of non-governmental organizations might be established which UNDRO would regularly convene.

62. The CHAIRMAN said that the Committee had thus concluded its discussion of item 81.

AGENDA ITEM 78: DEVELOPMENT AND INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC CO-OPERATION (continued)

Draft resolution A/C.2/38/L.11

63. Mr. SEVAN (Secretary of the Committee) announced that Yemen had joined the sponsors of the draft resolution.

AGENDA ITEM 12: REPORT OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL (continued)

Draft resolution A/C.2/38/L.23/Rev.1

64. Mr. SEVAN (Secretary of the Committee) announced that Upper Volta and Yemen had joined the sponsors of the draft resolution.

Draft resolution A/C.2/38/L.24/Rev.1

65. Mr. SEVAN (Secretary of the Committee) announced that Qatar had joined the sponsors of the draft resolution.

Draft resolution A/C.2/38/L.28

66. Mr. SEVAN (Secretary of the Committee) announced that the Ivory Coast and Venezuela had joined the sponsors of the draft resolution.

Draft resolution A/C.2/38/L.29

67. Mr. SEVAN (Secretary of the Committee) announced that the Ivory Coast had joined the sponsors of the draft resolution.

The meeting rose at 5.35 p.m.