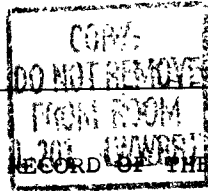


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SECOND COMMITTEE
34th meeting
held on
10 November 1983
at 10.30 a.m.
New York



SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 34th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. DIETZE (German Democratic Republic)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.50 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 81: SPECIAL ECONOMIC AND DISASTER RELIEF ASSISTANCE:

- (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);
- (b) SPECIAL PROGRAMMES OF ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE (A/38/3 (Parts I and II), A/38/211-217 and Add.1, A/38/218 and 219; A/C.2/38/2);
- (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 and A/38/180 and Add.1)

AGENDA ITEM 80: TRAINING AND RESEARCH (continued)

1. Mr. ESSAAFI (United Nations Disaster Relief Co-ordinator), referring to the report of the Secretary-General on strengthening the capacity of the United Nations system to respond to natural disasters and other disaster situations (A/38/202), said that in recent years, the international community has shown considerable interest in the economic and humanitarian aspects of emergencies and emergency relief. That interest had been manifested in General Assembly resolutions 36/225 and 37/144 and in decisions of the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination (1981/2 and 1982/1). In the opinion of the Secretary-General, if the aim of improvement was to be achieved, particular attention had to be given to the specific aspects of concerted relief programmes, appeals for funds, delivery of relief supplies, assistance from experts, general-purpose funding, evaluation of relief operations and rehabilitation and reconstruction.

2. A concerted relief programme made it possible to co-ordinate in the most advantageous way possible, at both the field and country level, assistance of various kinds from several agencies. The UNDP resident representative or the United Nations resident co-ordinator was responsible, pursuant to paragraph 8, of General Assembly resolution 36/225, for arranging for a combined and agreed assessment of damage and needs, using the expertise of the United Nations agencies' representatives and that of representatives of international voluntary agencies and diplomatic missions of donor countries. The formation of such a country team made it possible to respond more effectively to disaster situations and facilitated co-operation with the competent authorities. An example worth mentioning was the co-ordination by UNDRC of all relief assistance since December 1981 in Chad, a country where the effects of natural events had been worsened by civil strife. Another example was the UNDRC-led mission to Ethiopia at the beginning of October 1983 composed of representatives of ECA, UNICEF, UNDP, WFP, FAO and WHO. That mission had resulted in the adoption of a concerted programme of immediate relief for the drought-affected provinces and an UNDRC appeal to the international donor community to finance the programme. In the appeal, the activities of each organization had been clearly defined and the unmet needs emphasized so that donors could choose to finance those items in which they were most interested.

(Mr. Essaafi, UNDR0)

3. The delivery of relief supplies had two aspects, namely availability and distribution. Availability was not easy to control or to ensure, partly because of a shortage of general-purpose funding. On the other hand, distribution basically depended on adequate means of transport, working in the framework of an effective disaster relief organization. Material aid would be of no avail if there were no vehicles, spare parts or personnel to transport them to where it was needed. There was, however, no single organization in the United Nations system specifically responsible for transporting and distributing relief supplies. Consequently, delivery was very often carried out through a number of bilateral programmes instead of a properly co-ordinated programme of transport assistance. Modalities for the operations of such a programme were suggested in paragraphs 95 and 96 of the report (A/38/202).

4. The delivery of supplies could also encounter legal obstacles, such as export controls and documentation, costs of transport, immigration and import controls, customs duties, delays at trans-shipment points and delimitation of liability. Various initiatives had been taken for the establishment of, at least, a code of practice which would help to overcome such difficulties. Early in 1982, the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) had produced some model rules for disaster relief operations, but there had inevitably been some reluctance to adoption of such rules unilaterally. For that reason, towards the end of 1982, UNDR0 had initiated a wider-ranging study of the matter, the results of which had already been examined at an informal meeting of an expert group. The group's report had proposed a draft international convention on expediting the delivery of emergency relief. It was his intention to convene a meeting of governmental experts to examine the report and the proposals from the informal meeting, and subsequently to proceed in accordance with the recommendations of the governmental experts.

5. Two years earlier, the Secretary-General had drawn attention to the value of an un earmarked general-purpose emergency relief fund. Such a fund would make possible, among other things, payment of that portion of the internal transport costs of relief supplies not provided for in the programmes of the organizations providing the goods; of the operating costs which could not be met by an organization responsible for internal transport and distribution; of the needed communications equipment; and of services of personnel released by various organizations to assist in dealing with disasters. It appeared to the Secretary-General that the most appropriate channel for such general-purpose funding would be the UNDR0 Trust Fund.

6. Turning to the annual report on UNDR0 (A/38/201) he said that, on the one hand, UNDR0 was under pressure to contain its costs and restrain its budgetary demands while, on the other, it had to respond to the needs of Governments when their countries were hit by disaster or when they requested assistance in preparedness or prevention activities.

7. One element of UNDR0 regular-budget funding which had regularly given cause for concern was the amount provided for making emergency grants to countries in case of disaster. That amount was currently \$360,000 per year and the maximum assistance per country for any one disaster was \$30,000. To prevent abuse of that

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(Mr. Essaafi, UNDRO)

fund, he insisted that if a grant was to be made, the requesting Government should agree that an international appeal for aid should be launched and that the Administrator of UNDP should release the corresponding grant from his funds in accordance with the provisions made by his Governing Council. None the less, the annual amount had been exhausted long before the end of the current biennium, so that a request for additional funding had been presented to the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ) and the Fifth Committee in document A/38/476.

8. There was authority for the maximum grant of \$30,000 to be supplemented by a further \$20,000 if the UNDRO Trust Fund received the necessary resources. If the total sum available each year were increased, more grants for emergency situations could be made in case of need. Although such an increase could be achieved by expansion of the contributions base of the UNDRO Trust Fund, unfortunately the number of countries contributing was still very small when compared to the number of States Members of the United Nations.

9. Apart from mobilizing and co-ordinating relief, UNDRO also had a mandate to reinforce the state of preparedness at the national and regional levels. Natural disasters were no respecters of national boundaries. It was for that reason that UNDRO was so interested in supporting regional or subregional disaster-preparedness activities in order: to promote the adoption of common or compatible practices; to permit the fruitful exchange of experience between disaster managers faced with common problems; to make the most effective use of resources; and, in general, to develop the cause of south-south co-operation. UNDRO had accordingly established close ties with some of the regional economic commissions and with the World Meteorological Organization. Activities relating to regional projects were described in paragraphs 52 to 62 of the annual report.

10. In connection with disaster prevention, as Co-ordinator of UNDRO, he was required to promote the study, prevention, control and prediction of natural disasters. UNDRO therefore participated, in co-operation with other agencies, in a number of activities, including techniques of earthquake predictions, the organization of seminars on new methodologies and the study of the economic effects of disasters. Disaster prevention was not a subject which could be regarded in isolation but should be an integral part of every planning decision and every major development project.

11. The work of UNDRO could be successful only to the extent to which all concerned co-operated with UNDRO and with each other. The co-operation achieved over the 11 years of UNDRO's existence had enabled the Office to do much to improve performance in all aspects of international disaster relief. Much however remained to be done. In the area of disaster relief, efforts must continue with a view to improving the flow of information into UNDRO and the quality and authority of the reports going from UNDRO to the international community. More efficient ways must be found to deliver relief to those in need of it. The need for well-concerted relief operations grew greater as the pressure on resources increased.

12. In the field of disaster preparedness, realistic plans must be made in advance so that relief operations could be conducted more quickly and effectively.

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(Mr. Essaafi, UNDRO)

Inter-country co-operation must be encouraged, especially in the dissemination of early warnings of events which might cause disasters. New technologies must be incorporated into disaster prediction so that it could develop into a more exact science.

13. Mr. N'GREGAI (Central African Republic) reminded the Committee that the General Assembly, by its resolution 35/87 entitled "Assistance for the Reconstruction, Rehabilitation and Development of the Central African Republic", had reiterated its appeal to the international community, contained in previous resolutions, to contribute generous aid to his country. He wished to thank all the countries and the governmental and non-governmental organizations which had provided help in response to that appeal. External assistance, although essential, would however be sterile if the people and Government of the Central African Republic were not prepared to make sacrifices and solidarity efforts and to adopt necessary measures to gain the confidence of the international financial organizations and of countries which could provide them with financial aid.

14. The sector of the economy to which top priority had been assigned in the development programme of the Military Committee for National Reconstruction was agriculture. Other priority areas were: the enhancement of national production through the rational exploitation of all the country's resources; the reduction of the differences between the capital and the provinces through the promotion of rural development; the rehabilitation of public finances; the expansion of national saving and the re-establishment of equilibrium in the balance of payments; and the satisfaction of the basic needs of the population.

15. It was hoped that the programme would produce the following results: a 9 per cent increase in gross domestic product (GDP) between 1982 and 1985; the halting of the fall in per capita GDP, starting in 1983 and its gradual increase to an average annual rate of at least 2 per cent as from 1985; investment of a minimum 135 million Central African francs (Caf) between 1982 and 1985, rising as from 1985 at a permanent average rate of 15 per cent of GNP with a view to achieving and maintaining self-sufficient and independent growth; payment of the State's current expenses from current receipts as from 1985; and elimination of the budget deficit, apart from the servicing of the external debt.

16. Unfortunately, that ambitious strategy had hardly begun to bear fruit when the country had been devastated by a drought of exceptional severity which had lasted for seven months with effects that would be felt for more than a year, as indicated in the Secretary-General's report (A/38/216). That natural disaster had seriously affected the coffee and cotton crops: producers' losses were estimated at about Caf 3.5 billion and the State's losses at Caf 4 billion. Manioc, one of the principal food crops, was so scarce that its price had doubled and it was beyond the reach of most of the population. As to industry, electricity cuts and the interruption of river navigation had obliged many factories to close down, resulting in serious consequences for employment and the State's receipts.

17. For all those reasons, the Government of the Central African Republic needed the assistance of the international community and requested the General Assembly to make a fresh appeal to States and international organizations, as well as to

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(Mr. N'Gregai, Central African Republic)

governmental and non-governmental organizations, to adopt measures to support his country. To that end, a draft resolution would be submitted to the Second Committee on assistance for the reconstruction, rehabilitation and development of the Central African Republic.

18. Mr. KAZEM (Afghanistan) expressed support for the activities of UNITAR and the measures taken towards its revitalization. In the view of his delegation, UNITAR, which was playing an increasingly important role by undertaking studies on ways and means of resolving the world's grave economic and political crises, should focus its activities on such questions as the strengthening of peace and security, international co-operation, disarmament, the launching of global negotiations for a new economic and social order, and the identification of new areas for research, such as the special problems of the least-developed and the land-locked countries. In addition, its work must be co-ordinated with that of other organizations of the United Nations system and the Secretariat with a view to preventing duplication of effort and waste of human and financial resources. UNITAR's expenditure must be planned realistically, consistent with its financial resources.

19. Afghanistan was keenly interested in the improvement of UNITAR training programmes through the introduction of modern methods and hoped that a larger share of the training programmes would be allocated to the least-developed countries. As a token of its support, Afghanistan had contributed \$US 1,000 to UNITAR for 1984.

20. His delegation had also studied with interest the report of the Council of the United Nations University (A/38/31) and it welcomed the efforts to put into operation the Medium-Term Perspective for 1982-1987. The establishment of a planning and evaluation unit within the University would further enhance its capability for better implementation of its plans and programmes, which should be concerned mainly with the problems of developing countries and, in particular, the least developed among them. The University should try to co-ordinate its activities with those of the United Nations system, the international academic and scientific communities and UNITAR, in order to avoid overlapping, duplication and wasteful use of resources.

21. He was happy to note that UNDRO had been able to aid disaster-stricken countries during the year and stressed that further ways should be sought to enhance its capacity for action. UNDRO should improve its assistance co-ordination activities and reduce its emphasis on unrelated functions. It was to be hoped that it would be strengthened enough to enable it to provide afflicted countries with needed assistance in cases of disaster.

22. Mr. GOKCE (Turkey) said that Turkey had been struck by three major earthquakes in the course of the century, the last of which had occurred recently and led to the death of 2,000 people and the destruction of 24 villages. He expressed gratitude to all the countries and international bodies, and especially UNDP and UNDRO, which had generously contributed to the relief operations.

23. Turkey attached great importance to the disaster relief activities of the United Nations. It had taken the initiative 12 years previously which had led to the establishment of UNDRO and it currently supported the strengthening of UNDRO's capacity to respond to disaster situations.

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(Mr. Gokce, Turkey)

24. At a time when the entire world was experiencing a growing number of disaster situations of increasing intensity and complexity, it was apparent that special arrangements would be needed to co-ordinate, mobilize and deliver emergency relief, particularly in situations which did not fall within the mandate of any particular organization. General Assembly resolutions 36/225 and 37/144 had dealt with various aspects of the problem and stressed the central role of UNDRO in the response to requests for emergency assistance in disaster situations; however, the concept of "lead entity" in complex disasters and emergencies of exceptional magnitude as envisaged in those resolutions had not yet been clearly defined. His delegation believed that if its mandate were strengthened, UNDRO would be able to fulfil that function.

25. It was encouraging that some relevant organizations and specialized agencies had taken steps to strengthen and improve their capacity to respond to emergencies. Those steps would allow them to play their full role in disaster situations and in programmes designed to improve the flow of information in the field of disaster prevention and preparedness.

26. In view of the unpredictable nature of natural disasters, disaster preparedness and prevention activities were just as important as the fast delivery of relief supplies after the disaster had occurred. The United Nations system must find effective ways to solve problems such as setting up early warning systems and methods of making correct assessments of disaster situations; the timely launching of appeals for international assistance; the monitoring of concerted relief programmes; the evaluation of relief operations; the mobilization of experts; technical training; the dissemination of information; the establishment of general purpose funds; and the rehabilitation and reconstruction of the disaster-stricken area. In that respect, the reports prepared by the Secretariat and resolutions of the General Assembly were constructive contributions which should help in progressing in the right direction.

27. No relief operation could be undertaken in isolation; a concerted effort was required. Thus a code of conduct should be drawn up. Moreover, it was clear that that co-ordination was more effective when the necessary resources were available and, in the view of the Secretary-General, the most appropriate channel for such general-purpose funding would be the UNDRO Trust Fund. The Co-ordinator of UNDRO had pointed out that the amount of \$360,000 a year allocated to the regular budget of the Office and emergency grants of a maximum of \$30,000 per country had been exhausted and that there was currently a deficit of \$240,000, so that a request for additional funding had been made to the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions and the Fifth Committee. It was necessary to find a more flexible mechanism to help UNDRO overcome its financial difficulties; otherwise, the Office would not be able to undertake any of the additional activities referred to in document A/38/202. There was a clear contradiction between the adoption of resolutions envisaging the strengthening of the capacity of the United Nations system and the failure to provide the necessary resources to implement those resolutions.

28. Mr. NGUYEN QUOC DUNG (Viet Nam) stressed the importance of UNDRO which, since its establishment in 1971, had effectively contributed to the mobilization and

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(Mr. Nguyen Quoc Dung, Viet Nam)

co-ordination of the relief activities of various organizations of the United Nations system in response to requests from stricken countries. He expressed appreciation for the efforts made by the Office in 1982-1983 and satisfaction that its activities had increased both quantitatively and qualitatively.

29. In resolution 2816 (XXVI), the General Assembly had clearly defined the duties of the Co-ordinator, two of which were particularly important: to mobilize, direct and co-ordinate the relief activities of the various organizations of the United Nations system in response to a request for disaster relief from a stricken State; and to co-ordinate United Nations assistance with assistance given by intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations. In both cases it was essential that the Office should work jointly with those organizations and closely co-ordinate its activities with those of the UNDP Resident Representative in the stricken country.

30. Viet Nam shared the view that UNDR0 should exchange information with all relief organizations and programmes since it did not have major resources. The Office should be aware of the level of damages and the specific needs of the disaster-stricken country so as to mobilize appropriate assistance from all the organizations concerned. UNDR0's activities should be concentrated primarily on sudden and natural disasters.

31. As to disaster preparedness, prevention and related activities, his delegation was prepared to help stricken countries which, because of their economic difficulties, were not able to allocate resources to those activities, which should consist primarily in the planning of relief operations, the establishment and strengthening of structures and the training of personnel for specific operations; an example of such training was the technical advisers provided by UNDR0 to stricken States. It was encouraging to note that, in resolution 1983/47, approved at its second regular session in 1983, the Economic and Social Council had recognized the importance of disaster preparedness and prevention activities and had called upon UNDR0, Governments and agencies involved to ensure that due priority attention was given to them.

32. As a result of its day to day work, in co-operation with the Governments of stricken countries, UNDR0 had been able to overcome the consequences of natural disasters through the mobilization and co-ordination of relief activities; respect for the sovereignty of nations and the compatibility of its activities with their needs and priorities were important factors in its success.

33. Preparedness activities for disaster situations were an element of the economic and social development programme of Viet Nam, a country which, because of its geographical situation, was very vulnerable to disasters. The assistance of the international community and the co-ordinating role of UNDR0 in emergency situations, in which members of all sectors of the local community participated, were very encouraging. Viet Nam had also participated in some regional projects such as the Committee on typhoons, the Mekong Committee and other meteorological activities.

(Mr. Nguyen Quoc Dung, Viet Nam)

34. As was indicated in the report of the Secretary-General (A/38/201), in October 1983, in view of the damage caused by typhoon "Nancy", UNDR0 had launched an appeal for relief assistance. The Government and people of Viet Nam wished to express gratitude for the assistance received. His delegation also wished to report that recent typhoons had devastated the northern and central provinces of Viet Nam, and he hoped that UNDR0 and all organizations concerned would continue to assist the people in the affected areas in overcoming that difficult situation.

35. Mr. WEIBGEN (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations) said that he wished to supplement the information provided in the relevant documentation on the assistance provided by the Office for Special Relief Operations (OSRO) to nine countries experiencing special difficulties, seven of which were in Africa.

36. In his recent address to the Second Committee, the Director-General of FAO had referred to the high-level policy meeting convened two weeks earlier at Rome to consider the emergency food-supply situation in 22 African countries and the pressing need for concerted action to avert hunger and malnutrition on a massive scale in the months ahead for a large proportion of the people living in those countries. The Special FAO/WFP Task Force established in April 1983 to monitor the situation had recommended emergency aid in the form of 700,000 tons of food and \$76 million for essential inputs, measures to control animal diseases and agricultural rehabilitation.

37. OSRO had provided special assistance to seven of the 22 African countries affected. In implementation of General Assembly resolution 37/151, it had assisted Benin, through funding from the FAO Technical Co-operation Programme, in controlling a serious outbreak of rinderpest.

38. In implementation of General Assembly resolutions 35/87, 36/206 and 37/145, on assistance to the Central African Republic, and of the recommendations made by the FAO/OSRO mission, the Special FAO/WFP Task Force had proposed that 9,500 metric tons of supplementary food should be distributed among the population of the country in the first half of 1984.

39. In accordance with General Assembly resolution 37/155, on assistance to Chad, and with the recommendations made by the joint FAO/WFP/UNDR0 evaluation mission, the Special Task Force had confirmed the need to supply 170,000 tons of cereals, 15,190 tons of which had been delivered at the end of September, together with a sum of \$770,000 for transporting and distributing the cereals. It was proposed that 50,000 tons of food should be earmarked against the anticipated 1983/84 deficit. The Special Task Force further advocated seed procurement, local reproduction of food-crop seeds, livestock protection and the reactivation of food-security projects and programmes. The Government of Italy was making a contribution in an amount of \$10.2 million to the FAO/OSRO project aimed at strengthening the logistics structure of Chad's agricultural and food sectors, thus partially meeting the need for additional transport capacity identified by the joint evaluation mission. Moreover, the FAO Technical Co-operation Programme was contributing 350 metric tons of seeds, and further contributions for seed procurement had been received from Belgium, the Netherlands and Norway.

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(Mr. Weibgen, FAO)

40. OSRO had given considerable support to Ethiopia, in implementation of General Assembly resolution 37/147, through three projects financed under the Technical Co-operation Programme, providing assistance in pest control and supplying seeds and hand-tools for drought victims. Similar assistance in an amount of \$1 million was being financed out of a Netherlands contribution to the Africa Food Aid Campaign. The Special Task Force had recommended aid in the form of 90,000 tons of cereals (61,000 tons of which were earmarked for the most seriously affected provinces); 7,000 tons of supplementary protein-rich foods; \$5 million for logistics support; \$1.4 million for production inputs; \$1.2 million for seed reserves and storage facilities; and greater support for the national food-security scheme.

41. Following the adoption of General Assembly resolution 37/160, the Government of Lesotho had declared a food emergency, since it estimated that 50 per cent of its population would need food relief until mid-1984. The Director-General of FAO had approved emergency food aid in an amount of \$2.8 million. The Special Task Force had recommended an allocation of 22,500 tons of food to meet the minimum requirements of 450,000 people for three months.

42. In accordance with General Assembly resolutions 37/161 and 36/215, the Director-General of FAO had approved emergency food aid for the population affected by drought in Mozambique in an amount of \$2.2 million. Assistance had already been provided through the use of \$3.2 million from the contribution made by the Government of Italy to the Africa Food Aid Campaign and \$600,000 from the contribution made by the Government of the Netherlands. The Special Task Force proposed the following emergency aid: \$4.5 million for seeds and other inputs; \$1.5 million for livestock feed and protective measures; and \$7 million for seed reserves and the expansion of food-emergency reserves.

43. Following the adoption of General Assembly resolution 36/214, on assistance to Zambia, the Director-General of FAO had approved emergency food aid in an amount of \$2 million, and the Technical Co-operation Programme had provided 350 tons of seeds and 300,000 doses of animal vaccines. The Special Task Force had proposed that a further 550 tons of seeds and additional vaccines should be distributed and that the necessary assistance should be provided to meet the maize deficit of 100,000 tons.

44. FAO had also provided Lebanon and Nicaragua with assistance. In response to General Assembly resolutions 35/85 and 36/205, the Director-General of FAO had established an Ad Hoc Task Force and sent a FAO/OSRO mission to Lebanon, which had recommended the provision of transport and other means of communication to the Ministry of Agriculture, as a preliminary measure to pave the way for reconstruction. The execution of rehabilitation projects in the agricultural, fisheries and livestock sectors at an estimated cost of almost \$1.4 million, with \$1 million coming from donors, had also been recommended. The Director-General of FAO had approved an emergency food allocation in an amount of \$1.8 million to provide rations for one and a half months for 150,000 victims of the fighting and disturbances.

(Mr. Weibgen, FAO)

45. In implementation of General Assembly resolution 37/157, the Director-General of FAO had approved emergency food aid in an amount of \$5.5 million for a period of five months for the victims of the 1982 drought, and the Technical Co-operation Programme had provided seed materials to assist Nicaragua in coping with the serious effects of flooding on the 1982/83 planting season.

46. Mr. GBEHO (Ghana) emphasized the need for assistance to be provided by the international community to 1 million nationals of Ghana who had been forced to return home at short notice from Nigeria; that influx of refugees was a serious threat to social stability and a grave challenge for the Government.

47. The Government's appeal for assistance had met with a response from such organizations as the League of Red Cross Societies, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the World Food Programme, the World Council of Churches and the Office of the United Nations Disaster Relief Co-ordinator, which had donated food, clothing, drugs and other items.

48. Although the strategy of encouraging the returnees to move on quickly to their home towns and villages had alleviated the pressures on the main urban centres, the Government of Ghana was confronted with the medium-term and long-term structural problem of reintegrating the vast number of returnees into the national economy and meeting their basic material and social needs, a problem which was exacerbated by the already difficult economic situation of the country.

49. Document A/38/215 reflected the outcome of the inter-agency mission sent to Ghana by the Secretary-General in response to the Government's appeal. The Government had presented a request for special economic assistance at the second regular session of the Economic and Social Council in 1983, at which resolution 1983/44 had been adopted by acclamation. That resolution would be submitted to the General Assembly in order to enable the mobilization of international assistance to proceed. The programme of special economic assistance envisaged in the Secretary-General's report comprised emergency projects, to be implemented over a period of six to eight months, and recovery projects spanning the next two years.

50. After reviewing the content of the draft resolution to be submitted to the Committee, he drew attention to the far-reaching measures adopted by Ghana to tackle its economic problems, including the adjustment of the value of the national currency in terms of the dollar, the improvement of revenue collection procedures, the slashing of the budget deficit, the encouragement of food exports, the reduction of government expenditure and the revitalization of mining and manufacturing.

51. Following the implementation of those measures, the Government of Ghana had received \$377 million in credits and financing from the International Monetary Fund and over \$40 million in loans and credits from the World Bank for rehabilitating infrastructure in such sectors as mining and cocoa.

52. He trusted that the indications which the Government of Ghana had given of its determination to solve the economic problems of the country would convince the international community that any assistance made available would merely supplement the efforts of the Ghanaian nation as a whole.

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53. Mr. BIRIDO (Sudan) commended UNDRO for the efficient way it had responded to major disaster situations, in particular in Chad, Ethiopia, Angola, Ghana and Lebanon, as was described in the Secretary-General's report in document A/38/201, and expressed gratitude for the assistance of the international community to the drought-stricken areas in Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, the Sudan and Uganda, as detailed in the Secretary-General's report in document A/38/214. He hoped that the consultations between the countries of the region regarding the establishment of the proposed intergovernmental body would be concluded as soon as possible.

54. He stressed the importance of the report on the strengthening of the capacity of the United Nations system to respond to natural disaster situations, contained in document A/38/202, concerning which he would make some observations. The measures adopted by various organizations and agencies of the United Nations system to improve their capacity to respond to emergency situations were very positive and at the same time had improved the effectiveness of UNDRO as a focal point for emergency relief. During the preparation of the report informal discussions had been held with representatives of a number of donor Governments. He hoped that future consultations would also include the recipient countries, since they were the ones primarily concerned and provided the major part of the material assistance and human effort in disaster relief. The report was silent on a number of elements which were important to recipient countries. For instance, General Assembly resolution 36/225 recognized that material and other assistance provided by the international community should meet the particular needs of the populations of disaster-affected areas, that problem and the role of the United Nations system should be studied in greater depth.

55. Regarding the shortage of resources referred to in the report, he emphasized the necessity of providing more substantial financial and human resources to the agencies concerned and to disaster-prone countries, so as to strengthen emergency-preparedness, the operational capacity of the organizations concerned and the effectiveness of preventive measures.

56. As the report indicated, in certain situations, in particular in the least developed countries, the local authorities might not be able to assume responsibility for transport, communication and the distribution of relief supplies. Consequently, it was important to provide the system with the capacity to meet any needs which fell outside the mandate and programmes of the organization responsible for relief. In that connection, the Sudan supported general-purpose funding through the Trust Fund, which could fill the gap. Although UNDRO had a limited role in rehabilitation and reconstruction activities, it could be of considerable assistance to development agencies in their efforts to mobilize resources for such activities. For example, in its reports it could point to the sectors with priority reconstruction needs. Development agencies also required flexibility and sufficient resources to be able to respond to unprogrammed needs. He fully supported the United Nations Disaster Relief Co-ordinator's appeal for the additional resources which his office required.

AGENDA ITEM 12: REPORT OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL (continued)Draft resolution A/C.2/38/L.22

57. Mr. SALLU (Sierra Leone) introduced on behalf of the sponsors draft resolution A/C.2/38/L.22, entitled "Particular problems facing Zaire with regard to transport, transit and access to foreign markets". In pursuance of General Assembly resolution 37/205, ECA, in co-operation with the Government of Zaire, had organized at Kinshasa on 28 and 29 June 1983 a round-table meeting, at which had been submitted an investment programme in the amount of \$US 1,984 million, of which \$677 million (34 per cent of the resources required) had been obtained, 83 per cent coming from Zaire and 17 per cent from external sources. Zaire would finance 28 per cent of the programme as a whole. In 1985, a second round-table meeting would be organized. The draft resolution was designed to secure support and assistance for the implementation of the results of that second meeting.

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

58. Mr. A. BA (Senegal), speaking on behalf of the sponsors, introduced draft resolution A/C.2/38/L.23/Rev.1, entitled "Permanent sovereignty over national resources in the occupied Palestinian and other Arab territories". He emphasized that the right of peoples and nations to permanent sovereignty over their natural resources had been accepted as a principle of international law. The General Assembly had recognized the validity of that principle in the case of peoples whose territory was occupied when it had adopted resolution 3005 (XXVII) of 25 December 1972. In the case of Palestine, the occupying Power affirmed that it observed most of the provisions of the fourth Geneva Convention but refused to admit that they were applicable to the occupied Palestinian and other Arab territories.

AGENDA ITEM 78: DEVELOPMENT AND INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC CO-OPERATION (continued)(1) NEW AND RENEWABLE SOURCES OF ENERGY (continued)Draft resolution A/C.2/38/L.16

59. Mrs. MORENO (Mexico), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77, introduced draft resolution A/C.2/38/L.16, entitled "Immediate implementation of the Nairobi Programme of Action for the Development of New and Renewable Sources of Energy". The purpose of the draft resolution was to promote the development of new and renewable sources of energy that could be of potential importance in stimulating, through energy self-sufficiency, the progress of developing countries, in accordance with the Nairobi Programme of Action.

The meeting rose at 1.05 p.m.