



SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 42nd MEETING

Chairman: Mr. DIETZE (German Democratic Republic)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.30 p.m.

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- (d) SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY FOR DEVELOPMENT: REPORT OF THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL COMMITTEE ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY FOR DEVELOPMENT (continued) (A/38/37 (part I and Corr.1 and part II))
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1. Mr. van WELL (Federal Republic of Germany), speaking on agenda item 78 (b), observed that his country, as indeed most countries, depended on export earnings to finance its imports and sustain its economic growth and therefore sought to maintain close co-operation with all its trading partners. In that connection, he stressed the competence of the European Community in the field of trade and development.

2. At the same time, his country realized how very much foreign-exchange earnings meant to the countries of the third world and to their economic development. Accordingly, a growing export potential of the developing countries and a readiness on the part of the industrialized countries to accept the relevant challenge were necessary for a positive adjustment to the constantly changing world economic structures. The healthy growth rates achieved by most of the developing countries from 1965 to 1980 had been largely the result of the liberal import policies of the Western industrialized nations which had increased their imports from developing countries by an annual average of 20 per cent during that period. Despite the assertions to the contrary, the industrialized countries had not closed their markets to the developing countries; they had granted sizeable unilateral preferences. At the same time, 70 per cent of the exports of the developing countries had gone to Western industrialized countries, while not even 3 per cent of their exports had been sold to East European countries. Moreover, the foreign

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exchange which the developing countries had earned in the past three years by exporting to the West had been 12 times the amount they had received from the Development Assistance Committee Countries in the form of official development aid, which showed that international trade constituted the truly dynamic element of West-South economic relations. The prospects for revitalizing trade between the South and the West seemed very good, provided the major industrialized countries remained on the road to recovery.

3. In view of the high growth rates the developing countries had achieved in the past 15 years, he wondered whether a system of international trade which could allow such growth rates was really as anachronistic as had sometimes been asserted. Of course, the international system needed to be constantly developed and strengthened, as the parties to GATT agreed. The problem was not that the international system of trade was outmoded, but that the well-proven rules of the GATT system were often ignored and that most countries were engaged in protectionism, particularly through the erection of non-tariff barriers. It was important to ensure that trade did not become increasingly disrupted by new forms of protectionism and subsidies and to guard against a relapse into bilateralism, which the State-run trading countries, in particular, preferred because of their non-convertible currencies.

4. Although at the beginning of the decade the combination of protectionism and recession had caused world trade to lose momentum, economic activity was reviving and there were better prospects for dealing with protectionism. The elimination of protectionist tendencies and trade restrictions was the best common approach to the task of building a healthy world economy and ensuring that world trade again became a dynamic element of economic development.

5. By the same token, the problems resulting from the explosive increase in the price of oil and from the tendency to tolerate inflation were gradually being controlled through consistent, stability-oriented policies implemented by the major industrialized nations. Interest rates had been reduced considerably, and there were good prospects of increased investments. Those factors, together with more stable energy, wage and import costs, constituted the basis for rising economic activity in many of the important trading nations. The confidence created by the expectation of a growth in world trade and lasting economic recovery in many countries should not be disregarded. However, the economic upswing was not self-propelling; it required a consistent, non-inflationary policy of sustained growth. Structural budget deficits must gradually be reduced, industry must adapt to the new market situation, and monetary and credit policies must be directed towards stability. If all those measures were undertaken, the chances of returning to consistent growth were good, and the sacrifices made during the recession would not have been in vain.

6. In its World Economic Outlook, issued in 1983, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) predicted real economic growth exceeding 3 per cent for the industrial countries in 1984. If that prediction was fulfilled, the volume of exports from the non-oil-producing developing countries was expected to rise by approximately

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5.5 per cent in 1984, and the improvement in their terms of trade was expected to continue. If net inflows of private capital also stabilized, significant import growth should be possible, thus relaxing the constraint on the expansion of their output. Nevertheless, the 3.75 per cent growth rate expected in those developing countries would remain far below the rates recorded prior to 1979.

7. The relationship between the economic recovery of the industrialized countries and the exports and economic growth of the developing countries should not be underrated. Although trade could not solve all the fundamental structural problems in the latter countries or cover all their financial needs, it was nevertheless a crucial factor for revitalizing the development process in the third world.

8. The growth of the developing countries' income from exports was bolstered by the current upswing in commodity prices. Moreover, the revival of the world economy supported the assumption that commodity prices would continue to rise. According to forecasts issued by the UNCTAD secretariat and IMF, substantial increases in the export earnings of those countries could be expected in 1984, compared to 1983, in both absolute and relative terms. Moreover, the prospective growth of trade from one year to the next was greater than the total volume of development assistance expected in the same period. He expressed the hope that those comparisons had helped to illustrate the significance of trade for the economic development of the third world. Accordingly, concrete steps should be taken to keep industrial markets open to the developing countries, to reinforce the multilateral system of trade and not to destroy the system on which all countries depended.

9. The Federal Republic of Germany wanted very much to maintain economic co-operation with all nations on the basis of mutual trust and, in particular, to intensify its trade relations with the developing countries. In that connection, while his country continued to support the generalized system of preferences, it would like to see the more advanced developing countries become increasingly integrated into the system of world trade, with the rights and obligations it entailed.

10. In spite of its own economic problems, the Federal Republic of Germany had, in recent years, increased its imports from the non-oil-producing developing countries and, as a member of the European Community, was seeking to develop even better economic relations with them. In addition to trade, intensive entrepreneurial co-operation and direct investment by Western countries in developing countries were needed to facilitate the transfer of technology to the third world.

11. Referring to allegations that the concept of international co-operation had been superseded by pragmatism for the sake of financial advantage, he pointed out that the idea of mutual economic advantage was the corner-stone of international economic co-operation. It was an expression of the growing economic interdependence of the North and the South and of the growing integration of the third world.

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12. His Government was anxious for the North-South dialogue to be intensified. The dialogue was not at a dead-end but was continuing constantly at the bilateral, regional and multilateral levels. At UNCTAD VI in Belgrade and at the recent session of the Economic and Social Council in Geneva, his Government had tried to conduct an open discussion of the world economic situation and of the issues relating to economic recovery and development. That discussion had proved successful, in spite of some degree of inflexibility on both sides. In any case, there was a greater awareness of the different problems and concerns and of the fact that fresh efforts were needed at both the national and international level in order to proceed along that path. The Federal Republic of Germany would continue to participate constructively in the North-South dialogue and to play its part in common endeavours to promote economic and social development.

13. Mrs. NAGY (Hungary) observed that the decline of economic growth and world trade, which were closely connected, had in recent years been directly influenced by the decline in imports resulting from the balance-of-payments deficits of a number of developing countries, even those with an advanced economy. Such trends were of particular significance for Hungary, whose open economy was oriented towards foreign trade. The rising price of raw materials and energy had been extremely difficult for its economy and, in order to halt the growth in its external debt, her country had been obliged to curb the rate of economic growth and moderate the rise in imports.

14. In view of the circumstances, Hungary's success in maintaining a positive trend in its economic growth was a notable accomplishment and, thanks to a rather strict and consistent trade policy, her country had had a surplus in its dollar-currency trade account since 1981. Therefore, as the Hungarian delegation to UNCTAD VI had pointed out, respect for the rules of international trade on the world market, the smooth development of international relations and freedom from unexpected changes were extremely important for Hungary's open economy. In its view, world trade should be based on most-favoured-nation treatment, non-discrimination and the fulfilment in good faith of contractual obligations.

15. Unfortunately, growing protectionist measures had aggravated Hungary's situation in recent years. Her country was facing greater difficulties in obtaining access to the markets of precisely those countries that were its main creditors and, accordingly, was unable to derive sufficient income from exports in precisely those areas where its earning of foreign currency to repay its debts would be in the interest of its partners. She noted with regret that certain Western Powers were creating uncertainties in East-West relations, for other than specifically economic considerations.

16. Hungary attached great importance to co-operation with the developing countries, which had reached notable levels in the past year: its exports to those countries had risen by 14.5 per cent and its imports from them only slightly less.

17. Referring to the economic situation of the developing countries, she noted with regret that the actual results achieved fell far short of the targets set by

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(Mrs. Nagy, Hungary)

the International Development Strategy. Instead of the rapid expansion of trade envisaged, the exports of the developing countries showed a downward trend, and the stagnation of world trade was affecting them the most. In order to attain the objectives of the Strategy, a significant increase in external financial resources would be necessary. Instead, however, the percentage of development assistance in the gross national product of the advanced capitalist countries continued to decline and, moreover, the percentage of direct foreign investments in the developing countries had dropped in 1982.

18. Hungary continued to provide assistance to developing countries, mainly in the form of government credit, grants of goods and services, aid in scientific and technical co-operation and fellowships. Fellowships, which were of great importance, were provided on an individual and group basis. Both forms of training owed their effectiveness to the fact that experts from the developing countries were directly involved in both theoretical and practical work in the areas of professional interest to them. Her country wished to continue its current assistance activities, in accordance with its resources and economic capacity and despite its economic difficulties.

19. With regard to science and technology, her delegation attached importance to every aspect of the Vienna Programme of Action, and Hungary would assume its share of the relevant efforts to the extent of its means. Hungary attached great importance to co-operation on information and, accordingly, had organized the Data Base '83 Exhibition in the first part of 1983. With a view to implementing the Vienna Programme, she expected the Centre for Science and Technology for Development actively to attend to the tasks for which it had been created. A central aspect of that undertaking was finance and, in that regard, she agreed with the original Soviet proposal to the effect that financing should be provided within the framework of UNDP from a special account to which contributions would be made only on a voluntary basis.

20. Mr. ZOLLER (Australia) said that an important aspect of reorganizing and rationalizing the work of the Committee was the relationship between formal debates and informal consultations. The time devoted to the general debate in the Committee had been significantly lengthened and the amount of repetition had markedly increased. If the Committee wished to retain the general debate at future sessions, it should consider whether there was any justification for holding separate debates on every agenda item allocated to it. For example, agenda item 78 was being discussed twice on the basis of an essentially arbitrary division of sub-items. In fact, the subject of that item, development and international economic co-operation, was a central theme of the Committee's work and might be considered in the context of the general debate.

21. One of the most important issues under consideration during the current session was the International Development Strategy. In discussing preparations for the 1984 review and appraisal of the Strategy's implementation, the Committee should make optimum use of the time allocated to it for that purpose. Careful thought should be given to the documentation for the review, since adequate

(Mr. Zoller, Australia)

documentation would enhance the deliberations significantly. While there did not appear to be any reason to change the basic objectives of the Strategy, or to release anyone from the obligations assumed under it, the review should provide an opportunity for re-examining the priorities that had been set and considering a possible redefinition of the Strategy in the light of experience gained and changed economic conditions.

22. The subject of trade and development was perennially one of the broadest before the Committee and was providing even more material for consideration as a result of UNCTAD VI. While no one could be entirely happy with the outcome of that session, progress had undeniably been made: one issue discussed at length was protectionism, the evils of which had been widely acknowledged in recent years. However, no action had been taken on the matter, and it was unfortunate that no text on protectionism and structural adjustment had yet been adopted by the Second Committee. Another key issue discussed at UNCTAD VI was the least developed countries. The outcome of the deliberations on that subject was a matter for quiet satisfaction, since the strong reaffirmation of the Substantial New Programme of Action had taken place in economic circumstances that were considerably harsher than those obtaining when it had been negotiated.

23. The Committee for Development Planning had expressed the view that further candidates for the "least developed country" category should not be considered until the criteria used to define the category had been reviewed. While he sympathized with the reluctance of countries classified as "least developed" to accept an exercise which could lead to a new definition, he doubted that that would be the outcome of such a review and believed that the wisdom of the Committee for Development Planning could be ignored only at the risk of jeopardizing the credibility of the assignment of countries to that category. The Second Committee should therefore decide whether candidate countries should continue to apply for consideration as least developed countries or whether the relevant criteria should be reviewed.

24. The consensus achieved at Belgrade on the subject of economic co-operation among developing countries indicated possible ways of providing an impetus and the precipitate action recently taken in that connection by the Trade and Development Board was therefore unfortunate. His delegation hoped that such resorts to voting would remain the exception rather than the rule and urged the Second Committee to opt for consensus rather than confrontation on the question of such co-operation.

25. Mr. AL-HADDAD (Democratic Yemen) said that the role of the developing countries as full-fledged partners in world development must be recognized. A coherent package of international policies must be assembled to deal with the short-term and long-term problems. The industrialized States must show the political will to rescind the restrictive measures they had introduced and to embark on global negotiations on the establishment of the new international economic order.

26. Lack of scientific and technological know-how constituted a major obstacle to the overall development efforts of the developing countries and to the utilization

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(Mr. Al-Haddad, Democratic Yemen)

of their natural resources. His delegation therefore noted with concern the decline in the priority attached to international co-operation in science and technology for development. Adequate priority must be given to that aspect so that the scientific and technical potential of the developing countries could be realized. He noted from the report of the Intergovernmental Committee on Science and Technology for Development (A/38/37, parts I and II) that tangible efforts were being made to implement the Vienna Programme of Action but that no progress had been made in consolidating the technical and scientific potential within developing countries or in providing the necessary support for the transformation of the Vienna Programme into practical proposals. It was essential that the guidelines drawn up by the Intergovernmental Committee at its fifth session should be adopted as that would contribute to the transformation of the Vienna Programme into practical proposals. In view of the great diversity of social, economic and technological problems in the developing countries those guidelines would have to be kept under continuous review and adjusted as necessary. He welcomed the efforts being made within the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination to harmonize the activities of the United Nations system with regard to the implementation of the Vienna Programme. Those efforts must be consolidated and the necessary resources must be provided. That might involve the use of extrabudgetary resources.

27. It was essential to establish the United Nations Financing System for Science and Technology for Development along the lines set forth in General Assembly resolution 37/244. His delegation therefore looked forward to the results of the ongoing negotiations on the subject and appealed to the industrialized countries to consolidate the Financing System so that it could carry out the tasks assigned to it.

28. Referring to the report of the High-Level Committee on the Review of Technical Co-operation among Developing Countries (A/38/39), he said that he appreciated the efforts of the organizations of the United Nations development system to consolidate the potential of the developing countries. He noted the tangible efforts being made in that connection by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and expressed the hope that the Special Unit in UNDP which dealt with technical co-operation among developing countries would be expanded.

29. Numerous sectoral meetings had been held in accordance with the the Caracas Programme of Action. Some of the proposals made at those meetings were referred to in paragraph 22 of the report. At a meeting in Tunis earlier in 1983 a recommendation had been made concerning the creation and strengthening of national focal TCDC points and more effective co-ordination among developing countries and between them and international bodies. Those measures would contribute to the overall development of the developing countries. The latter hoped that the industrialized countries would overcome their past attitudes with regard to additional means for activities in the area of technical and economic co-operation among developing countries.

30. Much remained to be done to implement fully the Substantial New Programme of Action for the 1980s for the Least Developed Countries. The position of the least

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(Mr. Al-Haddad, Democratic Yemen)

developed countries was worsening; in many of them the economic crisis had been compounded by various natural disasters. Development efforts were hampered because of insufficient domestic resources. He therefore appealed to the international community to show willingness to implement the Substantial New Programme of Action by increasing the level of their official development assistance and by implementing UNCTAD resolution 165 (S-IX) concerning debt and development problems of the least developed countries.

31. Mr. JAYANAMA (Thailand) welcomed the decision to convene a one-day organizational session at the end of November in order to discuss the review and appraisal of the International Development Strategy, and to convene the substantive session in May 1984. Given the continuing economic crisis, that review exercise was very important.

32. If international trade flows were to be revived, it was of the utmost urgency to undertake a specific programme of action to eliminate trade barriers and restrictions. Verbal commitments to the maintenance of an open trading system must be backed by action. While welcoming the commitments voiced at the recent Williamsburg summit, he was disheartened to learn that the dismantling of the trade barriers had been made conditional upon further economic recovery in the developed countries.

33. It had been disappointing to note that the resolutions adopted at UNCTAD VI did not address the urgent imperatives of the day and, in particular, did not respond to the immediate need for concerted international action to assist the developing countries. The recovery taking place in the United States, which seemed likely to be repeated in the OECD countries, would not yet have an impact on the developing countries. Accordingly, the need for action in the areas of currency and finance, trade and commodities remained as urgent as ever.

34. He welcomed the agreement reached on the long-term financial and institutional arrangements for the United Nations Financing System for Science and Technology for Development as reflected in General Assembly resolution 37/244, even though it fell somewhat short of his expectations. He particularly endorsed paragraphs 3 and 6 of the arrangements and hoped that the System would enter into operation as soon as possible. His Government would contribute to the System as a demonstration of the importance it attached to science and technology for development.

35. His delegation attached high priority to the goals of self-reliance and greater economic and technical co-operation among developing countries (TCDC) at the regional and global levels and endorsed the report of the High-Level Committee on the Review of Technical Co-operation among Developing Countries (A/38/39). Although the primary responsibility for co-operation among developing countries lay with those countries themselves, the continued support of the United Nations system was indispensable for applying the concept of TCDC. He endorsed the recommendation made by the Administrator of UNDP that future activities of the United Nations system should be better designed and focus on selected areas or projects that promised the greatest and most immediate results.

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(Mr. Jayanama, Thailand)

36. He welcomed the efforts to involve women in development. Thailand's current five-year national development plan established a series of basic goals in specific areas to enhance the role of women who had been given priority in a number of fields, and steps were being taken to ensure higher economic rewards and fair treatment for women.

37. His Government had been making every effort to assist the least developed countries in accordance with the Substantial New Programme of Action for the 1980s for the Least Developed Countries, giving them assistance in cash and in kind. It also contributed annually to the United Nations Special Fund for Land-Locked Developing Countries.

38. Mr. SANGARE (Mali) noted with concern that two years after the adoption of the Substantial New Programme of Action (SNPA) the level of aid to the least developed countries remained extremely modest and that the targets set in the Programme were far from being achieved.

39. As stated in the report of the Secretary-General (A/38/471), the aid given by the members of the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) had risen only from 0.08 per cent of GNP in 1981 to 0.09 per cent in 1982. Only one member of that group had exceeded the target of 0.15 per cent of its GNP since the adoption of the SNPA. Only two member countries of DAC had achieved the other target, namely, the doubling of their official development assistance to the least developed countries. At the same time, however, aid from five countries members of DAC, including some of the major donors, had declined. He welcomed the steps taken to co-ordinate the efforts of the entire United Nations system in support of the substantial New Programme of Action.

40. Mali had held a round-table meeting in order to initiate a dialogue with the international community on the main issues set forth in its national development plan. The two general goals of that plan were to lessen the economy's vulnerability and to meet the essential needs of the population. In order to do so it planned to adopt planning techniques, to seek systematically to achieve financial and economic balance, to secure the participation in the development process of the public, private and semi-private sector and to promote integrated basic development. Integrated basic development was designed to promote a high degree of self-reliance at the local level.

41. Three suggestions had been made at the round-table meeting. One concerned the establishment of a permanent co-ordinating group on food self-sufficiency, consisting of Mali and some of its partners, in order to devise and implement a food strategy. The second concerned the organization of periodic meetings between the Government and all its partners having representatives in Bamako in order to review implementation of the projects contained in the five-year plan. The third concerned the organization of another round-table meeting in order to evaluate the progress made.

(Mr. Sangare, Mali)

42. The group on food self-sufficiency had met in February 1983 to evaluate the restructuring of the cereals market. The results of that meeting were fairly encouraging. The first periodic meeting between the Government and all its partners having representatives in Bamako had taken place in June.
43. The least developed countries were particularly in need of increased financial and technological resources; they could secure them only if others demonstrated the necessary political will.
44. Mr. SMIRNOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that the review of the implementation of the International Development Strategy was being undertaken at a time when international economic relations were adversely affected by the continuing crisis in the capitalist economy and the growing threat to peace and security posed by imperialism. The chronic weaknesses of capitalism had hit the developing countries particularly hard. The policies of the United States and other imperialist countries were mainly responsible for that because they had intensified the arms race, exploited the developing countries, and used blackmail and threats against socialist and progressive régimes in Asia, Africa and Latin America. Similar policies were carried out by Western-controlled multilateral agencies such as the International Monetary Fund, which turned down loans for Guyana and Nicaragua while generously handing out money to South African racists. Imperialist hostility towards progressive States had culminated in naked aggression by the United States against non-aligned Grenada.
45. There was a clear connection between development and the struggle for peace and security and disarmament; on the other hand, colonialism, imperialism and neo-colonialism were the major obstacles to the economic liberation of developing countries. He therefore urged all States to implement the aims of the International Development Strategy, namely, the independent progress of developing countries towards industrialization, the strengthening of the State sector, progressive social and economic change, and an end to the reactionary role of transnational corporations. The prospects for the Third United Nations Development Decade depended on how far the international community could fulfil the aims of the Strategy, the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States, and the Declaration on the Establishment of a New International Economic Order. The Committee established to appraise the International Development Strategy, as well as the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination should concentrate on that task.
46. The contribution of the Soviet Union and the other socialist States to the implementation of the Strategy was clear from the statements of representatives of those countries at the eleventh special session of the General Assembly (A/S-11/AC.1/4).
47. The Soviet Union and the socialist countries fully supported the developing States in their efforts to throw off the yoke of monopolist capitalism and protect themselves against neo-colonialist robbers, and at UNCTAD VI the socialist countries had supported the Group of 77 in a joint approach on those lines to the assessment of the world economic situation, and to questions of trade policy such

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(Mr. Smirnov, USSR)

as greater trust in international trade, trade among countries with different social and economic systems, and the activities of transnational corporations in the raw materials sector of the economies of developing countries. Among the positive results of UNCTAD VI had been the recognition of the indissoluble link between peace, disarmament and development, and condemnation of the economic coercion for political ends applied by some Western countries. The vast majority of States opposed the increasingly protectionist trend in world trade and wished to establish the principles of most-favoured-nation status and non-discrimination, and a number of recommendations had been adopted by the Conference to improve the climate of confidence in international economic relations.

48. On the other hand, however, UNCTAD VI had made scant progress in restructuring international economic relations, and his delegation shared the disappointment of the developing countries with the achievements of the session in that respect. The position of the Western Powers and in particular the United States had prevented agreement on a number of questions, and constructive discussion had been thwarted by alleging the need for free play to market forces in the world economy and optimum conditions for foreign private capital in the developing countries; by those means it had been possible to undermine the role of UNCTAD and prevent discussion of basic trade and economic problems falling within the preview of GATT, IMF and IBRD.

49. The Western Powers had also endeavoured to impede the implementation of a number of resolutions adopted at UNCTAD VI; for example, as would be seen from document A/38/557, all the Western countries had boycotted the work of the Group of Governmental Experts on Reverse Transfer of Technology, thus demonstrating their stubborn refusal even to discuss any aspects of the problem of the drain of real resources from the developing countries.

50. The Soviet Union would support the just demands of the developing countries for the establishment of an equitable international economic order with guarantees of the rights of peoples to independent development. It rendered multilateral economic assistance to developing countries and a substantial part thereof went to the least developed countries. Details of that assistance were contained in the Secretary-General's report on the implementation of the Substantial New Programme of Action for the 1980s for the least developed countries (A/38/471). In that document some forms of aid by the socialist countries to the Least Developed Countries were presented in a distorted light, which was completely impermissible; the Secretariat had at its disposal official statistics on the co-operation between the socialist States and the least developed countries, and it was no part of its functions of the authors of the document to interpret the information.

51. United Nations bodies such as UNCTAD could play a valuable part in organizing economic and technical co-operation among developing countries so as to ensure that such co-operation did not violate the principle of universality or lead to any increase in the regular budgets of the United Nations system.

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(Mr. Smirnov, USSR)

52. The Soviet Union pursued a policy of broad international co-operation in science and technology, particularly in such matters as microelectronics, biotechnology, marine resources, and information on progress in science and technology. In general he appreciated the results achieved by the fifth session of the Intergovernmental Committee on Science and Technology for Development. Soviet experts had also played an active part in the third session of the Advisory Committee on Science and Technology for Development and its meetings of specialists, and hoped that those activities would lead to the preparation of positive measures to implement the proposals in the Vienna Programme of Action for increasing the scientific and technical potential of developing countries. The Soviet Union was ready to assist the attainment of those objectives and intended to host a number of seminars on scientific and technical topics for experts from developing countries. The United Nations Centre for Science and Technology should concentrate on increasing its own effectiveness and eliminating duplication and should devote its available resources to priority projects. Similar measures for co-ordination could well be applied to the general scientific and technical programmes of the United Nations system, but the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination seemed to have had little success in that respect. With regard to the proposal for regional consultative organs in science and technology, it was for the regional commissions to assess their requirements in the light of available resources. The activity of non-governmental organizations in the implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action should be deployed in such a manner as to obviate any possibility of supplementary expenditure being required under the regular United Nations budget.

53. His delegation attached great importance to United Nations action on the participation of women in development, believing that an essential condition for their participation was implementation of the progressive proposals and recommendations of the world conferences held in Mexico in 1975 and Copenhagen in 1980, the ratification by all States of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, and achievement of the three goals of the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace.

54. Mr. VERCELES (Philippines) said that his delegation had grave misgivings about the review and appraisal of the implementation of the International Development Strategy for the Third United Nations Development Decade. The current economic deterioration was accompanied by disillusionment in the developing countries, in contrast to the hopes engendered by the adoption of the Strategy in January 1981. Consequently, the review would be useful only if all countries subsequently adopted and implemented policies that would increase the likelihood of meeting its goals. Otherwise, the exercise would be nothing more than a repetition of the annual ritual of reviewing economic trends, assigning blame and finding justifications for poor performance.

55. With regard to trade and development, never before had there been such a vast stock of knowledge on the subject that could benefit the developing countries, but neither had the areas of agreement that might lead to equitable trade relations ever been so limited. Noting that UNCTAD would mark its twentieth anniversary in

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(Mr. Verceles, Philippines)

1984, he wondered whether its achievements had been worth the sacrifices involved. UNCTAD had done much to revolutionize thinking with regard to international relations in trade and development, but that knowledge had not been put into practice. It was necessary to find out why if current problems were to be overcome.

56. His delegation welcomed UNCTAD's efforts to strengthen the capacity of developing countries to develop their energy resources. Those countries' consumption of energy was increasing faster than their incomes because of the close relationship between industrial growth and energy consumption and because of the unprecedented rise in energy prices during the 1970s. Since energy consumption by the developing countries would most likely continue to increase, those countries must develop indigenous sources of energy and energy technologies. His delegation endorsed the approach to that problem outlined in document A/38/363 and called for more regional and international co-operation among developing countries for that purpose. He drew attention to the need for implementing the Nairobi Programme of Action; in his own country, emphasis had been placed on the development of geothermal energy, fuel wood and alcohol as sources of energy. The Philippines was resolved to continue co-operating with other developing countries and the rest of the international community in energy matters.

57. UNCTAD VI had given significant impetus to the ratification of the Common Fund Agreement and he hoped that the momentum would continue and that the Fund would soon become a significant factor in the search for price stability for the exports of developing countries. He also expressed the hope that all outstanding problems related to the establishment of the Financing System for Science and Technology for Development would be solved during the current session.

58. As a member of the High-Level Committee on the Review of Technical Co-operation Among Developing Countries, the Philippines subscribed to the view that economic co-operation among those countries had generally been a success. While the primary responsibility for such co-operation lay with those countries themselves, the developed countries and international organizations should provide financial and technical support.

59. He reaffirmed his support for the Substantial New Programme of Action for the 1980s for the Least Developed Countries because they required more help than other developing countries.

60. With regard to the mobilization and integration of women in development, his Government was strongly committed to improving the status of women and putting their talents at the service of development. In the Philippines, women occupied important positions of responsibility at all levels of society, since the Government believed that their contribution should be based on their ability and competence rather than their sex. His Government also supported all measures for eliminating sex as a criterion for assigning roles within social and economic structures and would continue to co-operate in promoting universal acceptance of that policy.

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61. Mr. STREEB (United States of America) said that at an earlier point in his career he might have been tempted to respond to the charges made by the representative of the Soviet Union; however, he had come to recognize how irrelevant the Soviet Union was with regard to the economic development of developing countries. That country had repeated its anti-Western charges so incessantly that at present they were listened to only by its client States.
62. His delegation supported economic and technical co-operation among developing countries but, with regard to the generalized system of trade preferences, recent developments had led it to take a less optimistic view. He referred to the statement which his delegation had made at the recent session of the Trade and Development Board, in which it had protested against the language used in the report of the sixth session of UNCTAD which implied that the statement attached to the report of the working group on agenda item 8 had been adopted by the Conference. His Government had dissociated itself from that statement and did not consider that it had been adopted by the Conference. The documents emanating from the recent sessions of UNCTAD and its Trade and Development Board accurately reflected what had happened during the meetings of those bodies but also indicated that the deliberative process which had been designed to meet certain goals had strayed from its course. He wondered whether the proceedings of those sessions were in fact meaningful. The process used in United Nations bodies to solve economic problems had become doomed to failure. The topics under discussion by the Second Committee had recently been discussed by UNCTAD, the Economic and Social Council and the Trade and Development Board. Instead of isolating and defining specific problem areas, United Nations bodies tended to shift problems of a broad nature from one forum to another, which resulted in sterile debate marked by confrontation and predictable decisions. The recent session of the Trade and Development Board could only be described as a spectacle: resolutions had been deliberately drafted with controversial elements; references to areas of agreement at UNCTAD VI had been omitted; and new, far-ranging mandates for UNCTAD had been introduced. The negotiating process had become a game which his country could no longer take seriously. He asked whether the recommendations and resolutions adopted by UNCTAD and its Board could truly advance development when they had been drawn up in such an irrational fashion. It was time to review that process with a view to making real progress on economic development issues. The value of conferences with broad agendas might also be reviewed: for example, the Fourth General Conference of UNIDO was scheduled to discuss many valuable items, but many other items would result in a mere repetition of the proceedings of UNCTAD VI and subsequent meetings. Furthermore, under the current system of regional groups, the economic problems of the developing countries were being ignored at the regional level in favour of global solutions. Regional "packages" were compiled in compromise efforts which ultimately benefited no one.
63. He hoped that the Committee would undertake a rationalization of its methodology with a view to obtaining better results. As an indication that a rationalization of working methods could have a positive effect, he pointed out that the United States Congress had voted to increase its contributions to such effective agencies as UNDP, UNICEF, UNEP and the World Food Programme even though it was considering other measures with regard to the United Nations itself. He urged the Committee to reflect on its successes and adopt decisions that would lead to changes that might benefit everyone.

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64. Mr. SALLU (Sierra Leone) said that some economic policies of developed countries seemed to have been adopted with no regard for their effect on millions of people in developing nations, thus leading to a threat of pauperization rather than development in those countries. That trend was remarkable for the discrepancy which it revealed between knowledge of the nature of the problems and unwillingness to solve them on the part of those in a position to do so. As the Executive Director of UNCTAD had said, there seemed to be a stalemate in the dialogue between North and South, despite hopes of a breakthrough at UNCTAD VI. Despite those hopes and the thoroughness of its preparation, the Conference had not produced very satisfactory results, but it had pointed the way for further international action in a number of areas. He noted with appreciation that several resolutions had been adopted by the Conference without dissent. The discussions on issues of that kind, on which agreement was possible, should be pursued in the General Assembly in the same spirit of compromise.

65. Turning to the specific issues dealt with by the Conference, he welcomed resolutions 153 (VI) to 158 (VI) concerning commodities, and hoped that Governments which had not yet done so would ratify the Agreement on the Common Fund. At the same time, there should be an effective integrated programme for commodities which took into account particularly the interests of the developing countries. It was also important for the international community to minimize the disruptions of international commodity markets which had been a prolific source of economic woes for developing countries.

66. Conference resolution 157 (VI) on the compensatory financing of export earnings shortfalls should be of benefit to countries such as Sierre Leone whose livelihood depended on commodity exports and whose economic development was affected by market fluctuations. He regretted that there had not been a consensus for its adoption but hoped that the delegation which had voted against and those which had abstained would reconsider their positions. He also hoped that the work of the expert group referred to in paragraph 3 of the resolution would enable the Trade and Development Board to reach a decision on the matter.

67. The international community must break the vicious spiral of debt which developing countries were caught up in, and the call, in paragraphs 2 and 3 of Conference resolution 161 (VI), for developed countries to take immediate measures in favour of the developing countries, as well as the actions prescribed in paragraph 7, should therefore receive the fullest attention.

68. He noted with satisfaction the actions taken by the Conference, as expressed in resolution 162 (VI), regarding the allocation of special drawing rights and the activation of the General Arrangements to Borrow with especial regard for the needs of the developing countries. He agreed that, in view of the severe impact of external developments on the balance of payments of many developing countries members of the International Monetary Fund, high priority should continue to be given to maintaining adequate access to its facilities.



(Mr. Sallu, Sierra Leone)

69. He appreciated the gradual movement by the Fund away from insistence on conditionality at all costs to an increasing awareness of realities other than economic ones. The goal of the Fund and its major contributors should be an increasing understanding of the variable factors affecting developing countries with a view to adopting lending policies in keeping with the situations in those countries. Paragraphs 10, 11 and 12 of Conference resolution 162 (VI) constituted a reasonable approach to the debt problems of the countries concerned. With regard to the surveillance provisions of the same resolution, he trusted that the major-currency countries, particularly the United States, would continue in co-operation with the International Monetary Fund to consider to the special needs of the developing countries in accordance with paragraphs 15 and 16 of the resolution.

70. Resolution 164 (VI) correctly stated the need to reach internationally agreed targets for international development assistance while recognizing the needs of the least developed countries.

71. Resolution 165 (VI) defined a broad range of actions for the World Bank and recognized the role of regional multilateral development institutions. The appeals to Governments in paragraphs 7 and 8 to support UNDP and begin negotiations on the second replenishment of the International Fund for Agricultural Development should be given serious attention.

72. UNCTAD VI had also dealt with the topic of economic co-operation between developing countries and, while international support action was necessary to promote such co-operation, it would be more effective if a workable compromise could be achieved to ensure more pledged support from the international community.

73. The effective implementation of the Substantial New Programme of Action in accordance with the real needs of the least-developed countries was a matter of primary concern for the international community.

The meeting rose at 6 p.m.