



SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 43rd MEETING

Chairman: Mr. MWANGAGUHUNGA (Uganda)

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AGENDA ITEM 69: TECHNICAL CO-OPERATION AMONG DEVELOPING COUNTRIES: UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON TECHNICAL CO-OPERATION AMONG DEVELOPING COUNTRIES (continued)

ORGANIZATION OF WORK

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

AGENDA ITEM 69: TECHNICAL CO-OPERATION AMONG DEVELOPING COUNTRIES: UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON TECHNICAL CO-OPERATION AMONG DEVELOPING COUNTRIES (continued) (A/33/Add.1 (Part I), A/33/300; A/CONF.79/13/Rev.1; A/33/151, A/33/206; A/C.2/33/L.34 and L.37)

1. Mr. HAJNAL (Hungary) said that the Conference on Technical Co-operation among Developing Countries had been a very important and unique event. Recalling that barely 10 or 15 years earlier the problem had been the elimination of the colonial system, it might rightly be stated that the Conference had marked in a symbolic way the progress from the times of colonial oppression to a new era of national independence. At the same time, it had dealt with the problems of the acceleration of the economic and social development of the developing countries and the restructuring of international economic relations on a democratic and just basis.

2. His delegation believed that the Conference had at least four major achievements to its credit: it had given an interpretation of the concept of TCDC in the context of the current development process; it had taken stock of the possibilities of TCDC; it had defined a set of clear-cut objectives for the future; and it had elaborated a concrete plan of action for the achievement of those objectives. It was a positive element that the Plan of Action affirmed that TCDC was neither an end in itself nor a substitute for co-operation with developed countries. Nevertheless, TCDC could be particularly profitable because it was better adapted to the concrete conditions and needs of the developing countries, and the deeper involvement of UNDP in the promotion of TCDC was therefore to be welcomed. The Information Referral System was a good example of what could be done in that field.

3. He expressed certain doubts concerning the advisability of the intergovernmental meetings for the review of TCDC proposed in recommendation 37 of the Buenos Aires Plan of Action. The considerable resources that would in the long run be required by those meetings could be used to finance TCDC promotion and support activities. Although he had some reserves also regarding the references made in the Buenos Aires Plan of Action to the interdependence of nations, his delegation supported the report of the Conference and considered that the Plan of Action could be an important means of promoting the establishment of a new international economic order on an equitable basis.

4. Mr. TERADA (Japan) said that he considered that the Buenos Aires Plan of Action was the result of a task of progressive co-operation carried out by all the participants in the Conference. An important element of the Plan was the implementation of the concept of collective self-reliance, which constituted a new dimension of international co-operation for development. In view of the role that UNDP could play in promoting TCDC, his delegation considered recommendation 37 of the Conference to convene a high level meeting within the framework of UNDP to review the progress achieved extremely apposite.

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(Mr. Terada, Japan)

5. His delegation wished to draw attention to the close relationship existing between TCDC and the Conference on Science and Technology for Development, to be held in 1979. The latter would provide a forum for the first step towards the implementation of TCDC, which he hoped would lead to the improvement of North-South relations.
6. Mr. LUTFI (Jordan) said that his delegation supported the report of the Conference on TCDC contained in document A/CONF.79/13/Rev.1 and the Buenos Aires Plan of Action, as well as the four resolutions adopted by the Conference. Jordan's position on TCDC had been set forth in the statement made by His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan Bin Talal at the Conference.
7. Mr. KALACHINSKY (Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic) said that TCDC was an important factor in socio-economic development, and he stressed that, in order to eliminate economic backwardness, it was necessary to restructure relations between the developing countries and the capitalist countries, on the basis of the progressive principles of the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States and the decisions of the sixth special session of the General Assembly.
8. The aim of TCDC must be to enable the developing countries to use science and technology to strengthen their economies and to avoid exploitation by the industrialized capitalist countries. The Byelorussian SSR viewed with sympathy the efforts being made by the developing countries to overcome economic backwardness and was giving every kind of assistance to developing countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America. It must be emphasized that one of the most important conditions for the success of TCDC was the strengthening of international peace and security and of the process of détente and the halting of the arms race. The Byelorussian SSR had always supported the progressive principles of the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States and United Nations decisions aimed at the elimination of inequality, dictatorship and exploitation. It was firmly opposed to TCDC's serving the political ends of the neo-colonialism of the imperialist States and declared itself in favour of the safeguarding of the sovereignty of the developing countries over their natural resources and their protection from the pillaging which they suffered on the part of the imperialist world.
9. Mr. LAZAREVIC (Yugoslavia) drew attention to the success achieved by the Conference on Technical Development among Developing Countries, thanks to the contribution made by all countries, who, in an effort to restructure world economic relations and establish the new international economic order, had recognized that TCDC was a sector of ever increasing importance for their efforts to make maximum use of their natural and human resources for the promotion of economic and social development. As a new dimension of international co-operation for development, TCDC was also an expression of the determination of the developing countries to attain national and collective self-reliance.
10. The recommendations of the Conference should be an integral part of national, regional and world-wide activities and should be envisaged as such by Governments and by institutions of regional and world-wide scope. TCDC could not be regarded as a separate activity sector entrusted to specific governmental organizations or international organizations and must give practical coverage to all spheres. In that context, the regional economic commissions had an important role to play.

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(Mr. Lazarevic, Yugoslavia)

11. The global process of TCDC would require an increase in assistance and support on the part of developed countries and international organizations, particularly UNDP, whose Governing Council had been entrusted with the review of the implementation of the recommendations of the Conference. However, the main responsibility for activities lay with Governments and with all the organizations of the United Nations system, and UNDP would only review the way in which the recommendations were implemented and would contribute to their implementation in those cases where its assistance was necessary and appropriate.

12. Mr. QUENTIN (Italy) recalled that Italy had been one of the first industrialized countries to support firmly and openly TCDC as a policy meant to benefit developing countries by enhancing their collective self-reliance. It had always regarded TCDC as a necessary complement to the North-South flow of technical co-operation, which should also be complemented by a similar flow from East to South.

13. The envisaged international meetings, to be held concurrently with the session of the UNDP Governing Council, would make it possible to make a satisfactory assessment of the progress made in the implementation of the Buenos Aires Plan of Action. His delegation was prepared to co-operate fully in those meetings.

14. The industrialized countries and the most advanced among the developing countries should not use technical co-operation to exert any kind of economic pressure. Nor must TCDC become a structure of sectoral co-operation or deny developing countries free access to the most up-to-date techniques, because there should be no dictation of the choice of developing countries as to whence they obtained the kind of technical co-operation which they needed. Italy believed that in the context of TCDC special attention should be paid to rural development and to industrialization, and, in view of its experience as a partially agricultural and partially industrial country, it was willing to participate in TCDC activities by sending experts and consultants to developing countries and elaborating technical studies and implementation projects.

15. Mrs. GRANT (Venezuela) said that the Buenos Aires Conference had represented the international community's first great effort to promote South-South co-operation, and both the constructive attitude of the developed countries and third-world solidarity had contributed to the success of the Conference. She agreed that, as stated in the Conference, the basic responsibility for furthering and implementing TCDC rested with the Governments of developing countries and that the successful implementation of the agreements reached would depend on progress made at the international level in all negotiations having to do with both South-South and North-South co-operation. Her Government attached great importance to the recommendation in the Plan of Action and to the resolutions adopted by the Conference, since they would provide the basis for establishing the individual and collective self-reliance that was the very foundation of TCDC.

(Mrs. Grant, Venezuela)

16. Her Government attached great importance to measures based on strengthening existing national potential, with a view to promoting technical exchange among developing countries. Such measures included identifying the potential for technical co-operation, strengthening national information systems, improving existing institutions and exchanging experience.
17. National research and training centres should be encouraged so that the potential available in each country could be extended to the subregional, regional and interregional spheres, since all developing countries had something to offer to the others in the field of technical co-operation. All members of the international community must show their political will to implement strictly the Buenos Aires Plan of Action, and the support of the developed countries was particularly important. Lastly, she emphasized the significance of the complementary activities devised to assure the implementation of the Buenos Aires Plan.
18. Mr. YAO (Ivory Coast) said that his country would make economic headway only in conjunction with all the countries of the subregion and region to which it belonged. The political upheavals affecting Africa had strengthened his Government's conviction that only frank and negotiated co-operation could promote the economic and social development of the various sectors and increase scientific and technical potential. His country was not in a position to offer technical assistance to other developing countries, at least for the time being. It nevertheless had been represented at Buenos Aires because it believed that TCDC could make an outstanding contribution to establishing a new international economic order. Developing countries possessed a wealth of knowledge and little-known techniques which, through an exchange process, could raise those countries to a position of collective self-reliance.
19. His delegation hoped that both the developed and the developing countries would show the necessary political will to apply the Buenos Aires Plan of Action, giving special attention to Africa so that the least developed of all the continents might put into practice its regional food plan, develop its water resources and improve its transport and communication networks and its education and training systems. In that connexion, his delegation invited Governments to participate in an international seminar on technical co-operation among developing countries in the sphere of private educational television, to be held at Yamoussokro from 12 to 20 December 1978, about which the UNDP resident representative in Abidjan had already been contacted.
20. The Ivory Coast attached great importance to United Nations operational activities, which must fall within the framework of the gradual establishment of a new international economic order, and it strove to make better use of UNDP services, concentrating on the projects that seemed most beneficial for its development. Nevertheless, his country's current indicative planning figure came out lower each time; hence it was to be hoped that the UNDP Governing Council would revise it.

(Mr. Yao, Ivory Coast)

21. His Government also supported UNICEF efforts to improve children's physical and mental health. The Fund had increased its assistance during 1978 and would, it was hoped, soon achieve its objective of a yearly income of \$240 million in order to expand assistance to programmes for improving children's living conditions in developing countries. The International Year of the Child could make a significant contribution to the awareness of problems concerning children.

22. In the food field, his country supported the principles and policies contained in the Mexico Declaration of the World Food Council, especially regarding the role of the entire international community in solving food problems. Any measures adopted in that respect would have to go hand in hand with policies for promoting rural development and the integration of women in development. His country placed great hope in the next FAO World Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development.

23. Mr. SHENKORU (Ethiopia) observed that the Buenos Aires Conference had been important for TCDC, because there for the first time the developing countries had concerted their efforts in order to challenge the existing system of international inequalities and had manifested their determination to mobilize and make effective use of their own resources.

24. His delegation was of the view that TCDC should not be formulated on the basis of existing international economic co-operation, but should rather constitute an effort to achieve national and collective self-reliance by translating the principles of the new international economic order into action. To achieve that, the developing countries must cultivate confidence in themselves, in their experience and in their technical capability to tackle development problems, and they should make efforts to undertake fundamental changes in their own socio-economic structures, since one must eliminate social injustices at home and fulfil the basic needs of the people if one expected fair treatment from the outside world. The least advanced countries were not on an equal footing with others for participating in the advantages of TCDC, and it was therefore essential that they should receive special treatment in the granting of assistance so as to compensate for their backwardness and alleviate the poverty of their peoples.

25. Mr. CORDERY (United Kingdom) reiterated his Government's support for TCDC and stressed that the United Nations system was uniquely placed to promote it. That applied especially to UNDP, whose Administrator had taken measures to strengthen the Programme's capacity to carry out the role assigned it at the Buenos Aires Conference, without creating any new bureaucracy. Its role could only be catalytic, because the success of TCDC would depend entirely on initiatives from the developing countries. Some countries had already made good progress towards TCDC, and it was to be hoped that they would be able to report substantial achievements at the 1980 meeting on TCDC. His delegation believed that the limited resources of UNDP should be directed principally towards the least advanced developing countries which, because they had little industrial capacity and no surplus of expertise, were in the worst position to benefit from TCDC.

26. Miss MBETTE (United Republic of Cameroon) said that co-operation was one of the constants of the foreign policy of her country, which had been promoting horizontal co-operation for over a decade and had concluded many agreements with developing countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America with a view to sharing resources and experience and strengthening collective self-reliance.

27. Multilateral horizontal co-operation had been introduced only very recently and accordingly required both boldness and caution. Her country, which subscribed to the theory of concentric circles of solidarity and was aware that the starting point had to be the immediate and most obvious problems of nations, had always maintained that TCDC should begin at the subregional and regional levels and later be extended to all developing countries. It had therefore established co-operation agencies with neighbouring countries with a view to solving problems of mutual interest, had promoted Afro-Arab co-operation on the foundations laid at Cairo in 1977 and, since the Georgetown Conference, had supported the programme of action for strengthening co-operation among non-aligned and other developing countries.

28. Co-operation among developing countries was a prerequisite for their participation in international relations on a footing of equality, and General Assembly resolutions 3201 (S-VI) and 3202 (S-VI) therefore declared it to be an essential element of the new international economic order. However, the collective self-reliance to which the developing countries aspired should not be considered as a desire to cut themselves off and become self-sufficient. It was not a substitute for but complementary to vertical co-operation with the developed countries, as was indicated by the policies advocated by the non-aligned countries, by the General Assembly resolutions she had mentioned and by the Buenos Aires Plan of Action itself, recommendation 35 of which urged the developed countries to support TCDC initiatives, to provide financial support to co-operation projects between two or more developing countries and to increase their voluntary contributions to the operational programmes of the United Nations development system. In recommendations 32 and 33 United Nations organizations and bodies were likewise requested to participate actively and continuously in the implementation of TCDC.

29. Her delegation firmly supported recommendation 37 on intergovernmental arrangements because, given the complexity of TCDC problems, to establish a new co-ordination body might be dangerous. It was the responsibility of the UNDP, because of its experience in such work, to promote and support TCDC efforts and programmes. Of course, the review of progress in the implementation of the Buenos Aires Plan of Action should not be entrusted to the existing Governing Council of UNDP, with its restricted membership, but, as laid down in recommendation 37, to a meeting of representatives of all States participating in UNDP.

30. Mr. XIFRA (Spain) said that the Buenos Aires Conference had to be considered together with prospects for the establishment of a new international economic order that fully reflected the interests of the world community as a whole. It was no accident that Spain should have provided one of the Vice-Presidents of the Conference and been one of the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.2/33/L.34, on TCDC, because while it had achieved, thanks to the effort of its people, a level of development that placed it in the industrialized category, it continued to be

(Mr. Xifra, Spain)

especially sensitive to the problems of the transition to development, the solving of which required the concerted effort of developing and developed countries.

31. In that connexion it should be stressed that the 38 recommendations of the Buenos Aires Plan of Action were a means and not an end; if they were significantly to enhance the progress of the developing countries and the improvement of international economic relations, they would have to be applied selectively and pragmatically and not become rigid dogmas. Thus, for example, industrialized countries at an intermediate level of development should not be excluded from the implementation of TCDC since it was they, on account of their economic characteristics, that were in the best position to offer unconditional co-operation. Similarly, care would have to be taken not to relegate the industrialized countries to the role of mere suppliers of voluntary inputs if they were not to shirk their responsibilities in co-operation for development. For that reason his delegation was rather worried about recommendation 35 in the Plan of Action. In conclusion, he said that bilateral and regional co-operation should be pre-eminent, and practice should have primacy over theory, without yielding to ideological temptations.

32. Mr. MUTOMBO TSHITAMBWE (Zaire) said that by resolution 31/179 the General Assembly had made all forms of technical co-operation into a new element in the process of establishing a new international economic order. Development problems and the current difficulties of the world economy demanded that the developing countries should intensify and co-ordinate their efforts to devise strategies based on national and collective self-reliance with a view to promoting national development in the existing world context.

33. Moreover, TCDC should not be the sole responsibility of the United Nations system: each developing country should determine the form of its co-operation with every other developing country. Against that background, the Zairian authorities had established an interdepartmental committee to study at the national level the means to be used to achieve the TCDC objectives of achieving national sovereignty and economic independence. His delegation believed that TCDC had been transformed into a new instrument for extending and improving the technological independence of developing countries. That did not mean that developing countries were not going to need external co-operation and technical assistance, but the important thing was that they themselves had to make the final decisions on the best way of using their own resources and to that end would utilize the experience of developed countries, which had used a similar form of mutual co-operation by concluding a series of economic co-operation agreements within several groupings and communities, and thereby acquired economic and technological power.

34. Mr. GAGLIARDI (Brazil) said that TCDC should be translated into practical measures and not mere verbal declarations. For some time past his Government had been developing that kind of co-operation with African and Latin American countries and would continue to do so. His Government's interest in such activities was evidenced by its contribution to the United Nations Development Programme, which was equivalent to \$1.6 million, chiefly for TCDC. It should be noted that at the time of the convening of the Buenos Aires Conference, an international meeting on



(Mr. Gagliardi, Brazil)

vocational training had been taking place in Brasilia under the auspices of UNDP and ILO, with the participation of 45 technical experts from African and Latin American countries.

35. His delegation thanked the developed countries for the spirit of co-operation they had shown at the Buenos Aires Conference and expressed the hope that UNDP would have a co-ordinating role in connexion with future TCDC activities.

36. Mr. TOURE (Guinea-Bissau) said that the developing countries were more aware than ever before of the imperative need to make maximum efforts to consolidate their national independence, strengthen their common opposition to methods of imperialist and neo-colonialist exploitation and organize their co-operation and solidarity within international, regional, and subregional organizations. In a series of declarations and international conferences the developing countries had confirmed their determination to defend their own fundamental interests and to organize their development themselves. The strengthening of TCDC should culminate in solutions suited to the needs of those countries and their financing and assimilation capacities.

37. The Buenos Aires Conference had been a great step forward because it had served to demonstrate that opportunities existed for co-operation among developing countries in all spheres, including the technical, economic, trade, educational and public health spheres. The co-ordination of the developing countries' efforts with a view to defining specific objectives would be helpful in achieving a degree of independence vis-à-vis the countries of the "North", with the help of international organizations and the specialized agencies, especially UNDP. The developed countries, for their part, should shoulder their responsibilities towards the developing countries, because that was a prerequisite for the establishment of a new international economic order.

38. Mr. MANSJUR (Indonesia) said that the Buenos Aires Conference had achieved a breakthrough by systematically addressing barriers to TCDC and evolving a complete range of objectives for it as a new dimension of international co-operation. The international community was embarking on a new venture - the structural transformation of existing international economic relations through the establishment of a new international economic order which would assure just and equitable economic opportunities for all mankind on the basis of equal and mutually beneficial economic co-operation. In that context TCDC was a significant advance on the long road towards realizing the full potential of the new international economic order.

39. His delegation believed that TCDC should foster national and collective self-reliance, while at the same time avoiding any compromise of national sovereignty. It should give priority to national primacy while welcoming the participation of developed countries and of the United Nations system. Furthermore, TCDC was not a substitute for traditional technical co-operation but complementary to it and a corrective to its deficiencies. TCDC should likewise strengthen, and if necessary create, indigenous capacities to meet basic development needs and to enhance the absorptive capacity of developing countries and their ability to adapt

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(Mr. Mansjur, Indonesia)

technology to their needs. TCDC should promote technological self-sufficiency in the developing countries and bridge the gap between them and developed countries. His delegation fully supported the Buenos Aires Plan of Action, which incorporated those principles; however, if the spirit of Buenos Aires was to be sustained, good follow-up measures and commitment by the international community to implement the Plan of Action would clearly be needed. His Government was prepared to lend its full support to the implementation of TCDC.

40. Mr. MORSE (Administrator, United Nations Development Programme), speaking as Secretary-General of the United Nations Conference on Technical Co-operation among Developing Countries, said that the debate in the Committee had decisively confirmed that TCDC had come to be regarded as an intrinsic new dimension in international co-operation for development, and one with enormous potential for the years ahead. The international community had witnessed a common acceptance of the need to redress the gross imbalance which characterized existing international economic and social relations. The content of the resulting new international relationships produced by such restructuring still had to be determined. In any event, the very fact of agreeing to build "bridges across the South" would begin to change some of the fundamental factors on which all international economic relations had so far been built and would set in motion multiple chain reactions in human creativity and political will.

41. As Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme, he had taken full note of the constant references by delegations to the crucial role which the Buenos Aires Plan of Action entrusted to UNDP, which was perhaps the most significant request for change and innovation in the Programme since early 1970; he reaffirmed his commitment that the Programme would spare no time or energy in meeting that challenge. In the following week a series of interdepartmental staff meetings would begin with a view to ensuring that UNDP would be fully mobilized to meet the initiatives of Governments of developing countries for TCDC.

42. In accordance with General Assembly resolutions 3251 (XXIX) and 32/182, UNDP was preparing, together with executing agencies, a progress report on the implementation of TCDC for the following session of the Governing Council. That report would be analytical and would, wherever possible, contain quantitative indices reflecting the progress made. It would also discuss the performance of the Special Unit and make a projection of its future work in light of the Buenos Aires Plan of Action.

43. With regard to the information referral system (IRS), a computerized data base containing information on the capacities of 1,300 organizations of 90 developing countries had already been established. Consideration was at the moment being given to the modalities of further development and improvement of IRS, as recommended in the Plan of Action. A report on the evaluation of IRS would be submitted to the Governing Council of UNDP and to the high-level intergovernmental meeting on TCDC to be held in 1980. In any case, in the early stages evaluation would be continuous and at a later stage a comprehensive report would be submitted.

44. With regard to the strengthening of UNDP's Special Unit on TCDC, he would submit a detailed projection of needs for such strengthening to the Governing

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(Mr. Morse, UNDP)

Council in June 1979. In the meantime he would take the necessary steps to achieve such modest strengthening as could be accomplished with available resources. A detailed examination of questions affecting the supervision and site of the Unit had already begun with a view to ensuring that it would fully play its catalytical role in TCDC and could stimulate and draw upon all resources of UNDP through its programming units and, above all, the Resident Representatives.

#### ORGANIZATION OF WORK

45. The CHAIRMAN suggested that the list of speakers on agenda item 70 (United Nations Conference on Science and Technology for Development) should be closed at the end of the afternoon meeting and that the deadline for the submission of proposals on that item should be Friday, 24 November at 6 p.m. He also suggested that the deadline for the submission of proposals on the following agenda items should be 6 p.m. on Monday, 27 November: item 12 (Report of the Economic and Social Council), item 58 (Development and international economic co-operation), item 65 (United Nations Special Fund), item 66 (United Nations University) and item 71 (Acceleration of the transfer of real resources to developing countries).

46. It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 12.35 p.m.