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SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 35th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. VALDES (Bolivia)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.45 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 61: FOOD PROBLEMS: REPORT OF THE WORLD FOOD COUNCIL (A/31/3; A/31/19, A/31/197; A/C.2/31/11) (continued)

1. Mr. FLEMING (Argentina) said that the recent improvement in food production should not lead to false optimism or a reduction of efforts by Governments in the fields of co-operation and food aid. The serious problems affecting food production, trade, distribution and consumption in the developing countries should be one of the main concerns of the international community. Unfortunately, the measures adopted by the General Assembly at its seventh special session with a view to solving those problems had not yet been implemented. Moreover, the fragmented approach to food issues in the various international forums was frustrating.
2. He reaffirmed his country's support for the World Food Council and said that it was essential to strengthen the Council's role as the main food policy-making and monitoring organ, in accordance with the provisions of General Assembly resolution 3362 (S-VII), section V. He could only express disappointment at the meagre progress achieved in implementing those provisions, as recorded in the Council's report (A/31/19). It was distressing to note that the International Fund for Agricultural Development had been unable to become operational for lack of a mere \$30 million, and he hoped that the target of \$1 billion would soon be attained. He expressed support for the efforts of the Fund and the Council to improve food production in the least developed countries and in the lowest-income, food-deficit countries. However, given the magnitude of food problems, it was also essential to provide support with a view to increasing production in developing countries which were already efficient producers, in order to attain the necessary volume of food production and show a responsiveness to the problems of all developing countries.
3. He welcomed the increased acceptance of the concept of forward planning of food aid, particularly by Canada, Sweden and the European Economic Community, and hoped that such planning would be carried out in accordance with the provisions of General Assembly resolution 3362 (S-VII), section V, paragraphs 9 and 11.
4. The lack of progress in establishing the international system for food security, including the reserve for emergencies, despite commendable efforts of Norway, Sweden and the Federal Republic of Germany, was regrettable. There was a need for greater co-ordination between the relevant international bodies and for further study of the technical aspects of such reserves.
5. It was disappointing to learn that fertilizer aid had amounted to only 500,000 tons of nutrients in 1975-1976, since fertilizers had been a key factor in the recent expansion of agricultural production in developing countries. There was an urgent need to create or expand productive capacity in developing countries in order to ensure that those countries had stable supplies of fertilizers and also

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(Mr. Fleming, Argentina)

of pesticides. In order to attain that objective, developed countries and international financing agencies should provide the resources to set up fertilizer plants in the developing countries, particularly those whose existing or potential capacity would enable them to make an important contribution to agricultural development.

6. Conscious of its responsibility to the international community, his Government had recently undertaken an extensive fisheries development programme. While maintaining full sovereignty over its marine resources, it had entered into mutually beneficial arrangements with Japan and the Federal Republic of Germany in order to implement that programme.

7. As an important agricultural producer, Argentina provided 23,000 tons of grain annually to other developing countries through the Food Aid Convention within the framework of the International Grains Arrangement, a contribution which represented a considerable effort for a developing country. In its experience, constant external financial assistance was required in order to expand production and improve storage and distribution. Implementation of the essential changes in the international food trade called for in resolution 3362 (S-VII) would complement such assistance and help to improve existing and potential productive capacity.

8. His delegation was seriously concerned at the failure to implement the provisions relating to international trade, stabilization and agricultural adjustment contained in resolution XIX of the World Food Conference and in General Assembly resolution 3362 (S-VII). He urged speedy implementation of the programme of work adopted by the World Food Council to deal with the question of world food trade in the context of the strategy for the solution of the food problem of the developing countries. He hoped that the multilateral negotiations in GATT would adopt a decisive approach to agricultural problems, including processing, and that special attention would be given to efforts to reduce post-harvest losses.

9. Mr. RÖSSUM (Norway) said that the World Food Conference had constituted a milestone in the battle against hunger and malnutrition. It had focused world attention on food and nutrition problems and, even more important, it would have an energizing influence in the long term on national and international policies.

10. In his country, the Conference had given impetus to a government white paper on nutrition and food supply, which was currently being debated in the Norwegian parliament and which was expected to have important and far-reaching effects on national policy in the field of food consumption and production. The paper concluded, inter alia, that food production should be considered in the context of available global resources and that the shortage of food in the world required maximum utilization of national food production potential as far as was economically feasible, with due regard to the interests of developing countries.

11. The establishment of the World Food Council as the main body responsible for co-ordinating food, nutrition and related policies of all agencies within the

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(Mr. Rössum, Norway)

United Nations system had been an important outcome of the World Food Conference. The role of the Council as the main political body within the United Nations system responsible for the question of food and agriculture had been further strengthened by the provisions of General Assembly resolution 3362 (S-VII), section V. In order that the Council might effectively assume that function, the development-political aspects of food and agricultural policies, as well as the traditional economic-commercial ones, must be given due attention as part of an over-all strategy aimed at establishing the new international economic order. That approach should be reflected in the composition of delegations to both the ministerial and the preparatory sessions. In that connexion, he endorsed the views expressed by the representative of the United Kingdom at the previous meeting; while some limit of review of the general food situation should be allowed for, much would be gained by focusing the discussion among ministers on a few substantive issues of major importance.

12. His delegation noted with satisfaction the progress which had been made towards the establishment of the International Fund for Agricultural Development. In addition to its original pledge of 65 million kroner, his Government had made a further pledge of 10 million kroner, subject to parliamentary approval and conditional upon other countries' providing contributions which would bring total pledges to the target figure, thereby enabling the Fund to become operational.

13. In spite of certain recent improvements, the world food situation remained insecure and long-term food production trends in the developing countries were still inadequate to meet the growing needs. In view of the objective of eliminating hunger and malnutrition within a decade, the future work programme of the World Food Council should be focused on increasing food production and improving food distribution and consumption.

14. The only lasting solution to the food problem was a sharp increase in food production in the developing countries themselves. However, it was important that that increase should take place within the framework of over-all development objectives, with particular emphasis on involving the rural poor in the process of development and employment, wider income distribution and other social objectives.

15. His delegation accepted in principle the concept of "food priority countries" as well as the main criteria for their determination. However, he emphasized the need for flexibility in that respect. He also looked forward with interest to the report of the Consultative Group of Food Production and Investment in Developing Countries on the identification of developing countries having the potential for most rapid and efficient increase of food production.

16. With regard to the question of food aid, his delegation strongly supported the Preparatory Meeting's recommendations that food aid should increasingly be channelled through the World Food Programme, that the Committee on Food Aid Policies and Programmes should proceed with its examination of food aid targets for non-cereal products and that the International Undertaking on World Food Security should be speedily implemented.

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(Mr. Rössum, Norway)

17. He noted with satisfaction that another industrial country had joined Norway and Sweden in contributing to the emergency grain reserve and announced that his country would again contribute to that reserve in 1977.

18. His delegation could agree to the inclusion of nutrition and food trade in the Council's work programme, but he emphasized that the Council should avoid duplication of work with other United Nations organs and agencies and concentrate on its co-ordinating function and on the drawing up of general policy guidelines. Especially where food trade was concerned, the Council should limit itself to observing the progress made in other forums, such as UNCTAD, the International Wheat Council and GATT, and avoid any activities which could prejudice the negotiations taking place in those bodies. His delegation attached considerable importance to the question of nutrition, which had been discussed at the sixty-first session of the Economic and Social Council and he hoped that it would soon be possible to arrive at satisfactory institutional arrangements in that field.

19. Mr. GOBIR (Nigeria) said that the World Food Council had made a strong impact on the world food situation in its two years of operation. His delegation hoped that the sustained attack on hunger, malnutrition and disease would be further promoted by the adoption of progressive measures and programmes within the framework of the new international economic order.

20. As a result of concerted world efforts, some progress had been made towards increasing the volume and improving the quality of food production in food deficit areas such as Africa where there was a concentration of least developed countries, most seriously affected countries, land-locked countries and newly independent countries, all of which had particular problems. Furthermore, Africa suffered from natural disasters which demanded the mobilization of international action, by developed countries and the international organizations concerned, particularly the multilateral financial institutions, in order to give practical expression to the goal of collective survival of all mankind.

21. His delegation appreciated the efforts of some developed countries and the genuine campaign by some international organizations within the United Nations system to promote the aims of the Declaration on the Eradication of Hunger and Malnutrition. Further global efforts were required in order to improve the quality of life of the peoples of developing countries. He urged the World Food Council to give further consideration to the concept of "food priority countries", particularly the criteria for characterizing those countries, the determination of their real needs and the formulation of acceptable international measures to deal with them. He appealed to the appropriate United Nations organizations and specialized agencies to intensify their co-operation with the African Inter-Ministerial Committee for Food and take all necessary measures, including financial support if necessary, to assist the subsidiary bodies of that Committee in accordance with the spirit and intentions of Economic and Social Council resolution 2038 (LXI).

22. It was disappointing that, despite the considerable contribution of the

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(Mr. Gobir, Nigeria)

developing countries to the International Fund for Agricultural Development, the initial investment target had not yet been reached. OPEC countries alone had contributed over 40 per cent of the total sum required to make the Fund operational; yet there was a muted attempt to coerce those countries to contribute more, while appeals to certain developed countries to scale down their military expenditure and devote the resources thus released to development and international co-operation had gone unheeded. His delegation expressed its appreciation to those developed countries which had indicated their willingness to make additional contributions, and hoped that other developed countries would assume their responsibility to make up the shortfall as early as possible.

23. World food aid should be increased beyond the target of 10 million tons and channelled through the World Food Programme under the vigilant eye of the Committee on Food Aid Policies and Programmes, in a manner which would ensure the integrity of each recipient country. To facilitate the work of WFP, donor countries should undertake indicative planning of their food aid programmes. The International Undertaking on World Food Security and the emergency food reserve should be maintained at realistic targets recommended by the General Assembly in its resolution 3362 (S-VIII) in order to strengthen the capacity of the World Food Programme to deal with crisis situations in developing countries. Information on non-cereal food-stuffs, harvest and post-harvest losses, fish production, and pesticides and other agricultural inputs should be provided in close collaboration with FAO. The obstacles to the liberalization of food trade between developed and developing countries should be examined in close collaboration with UNCTAD and GATT in order to alleviate the balance-of-payments problems of the most seriously affected countries and facilitate the steady supply of fertilizers to them. The General Assembly should support the proposals of the Group of 77 contained in annex II to the report of the World Food Council (A/31/19), and annex V of the report should also be given favourable consideration, it being understood that the secretariat should be as small as possible, since close co-operation between the Council and other international organizations within the system was envisaged in General Assembly resolution 3348 (XXIX) and it was important to avoid duplication of effort in order to save resources for the vital functions of the Council.

24. With regard to efforts at the national level, he said that the Federal Military Government of Nigeria, in accordance with the Third National Development Plan (1975-1980) had established 10 River Basin Development Authorities to promote food production. A National Grain Storage Scheme, combining technical assistance from FAO and human resources from universities and institutions in Nigeria, would soon be inaugurated. The purpose of that scheme was to provide short-term and long-term national grain stocks for interseasonal price stabilization and for national relief and emergencies and to improve rural grain handling, disinfection and storage. It was hoped that, when the network was fully operational the Federal and state Governments would have a total improved storage capacity of over 600,000 metric tons. Alongside those infrastructure developments, "Operation Feed the Nation" had been launched with the basic aim of achieving self-sufficiency in food production within the present fiscal year.

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(Mr. Gobir, Nigeria)

25. If a developing country like Nigeria could mobilize its human and financial resources in that way, there was clearly an urgent need for the international community to respond effectively to the just demands of the developing countries for an increase in multilateral and bilateral assistance in food and agriculture.

26. Mr. STOFOROPOULOS (Greece) said that, in view of the need to channel additional resources to the developing countries so as to expand food production capacity, it was encouraging that the \$1 billion target set for the International Fund for Agricultural Development had almost been achieved. The resources must be used efficiently and as soon as possible, and the Fund should prepare concrete food plans for individual countries, taking into account such factors as the comparative agricultural advantages of the various countries and the extent of malnutrition. The concept of "food priority countries" would be a useful one in planning the Fund's activities. It was essential that resources from other United Nations institutions should be channelled increasingly towards agricultural development; for the food crisis was due in part to the past neglect of agriculture in development planning. His delegation agreed with the view expressed in the Economic Declaration adopted at the Fifth Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries that it was imperative to increase investment in food production in the developing countries.

27. Efforts should also be made to remove the numerous non-financial constraints on the growth of food production in the developing countries. Research into problems specific to the agriculture of the developing countries would be useful, and the idea of initiating a seed supply scheme through FAO should be encouraged. More information on agricultural planning techniques should also be supplied in order to enable developing countries to channel their internal resources more effectively into agriculture. New solutions to the more effective use of water resources could be explored at the forthcoming United Nations Water Conference, and the question of appropriate technology for food production should be looked into more systematically. His delegation hoped that the forthcoming World Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development would be adequately prepared so that it could make a decisive contribution to solving the problem of land reform. The World Food Council should renew the interest of all parties concerned in that issue.

28. Turning to the question of food aid and food security, he said that minimum food aid targets could be set for some basic commodities other than cereals. Food aid policies should become more effective once all donor countries engaged in forward planning of food aid. The creation of a dependable system of food reserves should also be regarded as a matter of urgency, and food distribution systems should be streamlined. Every effort should be made to provide adequate quantities of fertilizers, particularly to the most seriously affected countries. In order to make the food aid programmes more effective the reviews of the world food situation and outlook should be more informative. In that respect, the suggestions made at the last session of the World Food Council should be taken up.

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(Mr. Stoforopoulos, Greece)

29. Finally, in carrying out its task the Council should take advantage of the research and activities of other United Nations bodies and prepare an action-oriented programme on that basis.

30. Mr. VAN BUUREN (Netherlands) agreed with the Executive Director that, while there had been an improvement in world food production, nothing could be more dangerous than complacency. It was unfortunate that no structural improvements had been made in the world food situation since the World Food Conference; as a result, it was very unlikely that hunger would be eradicated within a decade from the time of that Conference.

31. The International Fund for Agricultural Development would be an important factor in eradicating hunger and malnutrition, and he recalled that his Government had announced that it would pledge an additional amount over and above the 100 million guilders already pledged, in order to help to attain the \$1 billion target.

32. In the coming days, his delegation would take a positive stance in the negotiations on the report of the World Food Council (A/31/19) and was confident that a consensus would prove possible.

33. Mr. GUNA-KASEM (Thailand) said it was unfortunate that, although it had been agreed that a concerted effort to increase food production in developing countries was needed as a critical element in the concerted attempt to solve food problems, the agreement had not so far resulted in concrete action by countries that were in a position to contribute to its effective implementation.

34. Despite the fact that the developing countries had been devoting a major part of their financial resources to producing sufficient food for their people, their efforts had continued to be hampered by the deteriorating balance-of-payments situation and the stagnation in food production which ensued because the developing countries had to import inputs such as fertilizers and pesticides, as well as agricultural machinery, at increasingly high costs. A majority of the farmers in developing countries were prevented from maximizing the use of their land because they lacked those material inputs. Accordingly, he called on donor countries, both developed and developing, which were in a position to do so, to expand their assistance to developing countries with a view to increasing food production, inter alia, by selling fertilizer and other necessary agricultural machinery at appropriate prices and by co-operating in agricultural investment projects in developing countries in accordance with the latter's development plans so as to increase their self-sufficiency.

35. With regard to food aid, he urged the donor countries to achieve the target of a minimum of 10 million tons of cereal during the current year and to participate in long-term planning of food aid. It was regrettable that progress in implementing the concept of forward planning of food aid had been very slow. While supporting the concept of food aid, he pointed out that food aid programmes must not hinder the production and the exports of food-exporting developing

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(Mr. Guna-Kasem, Thailand)

countries, which depended heavily on their export earnings. Whenever possible, transactions should be triangular, with donor countries purchasing available commodities from the food-exporting developing countries and sending them to needy areas. That was important as a means of preventing a deterioration in the balance of payments, which in turn would adversely affect investment in food production and thus lead to economic stagnation in the food-exporting developing countries. Donor countries participating in the World Food Programme should provide adequate cash resources to help to meet transportation and other expenses of the commodities they contributed, so that a larger proportion of the funds could be available for purchases of commodity from and the construction of storage facilities in developing countries.

36. Turning to the problem of food security and food reserves, he said that progress had been rather slow. One very important aspect of the world food-grain reserve called for in General Assembly resolution 3362 (S-VII) was that it could prevent abnormal fluctuations in grain prices. His delegation therefore urged all countries in a position to contribute to the establishment of such a reserve to display the necessary political will and to extend financial assistance to food-producing developing countries which, while willing to contribute materially and to participate more substantially in the reserve, had been unable to do so for lack of funds.

37. His delegation wished to express appreciation to all countries which had already announced their contributions to the International Fund for Agricultural Development, and hoped that the Fund could become operational without delay. While priority should be given to agricultural projects in countries which had food shortages, the Fund should also concentrate its attention on agricultural development projects geared to increasing food production and the nutritional value of food in various developing countries.

38. In conclusion, he said that his country continued to attach great importance to the role and activities of the United Nations in the increasingly crucial area of food problems.

39. Mr. PARSI (Iran) said that, despite the progress achieved in increasing food production in the past year or two, the prospects of adequately meeting the growing demands remained dim unless sustained efforts were made to implement speedily the decisions of the World Food Conference.

40. In the short term, donor countries must make every effort to achieve the minimum annual targets set for food aid; it was discouraging that such aid had not yet reached the target of 10 million tons of cereal grains set by the World Food Conference and that to date only a few donor countries had agreed to implement the principle of forward planning of food aid. It was also discouraging that little progress had been made toward the achievement of a system of world food security. The solution of the world food problem lay, in the long run, in increasing food production world-wide, particularly in the food-deficit developing countries.

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(Mr. Parsi, Iran)

41. The proposal for the establishment of an International Fund for Agricultural Development had been an important initiative in that context. Iran had initially contributed \$104,750,000 to IFAD and had recently made an additional pledge of \$20 million. He reiterated his Government's offer of Teheran as the permanent seat of the Fund; in view of its unique geographical position and the fact that it had successfully completed a comprehensive land reform and agricultural development programme, Iran could offer much to the Fund. His Government was prepared to provide IFAD with all the necessary facilities, and hoped that its offer would be endorsed by the members of the Fund.

42. Mr. SIYOLWE (Zambia) expressed disappointment at the continued lack of significant results in the implementation of the Declaration and the Programme of Action on the Establishment of a New International Economic Order. The principles and decisions which had been adopted at the World Food Conference could, if fully implemented, be a basis for alleviating the current food problem. While the responsibility for increasing food production for their people lay primarily with the developing nations, the international community had an obligation to encourage such efforts through international assistance and trade policies. He paid tribute to those developed countries which had already demonstrated their willingness to help, and appealed to them to expand such assistance.

43. Noting that the short-term solutions outlined by the World Food Conference called for food reserves and the channelling of increased food aid to food-deficit countries, he said that the results with regard to food aid were quite encouraging, as the 10 million ton target had nearly been achieved. The international community should give urgent consideration to the recommendation regarding the establishment of a form of grain reserve to ensure food security. Long-term solutions to food problems called for increased investment in agriculture, which his delegation believed would in the long run solve the problem of starvation and hunger in developing countries. Moreover, once the majority of the developing countries achieved self-sufficiency in basic foods the obligations of the international community would be minimized, since the capacity of developing countries to assist one another would substantially increase.

44. In Zambia, the food problem had been treated with the seriousness it deserved and emphasis had been placed on providing for the basic nutritional needs of the people, improvement of their living standards and diversification of the formerly copper-oriented economy. Zambia was making encouraging progress towards self-sufficiency in staple food commodities.

45. On the question of assistance to liberation movements and refugees in southern Africa, he said that the efforts already being made by the Organization of African Unity and other governmental and non-governmental organizations should be encouraged, and the Economic and Social Council should be invited to intensify and co-ordinate its activities in that regard. While providing immediate food aid to the liberation movements, the international community should, at the same time, assist these young people to acquire basic skills in agriculture and other fields.

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(Mr. Siyolwe, Zambia)

Noting that the independent African States in southern Africa continued to assist refugees to produce their own food, he called on the international community to encourage such efforts by providing assistance to those States and by supplying food to the refugees themselves.

46. Finally, he commended the World Food Council on its work and expressed the hope that the International Fund for Agricultural Development would soon become operational.

47. Mr. BRUCE (Canada) said that over the last five years world food production had slowed, partly for climatic reasons. Nevertheless, the slow-down suggested that renewed efforts must be made, particularly by developing countries, to improve food resource capabilities. In the third world, population increase was outstripping food production; if that trend were to continue, mass starvation could occur in certain regions of the world by 1985. The World Food Conference and the World Food Council had discussed the problems, and the potential for improvement of the situation was undoubtedly there. Many decisions taken in the last few years had been directed primarily towards increasing food production potential in the developing countries themselves. It had been argued that every nation could be self-sufficient in food if the right choices were made and if national resources and efforts were organized. His Government was not sure that that was a valid assertion within the limits of comparative economic advantage; it was sure, however, that many food importers, particularly developing countries, had considerably greater potential for food autonomy than present circumstances would indicate. The realization of that potential was the only reasonable goal to pursue, and direct food aid was essentially a stopgap measure. In the current year Canada was contributing over \$100 million to the World Food Programme, but it did not pretend that direct food aid was doing much more than treating the symptoms of inadequate food production elsewhere until such time as food production in the recipient countries could be increased. The role of FAO would be critical in that respect.

48. There was no single cause for the world food problem. There was a lack of effective infrastructure in developing countries for the application of sound technology and the transport and distribution of produce and food. There had also been too little emphasis in many countries on the overriding need to enhance agricultural production, and in some cases cash crops had been preferred to traditional basic food resources.

49. If international mechanisms for stabilizing commodity prices were improved, that would be conducive to sound investment planning. Canada was pursuing solutions to problems in grains markets both in negotiations under the International Wheat Council in London and in the multilateral tariff negotiations. Any real solution in that sector would have to take into account basic problems in international trading in grains, including access to markets. Food supply was too important a matter to be governed by speculative market forces; the people of the world had the right to demand a system which provided food security.

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(Mr. Bruce, Canada)

50. The Executive Director of the World Food Council had correctly identified the questions of food aid, food production and supply, and food security as the three major areas of concern. Together with nutrition and world trade, they were the priority items in the Council's work programme, and they were interrelated. Food security could only be obtained by enhancing food supply in the long run while maintaining adequate levels of food aid in the meantime. Thus, increasing agricultural production in developing countries must be the principal goal and was in fact a major focus of Canada's development assistance strategy. As a counterpart to Canadian food aid, Canadian experience was being applied to agricultural development projects undertaken with many of Canada's co-operation partners.

51. Internationally, constraints on the increased production of food must be removed. In that connexion, the International Fund for Agricultural Development could be of major significance.

52. The World Food Council had not been the success Canada had hoped for, despite the efforts of its Executive Director, and it was the responsibility of the member countries to improve its effectiveness; the adoption at the present session of the General Assembly of agreed rules of procedure for the Council would help. The Council should be encouraged to concentrate on the examination in depth each year of one or two key issues relevant to the fundamental need to increase food production. Above all, the Council should take seriously its mandate as the highest international political forum addressing itself specifically to world food problems; it should not try to duplicate the work of other institutions in the United Nations system, such as the World Food Programme or the Council of FAO. It should take advantage of the ministerial level of its representation to generate the political will necessary to solve specific elements of the world food strategy. It should also provide, and use to advantage, an overview of all relevant international activities, including those proposed by such international conferences as the United Nations Water Conference or the Conference on Science and Technology for Development. Canada would make every effort to assist the World Food Council in realizing its potential for leadership.

53. At the World Food Conference, Canada had pledged to give one million tons of grain per year, of which 40 per cent was being channelled multilaterally, through the World Food Programme. As a result of further supplementary pledges, Canada was the largest single contributor to the Programme and had given over \$200 million in the pledging period 1975-1976. For that reason, and because of its interest in the Programme's management, it had proposed that a distinguished Canadian citizen, Mr. Vogel, should be appointed Executive Director of the Programme. He had for several years been Chairman of the Canadian Wheat Board and had been in charge of a food organization whose responsibilities each year were of the order of several billion dollars. His talents and knowledge would be valuable to the world community as head of the World Food Programme.

54. Apart from bulk food supply, there was the issue of inadequate nutrition. The report prepared by Professor Tinbergen for the Club of Rome meeting in October

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(Mr. Bruce, Canada)

had pointed out that estimates of the number of people currently suffering from hunger and undernourishment varied from half a billion to one and a half billion. Yet catastrophe could still be averted. Good cereal crops in developed and developing countries had enabled the world to begin rebuilding its stocks, and the effect of the renewed emphasis given to agriculture and food production since the World Food Conference was becoming apparent.

55. Mr. VILLA (Philippines) said that the question of increasing food production in developing countries had two aspects: internal adjustments which would enable developing countries to accelerate food production, and external requirements to supplement and facilitate the national development process.

56. Developing countries must devote more resources to agriculture and food production, and in order to do so they must adopt policies enabling them to use their full potential for food production. The specific areas in which national action was necessary included providing incentives to farmers and producers by ensuring the supply of fertilizers, pesticides, farm tools and other inputs, building the infrastructure required for the total production process. Fundamental agrarian and social reforms must be made where necessary. The Philippine Government had recently launched a land reform programme to transfer ownership of farmlands to those who cultivated them, and had supplemented that basic measure by other incentives to farmers. As a result, self-sufficiency in food was rapidly being attained; there had been a surplus of more than 1 million tons of rice in June 1976, and there might even be prospects of future rice exports.

57. Similar progress could be seen in many developing countries which were carrying out programmes of national self-sufficiency in food production; nevertheless, external assistance still had an important role to play. The countries' human resources and potential must be supplemented by specific external aid. The integrated approach called for by the World Food Conference provided a correct framework for channelling external assistance to developing countries. Impressive progress has been made towards implementing the various components of the strategy adopted at the Conference. For example, the consensus resolution adopted at the seventh special session of the General Assembly had indicated measures to be taken in the various developmental sectors, and in none of those sectors had greater progress been made than in food and agriculture. That was a welcome indication of the genuine political will which had been at work since the establishment of the new international economic order.

58. The contributions of the countries in Categories I and II of Schedule 1 annexed to the Agreement Establishing the International Fund for Agricultural Development (A/CONF.73/15) had brought the Fund close to its target of \$1 billion. The contributions pledged by the countries in Category III were equally significant as an expression of a concrete commitment of members of the international community to the establishment of IFAD. He hoped that the remaining balance would soon be met, so that the Fund could start operations without delay. The Philippines had been the first country to remit part of its contribution to the Fund.

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(Mr. Villa, Philippines)

59. Contributions to the food aid programme had also been noteworthy; although the minimum target of 10 million tons of grains had not been achieved, the amount of more than 9 million tons committed for 1975-1976 was an improvement over the last two years. However, it must be stressed that the target of 10 million tons was a minimum, and was far from adequate to meet actual food needs. He urged all donor countries to implement the concept of forward planning of food aid. An important aspect of that aid was the establishment of an international emergency reserve. In setting the criteria to govern the operation of the reserve, no restrictions should be placed on destination.

60. Implementation of the concept of food security offered the most promising and enduring solution to the chronic difficulties of food production, since there were obvious advantages not only for developing countries but for the world at large in reducing the uncertainties of supply, demand and price. He supported the recommendations of the second session of the World Food Council for the early establishment of a dependable system of food security.

61. Related to the question of food security was the more general question of food trade. The World Food Council should be able to assist in devising a form of international action that would avoid any deleterious effects of food trade on developing countries. It was encouraging to note that food trade had been included in the agenda of the Council's third session.

62. The World Food Council had been established to provide co-ordination and follow-up of policies concerning food production, nutrition, food security, food trade and food aid. Although the food crisis had abated somewhat, the problem remained urgent and the Council should therefore pursue with greater vigour the implementation of the measures adopted at the World Food Conference. The secretariat should maintain a small staff adequate for the urgent needs of the Council. His delegation would support the draft resolution recommended by the World Food Council for adoption by the General Assembly (A/31/19, annex V). However, he noted that the draft resolution proposed to change the title "Executive Director" to "Executive Secretary"; his delegation considered it more appropriate to maintain the present title, as being in consonance with the titles of the executive heads of other United Nations organs.

63. Mr. MAKWETTA (United Republic of Tanzania) noted that, of the 2.6 billion inhabitants of the developing countries, almost 1 billion suffered from malnutrition or hunger and 900 million earned less than three cents a day. Yet more than \$1,300 billion was spent every year on the arms race. The developing countries, with 70 per cent of the world's population, had only 30 per cent of world income. That uneven distribution explained the prevalence of hunger and malnutrition in the developing countries.

64. He noted with satisfaction from the report of the World Food Council that there had been some improvement in food production in the past two years; nevertheless, ways must be found to increase production still further. In the developing countries, it could be increased by improving farming methods, using

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(Mr. Makwetta, Tanzania)

modern machinery and opening new areas for cultivation and irrigation, as well as by such measures as land reclamation, the resettlement of agricultural labour and adequate investment in agriculture. Much depended on the ability of Governments and United Nations agencies to implement the recommended strategies; for instance, the targets for fertilizer aid, food aid, IFAD and the food reserve could not be reached without the co-operation and concerted efforts of all.

65. The problems of hunger and malnutrition in the developing countries could only be solved within the framework of over-all development objectives. Thus, food production strategies in the developing countries should encompass other aspects of human development, such as functional education, health services, clean water, improved housing conditions - in fact, what the Executive Director of UNICEF had called the basic services approach. There again, the success of the approach depended on the co-operation of developed and developing countries.

66. The United Republic of Tanzania had a vast agricultural potential, with more than 15 million hectares of arable land, of which only slightly more than 1 million hectares were under permanent cultivation. It also had a network of large rivers and fertile valleys which could increase food production if properly utilized. The central part of the country had fertile soil but experienced droughts almost every year. The rivers could not be harnessed for irrigation because that required modern technology which the country lacked at present. In common with many developing countries, the United Republic of Tanzania had only a small labour force; the farmers used largely subsistence farming methods, and they could not produce enough food for the rest of the population because, in addition to the lack of basic social services, they were too poor to pay for tractors, fertilizers, pesticides, storage and transport, and all the services and know-how necessary to improve production.

67. Nevertheless, the Tanzanian people had been responding positively to the food shortage problem, and in 1975, in response to the recommendations of the World Food Council, his Government had launched a national maize project in 13 regions and had formed a National Seed Company to deal with the production and provision of improved seeds. The cost of the maize project would be more than 531 million shillings, and the World Bank had agreed to provide a loan of 144 million shillings, the Arab Bank for Economic Development in Africa 41 million shillings and the United States Agency for International Development 35 million shillings. The object of the programme was to make the country self-sufficient in maize, which was the staple food.

68. The developing countries' efforts to increase food production were hampered by sharp rises in the costs of basic agricultural requisites, such as tractors, fertilizers and pesticides, while the agricultural produce which they must sell to buy those items kept falling in price.

69. His delegation approved all the recommendations made by the World Food Council with a view to increased food production, but would like specifically to emphasize

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the following items in the Council's report which called for immediate action by Governments, intergovernmental bodies and the United Nations agencies concerned: extension of irrigation and control of waterlogging and salinity; research on high-yield and drought-resistant crops; more assistance by the developed to the developing countries in the form of such inputs as fertilizers, tractors, pesticides and herbicides; continuation of the FAO International Fertilizer Supply Scheme and development in FAO of a seed supply scheme; better assessment of harvest and post-harvest losses and measures to tackle them; improved internal and external market conditions for food in order to support increased food production in developing countries; assistance to developing countries in developing their agro-meteorological services.

70. Mr. JÖDAHL (Sweden) agreed with the Executive Director of the World Food Council that, although the world food situation had improved in the past two years, there was no room for complacency. There must be sustained increased production in food-importing countries, above all the developing countries. The need for increased food production and storage facilities was particularly important in the least developed and most seriously affected countries. A basic element in establishing a world food security system was the attainment of self-sufficiency in developing countries. Nevertheless, measures to increase production in those countries must be combined with political, economic and social changes to increase employment and incomes and promote better nutritional standards. Thus, rural development must be considered in an integrated context, where different policies interacted in pursuit of the goals of the development strategy.

71. One important factor in international efforts to achieve an increase in production was the International Fund for Agricultural Development. As the Swedish Minister for International Development Co-operation had said at the 32nd meeting, Sweden was prepared to go beyond its original pledge of 100 million kronor, provided that other Governments took similar steps. He therefore hoped that IFAD would shortly reach its \$1 billion target.

72. Sweden wished to see an international food emergency reserve established as quickly as possible, in conformity with the decision of the Committee on Food Aid Policies and Programmes, which had been confirmed by the World Food Council.

73. The World Food Council had been established as the central organ for co-ordination of policies concerning food production, nutrition, food security, food trade and food aid, and to fulfil those objectives the Council should make clear, action-oriented recommendations to the General Assembly through the Economic and Social Council. In that way, it would give the necessary impetus to decisions on central questions of food policy, the development of which might otherwise be very sluggish.

The meeting rose at 12.50 p.m.