



**ADDENDUM TO THE REPORT
OF THE *AD HOC* COMMITTEE
ON THE RESTRUCTURING
OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL SECTORS
OF THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM**

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

OFFICIAL RECORDS : THIRTY - FIRST SESSION

SUPPLEMENT No. 34A (A/31/34/Add.1)

UNITED NATIONS



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OF THE *AD HOC* COMMITTEE
ON THE RESTRUCTURING
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**ANNEX
SUMMARY RECORDS
OF THE FIRST AND SECOND SESSIONS**

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UNITED NATIONS

New York, 1976

NOTE

Symbols of United Nations documents are composed of capital letters combined with figures. Mention of such a symbol indicates a reference to a United Nations document.

CONTENTS*

Summary records of the first session

| | <u>Page</u> |
|--|-------------|
| <u>1st meeting</u> | 3 |
| Opening of the session by the Secretary-General | |
| Election of officers | |
| Statement by the Chairman | |
| Adoption of the agenda | |
| Organization of work | |
| <u>2nd meeting</u> | 10 |
| Election of officers (<u>continued</u>) | |
| Organization of work | |
| <u>3rd meeting</u> | 16 |
| Election of officers (<u>continued</u>) | |
| Organization of work | |
| Restructuring of the economic and social sectors of the United Nations system | |
| <u>4th meeting</u> | 37 |
| Restructuring of the economic and social sectors of the United Nations system (<u>continued</u>) | |
| <u>5th meeting</u> | 47 |
| Restructuring of the economic and social sectors of the United Nations system (<u>concluded</u>) | |
| <u>6th meeting</u> | 64 |
| Adoption of the report of the <u>Ad Hoc</u> Committee to the thirtieth session of the General Assembly | |
| Election of officers (<u>concluded</u>) | |
| Closure of the session | |

* In accordance with the decision of the Ad Hoc Committee at its second session, the summary records of its meetings form part of the report of the Committee to the General Assembly (Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-first Session, Supplement No. 34 (A/31/34)).

CONTENTS (continued)Summary records of the second session

| | <u>Page</u> |
|--|-------------|
| <u>7th meeting</u> | 73 |
| Adoption of the agenda | |
| Organization of work | |
| <u>8th meeting</u> | 77 |
| Election of officers | |
| Restructuring of the economic and social sectors of the United Nations system | |
| <u>9th meeting</u> | 81 |
| Restructuring of the economic and social sectors of the United Nations system (<u>continued</u>) | |
| <u>10th meeting</u> | 89 |
| Restructuring of the economic and social sectors of the United Nations system (<u>continued</u>) | |
| <u>11th meeting</u> | 103 |
| Restructuring of the economic and social sectors of the United Nations system (<u>continued</u>) | |
| <u>12th meeting</u> | 117 |
| Restructuring of the economic and social sectors of the United Nations system (<u>continued</u>) | |
| <u>13th meeting</u> | 133 |
| Restructuring of the economic and social sectors of the United Nations system (<u>continued</u>) | |
| <u>14th meeting</u> | 143 |
| Restructuring of the economic and social sectors of the United Nations system (<u>continued</u>) | |
| <u>15th meeting</u> | 163 |
| Restructuring of the economic and social sectors of the United Nations system (<u>continued</u>) | |
| <u>16th meeting</u> | 175 |
| Restructuring of the economic and social sectors of the United Nations system (<u>continued</u>) | |
| <u>17th meeting</u> | 191 |
| Restructuring of the economic and social sectors of the United Nations system (<u>continued</u>) | |

CONTENTS (continued)

| | <u>Page</u> |
|--|-------------|
| <u>18th meeting</u> | 207 |
| Restructuring of the economic and social sectors of the United Nations system (<u>continued</u>) | |
| <u>19th meeting</u> | 223 |
| Restructuring of the economic and social sectors of the United Nations system (<u>continued</u>) | |
| <u>20th meeting</u> | 229 |
| Restructuring of the economic and social sectors of the United Nations system (<u>continued</u>) | |
| <u>21st meeting</u> | 243 |
| Restructuring of the economic and social sectors of the United Nations system (<u>continued</u>) | |
| <u>22nd meeting</u> | 249 |
| Restructuring of the economic and social sectors of the United Nations system (<u>continued</u>) | |
| <u>23rd meeting</u> | 263 |
| Restructuring of the economic and social sectors of the United Nations system (<u>continued</u>) | |
| <u>24th meeting</u> | 281 |
| Restructuring of the economic and social sectors of the United Nations system (<u>continued</u>) | |
| <u>25th meeting</u> | 295 |
| Restructuring of the economic and social sectors of the United Nations system (<u>continued</u>) | |
| <u>26th meeting</u> | 311 |
| Restructuring of the economic and social sectors of the United Nations system (<u>continued</u>) | |
| <u>27th meeting</u> | 329 |
| Restructuring of the economic and social sectors of the United Nations system (<u>continued</u>) | |
| <u>28th meeting</u> | 345 |
| Restructuring of the economic and social sectors of the United Nations system (<u>continued</u>) | |
| Organization of work | |

CONTENTS (continued)

| | <u>Page</u> |
|--|-------------|
| <u>29th meeting</u> | 355 |
| Restructuring of the economic and social sectors of the United Nations system (<u>concluded</u>) | |
| Consideration of the provisional agenda for the third session | |
| Closure of the session | |

SUMMARY RECORDS OF THE FIRST SESSION

(13 to 21 November 1975)

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1st MEETING

Thursday, 13 November 1975, 10.30 a.m.

OPENING OF THE SESSION

1. The SECRETARY-GENERAL declared open the first session of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Restructuring of the Economic and Social Sectors of the United Nations System.
2. The seventh special session of the General Assembly had marked a turning-point in the history of international economic co-operation, and in the history of the United Nations. The resolution adopted unanimously at the end of the session set forth a comprehensive set of policies aimed at redirecting international economic activities, redressing structural imbalances and creating a more equitable system for the benefit of the entire world community. It also contained new guidelines, principles and action-oriented measures intended to give practical meaning to the significant change of attitudes underlying the negotiations held and the agreements reached at the session. The resolution would serve as the basis and framework for the future work of all the competent bodies and organizations of the United Nations system. As an integral part of such measures, a clear consensus had also emerged at the special session on the necessity of restructuring the United Nations system.
3. The special session's decision relating to the establishment of the Ad Hoc Committee spelt out in clear terms the over-all objectives of its future deliberations. The importance and urgency of reforming the present United Nations system was inextricably linked to the greater interdependence between States and the growing recognition that the problems which prevailed in the world today were closely interrelated. The application of an integrated multidisciplinary approach,

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(The Secretary-General)

conceptually and institutionally, to deal with those problems consequently required the adaptation of the existing structural framework of the United Nations system. That process must be undertaken in the context of progress towards a new international economic order.

4. The complexity of the task before the Committee should not be underestimated. Just as it had proved extremely difficult to evolve mutually acceptable strategies for development, it was equally obvious that it would not be easy to achieve the mechanisms for international collaboration that the present problems demanded. The political will which had enabled Governments to surmount wide differences of view at the seventh special session would also be an essential prerequisite for the establishment, adaptation and effective utilization of institutional arrangements. An international institution was nothing more and nothing less than what its member Governments wanted it to be. Almost every day brought proof of the validity of that assertion.

5. The seventh special session of the Assembly was a case in point. It had been said that the rigidity of its procedures, the size of its membership, and even its timing, could not lead to genuine negotiation and agreement. The results of the session, however, constituted indisputable evidence that, if the necessary degree of political determination prevailed, appropriate processes of deliberation and negotiation could be evolved to achieve consensus and concrete solutions. And the United Nations, at that session, had once again proved that, if its Member States were resolved to avoid confrontation, it could serve as a catalyst of those forces which worked in the direction of establishing conditions for a better world. That, he believed, was the spirit in which the Ad Hoc Committee had been created.

6. The Assembly had also been well aware that its deliberations were being held against the background of many years of hard, patient and visionary work in the network of specialized organs and organizations of the system. The activities of the United Nations system reflected all the prevailing economic

(The Secretary-General)

conditions, in the developed as well as in the developing parts of the world, all the diverse aspirations and all the various trends in economic and social policy. Now that the Assembly had developed an integrated programme of action giving new direction and impetus to the work of the organizations of the United Nations family, the need for institutional adjustment and adaptation of the system for the implementation of those actions had become all the more apparent and urgent. It had also acquired a clearer focus and a well-defined purpose.

7. In conclusion, he emphasized that both he and the heads of the other United Nations organs and organizations were prepared to provide the Committee with all possible assistance to facilitate its work and assist it in its deliberations. He wished the Committee the best of success in its important task.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

8. Mr. RAJAONARIVELO (Madagascar), speaking on his own behalf and on behalf of the Group of 77 nominated Mr. Dadzie (Ghana) as Chairman.
9. Mr. STURKEY (Australia), speaking on his own behalf and on behalf of the Group of Western European and Other States, supported the nomination.
10. Mr. CZARKOWSKI (Poland), speaking on his own behalf and on behalf of the Group of Eastern European States, also supported the nomination.
11. Mr. Dadzie (Ghana) was elected Chairman by acclamation.
12. The CHAIRMAN said he understood that delegations were not yet ready to make nominations for the other offices, and suggested that the elections should be postponed until the next meeting of the Committee.
13. It was so decided.

STATEMENT BY THE CHAIRMAN

14. The CHAIRMAN thanked the members of the Committee for the confidence placed in him, and assured them that he would do his utmost to merit it. He associated himself with the remarks made by the Secretary-General about the significance of the seventh special session of the General Assembly and the relevance of its outcome for the work of the Committee. The results of the session constituted an important first step towards the progressive removal of the wide economic and social disparities between different sections of mankind, and towards assuring fuller participation for the developing countries in the related decision-making process.

15. At the same time, the special session had recognized that a process of restructuring was essential if the United Nations system was to be capable of dealing with problems of economic co-operation in an effective manner and if it was to be responsive to the requirements of the Declaration and the Programme of Action on the Establishment of a New International Economic Order, as well as the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States. The concern to promote greater unity and effectiveness within the system obviously was not new. Member States had accepted that the functional decentralization of the system was a source of vitality and that the support of the constituent organizations was indispensable. As the concept of a comprehensive and integrated approach had gained general acceptance, so, ironically, had the responsibility for related problem areas become more diffused among an increasingly large number of institutions. It was such preoccupations, owing to the complexity and fragmentation of the system, that had prompted the Organization to undertake the evaluation and reform exercises of recent years.

16. The process which the Ad Hoc Committee was to initiate, however, was broader in scope and was based on a qualitatively different conceptual framework. It not only covered the whole range of specialized agencies, organs and programmes of the United Nations in the economic and social field, but was to proceed in the context of progress towards - and as an integral element in - the establishment of a new international economic order. As had been pointed out by the Secretary-General, the process would also have to be carried forward in full awareness of certain fundamental principles of international economic co-operation, namely, universality,

(The Chairman)

the interdependence of States, the interrelation of global problems and the consequent necessity for an integrated approach of a multidisciplinary character.

17. The task ahead of the Committee was therefore an enormously complex one. Furthermore, the Committee was called upon to synthesize and build upon all the ideas and proposals from different organs of the system, including the Group of Experts on the Structure of the United Nations System, the Economic and Social Council, the Trade and Development Board of UNCTAD, the Governing Council of UNDP and the Governing Council of UNEP. Difficulties would undoubtedly arise as to the criteria to be applied in evaluating proposals for structural reform. For example, it might be asserted that structural change could not replace consensus on policies, priorities and objectives. However, the structures of the system were a factor both in mobilizing the collective will of Member States and in determining the mode in which that will was expressed. The search for solutions would therefore call for the exercise of the same spirit of accommodation that had distinguished the seventh special session of the General Assembly. In that effort, he was confident that the Committee would benefit from the assistance of the executive heads of the various United Nations organs and agencies. In the final reckoning, institutions were not ends in themselves, but rather, means for the improvement of the quality of human life. The test of the Committee's efforts would be the extent to which the effectiveness of the United Nations system was enhanced to promote the goals of "social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom".

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA (A/AC.179/1)

18. The CHAIRMAN said that if there were no objections he would take it that the Committee wished to adopt its agenda in document A/AC.179/1.

19. It was so decided.

ORGANIZATION OF WORK

20. The CHAIRMAN said that in his view there were two distinct questions to be considered in connexion with the organization of work. One was the organization of work of the current session, and the second was the organization of the future work of the Committee. With regard to the first, he believed, on the basis of

(The Chairman)

informal consultations, that some delegations were ready to make statements of substance and that the Committee would agree that they should take the floor within the time allocated to the current session. It might be useful, however, in order to plan the Committee's work, to close the list of speakers by the end of the following day.

21. With regard to the broader question of the future work of the Committee, he suggested that a preliminary exchange of views should be held on that subject the following morning, so that the Committee would be able to take certain decisions before Wednesday of the following week, when it was supposed to conclude its session. It should be noted, in that regard, that the arrangements for the organization of the work of the Committee during the following year might have financial implications and that, therefore, it was important that such arrangements be carefully considered within the time available, since they would have to be considered and approved by the Fifth Committee at the current session of the General Assembly. He suggested, pending further consultations with delegations, that the following main questions should be discussed: the number and dates of the sessions to be held in 1976; the documentation that might be required; and the possible arrangements for informal consultations during the intersessional periods, as well as the question of consultations with other relevant bodies of the United Nations system.

22. Mr. GONZALEZ DE COSSIO (Mexico) said that it would be useful to indicate the schedule of the Committee's meeting so that delegations could organize their work.

23. The CHAIRMAN said that the Committee would hold one meeting the following morning, Friday, 14 November, and that it would hold morning and afternoon meetings on Monday, 17 November, Tuesday, 18 November and Wednesday, 19 November.

24. Mr. VERCELES (Philippines) said that his delegation had studied document A/AC.179/1 and section VII of General Assembly resolution 3362 (S-VII), and, with regard to the documentation which should serve as the basis of the Committee's work, he wished to propose that an important document known as the Jackson Capacity Study should be taken into account. That study contained very

(Mr. Verceles, Philippines)

important ideas on the economic and social structure of the United Nations, had been widely used by various United Nations organs, in particular UNDP, and had been the inspiration for General Assembly resolution 2688 (XXV).

25. Mr. HASHMI (India) said that, while it was true that section VII of General Assembly resolution 3362 (S-VII) mentioned a specific document, the text also indicated that all delegations could draw attention to any existing documentation on the subject which they considered relevant. It was not necessary to draw up a list of documents to serve as the basis of the Committee's work.

26. The CHAIRMAN said that in his view the Committee could use any available documentation on the item which it deemed pertinent to the work entrusted to it by General Assembly resolution 3362 (S-VII).

27. Mr. DIALLO (Upper Volta) said that, while he agreed with the general approach of the representative of India, he believed that the Committee should not limit itself to examining and interpreting relevant texts. In order to ensure that the Committee's activities and efforts were directed towards a specific objective, it would be necessary at some point to define the exact nature of the text or texts on which its future work should be based. He requested that a decision on the matter be adopted at a subsequent meeting.

28. Mr. OLIVERI LOPEZ (Argentina) said that he agreed with the Indian delegation, for, while delegations might concentrate on certain documents to guide their work, what counted were the objectives being pursued, and to attain those objectives all types of documents could be used, as could the power of imagination. If the Committee had to take a decision on that question, he would like it to do so at a subsequent meeting.

The meeting rose at 11.35 a.m.

2nd MEETING

Friday, 14 November 1975, 10.30 a.m.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS (continued)

1. The CHAIRMAN reported that the consultations concerning the election of the other officers of the Committee had not yet been completed, and suggested that consideration of the subject should therefore be postponed until the next meeting. Since he understood that a number of delegations wished to express their views on the question, with particular reference to the number of officers, the duties they would perform and other points, he further suggested that those matters should be discussed at an informal meeting immediately after the current meeting. If there was no objection, he would take it that the Committee agreed to those suggestions.

2. It was so decided.

ORGANIZATION OF WORK

3. Mr. MYERSON (United States of America) said that from the beginning his delegation had strongly supported the creation of the Ad Hoc Committee, because it believed that rationalization and improvement of the United Nations system would serve the common interests of all countries over and beyond any differences regarding policy questions or ideology. Within the past few months, the United Nations had undergone a series of important changes in key operational personnel. So far there had been new executive heads of WHO, ILO, UNCTAD, UNEP, UNESCO, UNIDO and the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, together with the election of a new Director-General of FAO and the forthcoming appointment of a new Administrator of UNDP. Those circumstances afforded the Organization a rare opportunity to harmonize and synchronize the many interrelated activities of the United Nations system.

4. With regard to the work programme, he noted in the first instance the need for a time-table that would enable the Committee to pass at the very least a substantial report to the Economic and Social Council at its sixty-first session.

(Mr. Myerson, United States)

Secondly, many pages of testimony and studies had preceded the documents before the Committee, including notably the report of the Group of Experts, and it would be virtually impossible to study all that documentation in a plenary body or a series of smaller working groups. His delegation hoped that it would be possible to develop a compendium of recommendations so structured that they contributed to the development of an over all system. Provision should also be made for the introduction, by some agreed time-limit, of new proposals, ideas or recommendations. Such a compendium should become the basis for in-depth discussions on the creation of a new United Nations system.

5. Thirdly, a major restructuring of the United Nations system would inevitably involve the co-operation of a wide range of parties whose interests would be affected. There was therefore a need for intensive consultations at each stage to encourage co-operation and to avoid fear, suspicions or even open opposition to the reform process. If the Committee could work out a time-table and a method that would produce a draft proposal for reform, there would be a need at that stage for preliminary comments at the appropriate intergovernmental level. His delegation therefore suggested that opportunity should be provided for incorporation of modifications, taking account of reservations, and a qualitative revision of the preliminary product before it was submitted to the Economic and Social Council.

6. Mr. BREITENSTEIN (Finland) said he believed that the important thing at present was to concentrate on ways and means which would allow the Committee to translate its mandate into operative work. With that in mind, he agreed with the Chairman's suggestion that the Committee should discuss the possibility of conducting informal consultations in the interval between the current session and the resumption of the Committee's work early in 1976. That did not imply that everything should be postponed pending the informal consultations; the exchange of views during the current session must advance sufficiently, on both procedure and substance, to make the consultations purposeful and to lay solid foundations for the Committee's work at its next session.

7. He did not believe that at the present point the Committee need concentrate too much on the question of background documentation; rather, it should try to define the problem areas or groups of subjects which should be taken up by the

(Mr. Breitenstein, Finland)

Committee at its next session. While he was not ready at the present stage to propose subjects for such a list, he could mention by way of illustration the following: the role and functions of the main organs of the United Nations, the functions of subsidiary bodies, the role and organization of the Secretariat, the question of planning and programming, and the functions of the various funds and programmes. The Committee should also establish a calendar of meetings for 1976, even if it was only tentative. If agreement was reached on a list of broad subjects, it would then be possible to schedule a series of consecutive meetings at which the entire Committee could either discuss the problems one after the other or discuss various problem areas simultaneously in working groups. It was still too early, however, to start discussing a drafting group or drafting groups, since before drafting the Committee needed plenty of time for negotiations and consultations.

8. Mr. MARSHALL (United Kingdom) said that his Government attached great importance to vigorous follow-up to the seventh special session of the General Assembly. The British Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs had referred both to the importance of organizational questions and to the growing emphasis on world economic issues and on multilateral economic relations of which they were a reflection. In particular, he had said at the seventh special session that, while seeking to work out the economic policies which would benefit the world as a whole and the developing countries in particular, we should not neglect the task of finding a structure for the United Nations system which would ensure that those policies were properly carried through.

9. The follow-up to the seventh special session would come in a number of major bodies. The General Assembly had recognized the importance of such a division of labour. But for reasons which were as substantial as they were self-evident it had reserved to itself the task of restructuring the economic and social sectors of the United Nations system. If the Committee did not grip that cluster of problems, it would not be done elsewhere.

10. For its part, the United Kingdom would be reluctant to put forward any blueprint of exactly how the job should be done, still less what the solutions should be. What was wanted at the present stage was collective wisdom. That was why it had warmly advocated the establishment of the Ad Hoc Committee. However, the preliminary discussion which had already taken

(Mr. Marshall, United Kingdom)

place prompted him to offer some practical suggestions. First, without spending a great deal of time on it, the Committee needed to define the issues, since there was no agreed definition. In chapter 1 of the report of the Group of Experts on the Structure of the United Nations System there was a definition of the problem before the Committee which the United Kingdom, while not sharing it in its entirety, could accept as a broad perspective, if that was the general view. He paid tribute to the work of the Group of Experts, and recalled that the Minister of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs had said that its proposals should be carefully considered.

11. The Committee's mandate also referred to what had been said and decided about those issues on previous occasions. Priority should therefore be accorded to the remarks made by Ministers in the general debate both at the seventh special session and at the beginning of the current regular session. His delegation would find it helpful if the Secretariat were to make a digest of the relevant observations on structure from the two general debates. As far as documentation was concerned, he endorsed the representative of Argentina's view that the Committee should not limit itself to documentation. Documentation must be the Committee's servant and not its master. On the other hand, the Committee should have access to any relevant documentation that was available.

12. Referring next to the organization of work, he said that real life did not often afford a pattern that proceeded in orderly sequence from the definition of the problem to the tackling of it. Until there had been some discussion both of the problem in general and of some very detailed matters, one could not really know what the problem was. Flexibility was therefore necessary. The Committee needed to get down to detail as soon as it could, if necessary referring some matters to smaller groups. Dispersal of effort must also be avoided, but not at the expense of excluding from the Committee's work those who had something to contribute and whose right it was to make that contribution, including Governments and all those whose role was recognized in the mandate.

13. With regard to the speed of the Committee's work, there was a time-scale in General Assembly resolution 3362 (S-VII). It demanded the best possible use of the time available up to late spring or early summer, when the rhythm of major international meetings would accelerate. His delegation stood ready to devote

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(Mr. Marshall, United Kingdom)

very high priority to the work of the Ad Hoc Committee not only during the current session but also in the new year.

14. Finally, he did not see the work of the Committee as a Herculean administrative labour in the interest of efficiency alone. He was thinking about the response which the United Nations system could make to the problems of mankind in the present decade and in the decades to come. Administration should be the handmaid of policy and purpose.

15. Mr. EL-ASHRY (Egypt) said, with regard to the number of meetings which he believed the Committee would need to discharge its duties, that his delegation deemed it necessary to take into account that in the first five months of 1976 there would be three important meetings within the United Nations, namely, the sixtieth session of the Economic and Social Council, the fourth session of the Governing Council of UNEP and the fourth session of UNCTAD. The Committee should avoid holding any session while those bodies were meeting, partly for the convenience of small delegations and mainly to wait for the findings of those bodies regarding their respective restructuring and rationalization. That did not mean that the Ad Hoc Committee should suspend its activities; rather, it should have a second session, or a resumed first session, in February 1976. That session should provide the opportunity for a general debate, and a working group might also be set up to pinpoint specific proposals. At the next session, to be held some time in June 1976, the Committee could take up the findings of UNEP and UNCTAD and produce its final report.

16. He emphasized that the Committee should reach decisions as broad as possible by consensus, because the new structure should have the support of all Members of the United Nations. His delegation was also of the opinion that the Committee should limit the number of working groups. Finally, his delegation did not rule out the possibility of the Committee's holding another session, especially in view of the need to consider the opinions of Governments on the report of the first two sessions and to reach final conclusions for submission to the General Assembly at its thirty-first session.

17. The CHAIRMAN suggested that the deadline for the list of speakers on the question of the organization of work should be set at noon on Monday, 17 November. If there was no objection, he would take it that the Committee agreed to that suggestion.

18. It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 11.55 a.m.

3rd MEETING

Tuesday, 18 November 1975, 10.30 a.m.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS (continued)

1. The CHAIRMAN proposed that, since consultations were still proceeding, the election of the other officers should again be postponed.
2. It was so decided.

ORGANIZATION OF WORK (A/AC.179/L.1)

3. The CHAIRMAN drew attention to the schedule of formal sessions contained in document A/AC.179/L.1 and suggested that the Committee should take a decision of principle on that document so that the Secretariat could calculate the financial implications, which the Committee would need to know before taking a final decision.
4. Mr. CORDOVEZ (Secretary of the Committee) informed the Committee that, whichever of the alternative dates indicated in document A/AC.179/L.1 it chose for its third session, there would be technical difficulties in servicing the meeting because of other commitments relating to the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements and the twenty-second session of the Governing Council of UNDP. In any case, one of the six meetings scheduled at Headquarters during the dates proposed for the Ad Hoc Committee's third session would have to be rescheduled.
5. The tentative dates for the fourth session should read "13-17 September".
6. Mr. DIALLO (Upper Volta) said that his delegation had no objection to taking a decision on the length of the Committee's sessions. However, if the Chairman's intention was that the Committee should take a decision on the actual dates of the sessions, his delegation would have difficulty particularly with regard to the suggested dates for the third session. Both sets of dates indicated

(Mr. Diallo, Upper Volta)

in the Chairman's note followed too closely upon the fourth session of UNCTAD, and it would therefore be difficult for the Ad Hoc Committee to assimilate adequately the relevant results of that meeting before its own third session. Moreover, as the Secretary had pointed out, the second alternative would coincide with the meeting of the Governing Council of UNDP. He therefore hoped that efforts would be made to avoid holding the third session simultaneously with or too soon after the other meetings he had mentioned.

7. Mr. BARCELO (Mexico) said that his delegation shared the concerns expressed by the representative of the Upper Volta regarding the timing of the third session. It also wondered whether the timing of the organizational session of the Economic and Social Council would have any effect on the work of the Ad Hoc Committee.

8. In general, his delegation was able to accept the dates suggested for the Ad Hoc Committee's sessions. He stressed, however, that the Ad Hoc Committee's meetings should not coincide with those of other bodies, such as UNCTAD, whose deliberations were relevant to the restructuring of the economic and social sectors of the United Nations system.

9. Mr. CABRIC (Yugoslavia) recalled that in informal meetings on the preceding day some delegations had suggested that the organizational session might be combined with the second session, since only one week separated the two. Some delegations had also believed that it was not necessary at the current stage to take any decision on the dates for the fourth session, since that could be done during or after the third session.

10. Mr. MWANGAGUHUNGA (Uganda) said that his delegation had no difficulty in accepting the suggested schedule of formal sessions; the details could be worked out at a later stage. Some delegations had even suggested that the organizational session might be held during the current session of the General Assembly.

11. Mr. HOSNY (Egypt) said that of the two alternative dates for the third session his delegation preferred the second, since it allowed at least a little more time to consider the results of the fourth UNCTAD.

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12. Mr. RAJAONARIVÉLO (Madagascar), supported by Mr. VERCELLES (Philippines), proposed that the Committee should defer taking a decision on the suggested schedule of formal sessions until a future meeting.

13. It was so decided.

14. The CHAIRMAN said that, when the Committee came to take a decision of principle on the proposed schedule, the total number of days envisaged in document A/AC.179/L.1 for the various sessions could then be used by the Secretariat to calculate the financial implications.

RESTRUCTURING OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL SECTORS OF THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM

15. Mr. TARZI (Afghanistan) said that, in order to find equitable solutions to the complex problems involved in restructuring the economic and social sectors of the United Nations system, the views of all Member States must first be obtained. The representative of the United Kingdom had suggested that the Secretariat should summarize the observations made by Ministers in the general debates at the seventh special session and the thirtieth regular session of the General Assembly. However, a more comprehensive analysis of the objectives and opinions of the various Member States would be obtained if permanent representatives were asked to submit their Governments' views and suggestions on restructuring. By analysing the replies, the Ad Hoc Committee could form a general idea of what Governments considered to be the most important factors, and could proceed accordingly.

16. The most efficient procedure would be for the Ad Hoc Committee to appoint two sub-committees, one to deal with executive aspects and the other with administrative problems. The executive sub-committee could analyse and evaluate all the inputs, such as policy statements from Governments, which it would receive from the Ad Hoc Committee and pass on to the administrative sub-committee so that the latter, with the assistance of the relevant United Nations organs and agencies, would be able to devise the necessary structural changes. Such an arrangement would enable the sub-committees to continue their work almost continuously, while

(Mr. Tarzi, Afghanistan)

the Ad Hoc Committee itself could meet as necessary and would be assisted by concise reports and decision-oriented working papers from the two sub-committees. The Ad Hoc Committee and its Working Group would have before them a wealth of material, such as the Programme and Plan of Action of the sixth special session and the resolution of the seventh special session, not to mention the report of the Group of Experts (E/AC.62/9) and the conclusions of the fourth session of UNCTAD. Continuity in the work of the Ad Hoc Committee was an essential element in the administrative restructuring which would be necessary if progress towards a new economic order was to be achieved.

17. There had been some question as to what the objectives of restructuring were. In his view, the aims were quite clear. There had been a fundamental change in the relations between countries; the exploitation of the under-developed world by the industrialized countries was becoming a relic of the past, but inequalities in the economic and other fields still persisted. The irresistible forces of change had found expression in the resolutions and recommendations of the sixth special session of the General Assembly directed towards the implementation of a new international economic order, the effect of which would be to give the developing world an equitable share of world trade, shipping and technology, and effective participation in financial affairs. Efforts were being made to preserve the purchasing power of the developing countries by such means as the indexation of prices and the redeployment of industry, and special measures for the least developed, land-locked and island developing countries were envisaged. The problems had been clearly identified in a large number of documents, including General Assembly resolution 3362 (S-VII), and the purpose of restructuring was to make the United Nations more capable of dealing with these and other problems of international co-operation. The Ad Hoc Committee did not need to waste time identifying the problems. It could begin, on the basis of the mandate given specifically by the seventh special session, to work out a new system for the United Nations within a specified time. The policy changes had been enunciated, and what was about to be undertaken was the task of designing the administrative system which would serve as a vehicle for the new policy measures.

(Mr. Tarzi, Afghanistan)

18. One of the major objectives of restructuring should be decentralization, on the lines suggested by the Group of Experts. The present centralized system could no longer cope with rapidly changing conditions; it took too long for decisions to be passed to the highest level and handed down. Flexibility and speed were vital; the main theme of restructuring ought to be the centralization of objectives and the decentralization of decision-making. It must be borne in mind, however, that a certain amount of centralization was necessary if the full benefits of decentralization were to be obtained. Moreover, decentralization without flexibility and responsiveness was not enough; any new administrative units created during the process of restructuring should be so designed that they would act on the recommendations addressed to them by the international community particularly the developing countries, rather than merely confining their operational activities to the limits of their charters.

19. One aim of restructuring should therefore be to make United Nations agencies decision-oriented. A case in point was UNCTAD, which, though receptive to the recommendations of the developing countries, was largely limited to the role of a forum for negotiations, without decision-making capability, so that when decisions were made, by such bodies as the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, the developing countries were unable to participate in the decision-making process in any effective way. In such cases, restructuring might entail merely the amendment or revision of existing charters.

20. Attention to those points would help to make good many of the short-comings of the present administrative system and would have far-reaching effects on the achievement of a new international economic order comprising commodities, transfer of technology, shipping, insurance, transfer of real resources, and industrialization.

21. The sixth and seventh special sessions of the General Assembly had provided the basis for the restructuring of the economic sector in the first place, and the initial step in the restructuring process should be to approve the establishment of a post of Director-General for Development and International Economic Co-operation; that would be fully in keeping with the need, to which he had referred, for a

(Mr. Tarzi, Afghanistan)

certain measure of centralization in order to reap the benefits of decentralization. The person appointed as Director-General would obviously be highly qualified and experienced and should be second in the United Nations hierarchy only to the Secretary-General. The Ad Hoc Committee could then entrust to him the task of planning a rational organization chart within a specified budget, taking into account the policy requirements and recommendations of all Governments. The Ad Hoc Committee would give the Director-General all possible assistance in fulfilling his mandate in a manner commensurate with the needs of the various Member States; but in any case the Committee should concentrate on policy and ask the Secretariat department concerned to design a viable administrative framework, subject to the Committee's approval.

22. Restructuring should begin with the United Nations, the strengthening of whose economic sector could be advanced by approving the creation of a central unit, in the form mentioned by the Group of Experts. If that were done, the Ad Hoc Committee would be dealing only with one or two responsible central units and would avoid the dispersal of energy and resources inseparably from dealing with a multitude of agencies.

23. With regard to the organization of the Ad Hoc Committee's work, the February session could set the date for the next meeting, and further meetings could be planned as the need arose. The time-limit of one year should be ample but it could be extended if necessary. The meetings should be held in New York because of the facilities available there, particularly for the delegations of the developing countries.

24. Mr. ZACHMANN (German Democratic Republic) said that his delegation had supported the establishment of the Ad Hoc Committee as an appropriate forum for drawing up proposals for increasing the efficiency of the social and economic work of the United Nations, with strict respect for and observance of the United Nations Charter; in other words, within the framework of the Charter, and on the basis of the decisions of the sixth and seventh special sessions and the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States.

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(Mr. Zachmann, German Democratic Republic)

25. One of the Committee's main tasks would be to devise measures of rationalization which would not only make the work of the United Nations in the economic and social sectors more effective but would foster co-operation between States with different social structures in accordance with the principles of peaceful coexistence, and would provide support for the developing countries in their struggle for economic independence. He hoped that the Committee's work would lead to the strengthening of peace and security as a pre-condition for economic development and co-operation and would enable the developing countries to participate equitably in international economic life while enjoying unfettered control of their own natural resources.

26. The success of the Committee's work would depend largely on the manner in which it defined its initial priorities. One of the most important problems was the strengthening of the role of the Economic and Social Council to enable it fully to discharge all its responsibilities under the Charter. Very high priority should be given to the implementation of the resolutions of the sixth and seventh special sessions and of the progressive principles of the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States.

27. Regarding the organization of work, he supported the proposal of the representative of Finland that the Committee should draw up a list of priorities which would serve as a basis for discussion and for the formulation of appropriate recommendations. He also agreed with the representative of Egypt that the Committee's recommendations should be based as far as possible on the principle of consensus. A number of representatives had said that in taking decisions on complex matters it was best to use informal consultations or working groups as much as possible. While he was not opposed to such procedures, the resolution of the seventh special session specifically entrusted the Ad Hoc Committee with the task of finding solutions to a very complex problem, so that there could be no doubt that the bulk of the Committee's work must be done in its official meetings. His delegation would do its utmost to assist the Committee's work and would express its views in due course on the various points raised in the documentation before the Committee.

28. Mr. BARCELLO (Mexico) said that his delegation attached great importance to the work of the Ad Hoc Committee, and stressed that any organizational changes or criteria which Mexico suggested for the consideration of the Committee would be based on General Assembly resolutions 3201 (S-VI), 3202 (S-VI) and 3281 (XXIX) and on the letter of the agreement reached at the seventh special session. -The Committee's task would undoubtedly be arduous, and there was no established precedent for its work. If the United Nations system was to be restructured so that it could effectively promote co-operation and international economic and social development, make rational and fair use of available resources for the benefit of the poor countries, ensure that new technology met national needs and strengthened the economic independence of the third world and that the studies carried out and organizations set up mobilized public opinion to seek appropriate policies while avoiding the problems of technological progress, and make the developed countries understand that international co-operation in the autonomous development of developing countries was the true sign of world peace; then there must be taken within the system a revolutionary but at the same time objective decision to transcend the income and class differences which could neutralize any efforts to achieve general well-being. The priorities for the Committee's work had already been established in documents adopted by the United Nations; the system must now be built up so that it could overcome economic injustice and achieve social peace.

29. The report of the Group of Experts (E/AC.62/9) would be helpful to the Committee in its efforts to restructure the complex network of agencies, organizations and programmes which had grown up during the past 30 years. The object of the exercise was to find appropriate solutions to various international problems, and at present there was an atmosphere of uncertainty and good intentions which must become one of decision and objectivity. The Group of Experts had made two kinds of proposals in its report, relating respectively to changes in the way in which the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council carried out their work of policy formulation and to changes in the implementation of the action programmes of the United Nations system. Although those two areas deserved considerable attention, the Committee should not restrict itself exclusively to them. Many questions had to be considered, such as

(Mr. Barcelo, Mexico)

what purpose was served by reconsideration in the General Assembly of matters dealt with at special conferences, what was meant when one spoke of a strengthened and activist Economic and Social Council, and what the value of establishing negotiating groups on particular subjects might be.

30. Immediate action must be taken on the organization of the Committee's work. In accordance with its mandate in General Assembly resolution 3362 (S-VII), the Ad hoc Committee must take into account the work of the fourth session of UNCTAD and the fourth session of the Governing Council of UNEP. The Committee must define the basic elements of its work. For that purpose, the basic working documents of the Committee should be the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States, the Declaration and Programme of Action on the Establishment of a New International Economic Order, the relevant decisions of the seventh special session, the Lima Declaration and Programme of Action on Industrial Development and Co-operation, the definitions produced by the Group of 77 and the criteria of experts on the new international economic order.

31. Intensive consultations between the various interest groups would undoubtedly take up at least the first month of 1976, and it would therefore be appropriate for the Committee to hold its first session meeting in February. The Working Group could then be set up and prepare a substantive document, continuing its work until June, when the Committee would meet to decide on subsequent action. Since the major concern in the restructuring of the system was to improve the transfer of real resources and technology to the developing nations in order to enhance their well-being, he urged that the short time available to the Committee should not be wasted.

32. Mr. KAUFMANN (Netherlands) said that his delegation had already commented on a number of the substantive issues in the Preparatory Committee for the seventh special session. At that session, many delegations had stressed the need for a restructuring of the United Nations system and had suggested ways to go about it. During the past few days, consultations had been held and it had been suggested that a Working Group should be established. His delegation fully supported that idea as being the only possible way that the Committee could

(Mr. Kaufmann, Netherlands)

function expeditiously and efficiently, and agreed that the Chairman of the Committee should also preside over the Working Group.

33. It should be possible, with the assistance of the Secretariat, to analyse the statements made during the general debates of the seventh special session and the thirtieth regular session of the General Assembly on issues related to restructuring. Such an analysis would give the Committee a better idea of how to tackle its task. The analytical document could be submitted to an early meeting of the Working Group, which, once it was established, should identify the so-called principal problem areas, as proposed by the representative of Finland. His delegation agreed that that task should not be too difficult for the Working Group, and it would mean that much preliminary work could be achieved before the second session of the Committee, tentatively scheduled for February 1976.

34. Paragraph 14 of the report of the Group of Experts (E/AC.62/9) listed nine general principles for structural change in the United Nations system. His Government could fully subscribe to those principles, which should form a reliable basis for the work of the Committee and its Working Group. His delegation felt that there were three areas which deserved special attention and on which concrete steps could be taken during the next year. The first area covered issues related to the role and working methods of the Economic and Social Council and its subsidiary bodies. The vast majority of statements in the general debate at both the seventh special session and the thirtieth regular session had called for a revitalization of the Council. The second area related to proposals concerning the role of the Secretariat, including a possible reorientation of the functions of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs. Concrete proposals should be made by the Secretary-General, in consultation with the executive heads of the various bodies and agencies of the United Nations system. The third area in which action could be taken was the proposal of the Group of Experts concerning the establishment of more effective interagency machinery for economic co-operation and development. The Administrative Committee on Co-ordination should examine that proposal as soon as possible so that the Ad Hoc Committee could come to specific conclusions. In his delegation's view, any draft proposals

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(Mr. Kaufmann, Netherlands)

before the Committee should be discussed at an early stage with representatives of the various organizations of the United Nations system involved, including the specialized agencies, as indicated in General Assembly resolution 3362 (S-VII), section VII. Although it had been rightly said that the report of the Group of Experts was only part of the documentation before the Committee, it did contain the most recent and comprehensive analysis of a very complex series of issues and problems available to the Committee.

35. It was generally agreed that there was an urgent need for a review of the United Nations system with the aim of making it more capable of carrying out the important tasks assigned to it in the economic and social field and of contributing to the establishment of a just economic and social order. The growing fragmentation in the United Nations structure must obviously be countered without weakening a healthy degree of decentralization and pluralism. The present proliferation of organizations and secretariats within the system made it difficult for them and for Governments to formulate and implement a much needed coherent global policy throughout the system. The restructuring process might be painful to certain individuals or organizations and obviously called for intensive consultation with, and the full understanding of, all concerned. The Committee must grasp the opportunities before it, and his delegation was optimistic that it could achieve results.

36. Mr. CHIRILIA (Romania) said that the work on which the Ad Hoc Committee had embarked had a twofold significance. Firstly, it was a sign that States now had greater confidence in the role of the United Nations and wanted to use it and its system of organizations to solve international problems in a new spirit. Secondly, it reflected the interest of States in restructuring the United Nations system to make it better able to deal with the problems of international economic co-operation and development. The United Nations had a special role to play in establishing the new international economic order and must therefore carry out a detailed and systematic analysis of the economic problems

(Mr. Chirila, Romania)

of fundamental importance to peace and progress, draw up and adopt precise rules which were binding on all Member States for the new international economic order, and prepare special action programmes to ensure their application. Romania had submitted its views on the establishment of the new international economic order at the seventh special session, in document A/AC.176/3.

37. If the United Nations was to take an active part in establishing the new international economic order, the General Assembly must regularly consider economic problems and the implementation of the provisions of international programmes, setting up the appropriate organizational structures. Similarly, the Economic and Social Council must reorganize its work so that it could keep under review and co-ordinate more effectively the way in which the United Nations system was implementing the objectives of economic programmes relating to the establishment of the new international economic order and to support for the speedier development of the developing countries. In that context, his delegation endorsed the suggestion that the Economic and Social Council should hold periodical ministerial sessions to consider the international economic situation, and in particular the trade, monetary and financial problems connected with development.

38. Romania strongly endorsed the principle of universality in the United Nations and its economic agencies, in order to ensure the active and direct participation of all States, on an equal footing, in the work of the system. Every interested State should have a voice in the discussions and decisions of the economic and social organs of the United Nations. Strengthening of the democratic character of the United Nations also meant applying the principle of equitable geographical distribution to membership in all economic and social bodies and generalizing the practice of filling the seats on them by means of elections. The same end would be served by introducing the practice of rotating the seats on subsidiary bodies having a small membership.

39. With regard to decision making, his delegation agreed with those who favoured a process of negotiations in which all interested countries took part.

(Mr. Chirila, Romania)

The seventh special session had proved that, with the requisite political will, consultations and negotiations could lead to unanimously acceptable solutions. Such procedures should be devised and spelt out so that consensus would become the established method in the United Nations economic and social system for taking decisions on essential problems. Recourse should be had to voting only when attempts to reach a unanimous decision had failed. In that context, his delegation also had in mind the need for follow-up machinery in the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and intergovernmental forums to ensure the implementation of resolutions.

40. The Committee must also concentrate on eliminating duplication of work in the United Nations system. Similarly, it must focus on the co-ordination of economic analysis and planning with operational activities both at the central and regional levels and between the centre and the various specialized agencies. Ways to increase the effectiveness of the execution and management of operational activities should be given special attention. The discussion of structural changes gave the Committee an opportunity to consider how to include in the economic machinery of the Organization activities in such vital fields as raw materials and energy, science and technology, price stabilization and the resources of the seas and oceans, which were being or were to be considered in various international forums.

41. Romania, like many other Member States, supported the development of regional activities, particularly those of the regional economic commissions, aimed at solving major problems concerning economic and social co-operation and development. The regional commissions should make a larger contribution to the establishment of the new international economic order and the expansion of trade and industrial co-operation in the fields of science and technology and the environment. Obviously, it was also necessary to strengthen the structure and organization of the secretariats and agencies of the United Nations system, rationalizing their methods of work and their composition. In that context, his delegation supported the adoption of concrete measures to ensure appropriate representation of States in the Secretariat on the basis of criteria derived from the current membership of the United Nations.

(Mr. Chirila, Romania)

42. The conclusions reached by the Committee would affect the capacity of the United Nations system to respond more appropriately to the requirements imposed by the world economy for the establishment of new and equitable economic relations. General Assembly resolutions 3073 (XXVIII) and 3282 (XXIX), on the strengthening of the role of the United Nations, were directly connected with the current concern to improve the functioning and output of the United Nations system. The Committee's discussions could make a positive contribution to the gradual improvement of the United Nations capacity for action, while at the same time establishing the exact dimensions of economic and social problems within the activity of the United Nations system. Member States had been requested to express their views and make proposals on ways and means of strengthening the role and effectiveness of the United Nations, and their replies were contained in documents A/9128, A/9695 and A/10255. In that connexion, he also drew attention to document A/C.6/437, which outlined his Government's views on a more appropriate approach to economic problems for United Nations organs, analytical methods and their use by Member States. His delegation felt that, in the interests of its work, the Ad Hoc Committee should take into consideration the views of States on the transformation of the United Nations into a truly effective instrument for promoting international co-operation. His delegation therefore formally proposed that the documents to which he had referred should be among the reference material on which the Committee based its recommendations.

43. Romania wished to participate in the work of the Committee in the future and felt that it would better reflect the just world desired by all if it began by adhering to democratic working practices. His delegation therefore supported the view, expressed by other delegations, that the decision on the continuation of the Committee's activities and on informal negotiations between sessions should ensure the participation on an equal footing of all States wishing to make an effective contribution to the fulfilment of the Committee's mandate. In view of the flexible nature of the organization of its future work, it could be assumed that the Committee would not wish to disperse its energies in numerous working groups and that it would take every opportunity to give due attention to the views of Governments. The open and constructive spirit in which the Committee was

(Mr. Chirila, Romania)

approaching the restructuring of the economic and social sectors of the United Nations system found its reflection in the position of his country, which favoured the strengthening of the Organization's capacity for action, its prestige and its authority.

44. Mr. KJELDGAARD (Denmark) said that his Government had for some time felt the need for a thorough review of the international structure of the United Nations system for dealing with social and economic questions and had therefore welcomed the decision to establish an Ad Hoc Committee for that purpose. His delegation could agree to the proposal to hold formal sessions of the Ad Hoc Committee in February, in June and, if necessary, immediately before the thirty-first session of the General Assembly.

45. He emphasized the necessity of initiating consultations as soon as possible on how best to organize the Committee's work, taking into account the need to identify from the start the principal "problem areas" to be taken up at the second session. As it began its deliberations, the Committee was fortunate enough to have the 1969 capacity study of the United Nations development system and, above all, the report of the Group of Experts on the Structure of the United Nations System (E/AC.62/9). The representative of Jamaica had called attention to chapter I of the latter document and had noted that, if agreement could be reached on the conceptual approach in that chapter, the immense task ahead would be considerably facilitated. His delegation endorsed that view and had a number of preliminary comments to make regarding the recommendations presented in chapter 2 of the report.

46. The first main area in which the Group of Experts made proposals for changes was the working and structure of the decision-making organs. With regard to the General Assembly, his delegation endorsed the proposal to hold special sessions of the General Assembly instead of ad hoc global conferences. The proposal to shift social development questions from the Third Committee to the Second Committee, which had already partly taken place, raised a number of practical problems, especially for smaller delegations, as the workload of the Second Committee was already very heavy. However, decisions on a number of issues were taken in the Economic and Social Council, and a solution would be to avoid repeating the discussions which had occurred in the Council.

(Mr. Kjeldgaard, Denmark)

47. With regard to the Economic and Social Council, it was a long-standing policy of his Government to support efforts to strengthen the role of the Council as the co-ordinating organ for economic and social work inside the United Nations system. His delegation therefore agreed in principle with the proposals for transforming the Council into a standing committee. The proposal to hold short subject-oriented sessions, if adopted, could be instrumental in securing the interplay between experts and officials necessary for satisfying results.

48. To propose a one-week ministerial session devoted to an over-all policy review was perhaps to attack the problem of the lack of governmental priority which characterized the Economic and Social Council the wrong way round. Ministers and senior officials would first participate in the work of the Council when it dealt in a serious way with the most important political and economic questions.

49. The review of the programme budget and the medium-term plans for the entire United Nations system was a central aspect of the Council's responsibilities for international agency co-ordination under the Charter. Unfortunately, that aspect of the Council's work had not been performed in an acceptable manner. His delegation therefore welcomed the proposal that the Council should review in alternate years the programme budgets and medium-term plans. A prerequisite for an effective review was, however, that those documents should be comprehensively dealt with beforehand by an expert group which would report to the Council. Alternatively, such a procedure would be made possible if the proposed strengthening of the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination was carried out.

50. With the establishment of a great number of subsidiary bodies of the Council, its work had become too fragmented, thus making co-ordination difficult. At the same time, it had not led to the required reduction in the Council's work because the work of the subsidiary bodies was often repeated in the Council itself. His delegation therefore endorsed the basic proposal to the report, namely, that the Council should assume direct responsibility for the work now performed by its existing subsidiary bodies. The question which commissions and committees should be discontinued would undoubtedly be one of the main issues in the Ad Hoc Committee's deliberations.

(Mr. Kjeldgaard, Denmark)

51. One of the most interesting proposals of the Group of Experts was undoubtedly the establishment by the Council of small negotiating groups to deal with key economic issues requiring further negotiations before an agreed solution could be reached. That proposal, while invaluable if properly implemented, raised a number of questions which would have to be answered before any final view could be expressed.

52. The second area in which the Group of Experts had made proposals was operational activities. His Government had in the past been reluctant to participate in the creation of many new funds, and the capacity study of the United Nations development system had confirmed it in that attitude. While doubts still existed as to the practical arrangements for existing funds, his delegation agreed in general with the conclusions of the Group of Experts, namely, that United Nations funds for technical assistance and pre-investment activities should be consolidated into a new United Nations Development Authority. Nevertheless, such a consolidation would entail a number of problems, and in that connexion he drew attention to paragraphs 147 and 148 of the report. The proposal of the Group of Experts was a starting-point for the future deliberations of the Ad Hoc Committee's Working Group. His delegation would participate in those deliberations with an open mind but would seek to ensure that UNDP could continue its activities in a way which preserved the advantages of existing arrangements.

53. The third area in which the Group of Experts had proposed changes was Secretariat support facilities and the changes proposed in that area must be seen in connexion with the proposed changes in the other two. In the absence of comments from the Secretary-General and the specialized agencies regarding the proposed changes, his delegation would limit itself to expressing its general support for the establishment of a new post of Director-General for Development and International Economic Co-operation.

54. Mr. KANAZAWA (Japan) said that his delegation had a few observations to make regarding the identification of areas for the work of the Ad Hoc Committee. With regard to its organization of work, his delegation was amenable to whatever consensus might be reached.

(Mr. Kanazawa, Japan)

55. His delegation was aware of the necessity and desirability of adapting the United Nations system to the changing pattern of international economic relations. The problem had two separate aspects, those of the intergovernmental forums within the United Nations system and the structure of the Secretariat.

56. There were at least three essential functions performed by the intergovernmental forums - to take cognizance of the problems and views of Member States, to make objective assessments of the problems, and to formulate policy decisions.

57. The General Assembly, as the universal and highest organ of the United Nations system, was the most appropriate forum for any Member State to bring its problems and views to the attention of the world community. Questions which could be dealt with in a sectoral context should, of course, be taken up in the governing bodies of the specialized agencies. In that connexion, co-ordination should be maintained between the General Assembly and the other governing bodies.

58. The assessment function of the intergovernmental forums was an indispensable second step in the over-all process. Without comprehensive assessment, no sound and viable policy decisions could be made. When well performed, as in the case of the Committee for Development Planning, that function could be immensely valuable. His delegation would like to see the role of the Economic and Social Council in that area strengthened.

59. With regard to the decision-making function, he observed that as the number of Member States increased it became more necessary to reflect their views and desires in the decision-making process and, at the same time, to avoid unwieldy and time-consuming procedures. In that connexion, his delegation endorsed the proposal of the Group of Experts for the creation of small negotiating groups. His delegation attached importance to decision making by consensus, without which no resolution or decision could be satisfactorily implemented. Whenever discussing structural changes in the United Nations, therefore, serious thought should be given to mechanisms for creating an atmosphere conducive to meaningful discussions and dialogue among Member States and the attainment of consensus.

60. Serious attention should also be given to the matter of duplication among intergovernmental bodies in the United Nations system, and the Economic and Social Council should be given the central role in that area.

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(Mr. Kanazawa, Japan)

61. Turning to the second aspect, the structure of the Secretariat, he said that the Secretariat's task was to provide support and services to the intergovernmental bodies and to ensure efficient and effective implementation of their decisions. The Secretariat was, as had been pointed out, a product of historical circumstances rather than rational design, and future changes in the world economic situation would continue to call for solutions to new problems and new solutions to old problems. The proliferation of new organizations should, however, be avoided because of the duplication and lack of co-ordination which inevitably resulted from their creation. There was no doubt that lack of co-ordination among various United Nations bodies was the most important problem the Ad Hoc Committee would have to tackle. However, co-ordination was as much a problem of institutional framework as of personality and individual capability. It was therefore necessary to be very careful not to undertake any institutional changes lightly.

62. Mr. ROUGÉ (France) said that the Ad Hoc Committee had to come to grips with two tendencies which were evident in every discussion relating to the economic and social sectors of the United Nations system. The first was the widespread desire to have the United Nations tackle every new problem which arose and which required a global solution. Every Government had at one time or another called for or endorsed the creation of a new programme or fund to deal with a new problem. Alongside that proliferation of new bodies and secretariat units, there was also a strong trend towards centralizing and streamlining the United Nations structure. For example, Member States were expressing renewed interest in the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination, and the Economic and Social Council itself had recently given signs that it was anxious to assume the central role for co-ordination conferred on it by the Charter. The establishment of UNDP was another case in which a number of related but previously scattered activities had been gathered under a single roof.

63. The problem which must be resolved was how to reconcile those contrary tendencies within the United Nations, one centrifugal, one centripetal. One approach was simply to mouth ready-made phrases such as "unity in diversity" and "independence within interdependence", but that avoided the heart of the problem. Another specious solution consisted in favouring one trend at the expense of the

(Mr. Rougé, France)

other. The trend currently favoured was centralization, and the Group of Experts on the Structure of the United Nations had leaned towards it by suggesting the abolition of many committees or funds and the consolidation of certain departments into new organizational units. It was a fact that many delegations which touted centralization as a solution were the very ones that advocated the establishment of new committees, funds, secretariat units and even specialized agencies. His delegation's intention was not to lay the blame on such delegations; it was itself caught up in the same contradictions. What was necessary, however, was to find practical solutions which transcended ideology and preserved a unified approach.

64. His delegation had nothing but admiration for those delegations which were already able to express a preference for one or another of the recommendations contained in the report of the Group of Experts without having had the benefit of hearing the opinions of other members of the Committee. His delegation firmly believed that in order to find genuine solutions it was not enough to be convinced of the drawbacks of the existing system or to jump at the most superficially attractive solutions; it was necessary rather to ascertain through thorough discussion and an authentic exchange of views which of the proposed solutions were well-founded in the light of the practical experience of Member States in the area of institutional organization. The subject called for free and open discussion which included genuine give and take among members, and not the mere reading out of prepared statements. His delegation therefore appealed to the members of the Committee to promote open and frank discussion in which all Member States might participate, including those which were members of many United Nations bodies, had many of their nationals in the Secretariat, or were major contributors to the various United Nations funds and programmes. Moreover, the representatives of all the specialized agencies should take an active part in the deliberations of the Ad Hoc Committee. For those reasons, his delegation was not in favour of the establishment of a drafting group with a limited membership, since that might undermine free discussion.

65. With regard to the schedule of formal sessions, he said that the suggestions contained in document A/AC.179/L.1 were generally acceptable; however, the Ad Hoc Committee's third session should not coincide with the twenty-second session

(Mr. Rougé, France)

of the Governing Council of UNDP, since the latter was one of the bodies expected to take part in the process of restructuring. Accordingly, of the two sets of dates suggested for the third session his delegation preferred the first.

66. Finally, he emphasized that even the most logical arrangements, which seemed flawless on paper, would prove useless if the will did not exist among all Member States to promote the genuine development of all mankind, and particularly of the developing countries.

The meeting rose at 1.10 p.m.

4th MEETING

Tuesday, 18 November 1975, 3 p.m.

RESTRUCTURING OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL SECTORS OF THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM
(continued) (A/AC.179/L.1)

1. Mr. MANSFIELD (New Zealand) said that it seemed that it might be possible to hold only two, or at most three, sessions of the Committee in 1976. If the Committee was to make substantial progress, there would therefore have to be machinery to undertake between sessions the extensive consultations, negotiations and drafting which would be essential before it could produce agreed recommendations. His delegation agreed with the suggestion that a working group should be set up for that purpose, and suggested that the membership of the working group should be open to all interested delegations.
2. With reference to the shape of the work programme, his delegation was not persuaded that a definition of the issues and problem areas on which the Committee was to focus should await the general debate at the session envisaged for February 1976. At least four main problem areas were already known: the need to revitalize the Economic and Social Council as the central body in the United Nations system for co-ordination and review; the fragmentation of effort in the United Nations system, particularly in the development assistance area; the difficulties the Secretariat had, given its current structure, in exerting leadership and direction from Headquarters over the whole United Nations family; and the inadequacies of the decision-making processes. His delegation hoped that agreement could be reached at the current session to focus on those four areas so that Governments and representatives could prepare themselves accordingly, otherwise, agreement might be sought in consultations under the leadership of the Chairman during the period until the February session.
3. In his delegation's view, no exclusive list of documentation should be drawn up; all relevant documents from within the United Nations system should be available for the Committee to draw upon as appropriate. Moreover, since ideas on

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(Mr. Mansfield, New Zealand)

structural reform, not actual analysis and comparison, were the business of the Committee, the most up-to-date, useful and comprehensive compendium of ideas and suggestions for its purpose was the report of the Group of Experts, entitled "A New United Nations Structure for Global Economic Co-operation" (E/AC.62/9), which the Committee should use as its basic text. His delegation agreed with the Group's diagnosis of the main problem areas, and endorsed the goals which their proposals for structural reform were designed to achieve. Those proposals were balanced and practicable, and their implementation should lead to less fragmentation, improved co-ordination, clearer identification and execution of priorities, and an over-all tightening-up and revitalization of a loose and haphazard collection of separate parts.

4. In conclusion, he said that the Committee had the opportunity, by agreeing on measures to restructure the economic and social sectors of the United Nations system, to provide the necessary tools for shaping a new international economic order within a measurable period.

5. Mr. OLIVERI LOPEZ (Argentina) said that his delegation was convinced of the need to adapt the structures of the United Nations system to the process of change under way in international economic relations, the conceptual elements of which were clearly defined in the documents which had laid the foundations of the new international economic order. There was a need to ensure that institutions were equipped to implement decisions taken in response to changing conditions. In that connexion, his delegation agreed that the Committee was not working in a political vacuum, and that its progress should go hand-in-hand with policy decisions made by other meetings and bodies.

6. The purpose of the proposed structural reforms was to equip the system for optimum international co-operation, in which all parties concerned benefited equitably from the new international order. Moreover, there was an intrinsic balance in the set of proposals being developed, so that the Committee would be well advised to concentrate on having a "package" of measures adopted, and not to jeopardize the whole structure by the unduly hasty implementation of selected decisions. Moreover, since the efforts of the Committee seemed to be dominated by

(Mr. Oliveri-Lopez, Argentina)

the forces of centralization, the need to combine the concept of central direction with the diversity required by the range of problems to be faced should be borne in mind, as, indeed, the Chairman had pointed out in his opening statement.

His delegation had no difficulty with the schedule proposed in document A/AC.179/L.1 for the Committee's sessions. The third session should not, however, overlap with that of UNDP, and the length of that session could usefully be reduced to allow delegations time to reflect on the decisions of the fourth session of UNCTAD. With reference to the fourth session, his delegation urged that the dates should be left flexible; it would be sufficient to set aside two weeks in September or later. The time-limit for new proposals should also be as flexible as possible.

With reference to documentation, he said that a list of the most relevant documents would be useful to delegations, as would the documentation of the Joint Inspection Unit, together with the views expressed on it by the competent United Nations bodies. That Unit should also give the Committee benefit of its experience, at the Committee's request. In any event, documentation should not be allowed to impose constraints on the Committee's activities.

Finally, in his delegation's view, the main areas on which the Committee should focus were: the role of central and sectoral bodies; the function of the Secretariat; methods of work; the relationship between planning and operations; monitoring; and the strengthening of relations between bodies within the United Nations system in order to ensure both co-ordination and the decentralization of activities.

10. Mr. KÖMIVES (Hungary) said that his delegation's approach to the restructuring of the economic and social sectors of the United Nations system was based on the need to make the Organization a more effective instrument both for the strengthening of international peace and security and for international economic co-operation. It had therefore supported the establishment of the Ad Hoc Committee. The Committee had to conduct its work on the basis of strict observance of the

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(Mr. Kömives, Hungary)

United Nations Charter. The sixth and seventh special sessions of the General Assembly had provided other valuable guidelines for its work, as had the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States. Moreover, the restructuring of the economic and social sectors of the United Nations system was intimately connected with the establishment of a new, more just international economic order. The Committee should therefore duly take into account the different economic and social systems, and interests, of States, while giving high priority to the developing countries.

11. With reference to the number of officers the Committee should have, his delegation considered that five was the most suitable number. His delegation had an open mind with regard to the number of sessions, but it believed that it would be difficult to make a firm decision at the current session, because it was impossible to predict what progress the resumed first session and second session would make. His delegation had no objection in principle to informal intersessional consultations, but wished to stress the fundamental importance and priority of the Committee and its formal meetings. Finally, the results of the work of the Committee should be reached by consensus, owing to the very nature of the task entrusted to it.

12. Mr. MILLS (Jamaica) said that his country shared with many other Member States a very strong belief in the Organization and a determination to strengthen it. The founders of the United Nations had shown a vision and faith in the future which deserved the deep gratitude of those who served and benefited by the Organization. Nevertheless, the Member States had a duty to look at the system objectively, review its design and structure continuously and ensure that it was always adapted to the tasks and requirements confronting it. They perceived that the system was in need of significant restructuring of its economic and social sectors.

13. Expanded membership had led the Organization to shift its emphasis towards development, and the First and Second Development Decades and the International Development Strategy reflected that shift. However, the limited success of the efforts to promote the economic progress of the developing countries, and the growing gap between those countries and the developed world had made it clear

(Mr. Mills, Jamaica)

that the approach to development left much to be desired, and that relatively orthodox methods were not producing significant results. The situation had been aggravated by serious signs of breakdown in the international economic system. At the same time, there was a growing determination on the part of developing countries to bring about a change in the historical patterns of relationships, which had relegated them to a secondary position in the international economic system and left their economies entirely dependent on those of the industrialized countries.

14. It was in those circumstances that the United Nations system had tried to meet its increasing responsibilities with its limited resources and within the bounds set by its Members. Critical attention had therefore been increasingly focused on the inadequacies of the system, and the basis for a new approach to development had been provided by the sixth and seventh special sessions of the General Assembly. It was in that context that the member countries had called for a process of restructuring the economic and social sectors of the United Nations system to make them more capable of dealing with the increasingly complex problems of international economic relations and of contributing significantly to the establishment of a new international economic order.

15. The major requirement was that the United Nations system should be made more cohesive, and should be equipped with a capability for over-all policy planning, analysis and research, for exploring the processes of development at the national and international levels, and for promoting understanding of those processes. It should be made more capable of monitoring and analysing the factors and problems associated with development and the experience of different cultures throughout the world, and equipped to provide maximum opportunity for the full play of the energies and experience of the agencies and other United Nations bodies working in different fields.

16. The approach to the restructuring exercise should be based on two premises: first, that much of the effort and resources required for development would have to come from within each community, and that the best way to help communities was to assist them in discovering the means to release their own energies, on the basis of a full understanding of their circumstances and a respect for their aspirations and individual qualities; and second, that the implications of interdependence should be fully accepted and understood.

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17. With reference to the work of the Committee, his delegation urged that the Committee should take a flexible approach, and should be prepared to review and revise its organization of work as appropriate. It should make the fullest use of the documentation available and of the knowledge, expertise and interest of officials working in the various agencies and sectors of the United Nations system. An understanding should be reached as early as possible about the nature of the difficulties facing the United Nations system and the case for restructuring. In short, the Committee should form a diagnosis before prescribing remedies. In that connexion, he commended the report of the Group of Experts (E/AC.62/9), particularly chapter I, as a valuable basis for discussion. It should also be borne in mind that implementation of any recommendations made by the Committee or from any other sources would take time, although there were some recommendations which the Committee would expect to see implemented promptly. The idea of establishing permanent machinery for continuous review of the structure of the system therefore deserved attention.

18. Mr. RAJAONARIVELO (Madagascar) said that several conferences which would influence the Committee's decisions and procedure would take place in the near future. The Committee should not, therefore, be paralysed by an obsession with finishing its work in 1976. His delegation agreed that there should be two or three sessions in 1976, provided that the venue was the same, preferably New York, since at Headquarters the Committee would have a general view of the problems of restructuring and the small delegations would be able to participate in its work without undue expense. His delegation shared the view that a working group should be set up, but its size and programme could not be determined until the Committee had identified the problems.

19. No one doubted the complexity of the Committee's task, which was equal to that of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Charter of the United Nations. The fact that two important Committees were beginning their work in the same year under pressure from the developing countries indicated a desire for genuine change in the Organization. In the light of the recent special sessions of the General Assembly, the United Nations had to recognize that a remarkable change had taken place in its membership and that the arrival of the developing countries on the international scene would alter its social and political base. His delegation

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(Mr. Rajaonarivelo, Madagascar)

attached as much importance to that recognition as to the efforts to ensure greater efficiency in international economic co-operation. The proposals which the Committee was required to submit would be of value only to the extent that they strengthened the central role of the General Assembly in determining priorities and policy. Any departure from that requirement would undermine the principle of democracy. Although the majority was accused of exercising some kind of tyranny, it was the majority that held that the real problem lay less in the decision-making process than in the machinery for carrying out decisions. The developed countries' lack of political will was a well-known constraint in that respect.

20. The report of the Group of Experts devoted only one paragraph to the application of the general policy decisions of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council. That paragraph recommended that negotiations should be held with a view to the adoption of political decisions by those bodies and that the conclusion of formal international agreements to facilitate the implementation of decisions and resolutions should be the subject of other negotiations. No explanation was given for the arbitrary separation; it indicated to him a desire to reduce the powers of the deliberative bodies of the Organization. The General Assembly could easily serve as a framework for negotiations, as it had done in the case of the International Development Strategy.

21. The work of restructuring could not be carried out properly unless account was taken of the major long- and medium-term projects entrusted to existing agencies. The idea of strengthening the structure of the Secretariat to enable it to play a greater role in the formulation of development policy was attractive, but its implications for existing agencies had not yet been sufficiently studied. Senior staff members of the specialized agencies had rightly insisted on the need for consultations between themselves and the Committee. His delegation was particularly concerned with the problems of UNCTAD, which had proved its worth as a centre for negotiation. It did not wish to see any part of UNCTAD's activities taken over by other bodies and found it astonishing that the Group of Experts should have failed to recommend the establishment of an international trade organization, such as UNCTAD should ideally become. Similarly, the Committee should not disregard such issues as the conversion of UNIDO into a specialized agency and the establishment of an international sea-bed authority.

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22. Ms. OLDFELT (Sweden) said that her delegation agreed on the need to impart momentum to the Committee's work, and it endorsed the view that the Committee should single out certain problem areas for priority attention, as a preliminary to the establishment of machinery to support its work. Her delegation favoured the establishment of a working group, but the Committee would first have to determine the group's mandate. It might be best, for the moment, to request the Chairman to carry out whatever consultations he thought advisable. A wide range of documentation should be available to the Committee, but the central document should be the report of the Group of Experts.

23. The strengthening of the Economic and Social Council had long been a concern of her Government. There was an urgent need for a set of central institutions to shape the various elements affecting development into more coherent global policies. The Council should be revitalized so as to enable it to perform that function. Her delegation was accordingly in general agreement with the proposal of the Group of Experts that the Council's work should be organized in subject-oriented sessions, thereby facilitating concentration and detailed consideration of items.

24. There was also a need to strengthen the Secretariat's capacity in economic and social matters. The integrated approach to development called for increased co-ordination within the Secretariat, and her delegation supported the proposal to establish a post of Director-General for Development and International Economic Co-operation, who would have responsibility for all United Nations economic and social activities. Such a move should facilitate policy formulation and operational and administrative activities. The new role foreseen for the Economic and Social Council would also require greater Secretariat capacity.

25. The proliferation of funds and the fragmentation of United Nations development efforts was a major problem, and the possibility of merging all development funds into a new authority should be considered. That would facilitate a co-ordinated approach to development, an approach which her delegation supported in principle, although consideration would have to be given to individual cases.

26. Her delegation believed that a unique opportunity existed to adapt the structure of the United Nations to serve contemporary needs better. That opportunity must not be missed.

27. Mr. UDOVENKO (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic) said that the United Nations had proved that, when acting in strict conformity with its Charter, it could be an effective instrument for peace and security and make a substantial contribution to the development of international co-operation. The real opportunities provided by the Charter had enabled the Organization to play its role in the strengthening of détente; the improved political climate resulting from détente was in the interests of all States. Only the existing favourable conditions had made it possible to consider the problem of transforming international economic relations, a process contemplated in the decisions of the sixth special session, the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States and the documents of the seventh special session. His delegation had endorsed the decisions of the seventh special session, including the mandate given to the Committee. All that remained was for the Committee to come to grips with the task of establishing the organizational base for translating those decisions into practice.

28. Increased effectiveness and a progressive outlook could be achieved only by improving and simplifying the structure of the social and economic organs of the United Nations system, and not by the automatic expansion of those organs. The economic and social sectors were already so cumbersome as to make duplication of work inevitable, and the administrative costs and budget of the Organization increased yearly. The Committee had an opportunity to alter the situation and to bring the organizational structure of the United Nations into line with contemporary requirements. It should devise ways of rationalizing the economic and social organs and increasing their operational efficiency by simplifying their structure and reducing their administrative overheads. All restructuring measures should be in strict conformity with the Charter and make maximum use of the possibilities offered by the Charter for increasing the effectiveness of the United Nations. The new structure should reflect the universality of the Organization and the equality of rights of all States, which was one of the cornerstones of the new economic order.

29. Mr. CZARKOWSKI (Poland) said that the Committee's work had four main objectives: first, to bring about greater efficiency in United Nations economic and social activities; secondly, to adapt the structure of the United Nations system to recent changes in the world, especially to the requirements of the

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(Mr. Czarkowski, Poland)

Declaration and Programme of Action on the Establishment of a New International Economic Order, and of the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States; thirdly, to ensure that the structural changes took full account of the legitimate interests of all States, on the basis of equality and mutual advantage; and, fourthly, to carry out the restructuring in a manner consistent with the Charter. Certain conceptual assumptions would have to be taken into account if those objectives were to be attained. They included the strengthening of the Economic and Social Council as a body of decisive significance in the shaping of international economic relations, and the consolidation of operational and technical assistance activities, with UNDP and perhaps UNICEF retaining a central role.

30. His delegation believed that the Committee should have five officers, elected on the basis of geographical representation, and that the matter should be settled at the current session. Since the Committee's task was one of great magnitude and complexity, his delegation agreed with the suggestion that it should have two main sessions in 1976, but it would not oppose the convening of an additional session, as suggested in the note by the Chairman (A/AC.179/L.1). Meetings of the whole membership of the Committee would be very cumbersome, and his delegation therefore shared the view that a working or drafting group should be established, which might begin its deliberations after the general debate at the February session. The number of documents formally distributed should be limited, but delegations would remain free to use any documents which they considered relevant.

31. His delegation was convinced that the Committee's work had a significance which extended beyond economic and social activities. The successful completion of its work would make an important contribution in other areas of international relations, notably the maintenance of peace and security.

32. The CHAIRMAN said that, with regard to the schedule of sessions for 1976, he had requested the Secretariat to use his note (A/AC.179/L.1) as a basis for the preparation of a statement of financial implications, on the understanding that the Committee would take a decision in the light of those implications.

The meeting rose at 4.40 p.m.

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5th MEETING

Wednesday, 19 November 1975, 10.30 a.m.

RESTRUCTURING OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL SECTORS OF THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM
(concluded) (A/AC.179/L.1)

1. Mr. TUKAN (Jordan) said that it seemed sensible for the Committee to start with a diagnosis of the existing system of the United Nations for dealing with economic and social issues. The general objective of the Committee's work was to make the system fully capable of dealing comprehensively with problems of international economic co-operation. The focus of its work should therefore be on the methods of work and functioning of the United Nations system in the economic and social sectors. The immediate task was to determine what Member States expected from the restructuring exercise.
2. His delegation did not view the exercise as merely an administrative or managerial one aimed at improving the efficiency or productivity of the United Nations, important as that aspect might be. The fact that the restructuring process had been entrusted to an intergovernmental committee gave it political dimensions and an innovative character. Many recommendations or courses of action acceptable from an administrative point of view might prove to be less attractive in the light of political considerations, and a balance might sometimes have to be struck between the two conflicting factors.
3. His delegation fully supported the proposal to draw up a list of problem areas, although it believed that to do so at the current session would be premature. In a sense, however, the major problem areas were not altogether unknown. In the view of his delegation, therefore, there was no confusion over problem areas, documentation or the organization of work, but rather over what was expected from the restructuring exercise.
4. While a final decision on the number and duration of the Committee's future sessions would depend upon resolving some of the issues already raised by

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(Mr. Tukan, Jordan)

delegations, his delegation had no objection to deciding in principle to hold three sessions during 1976 in January, February and June, preferably at Headquarters. He stressed the need for flexibility in planning the Committee's future work.

5. His delegation believed that the bulk of the substantial work would have to be negotiated in one or more working groups. It was therefore preferred to agree in principle at the current session to the setting up of a main working group which would be open-ended and whose terms of reference could be decided on after an exchange of views on the list of problem areas had taken place.

6. With regard to documentation, the report of the Group of Experts represented a comprehensive and important input. His delegation endorsed the proposal that the Secretariat should prepare for the Committee a summary of remarks made by Member States during the seventh special session on the question of restructuring. The list of documents should remain open in order to accommodate any new reports or ideas which might be submitted, especially by delegations, in the coming year. A bibliography of relevant documents would likewise facilitate the work of the Committee. It should be borne in mind, however, that the available documentation would at best provide only general guidelines and that it was up to Governments to formulate the basic working documents. The process of improving efficiency through periodic administrative measures should be the normal practice of any institution, and the Committee's documentation requirements would emerge in the course of its work.

7. Finally, the substantive work should start immediately. The existing state of affairs made rational decision-making difficult; after all, the activity of the United Nations system in the economic and social fields could not be frozen until the restructuring exercise was completed. During the transitional period, measures would sometimes have to be taken which might prove obsolete at some future date, but such contradictions were unavoidable.

8. Mr. VERCELES (Philippines) said that his delegation was willing to go along with the consensus with regard to the organization of work which had begun to emerge.

(Mr. Verceles, Philippines)

9. His delegation believed that the report of the Group of Experts on the Structure of the United Nations System should be the primary document used in the Committee's deliberations. The reordering of the economic relationships between developed and developing countries called for a change in the international system supporting those relationships. There was therefore growing agreement that while corrective measures should be sought in international trade and finance, the United Nations system should also be modified in order to enable it to carry out more effectively its responsibilities for global development and play its central role in the implementation of the new international economic order. The issue was how to introduce into a system which had developed in an ad hoc manner, greater coherence without in the process destroying its vitality, flexibility and responsiveness to particular needs. In other words, it was necessary to avoid excessive fragmentation, on the one hand, and excessive centralization on the other.

10. The analysis contained in the Capacity Study (DP/5) was, on the whole, sound and still applicable. The recommendations of the Group of Experts paralleled those in the Capacity Study in many respects. The discussion on restructuring should not be restricted to the recommendations of the Group of Experts but should also consider alternatives and any new proposals which might be made in the Committee.

11. The Economic and Social Council had never fully lived up to its central responsibilities under the Charter for over-all policy formulation and implementation and co-ordination in the economic and social fields, and it should be revitalized as an essential part of any reform of the United Nations system. It was not altogether clear, however, that even a reorganization of the Council's work methods such as that proposed by the Group of Experts could enable it to perform effectively the work of its existing subsidiary bodies. The proposal for year-round meetings, for example, would place greater demands on the delegations of developing countries. The proposal for an Operations Board of 18 to 27 members to serve as the sole United Nations body to consider operational development and sectoral activities was difficult to reconcile with the desire of Member States to be adequately represented. On the other hand, the existence of fewer policy-making bodies should make broad policy directives more consistent and better integrated.

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(Mr. Verceles, Philippines)

12. Consideration should also be given to changing the working methods of the General Assembly at the Committee level so that more time could be devoted to productive work and consultations. The time spent on general policy statements in the Second Committee should be reduced, and the trend towards the integrated treatment of social and economic development questions should be reflected in the allocation of items between the Second and Third Committees. The recommendation made by the Group of Experts regarding the agenda of the Third Committee was in keeping with its priorities.

13. The creation of a new post of Director-General for Development and International Economic Co-operation would permit the question of development and international economic co-operation to receive the high-level, full-time attention it merited within the United Nations Secretariat. Such an office would also symbolize the centralization of management of all operational activities and the co-ordination of the economic and social policies of the United Nations system. The effectiveness of the office would, of course, depend on the appointment of a person of considerable distinction, capability and experience.

14. The consolidation of funds, governing bodies and secretariats was a logical step towards rationalizing the functioning of the United Nations system. However, the report of the Group of Experts had recognized that the separate identities of certain funds should be maintained in order to retain their fund-raising appeal or facilitate their operations. UNICEF seemed to belong in that category, and there were also grounds for including UNEP and UNFPA in it.

15. The Group of Experts envisaged a reduced role for the specialized agencies in operational activities and stressed their role as suppliers of expertise in all phases of country programming and in their sectoral fields of competence within the United Nations system. A reduction in the operational functions of the agencies might be contemplated in any case in which the implementation of projects could be delegated to other bodies. Nevertheless, their operational role was likely to remain fairly substantial for some time to come.

(Mr. Verceles, Philippines)

16. The Group of Experts' desire to apply the expertise of the specialized agencies on a more systematic basis to the needs of the United Nations system through the creation of a joint staff for central research, planning and programming was a step in the right direction and should result in better feedback between policy and operational activities. There was also merit in the recommendation that the agencies should develop comparable programme-budget presentations, synchronize their budget cycles and harmonize medium-term planning periods with country programming cycles.

17. At the interagency level, there was a great deal of overlapping between IACB, ECB and ACC, and there was a clear case for merging the three and maintaining the subsidiary bodies of IACB and ECB at the working level. There was, however, no interagency body which dealt adequately with fundamental economic and social problems and trends requiring international action. The Group of Experts had proposed the establishment of a new body for that purpose, but the need for a special body had not been clearly established. Although, as matters stood, its chief concern was with procedural matters, the ACC might serve that purpose.

18. His delegation endorsed the general objective of aligning the regional commissions more closely with the structural pattern proposed for the rest of the United Nations system and enhancing the contribution of the regional commissions to the activities of the system. The role of the commissions in the identification, formulation and implementation of regional projects should be strengthened. In that connexion, the recommendations of the capacity study on the progressive regional decentralization of UNDP were worthy of consideration. Close links should be forged between the regional commissions and the regional bureaux of UNDP.

19. The value of negotiating groups in resolving difficult and controversial questions had been amply demonstrated during the seventh special session, and the use of consultations in the process of decision-making should be expanded. While the institutionalization of consultation and negotiation procedures should be encouraged, the structure and functioning of negotiating groups should be flexible, and should leave scope for adapting them to the demands of individual subjects or situations.

20. Mr. HASHMI (India) urged all delegations to facilitate informal intersessional work by expressing firm views on the specific issues before the Committee. Even if there was not complete agreement with regard to all the

(Mr. Hashmi, India)

recommendations of the Group of Experts, it was undeniable that their report tackled the problems of structures and formed a good basis for the Committee's work. Since the restructuring exercise would embrace the entire United Nations system, it was imperative that the specialized agencies of the United Nations should participate fully in the deliberations, not only by furnishing the required information but also, when necessary, by giving explanations and their views on proposals.

21. His delegation attached great importance to the current review of the intergovernmental and expert machinery dealing with the formulation, review and approval of programmes and budgets, and believed that the recommendations of the intergovernmental Working Group on that subject formed a good basis for follow-up action both in the Economic and Social Council and in the Committee. His delegation endorsed the seven recommendations in chapter III of the Working Group's report (A.10117), which would be before the Ad Hoc Committee. His delegation therefore proposed that the report of the Working Group should be placed on the list of documents to be used by the Ad Hoc Committee, which would, after all, be dealing with the machinery for programme review - and therefore the future role of the CPC - and the budgetary mechanism, including the role, mandate and composition of ACABQ.

22. In examining the recommendations of the Group of Experts, it was perfectly conceivable to adopt some, postpone others and examine whether those remaining could be fitted into the structure eventually conceived by the Committee. It was not necessary, however, to restrict discussion to the report of the Group of Experts and his delegation would approach the work of the Committee with that frame of mind. As to the intersessional work of the Committee, his delegation was in favour of having one, or at most two, working groups so that the consideration of and reporting on the various questions was co-ordinated and the over-all picture of emerging structures remained in focus at all stages of the discussion.

23. Mr. von RUCKTESCHELL (Federal Republic of Germany) said that his delegation intended to take an active part in the process of restructuring the economic and social sectors of the United Nations. For effective organization of its work, the Committee should adopt a flexible attitude, and the participation of interested countries in its activities should not be limited. The proposed working group, preferably presided over by the Chairman of the Committee, should therefore be open-ended. It might be entrusted initially with defining the priority areas for restructuring and thereafter be divided, as necessary, into smaller open-ended groups to consider each priority area. The Committee itself should not consider the available documents one by one, but should concentrate on specific problem areas, using the material contained in the documentation. The documentation would subsequently help the Committee to develop a balanced set of structural proposals.
24. His delegation would agree to the suggestions concerning timing - whether to provide for two or three sessions - if they were adopted by consensus. Delegations should, before the end of the General Assembly, at least decide on the organization of work and such specific tasks as could be identified either during the current session or at a short organizational session in January. The Secretariat had agreed to compile a list of existing documentation, including resolutions and other decisions by which the General Assembly had assigned tasks to the Committee, and it would be helpful if the list was available in time for the organizational meetings.
25. Ever since the subject of restructuring the United Nations system had been raised, there seemed to have been a deliberate effort to enlarge and perpetuate existing programmes and organizations and to create new organizations. If not checked, that trend would render the work of the Ad Hoc Committee infinitely more difficult. The Committee should consider pointing out to the entire United Nations system that any structure-related individual measures being taken might subsequently be subjected to reform and that the competent bodies and executive organs would have to take responsibility for additional expenditure caused by such individual measures and for the recruitment of additional staff.

(Mr. von Ruckteschell,
Federal Republic of Germany)

26. His Government viewed the United Nations as an increasingly important forum for achieving the balance of interests between developing and industrialized countries. The proposed restructuring of the United Nations system provided an opportunity to improve the instruments available for the promotion of economic and social progress and better living standards for the world's population. It was his delegation's understanding that all proposals on structural changes would be governed by the terms of the Charter of the United Nations.

27. In his Government's view, the report of the Group of Experts was a useful basis for the Committee's discussion, but not the only one. The economic and social sectors of the United Nations system should be restructured wherever that seemed necessary for substantive reasons. The essential criterion should be how economic progress in the developing countries could be furthered within the framework of an efficient world economy. Another important point was that restructuring should in no case impair the right of member States to choose their own economic and social systems. The Committee should develop a procedure which avoided polarization of opinions and made it possible to find practicable solutions in the interests of all concerned. In that context, informal consulting mechanisms should be considered.

28. His Government firmly believed that the policy-making capacity of the principal organs, particularly the Economic and Social Council, should be strengthened and that established and proven structures should be preserved. In some areas, decentralization of the United Nations constituted an element of strength, particularly with regard to fact-related work; the specialized agencies should therefore preserve their independent status. The efficiency of the operational sector of the United Nations should be maintained and enhanced, notably by structural improvements in technical assistance and pre-investment activities. However, the question of which institutions should be merged required careful examination. Decision-making powers with regard to the formulation of work programmes in the operational sector should remain with bodies consisting of expert

(Mr. von Ruckteschell,
Federal Republic of Germany)

government representatives and should not be exercised by central political organs. Closer co-ordination of United Nations development activities was desirable and the promotion of regional co-operation among developing countries was particularly important. The United Nations Secretariat should achieve greater efficiency by functioning more smoothly and expeditiously and should be relieved of operational activities such as technical assistance.

29. It should be borne in mind that the Committee would need courage to make changes in the traditional structures and abolish mechanisms which had become obsolete or assign new tasks to them. It was to be hoped that it would not follow the example of earlier bodies formed to streamline functions and structures and avoid duplication which had ended by creating new institutions. The aim of the Committee was to create a more equitable system of international economic relations which offered the developing countries a better chance of progress. That aim should also guide members in defining primary objectives and setting priorities for the restructuring exercise.

30. Mr. BERG (Norway) said that at the sixth and seventh special sessions of the General Assembly international economic and social affairs had been more intensively debated than ever before. The continued involvement of the United Nations in those highly complex matters was dependent to a large extent on restructuring the economic and social sectors of the system to make it more capable of dealing with problems of international economic co-operation in a comprehensive and integrated manner.

31. It was widely accepted that the major challenges faced by the human race could only be met through global and multilateral action and that the United Nations system was the logical place for such action. There were growing doubts, however, about the capacity of the United Nations system to meet those challenges. The Committee must dispel those doubts. The fact that, as matters stood, the impact of future inputs was unknown should not prevent the Committee from taking the first steps in its work.

(Mr. Berg, Norway)

32. Consultations on the organization of work and the process of identifying problem areas to be discussed in February should begin as soon as possible. It would be helpful if as much as possible of the preparatory work could be done before the February session and an open-ended working group would help to ensure the smooth functioning of the Committee. His delegation hoped that the Chairman would organize consultations to ascertain whether there was widespread acceptance of the suggestion for a working group.

33. His delegation could accept the suggested schedule for formal sessions of the Committee outlined in document A/AC.179/L.1. Although its sessions might overlap with those of other bodies of the United Nations system, the Committee should not let that prevent it from starting the urgently needed process of institutional revitalization of the United Nations.

34. With regard to the identifying of priorities and problem areas, his delegation hoped that in 1976, the Committee could focus on the role and working methods of the Economic and Social Council and its subsidiary bodies, the role of the Secretariat, including the reorientation of the functions of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, and the possible establishment of more effective interagency mechanisms on economic co-operation and development. The Committee should also study the possibility of consolidating the operational activities of the United Nations system. It should bear in mind the need to harmonize two contradictory trends in the United Nations system: the trend towards regrouping and centralization, on the one hand, and the trend towards autonomy and decentralization.

35. His delegation agreed with those who had said that no exclusive list of documentation should be established. However, the Committee should give special consideration to the most recent and comprehensive report before it, namely that of the Group of Experts on the Structure of the United Nations System.

36. Mr. QADRUD-DIN (Pakistan) said that the move to restructure the economic and social sectors of the United Nations was the result of the desire of all developing countries to make the United Nations system more capable of dealing with the problems arising from the establishment of the new international economic order. Institutions, however, were only a means for the improvement of the

(Mr. Qadrud-Din, Pakistan)

quality of human life, and the decisive test of the Committee's efforts would be the extent to which the United Nations system was made more effective in promoting the goals of social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom.

37. All relevant documentation should be regarded as being available to the Committee, the volume of material involved could, however, create problems for delegations. His delegation therefore agreed with the proposal that a comprehensive bibliography should be prepared by the Secretariat. He suggested that the Chairman might prepare for the February session a summary of the issues and the proposals made in the relevant documents. The schedule of meetings outlined in document A/AC.179/L.1 was acceptable, on the understanding that the Committee could decide at its June session on the need for a further session in September.

38. His delegation was agreeable, in principle, to the establishment of an open-ended working group led by the Chairman. The Committee should authorize the Chairman to consult the regional groups on the size and composition of the working group. Even if no decision on that matter could be taken immediately, a worth-while start would have been made on the Committee's work. At the February session, the working group could decide, in the light of developments, on the establishment of further subgroups, if necessary. His delegation welcomed the fact that the Committee had had agreed to have the normal complement of five officers and hoped that they could all be elected before the end of the current session.

39. Mr. LOBANOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that one of the purposes of the Ad Hoc Committee was to make recommendations for restructuring the economic and social sectors of the United Nations so that they could respond more effectively to the requirements of the Declaration and the Programme of Action on the Establishment of a New International Economic Order, and of the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States. The new and more favourable political climate, together with new trends in the world economy and in international economic relations, required a new organizational structure within the United Nations system in order to remove existing short-comings.

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(Mr. Lobanov, USSR)

40. As for the principles on which the Ad Hoc Committee's work should be based, the first requirement was that any restructuring should be done in complete conformity with the Charter and should serve to translate the purposes, principles and methods embodied in the Charter into practice. The Charter established the principle of the relaxation of international tension, which in turn formed the basis of such important documents as the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States, and the Declaration and Programme of Action on the Establishment of a New International Economic Order. The United Nations, and in particular the Ad Hoc Committee, could well use the Charter as a basis for enhancing the efficiency of the economic and social sectors.

41. The Charter established the Economic and Social Council as the principal economic organ of the United Nations. Some delegations had maintained that the importance of the Council had declined in recent years. In his view, however, the Council's role as the organ responsible for the co-ordination of international economic and social co-operation should be strengthened, and it should be relieved of the burden of minor matters so that it could discuss the most important problems of the day and either make authoritative recommendations to the General Assembly or be empowered, where necessary, to make its own decisions. Such a procedure would strengthen rather than weaken the central role of the General Assembly in promoting international economic co-operation on the basis of equality and mutual benefit.

42. Restructuring should be based on the principle of universality and respect for the interests and views of all, including the socialist States. The mainsprings of the Ad Hoc Committee's action should be the principles of justice, sovereign equality, equal rights, non-discrimination, mutual benefit, peaceful coexistence and co-operation between all States, regardless of their economic and social systems. Observance of the principle of equitable geographical representation was also an essential condition for the effectiveness of any organizational structure. The Ad Hoc Committee should take fully into account the requirements and problems of the developing countries, particularly the least developed, and its recommendations should

(Mr. Lobanov, USSR)

lead to the establishment of a new and more equitable system of international economic relations under which the developing countries could rapidly overcome their economic backwardness, which was a relic of imperialism and colonialism.

43. The reorganization of the economic and social sectors should not take the form of merely enlarging the economic and social organs, rather, the aim should be to increase the effectiveness of and impart a progressive approach to United Nations activities in those fields. In fact, the task of the Committee consisted in giving effect to the recommendations in paragraph 5 of General Assembly resolution 3343 (XXIX).

44. Restructuring should lead to the streamlining of the economic and social organs of the United Nations, and to eliminating excessive administrative expenditures and duplication of effort. There were numerous instances in which the same problem was discussed simultaneously or successively in a number of bodies, with very little return for the extra expenditure involved. The Ad Hoc Committee should therefore carefully examine the activities of all organs of the United Nations system and make recommendations accordingly. In its work, it should consider the requirements and proposals of all member Governments, and take into account the opinions of the specialized agencies and other United Nations organs. The Secretary-General should accordingly send a questionnaire to all member countries and make a compilation of their replies available to the Ad Hoc Committee, if possible before its session in June 1976.

45. With regard to the organization of the Committee's work, he supported the proposal for the preparation of a list of priority matters which could serve as a basis for discussion and the preparation of recommendations. He agreed with the representative of Egypt that the consensus method should be used in preparing the Committee's recommendations. If that arrangement was supported by a majority of delegations, the Committee's report to the General Assembly might contain a statement to that effect. He had no objection to the formation of working groups or to the method of unofficial consultation, provided that the Committee's main work was done in its official meetings, with working groups or unofficial consultations being used only as necessary. That procedure would safeguard the interests of the smaller delegations.

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46. Mr. RIEDMATTEN (Switzerland) said that the improvement of the international machinery for promoting economic and social advancement was a challenge to which the international community had responded by appointing a group of experts to study the problems, and thereafter by forming the Ad Hoc Committee, whose task it was to transform proposals into reality. He hoped the work would culminate in the establishment of an efficient and coherent system. His Government took an active part in the work of many United Nations organs and was happy to be associated with the restructuring exercise.

47. The Committee should be guided in the conduct of its work by two considerations: it should seek pragmatic solutions which would increase the efficiency of the existing system, while taking due account of the legitimate interests of all States, and it should bear in mind that during the 30 years of its existence the United Nations had established a number of institutions and mechanisms of unquestioned merit. The Committee should certainly approach its work in a critical spirit, but it should also give full credit to the constructive features of the existing system.

48. With regard to organizational matters, participation in the work of the Committee should be open to all its members, since restructuring concerned them all. Each should be able to make his contribution and defend his views and interests at all stages of the restructuring process. Similarly, the various agencies in the United Nations system should be closely associated with the Committee's discussions. He agreed that it would be useful to start by identifying the chief problems and arranging them in an order of priority. With regard to the constitution of a working group, the best course might be to await the outcome of the session of February 1976 before deciding. Finally, he agreed that the Committee should make its decisions by consensus.

49. Mr. CAVAGLIERI (Italy) said that the interdependence of States, which was borne out by the current world economic situation, demanded the acceptance and general implementation of the principle of co-operation. Economic and social co-operation should be fully reflected in the structure of the United Nations, which needed to be reviewed in order to adjust it to contemporary realities and needs. The existing instruments had failed to achieve general co-operation and comprehensive balanced development or to prevent polarization and disparities, and

(Mr. Cavaglieri, Italy)

their defects had been pointed out by the Group of Experts on the Structure of the United Nations System. They included the proliferation of committees and special funds, duplication and lack of co-ordination between United Nations bodies, and the fragmentation of United Nations operational activities.

50. A pragmatic approach to the organization of work was appropriate. His delegation therefore favoured a small group of officers, and believed that the possibility of forming smaller groups for the study of specific problems should be left open. Subsequently other ad hoc groups might be formed for drafting purposes. His delegation could not, however, approve the establishment of a restricted group at the current session.

51. Three substantive sessions, appropriately spaced, would be required in 1976 if the Committee was to submit a meaningful report to the thirty-first session of the General Assembly. Since the issues involved were complex, consultations on specific solutions could not start immediately. The first session in 1976 would obviously be devoted largely to a general discussion in which Governments would have an opportunity to state their positions. His delegation therefore suggested that the Committee should authorize the Chairman to begin consultations with a view to defining broad areas on which the Committee should focus its attention. The mandate given to the Chairman should be as flexible as possible, leaving him a choice of methods of consultation and investigation. The Chairman should then report to the February session of the Committee, which would then have the first elements for constructive work. The second session should take place after the fourth Conference of UNCTAD and the third would summarize the work carried out for the purpose of its report to the General Assembly. His delegation preferred shorter sessions; the significant achievements of the seventh special session showed what could be done in only two weeks. However, that point should be decided by the Committee at a later stage.

52. Mr. AL-NAKKASH (Iraq) said that the report of the Group of Experts provided a solid basis for the Committee's work. It was important that when details of restructuring were discussed, the objectives should not include the provision of new posts as promotion opportunities, as had been the case in a decentralization exercise undertaken by the World Bank. Staffing matters in

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(Mr. Al-Nakkash, Iraq)

connexion with restructuring should be discussed with all the developing countries concerned. It was essential that decisions should be made with the full participation of developing countries.

53. He agreed with the proposed organization of the Ad Hoc Committee's work (A/AC.179/L.1), except that he doubted the wisdom of restricting the number of sessions. It was important that all Member States should agree on action to deal with the many difficult issues before the Committee, and rigid time-tables might not be compatible with that consideration. He hoped that the Committee would be supplied with documentation recording the views of the various organizations concerned with its work. In particular, the Committee should be informed whether its decisions would have financial implications for developing countries.

54. The level of co-ordination among international agencies was already satisfactory in some ways, but what was needed was a more comprehensive kind of co-ordination, which the Committee would endeavour to build into the United Nations system.

55. Mr. LASCARRO (Colombia) said that the report of the Group of Experts stated the problems well and would furnish a sound basis for the Committee's work.

56. In his opinion, the object of structural reforms should be to give back to the General Assembly its leading role in policy formulation, even though that might mean the elimination of certain other bodies which duplicated that work. The Second Committee should be the only forum for the discussion of a number of matters which, as matters stood, were discussed in other bodies active in the field of economic and social development. In that connexion, the role of the Economic and Social Council in the formulation of global economic and social policies should be safeguarded. It was also important to reinforce the regional economic and social commissions and to give them more independence in formulating policies and directing regional work.

57. His Government's experts were studying such matters as monetary reform and the financing of development, and his delegation would make its views on those subjects known at a later date.

58. He agreed with the proposed time-table for 1976, but hoped that the Ad Hoc Committee's proposed third session would not overlap with the session of the Governing Council of UNDP.

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(Mr. Lascarro, Colombia)

59. It would be interesting to hear from the various agencies of the United Nations system, whose long experience would provide the Committee with useful guidance. He agreed that the Secretariat should formulate a questionnaire to be sent to Member Governments, and should compile the results and submit them to the Ad Hoc Committee for information.

60. Mr. DHARAT (Libya) said that he accepted the Chairman's proposals regarding the organization of the Committee's work during 1976 (A/AC.179/L.1), and was in favour of the creation of an open-ended working group; he believed that that measure would assist the Committee in its work. He also agreed with the proposal that the Secretariat should distribute a document containing the relevant parts of the statements made at the seventh special session and during the general debate at the current session of the General Assembly. Such statements, together with the report of the Group of Experts, were of the utmost importance for the Committee's future work.

61. In his view, the Committee's main tasks were to strengthen the role of the United Nations in economic and social development by giving practical expression to the principles contained in the resolutions of the sixth and seventh special sessions and General Assembly resolution 3281 (XXIX) containing the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.

6th MEETING

Friday, 21 November 1975, 3 p.m.

ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE AD HOC COMMITTEE TO THE THIRTIETH SESSION OF
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY (A/AC.179/L.2)Paragraph 2

1. The CHAIRMAN suggested that the Committee consider the subparagraphs on which general agreement had been reached in informal meetings.

Subparagraph (1)

2. Mr. TUKAN (Jordan) asked whether it was necessary to state that the decision on the convening of a fourth session would be made at the second or third session of the Committee. The holding of a fourth session was dependent on the outcome of the third session and could not be decided at the second session.

3. Mr. FASLA (Algeria) said that, as far as his delegation was concerned, several other sessions might be held. He therefore suggested that the subparagraph should be amended to state that a decision on the convening of subsequent or other sessions would be made at the second or third session of the Committee.

4. Mr. DIALLO (Upper Volta) suggested that the text should be amended to read "and that a decision on the convening of other sessions including a fourth session would be made at the third session of the Committee. Such a wording would take into account the points raised by the representatives of Jordan and Algeria.

5. Mr. GAJENTAAN (Netherlands) asked for some clarification on subparagraph (1). It had been his understanding that the wording of the subparagraph was the result of the difficulties concerning financial implications and in no way prejudged the holding of a fourth session.

6. Mr. CORDOVEZ (Secretary of the Committee) said that the statement of financial implications of subparagraph (1) would be circulated shortly as a document

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(Mr. Cordovez)

of the Committee. The total additional appropriation for the services envisaged in the report (A/AC.179/L.2) was \$85,800. That figure was based on the Committee meeting from 11 February to 3 March 1976, from 1 to 11 June 1976 and possibly from 13 to 17 September 1976. Services would be provided in five languages with summary records. However, interpretation for the June meeting would not be available unless other meetings were rescheduled, irrespective of financial considerations. The total additional appropriation took into account the establishment of a working group of the Ad Hoc Committee which would meet on an average three times per week intersessionally from 4 March to 31 May and from 14 June to 10 September. The working group would not have summary records and would produce an estimated 200 pages of documentation spread more or less evenly over the periods involved.

7. Turning to the question raised by the representative of the Netherlands, he said that, if the Committee did not specify at the present time whether or not it required a fourth session, the financial implications would not change since the fourth session could be absorbed by existing appropriations. 'If it should transpire that further meetings or any other services were necessary, imposing additional financial requirements under the regular budget, the Secretary-General would seek the concurrence of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions to enter into the necessary commitments under the General Assembly resolution on unforeseen and extraordinary expenses during the biennium 1976-1977.

8. The CHAIRMAN said that, if he heard no objection, he would take it that the Committee was prepared to adopt subparagraph (1) with the last part of the first sentence amended to read "and that a decision on the convening of further sessions including a fourth session would be made at the second or third session of the Committee." The second sentence would remain the same.

9. Subparagraph (1), as amended, was adopted.

Subparagraph (2)

10. Mr. MANSFIELD (New Zealand) said that he felt it would be more appropriate to replace the word "decisions" in the third line with the word "recommendations".

11. The CHAIRMAN said that, if he heard no objection, he would take it that

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(The Chairman)

the Committee was prepared to adopt subparagraph (2) as amended by the representative of New Zealand.

12. Subparagraph (2), as amended, was adopted.

Subparagraph (3)

13. Subparagraph (3) was adopted.

Subparagraph (4)

14. Mr. TARZI (Afghanistan) suggested that the third line should be amended to read "participation in which would in any case be" rather than "should in any case be".

15. Mr. HACHANI (Tunisia) said that his delegation preferred the wording as it stood; as he understood it, the Committee had not yet taken a decision on the composition of the working group.

16. Mr. FASLA (Algeria) said that he would like confirmation of his understanding that there was a general consensus that the meetings of the working group should begin after the general debate at the second session of the Committee.

17. Mr. VERCELES (Philippines) suggested that the second sentence of subparagraph (4) should be amended to read "participation in the informal working group should in any case be open to all States and the size and composition of the working group would be decided through consultations ...". That was what had been agreed during the informal discussions.

18. Mr. WILDER (Canada) pointed out that the Committee had not yet taken a decision on the establishment of a working group. He therefore suggested that the wording of the second sentence, as amended by the representative of the Philippines, should be "would be decided following consultations" rather than "through consultations".

19. Mr. MWANGAGUHUNGA (Uganda) said that his delegation preferred the word "should" in the second sentence of the subparagraph and agreed with the representative of Algeria that it had been informally agreed that the working group was to begin its meetings after the second session. He therefore suggested that the words "after the second session" should be added to the end of the first sentence of the subparagraph.

20. The CHAIRMAN said that subparagraph (4) would therefore read "To

(The Chairman)

establish an informal working group, under the chairmanship of the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee, which would meet intersessionally after the second session. Participation should be open to all States but a decision on its size and composition would be taken following consultations between the Chairman of the Committee and the chairmen of the regional groups." If he heard no objection, he would take it that the Committee adopted that wording.

21. Subparagraph (4), as amended, was adopted.

Subparagraph (5)

22. The CHAIRMAN said that it was his understanding that the Secretariat, in preparing the bibliography, would make every effort, if a document covered other subjects, to refer specifically to the part of the document that was relevant to the work of the Committee.

23. Mr. MARSHALL (United Kingdom) asked for confirmation that the bibliography would include references to statements made by Ministers at the seventh special session and the thirtieth session of the General Assembly.

24. Mr. GONZALEZ DE COSSIO (Mexico) said that he found subparagraph (5) acceptable and it was his understanding that the bibliography would include the documentation referred to in General Assembly resolution 3362 (S-VII). However, since the representative of the United Kingdom had made a specific reference it might be better to use the wording of General Assembly resolution 3362 (S-VII) in subparagraph (5). The words "particularly the relevant proposals and documentation submitted in preparation for the seventh special session of the General Assembly pursuant to Assembly resolution 3343 (XXIX)" should be added to the end of the subparagraph.

25. The CHAIRMAN said that it was his understanding that the documentation referred to in General Assembly resolution 3362 (S-VII) was not the same as that referred to in subparagraph (5). The former were documents of which the General Assembly had instructed the Committee to take account. The documents referred to in subparagraph (5) were those on which the Committee felt it might need a bibliography for reference purposes only.

26. Mr. DIALLO (Upper Volta) thought that the existing text of subparagraph (5) reflected the Committee's requirements.

27. Mr. MWANGAGUHUNGA (Uganda) agreed with the representative of the Upper Volta that the text of subparagraph (5) as it stood was acceptable, with the explanation given by the Chairman.

28. Mr. TARZI (Afghanistan) expressed support for the observation made by the representative of the United Kingdom.

29. The CHAIRMAN said that it was his understanding that the Committee wished to leave the text of subparagraph (5) as it stood.

30. Subparagraph (5) was adopted.

Subparagraph (6)

31. Mr. GONZALEZ DE COSSIO (Mexico) pointed out that section VII of General Assembly resolution 3362 (S-VII) referred to the regional economic commissions. He therefore suggested that subparagraph (6) should be amended to read "... the participation in its work of all United Nations organs, programmes and specialized agencies including the regional economic commissions, and of the ...". He asked whether it was as the result of a consensus in the Committee that the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade had been included in subparagraph (6), since it was not referred to in General Assembly resolution 3362 (S-VII).

32. The CHAIRMAN said that the words "United Nations organs" covered the regional economic commissions; however, he would have no objection to using the words of the resolution of the seventh special session. The reference to GATT stemmed from a suggestion made by the representative of the Upper Volta to which no objection had been raised at the time.

33. Mr. OLIVERI-LOPEZ (Argentina) said that his delegation wished the Joint Inspection Unit to participate in the work of the Ad Hoc Committee. He would therefore like an assurance that the phrase "United Nations organs" covered that Unit.

34. The CHAIRMAN said that the point made by Argentina had been noted.

35. Mr. CHENG Yu-kuei (China) said that he wished to make clear that invitations to the specialized agencies to be represented on the Ad Hoc Committee should conform to the spirit of General Assembly resolution 2758 (XXVI).

36. The CHAIRMAN said that the point raised by the representative of China would be noted in the record.

37. Mr. AL-NAKKASH (Iraq) suggested that subparagraphs (a) and (b) of subparagraph (6) could be merged.

38. The CHAIRMAN said that the text of subparagraph (6) synthesized the views expressed by the representatives of Algeria, the Philippines and the Upper Volta. The amendment suggested by the representative of Iraq did not alter the substance of the subparagraph and he took it that he would not wish to press his amendment.

39. Subparagraph (6), as amended by the representative of Mexico, was adopted.

Paragraph 3

40. Paragraph 3 was adopted.

Paragraphs 4 and 5

41. The CHAIRMAN said that paragraphs 4 and 5 were factual and would be completed by the Chairman in consultation with the Secretariat.

Paragraph 6

42. The CHAIRMAN said that paragraph 6 could not be completed until after the suspension of the meeting for informal discussions on the election of officers. Paragraph 6 would therefore be left open.

Paragraphs 7 and 8

43. Paragraphs 7 and 8 were adopted.

Paragraph 9

44. The CHAIRMAN suggested that the Committee could adopt the report as a whole on the understanding that the parts missing from paragraphs 4, 5 and 6 would be added later.

45. Mr. PARSI (Iran) suggested that the statements made by the Secretary-General and the Chairman at the opening of the Committee's session should be annexed to the report.

46. The CHAIRMAN said that he assumed that a reference to the annexes was to be made in the report, and that, if he heard no objection, he would take it that the Committee agreed to the suggestion of the representative of Iran.

47. It was so decided.

48. The draft report (A/AC.179/L.2), as amended, was adopted.

49. The meeting was suspended at 5.05 p.m. and resumed at 6.40 p.m.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS (concluded)

50. The CHAIRMAN announced that, as a result of informal consultations, agreement had been reached on the election of two of the three Vice-Chairmen. He would take it, in view of the consensus which had just been reached, that the Committee wished the elections to be by acclamation.

51. Mr. Parsi (Iran) and Mr. Czarkowski (Poland) were elected Vice-Chairmen by acclamation.

52. The CHAIRMAN congratulated the two Vice-Chairmen and said he looked forward to collaborating with them in the future work of the Committee. He pointed out that further consultations would be needed regarding the election of the other officers of the Committee and he suggested that a decision on those elections should be postponed until the second session of the Committee.

53. It was so decided.

54. Mr. PARSI (Iran) thanked the Committee for having elected him to the post of Vice-Chairman and pledged his co-operation with the Chairman and all the members of the Committee in its future deliberations.

55. Mr. CZARKOWSKI (Poland) expressed his gratitude for having been selected to occupy the important post of Vice-Chairman and gave assurances of his full co-operation in the Committee's forthcoming sessions.

CLOSURE OF THE SESSION

56. The CHAIRMAN thanked the members of the Committee for their co-operation during the session. He hoped that the same spirit of accommodation and co-operation which had led to the adoption of the report and the election of the two Vice-Chairmen would again prevail when the Committee took up the question of the remaining elections at its second session, and in all its future work. He thanked the Secretary of the Committee and all the Secretariat personnel for their contributions and declared closed the first session of the Ad Hoc Committee.

The meeting rose at 6.45 p.m.

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SUMMARY RECORDS OF THE SECOND SESSION

(11 February to 4 March 1976)

7th MEETING

Wednesday, 11 February 1976, 10.30 a.m.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA (A/AC.179/2)

1. The agenda was adopted.

ORGANIZATION OF WORK

2. The CHAIRMAN reminded members of the Ad Hoc Committee that the General Assembly had, at its thirtieth session, adopted a number of decisions which were of concern to the Committee and which were contained in the annex to document A/AC.179/2. The Committee might wish at a later stage to decide on the manner in which it would deal with the questions which the General Assembly had requested it to consider.
3. The Committee had decided to hold a general debate at its second session. That debate was extremely important, since it would help to clarify the priorities which Governments attached to the various questions within the mandate of the Committee and would enable the heads of the secretariats of all the concerned organizations and organs of the United Nations system which were invited to participate in the Committee's debate to give their views on those questions.
4. There had been a consensus at the first session of the Committee that the Committee should, at the earliest possible date, identify priority areas for its work. An attempt should be made to do so before the end of the second session so that the informal working group would be able to meet intersessionally on the basis of an agreed framework. Since the Committee could conduct informal and formal consultations on that question, it did not seem necessary to adopt a detailed plan of work.
5. Mr. CORDOVEZ (Secretary of the Committee) introduced the bibliography of United Nations documentation having a bearing on the work of the Committee (A/AC.179/3 and Add.1). The bibliography was in three sections. Section I listed documents issued by the United Nations; section II listed documents which the secretariats of the specialized agencies had suggested should be brought to the attention of the Committee; and section III listed selected resolutions and

(Mr. Cordovez)

decisions of the United Nations which appeared to be particularly relevant to the work of the Committee. Given the scope of the mandate of the Committee, a very wide range of United Nations documents could be said to have a bearing on the work of the Committee. In view of the enormous volume of documents issued by the United Nations, a selection had had to be made, although it had been extremely difficult to determine what criteria to apply. Two categories of document had therefore been adopted: documents related directly to a particular agency, and substantive documents dealing with restructuring questions which might none the less also concern a particular agency. For instance, documents concerned with UNCTAD, UNIDO, UNEP and the Economic and Social Council belonged to the first category, while documents dealing with the structure of regional co-operation or with co-operation, planning, programming and budget questions belonged to the second. A further selection had had to be made among those documents and the bibliography mentioned only documents which were directly related to the problems to be dealt with by the Committee.

6. Regarding resolutions and decisions adopted by United Nations organs which might concern the Committee, and which were contained in addendum 1 to document A/AC.179/3, he drew the Committee's attention to the fact that an up-to-date list of those resolutions and decisions would be contained in document E/5453/Rev.1 to be issued shortly. Most of the references which would be needed for considering the questions which the Committee was to tackle in the near future were contained in that document, particularly those concerning the mandate of all the subsidiary bodies of the Economic and Social Council, legislative measures adopted by the General Assembly and certain legislative bodies connected with the terms of reference and the programmes of all organs dealing with economic and social questions. However, document A/AC.179/3/Add.1 contained only decisions and recommendations adopted as from 1970; major decisions taken before that date were contained in the documents listed in the bibliography. Because titles of resolutions were sometimes rather brief, it had been decided to follow them by a summary which gave a more precise idea of the content of the decisions.

7. The bibliography was not exhaustive and contained only indispensable basic documents. Additions could be made to it as the work of the Committee progressed, if the Committee so wished.

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(Mr. Cordovez)

8. Given the volume of documentation, only those of the documents listed which had been issued during the past two years would be available for general distribution. Members of the Committee wishing to consult other documents were requested to use the services of the Dag Hammarskjöld Library. Documents transmitted by the specialized agencies would be distributed to members of the Committee.

9. Regarding meeting records, he drew the attention of members of the Committee to General Assembly resolution 3415 (XXX) of 8 December 1975 by which the Assembly had adopted new criteria for the provision of meeting records for United Nations bodies. The bodies concerned were required to dispense with such records for organizational, procedural and valedictory discussions and for the adoption of their reports, and were urged to dispense with them for substantive discussions of lesser importance. Furthermore, summary records of subsidiary bodies of the General Assembly would be issued in initial general distribution, subject to the issuance of corrigenda to remove serious errors only. Given those criteria, the Ad Hoc Committee should restrict itself to requesting summary records solely for meetings dealing with item 4 of its agenda.

10. The CHAIRMAN requested members of the Committee to take note of the recommendations of the General Assembly and proposed that only item 4 of the agenda - Restructuring of the economic and social sectors of the United Nations system - should receive summary record coverage.

11. It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 11.50 a.m.

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8th MEETING

Wednesday, 11 February 1976, 3 p.m.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

1. Mr. Gonzalez Arias (Paraguay) and Mr. Sturkey (Australia) were elected Vice-Chairman and Rapporteur respectively by acclamation.

RESTRUCTURING OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL SECTORS OF THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM
(A/AC.179/3 and Add.1)

2. Mr. BLANCHARD (Director-General, International Labour Office) said he felt that the reform of the United Nations system was opportune, taking into account the very ambitious goals that had been set by the General Assembly in its resolution 3362 (S-VII), and the fact that, on the other hand, there was general disenchantment with the United Nations system. He recalled the Chairman's opening statement at the Committee's first session to the effect that there were no such things as ideal institutions and that institutions were not ends in themselves. Reforms were certainly necessary, but it should be borne in mind that reform did not necessarily entail upheaval. Moreover, in his opinion, the international community's present ills stemmed from a crisis of will rather than from the relative imperfection of existing institutions. From the very beginning the United Nations and its specialized agencies had constantly sought to increase the effectiveness of the machinery by adapting it to changing needs and, in so doing, had become increasingly imbued with a sense of common commitment. The proposed reforms should therefore aim mainly at strengthening the system from the standpoint of two fundamental functions, namely, the elaboration of global and sectoral policies and conceptualization and, secondly, negotiation.

3. With regard to the former, it was clear that the multidisciplinary framework must be strengthened with a view to developing global policies which could be implemented in a decentralized manner. The main problem, therefore, was the role and functioning of the Economic and Social Council. In that regard he suggested that, first, the calendar and programme of work of the Council should be overhauled so that its sessions would be shorter and each session could focus on one specific problem or group of problems. Second, the Council should make maximum use of the experience and capacity of the specialized agencies by making a practice of

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(Mr. Blanchard)

seeking their advice and entrusting to them the study of problems within their competence. So far the Council had not made use of the wealth of data available in the agencies. Third, the Council should make greater use of its authority to make recommendations or invite international organizations, and through them Member States, to orient their activities in a manner more in keeping with the over-all objectives of the system. Fourth, as the Group of Experts on the Structure of the United Nations System had suggested, means should be found of enabling the agencies to participate in the study of economic and social questions raised by the Council. Fifth, ACC could assist the Council more by presenting reports on important economic and social matters and making a more systematic effort to develop methods for implementing Council decisions in order to reduce the time lag between a decision and its implementation. Sixth, more strenuous efforts should be made to develop methods for real consultations on medium-term plans leading to joint planning in areas requiring a multidisciplinary approach.

4. With regard to the second main function, that of negotiation, the Council should seek ways of strengthening its negotiating capacity. At the seventh special session of the General Assembly, it had been demonstrated how much could be achieved when the political will was there. The Group of Experts had emphasized the need to strengthen negotiating practices. In his view, not enough use was made of the possibilities offered by the international organizations in the matter of negotiation. For instance, ILO had been involved, since its creation, in finding solutions to problems dividing management, labour and government. Negotiation, however, presupposed participation. Perhaps the time had come when, on both the national and the international levels, ways should be sought to enable more and more categories of the population, workers and employers particularly, but also members of co-operatives, peasant associations and so on, to make their voices heard so that decisions would better satisfy their aspirations.

5. Turning to another aspect of the problem, he said that, according to his personal experience, technical co-operation had been characterized by a desire for flexibility ensuring easy linkage between all parts of the United Nations system. That was the basic characteristic of the arrangements between UNDP and the executing agencies, which allowed the partners to express themselves and enabled the international agencies, in a decentralized system, to contribute the best of their

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(Mr. Blanchard)

experience to the joint enterprise. The only drawback was that that partnership was not always implemented with as much conviction as might be desirable. At all events, ILO was ready to seek ways of strengthening the commitment of agencies within the framework of the activities carried out by UNDP.

6. In the search for more effective methods regarding technical co-operation, Member States should seek to create, at the regional and national levels, centres of excellence in key areas of economic and social policy. Such centres should be designed, established and administered by nationals of the countries concerned and should be financed, at least in part, by the countries themselves. UNDP and the specialized agencies should merely give them additional assistance both in traditional forms - provision of experts, fellowships and equipment - and in any new form that nationals of the region might devise. Such centres already existed in Africa, Asia and Latin America, and ILO was participating in the activities of some of them. That would be a very dynamic and innovative form of technical co-operation and would enable countries to achieve their national targets, basing them on international decisions and commitments. They would also encourage Governments to co-ordinate their national policies with the United Nations system. Unless such co-ordination was achieved on the national level, any proposed reform on the international level would probably be doomed from the start.

7. Finally, Member States should pay more attention in future to the problem of staffing international organizations. That was an essential part of restructuring, for no progress could be achieved unless every effort was made to recruit personnel of the highest calibre in terms of intelligence, integrity and independence. In recent years, agencies had not paid as much attention to that matter as they might have; accordingly, specific methods and high criteria should be devised immediately.

8. Whatever the outcome of the discussion, he hoped that the reformed structures would remain sufficiently flexible; for it should be borne in mind that nothing would be more detrimental to the general interest than a system that was unduly centralized. In addition, the agencies should be allowed to continue their pragmatic approach to problems and should be able at all times to participate in the search for and formulation of the objectives of global and sectoral policies which the international community must continue to define.

9. It was decided that the delegation of the European Economic Community should be allowed to participate as an observer in the general debate.

The meeting rose at 4.10 p.m.

9th MEETING

Thursday, 12 February 1976, 10.30 a.m.

RESTRUCTURING OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL SECTORS OF THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM
(continued)

1. Mr. WILDER (Canada) said that at the seventh special session of the General Assembly, the international community gave its recognition to the need to make the United Nations system a more effective instrument of economic co-operation and development, responsive to the objectives of a new international economic order and in particular to the needs of the developing countries. In view of the difficulties which the system had encountered throughout the years, the time had come for a comprehensive examination of its institutional framework, an arduous task which had been entrusted to the Ad Hoc Committee.
2. Structural reform should not be a surrogate for, but rather should derive from, progress on substantive issues. Accordingly, the Conference on International Economic Co-operation and UNCTAD at its fourth session would continue to work towards the establishment of a new international economic order; in parallel the Ad Hoc Committee should begin the study of the restructuring of the United Nations system.
3. In undertaking its task, it was essential that the Committee take into account the consideration being given to institutional arrangements by other bodies such as the Committee on Science and Technology for Development and UNCTAD. Furthermore, he wished to emphasize the importance for the work of the Committee of the report of the Group of Experts on A New United Nations Structure for Global Economic Co-operation (E/AC.62/9). While the recommendations made in the report should not be viewed as a "package", they had the advantage of reflecting a comprehensive perspective and the Group of Experts had identified the main weaknesses of the United Nations system. The Canadian Government agreed in principle with the objectives set and the directions taken by the Group of Experts. Member States and the United Nations bodies concerned should now carefully and exhaustively examine the report.
4. The Committee's objective was to arrive at balanced and phased solutions acceptable to both Member States and the different bodies constituting the system.

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(Mr. Wilder, Canada)

The restructuring exercise should enable Member States better to direct and control the over-all operations of the system and its various bodies.

5. His delegation considered that the problems that could be solved through restructuring of the economic and social sectors and the benefits to be derived from it should be clearly identified and that the benefits of any changes recommended be acknowledged. It was for that reason that it supported the Chairman's suggestion to identify priority areas for consideration by the Committee as a whole and by its Working Group. Finally, he wished to emphasize the importance which the Government of Canada attached to the Committee's task, an exercise in which his delegation would participate actively and constructively.

6. Mr. LONG (Director-General, General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT)) said that he intended to identify the essential characteristics and functions of GATT and then to describe its present relationship with the United Nations system. He pointed out first of all that the nature and functioning of GATT were determined by the fact that the General Agreement was, above all, a contract in which all Contracting Parties had voluntarily undertaken mutual obligations and enjoyed mutual rights. Since it was an agreement applicable to 105 countries which were collectively responsible for about 85 per cent of world trade, it was time to say that the overwhelming share of international trade was now carried on within the framework of agreed rules and obligations provided by GATT. In that connexion, he pointed out that GATT had provided the rule of law that was lacking during the years of the Great Depression.

7. The General Agreement was an evolving instrument and while many of its basic principles remained unchanged, there was hardly one of its operative articles that had not been amended, added to, reinterpreted or waived when circumstances justified such action. In that connexion, he recalled the addition in 1965 of three entirely new articles designed to make the application of GATT rules more responsive to the needs of developing countries. Similarly, it had been a GATT waiver, agreed on in November 1971, that had paved the way for putting into effect trade preferences among developing countries.

8. The General Agreement was an essentially practical instrument, the purpose of which was to evolve new formulae that would meet changing circumstances while preserving a framework of law for international trade. It would continue to

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(Mr. Long, GATT)

volve and the multilateral trade negotiations currently in progress based on the Tokyo Declaration provided an opportunity for a general review of the present GATT rules.

Based on the General Agreement's primary role as a code for international trade was its second role as a forum for continuous consultations and negotiations on trade policy questions, in which - and that was its distinguishing characteristic - countries participated on the basis of specific rights and duties. GATT was called on to settle a large number of specific trade policy problems arising between countries and, to that end, it had established in many cases panels of conciliation or working groups. Certain bilateral trade questions were settled without reference to other Contracting Parties thanks to the mechanisms of consultation and negotiation established under the Agreement. GATT was also an instrument for encouraging Governments to negotiate multilateral codes of conduct, such as the agreement on the application of anti-dumping duties, and work was currently in progress on a number of such codes, some of which could be of major interest to developing countries.

10. What distinguished GATT as a forum was that negotiations there were essentially practical and down-to-earth, particularly because the participants in those negotiations knew that they could call for support on their rights as signatories to a binding agreement. It was thus the existence of the General Agreement itself which guaranteed the effectiveness of GATT as a forum for conciliation and negotiation.

11. Virtually all questions of importance in GATT were settled by consensus, resulting in some cases from much patient consultation and negotiation. The 26 years of GATT's operation proved that such consensus decisions, being generally supported, had the best chance of being effectively applied.

12. The General Agreement remained the cornerstone of the functional machinery of GATT. The organs established by the Contracting Parties existed solely to serve the purposes of applying international trade rules, interpreting them and modifying them as might be desirable, and making GATT an effective forum for consultation, conciliation and negotiation on trade policy questions.

13. The functions of the organs of GATT had been steadily adopted over the years. For example, the Council of Representatives, established in 1960 to act

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(Mr. Long, GATT)

on both routine and urgent matters, had been given broader powers in 1968 making it an effective body capable of investigating and reaching conclusions on trade problems as they arose between member countries. The Committee on Trade and Development had the task of overseeing the application of the three articles on economic development which had been added to the General Agreement in 1965. The Consultative Group of 18, established in 1975, provided an opportunity for high-level discussions on current issues of trade policy.

14. In their relations within GATT, the Contracting Parties always kept their attention directed firmly and exclusively on trade policy and it was that concentration of effort in GATT that had largely contributed to its effectiveness and had enabled it to maintain a compact and operational secretariat.

15. Membership in GATT was open to any country, and the present membership was representative of all parts of the world and all types of economy. Altogether, 105 countries were now within the GATT framework, of which 83 had acceded to the General Agreement, three had acceded provisionally and 19 were applying the Agreement on a de facto basis. Furthermore, in the present multilateral trade negotiations the 90 participating countries included about 20 developing countries which were not GATT members.

16. In its relationship to the United Nations system, as in GATT's actual operations, the determining factor was the contractual nature of the General Agreement, a network of specific legal rights and mutual obligations. GATT had a long-standing de facto relationship with the United Nations system arising from the decision taken at Havana in 1948 by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Employment to establish the Interim Commission for the International Trade Organization, from which the institutional structure of GATT had evolved. That relationship had been confirmed in August 1952 by an exchange of letters between the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the Executive Secretary of GATT. GATT highly valued its relationship with the United Nations and regarded the present de facto arrangement as a sensible and practical solution.

17. At the administrative level, that arrangement enabled GATT to participate in the work of the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination and in other inter-Secretariat bodies. The members of the GATT secretariat participated in the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund and in the common system of salaries and allowances.

(Mr. Long, GATT)

18. GATT was represented at the meetings of many agencies in the United Nations family when matters of common concern were discussed and representatives of those agencies in turn attended GATT meetings of interest to them. With respect to the regular training courses in commercial policy provided by GATT for officials from developing countries, GATT was indebted to UNDP for liaison arrangements in the trainees' home countries and for fellowships granted to them. Finally, mention should be made of the International Trade Centre which, founded by GATT in 1964, had, since 1968, been jointly operated by GATT and UNCTAD.

19. Those examples showed that the de facto arrangement had favoured the development of relations between GATT and the United Nations. For its part, GATT found those relations practical and useful; it appreciated the friendly co-operation that existed between GATT and the United Nations family and saw no reason to disturb the existing arrangements, which appeared well suited to the somewhat exceptional and contractual nature of the General Agreement. He also pointed out that GATT had a clearly defined and legally binding relationship with the International Monetary Fund, under article XV of the General Agreement, for the examination of trade measures adopted by member countries for balance-of-payments purposes.

20. The multilateral trade negotiations which were currently taking place within the framework of GATT - the Tokyo round - should be concluded in 1977 and would require unremitting work; he was therefore gratified that in paragraph 180 of its report the Group of Experts had recognized that any structural changes in the field of trade should not be allowed to interfere with the multilateral trade negotiations currently being carried out under the auspices of GATT.

21. While there was no doubt plenty of scope for improving the world's arrangements for defining trade policies, applying them and reconciling them with each other, he thought it unlikely that the member Governments of GATT would be prepared to give up the advantages which they saw in the contractual relationship inherent in GATT unless they could be persuaded that alternative arrangements would serve their fundamental objectives more effectively.

22. The unique contribution of GATT to international economic relations was that it provided world trade with an established framework of agreed rules and obligations, and was an effective, practical and continuously evolving forum in

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(Mr. Long, GATT)

which Governments could settle their trade differences and ensure that the implementation of their trade policies was kept in line with the needs of all the members of GATT. He hoped that the Ad Hoc Committee would bear in mind that those two functions were essential to a satisfactory system of world economic relations and that they must therefore, in one way or another, continue to be served.

23. Mr. GONZALES DE COSSIO (Mexico) said that for the purposes of the restructuring of the economic and social sectors of the United Nations system the Ad Hoc Committee should have before it more detailed information on the state of the current relations between GATT and all United Nations bodies, so that it could determine whether or not there were grounds for amending the provisions of the General Agreement.

24. Mr. OLIVERI LOPEZ (Argentina) asked the Director-General of GATT whether, at the end of the current multilateral negotiations, it would be possible to contemplate amending the articles of the General Agreement with a view to increasing its effectiveness, particularly with respect to the expansion of the trade of developing countries. He recalled that at its seventh special session the General Assembly had dealt with the question of the institutionalization of the Generalized System of Preferences. In that connexion, his delegation believed that that institutionalization should simply stem from the application of the General Agreement.

25. Referring to the report of the Group of Experts on A New United Nations Structure for Global Economic Co-operation (E/AC.62/9), he asked the Director-General what he thought of the proposal to integrate into the United Nations system contractual bodies such as GATT, the World Bank and IMF, and the proposal to establish an Advisory Committee on Economic Co-operation and Development, an interagency mechanism that would be under the chairmanship of the new Director-General for Development and International Economic Co-operation. He believed that those were two very important proposals on which the Ad Hoc Committee would have to take a decision.

26. Furthermore, it would be desirable to know the opinion of the Director-General of GATT on the proposal of the Group of Experts to establish an

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(Mr. Oliveri Lopez, Argentina)

international trade organization which, in effect, would incorporate UNCTAD and GATT into a single organization and which, if established, could deal not only with international trade issues but also with other issues, such as the transfer of technology and private investment.

27. Mr. LONG (Director-General, General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT)), replying to the point raised by the representative of Mexico, said that the GATT secretariat would do its utmost to provide the Ad Hoc Committee with the information that it might need with respect to relations between GATT and United Nations bodies.

28. Replying to the questions asked by the representative of Argentina, he said first that the GATT multilateral negotiations, which provided an opportunity for an over-all review of the rules governing the operation of the General Agreement, were based on the Tokyo Declaration, and more particularly on two paragraphs of that Declaration which dealt with improving the framework for conducting international trade and the commitments undertaken by more than 100 Governments to work, during those negotiations, for expansion of the trade of developing countries. Furthermore, the Committee on Trade Negotiations had considered a proposal to establish a group entrusted with improving the conditions in which trade between developing and industrialized countries was carried on.

29. With respect to the institutionalization of GATT, he repeated that the Tokyo round would deal not only with the granting of concessions aimed at facilitating access to markets, but also with the adaptation of provisions and procedures of the General Agreement to current and future trade requirements.

30. The proposals made in the report of the Group of Experts were not immediately applicable. For the time being, GATT was striving to achieve the objectives which it had set itself for 1977. Similarly, it would be in the course of the multilateral trade negotiations that further evolution would take place. The process of transformation had merely begun; results would have to be awaited.

ORGANIZATION OF WORK

31. On the proposal of the Rapporteur, it was decided that the summary records of the Committee should constitute an integral part of its report, in the form of an annex.

10th MEETING

Thursday, 12 February 1976, 3 p.m.

RESTRUCTURING OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL SECTORS OF THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM
(A/AC.179/3 and Add.1) (continued)

1. Mr. BREITENSTEIN (Finland) said that the Committee's ultimate objective must be to maintain and strengthen the role of the United Nations as an instrument for promoting economic and social development on a global scale. Restructuring must not be for its own sake but rather in order to adapt the institutional framework of the United Nations so as to enable it efficiently to play its part in realizing the aim of the establishment of a new international economic order. That could be accomplished without changing the United Nations Charter. Consultations and negotiations on a regional basis or between countries or groups of countries with specific responsibilities or interests in various sectors of world trade or economic or social co-operation should continue and be encouraged, but in order to avoid fragmentation of effort and to ensure that the interests of all the members of the international community were taken into account the United Nations itself must be vested with the responsibility and the power to co-ordinate and guide the global efforts towards the establishment of the new international economic order. His delegation preferred a gradual, balanced approach to restructuring rather than ready-made, over-all solutions, but felt that a full and open discussion of the problem was essential. It attached great importance to the report of the Group of Experts on a new United Nations structure for global economic co-operation, especially since it had been adopted unanimously, and felt that it provided a good starting-point. However, its almost total lack of concern for the restructuring of the United Nations system in the social sector was a serious omission which should not mislead the Committee into failing to consider both the economic and the social aspects of the work of the United Nations system.

2. One of the main reasons for the present unsatisfactory situation with regard to the decision-making organs was the lack of coherence and synchronization of the work at different levels of the organs dealing with economic and social problems. His delegation was not convinced of the wisdom of abolishing practically all

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(Mr. Breitenstein, Finland)

the subsidiary organs of the Economic and Social Council, as the Group of Experts had suggested. There were altogether some 160 organs subordinated to the Council. What would happen to all those which the experts had not listed? There was, of course, both need and room for streamlining the network of subsidiary bodies, but their complete elimination at one stroke would be unwise. They had over the years proved their value as initiators of new concepts and ideas which had later matured into important new ventures. The system could, however, be streamlined by eliminating superfluous bodies and merging some of them into fewer bodies and by radically reducing the frequency of their meetings. Such a reduction would probably lead to more penetrating work being done not only by those bodies themselves and their parent bodies but also by the secretariats and by the national administrations of Member States.

3. His delegation firmly supported the proposal of the Group of Experts for transforming the Economic and Social Council into an organ permanently in session, organizing its work as the Group had proposed in its report. It did, however, have some doubts about the need for formalizing a system of consultative procedures. It advocated implementation at an early stage of the Group's suggestion that the role of the Economic and Social Council in elaborating the agenda of the General Assembly concerning the economic and social sector and in preparing for the Assembly's discussion and recommendations in that field should be strengthened and that the Council's decision-making power should be increased. His delegation agreed by and large with the recommendations of the Group of Experts concerning the General Assembly itself. However, the proposal to establish a development committee of the Assembly must be looked into very carefully so that all the implications might be known before a decision was taken. His delegation failed to understand how such a development committee, as a committee of the Assembly, could be convened in special session without the Assembly itself being called to a special session.

4. With respect to operational activities, his delegation had consistently advised against the creation of new funds and programmes. It therefore agreed with the proposal of the Group of Experts that the United Nations funds and programmes for technical assistance and pre-investment should be consolidated into one single

(Mr. Breitenstein, Finland)

development authority. Obviously, however, careful study should be given to the practical implications of such a move. One such implication was the pressure which Member States would feel they were under to serve on the governing board; the best solution would be to make the board completely open-ended. In general, the concept of open-ended membership was a healthy one and consensus was the best way to safeguard the interests of Governments.

5. Where Secretariat support facilities were concerned, his delegation felt that the suggestions of the Group of Experts regarding personnel practices and policies would have far greater implications for the personnel policies of the United Nations as a whole and would perhaps not fall strictly within the scope of the work of the Ad Hoc Committee.

6. As to the proposals directly relevant to the Committee's work many of them were acceptable, especially the proposal to create within the Secretariat a new post of Director-General for Development and International Economic Co-operation. But it was especially important that the appointment of the Director-General should not be tied to any given regional or other group.

7. The proposal to establish a new interagency mechanism to be known as the Advisory Committee on Economic Co-operation and Development was interesting, but again the social aspects must be included. It should be an advisory body aimed at taking an integrated approach to development. He also pointed to the need for sufficient Secretariat support services for that new body.

8. Finally, he wished to emphasize that restructuring was important not only at the intergovernmental level but also at the level of each national administration.

9. Mr. McNAMARA (President, World Bank) said that he appreciated the invitation extended to him, as President of the World Bank, to take part in the deliberations of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Restructuring of the Economic and Social Sectors of the United Nations System, and hoped that there might be elements of the Bank's own experience, practice or policies which, if only by way of illustration or by analogy, might be helpful to the Committee.

10. He would begin with comments on two of the major recommendations of the Group of Experts on the Structure of the United Nations System, whose report was before the Committee. That report had placed emphasis on the importance of strong

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(Mr. McNamara)

leadership, and he fully concurred. If the 20 or more separate agencies and programmes comprising the economic system of the United Nations were to work together effectively to contribute to the solution of the international social and economic problems which preoccupied so much of the world today, it was essential that there should be within the system an entity or organ charged with, and capable of, providing a sense of direction to the group as a whole. That "focal point" should report objectively on what needed to be done, and in what order or priority, and, after the fact, it should report on what had been accomplished. Such a "focal point" did not exist today.

11. The report also stressed the need for a new negotiating process to facilitate agreement on solutions to specific and significant - although often controversial - development questions. It recommended the establishment of open-ended negotiating groups on particular issues. The World Bank had found that such an ad hoc technique could be a highly effective device for co-ordinating efforts and mobilizing funds, both within the United Nations system and outside it. He wished to cite three examples of such ad hoc techniques.

12. The first was the 20-year programme for the control of river blindness in seven countries in western Africa, jointly sponsored by the Bank, FAO and WHO. That programme had drawn in nine Governments, and the African Development Bank, as financial contributors.

13. A second and highly successful ad hoc undertaking was the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research. It had been established five years previously under the co-sponsorship of the Bank, FAO and UNDP to consider and help to meet the financial and technical requirements for an international agricultural research system and to organize the necessary financial support for that system. Its membership now included 33 Governments, international organizations, and even private foundations. The funds made available by donors had increased sevenfold, reaching \$49 million in 1975, and the number of research programmes supported by participants in the Group had grown from the original four to 12. The system now extended to all the major food crops and livestock, and to all the ecological zones of the developing world.

14. The third successful example of the ad hoc approach was the open-ended

(Mr. McNamara)

consultative groups which the Bank had organized, and for which it served as Chairman. Those groups brought together multilateral and bilateral sources of assistance for individual developing countries.

15. The first characteristic of the Bank itself to which he wished to call attention - and which he believed to be one of its principal strengths - was the quality of its staff. Bank staff were recruited and promoted solely on the basis of professional competence. The Bank did not have, and never had had, national quotas. As an international institution, it aimed for broad geographic representation, the broadest possible consistent with its high standards and the limited availability in many nations of the kinds of expertise it required. There had, nevertheless, been a 50 per cent increase in the number of staff members from developing countries. Recruitment and promotion of staff was entirely a management responsibility; the Board of Directors had not wished to be put in a position of approving staff appointments. Once employed by the Bank, staff members regarded themselves as international civil servants; their loyalty was owed to and was paid to the institution itself, not to the Government of which they were nationals.

16. A second source of the Bank's strength was its non-political character; programme direction and investment decisions were founded upon economic rather than political considerations. The Bank's objective, as defined by its charter, was to help to raise the standard of living and the productivity of the people of all the developing countries among its membership. To achieve that objective, it sought to finance projects which were of high developmental priority and which would, at the same time, produce a high rate of economic return. To determine which projects to finance and how much assistance to extend to individual countries, the Bank had had to adopt criteria which first the country and then the specific project must meet. The criteria adopted were economic, not political. The Bank's charter provided that only economic considerations were relevant to its decisions and that they might not be influenced by political considerations. That was a wise provision, but it was not an easy constraint to live with, particularly since a political situation and the political character of a country might have economic consequences and repercussions. In some cases the economic considerations which had led to a particular decision to lend, or not to lend, had been extremely

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(Mr. McNamara)

complex and controversial. The Bank had been criticized when it had lent to some countries and when it had failed to lend to others, but it had scrupulously complied with and steadfastly adhered to the charter requirement.

17. Another aspect of the Bank's non-political character was its decision-making process. It had, of course, a system of voting. A given number of votes came with membership itself; the additional votes of each member were based on the member's contribution to the Bank's capital. Of the Bank's 20 Executive Directors and 20 alternates, to whom all proposed loans were submitted for approval, five were appointed by the five largest shareholders; 15 were elected by the other members of the Bank. When an issue was put to the vote in the Board, each elected Director cast all the votes of all the countries he represented, for or against, or he abstained. He could not split his vote by country. Some of the elected Directors represented large geographic groupings; in other cases the composition of a group of countries electing a Director had been determined by the arithmetic of their voting power. In neither situation was there necessarily an identical viewpoint on a particular issue. Although each of a Director's constituents provided him with the instructions, he had to decide for himself what position to take on a particular issue. The most important point to make about the voting system, however, was that it was rarely used. Matters were seldom decided by formal vote. Though any Director had the right to request such a vote, the practice was to try to continue discussion until a consensus developed. Although the membership included industrialized countries and developing countries, and both capital importers and capital surplus countries, and despite wide variants in the political philosophies and economic systems of the members, generally the Bank succeeded in reaching consensus without a vote.

18. The Bank's management was fully responsible for the direction of its operations; policies were determined by the Executive Directors. Both the Bank's Directors and its management felt a sense of obligation and commitment to the full spectrum of the Bank's developing country membership; political ideologies had no place in such a process. The Directors arrived at their decisions after full and free debate, generally on the basis of papers presented to the Board by the management. Many of the discussions within the Board had not raised particularly

(Mr. McNamara)

horny or delicate issues. Others, such as the discussion of the Bank's role in population planning, had been potentially much more controversial. But whatever the instance, it had been the objective of both the management and the Executive Directors to find a common ground for divergent interests. It was because they faced issues squarely and talked them out in private, rather than talking around them or pretending they did not exist, that they found it rarely necessary to make a formal vote in the Board. That atmosphere of consensus had contributed significantly to the effectiveness of the Bank both in mobilizing resources for transfer to the developing countries and in providing advice and technical assistance to ensure that those and other resources were used with maximum efficiency for all the peoples of the developing countries.

9. The scope and direction of the Bank's activities were based on a detailed assessment of development priorities, first for individual countries and then for the developing world as a whole. The projects which the Bank financed had been fitted into the framework of a comprehensive strategy for each country. The total of the proposed country investment was incorporated in a five-year financial and operating programme for the Bank, which was revised annually. That approach was developed on the basis of an extensive country economic reporting system, which provided data on the current development situation, called attention to problems and suggested solutions.

10. In the Bank's early days, the indicated needs had been for the financing of infrastructure - large investments in transport, power, telecommunications - which provided the necessary underpinnings of economic growth. More recently, the predominant place of infrastructure lending had made way for increasing emphasis on agriculture and the needs of the small farmer; education, beginning with technical education, vocational and teacher training, which could most immediately and directly contribute to development; and the social aspects of economic growth: population planning, environment, health and nutrition.

11. The day-to-day existence of some 40 per cent of the peoples in the developing world was marginal at best. They lived under conditions so degrading as to constitute an insult to human dignity and were trapped in what he had termed absolute poverty. They were caught in a malaise of malnutrition, illiteracy,

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(Mr. McNamara)

disease, underemployment, high infant mortality and low life expectancy that condemned them to an existence beneath any acceptable definition of decency. They neither contributed significantly to their country's economic progress nor shared equitably in its economic advances. Unless some specific efforts were made to help those 800 or 900 million individuals to realize their own productive potential, no feasible system of welfare, or simple redistribution of wealth, could fundamentally alter the circumstances that impoverished them. The Bank, therefore, was today placing much greater emphasis on policies and projects designed explicitly not only to encourage economic growth, but to increase directly the productivity of the "absolute poor". It had begun that new approach with an attack on poverty in the rural areas, primarily through "new-style" rural development projects which cut across sector lines, and which provided a more comprehensive approach to increasing the productivity of small-scale subsistence farmers. Those projects might include components which indirectly, as well as directly, were designed to contribute to productivity - basic education and training; credit, marketing and extension services in agriculture, better sanitation and hygiene; and population planning. Having initiated the attack on the poverty of subsistence farmers in the rural areas, because it was there that the overwhelming majority of the poor lived, the Bank was now strengthening its capacity to help Governments to reduce poverty in the cities.

22. There were some who felt that the Bank tried to do too much, that its financing might be spread over too broad a spectrum, or that it sometimes seemed to ride now one hobby-horse, now another. But a closer analysis would reveal that its policies and the emphasis of its work at any one time represented not so much a reversal as an evolution of earlier strategies. It had built on - not discarded - what had gone before. Balanced and effective development was its objective, and its emphasis necessarily varied as the requirements of its member countries themselves evolved.

23. The Bank was very much aware that it was the custodian of scarce resources, whatever their source or the terms on which they were provided. Those resources must be professionally managed and invested in the best interests of the developing world. Moreover, if the Bank was to continue to serve as a channel for the

(Mr. McNamara)

flow of development finance to developing countries, it must continue to command confidence in the prudence of its financial management. Its lending therefore involved careful consideration of the developmental value and appropriate design of the projects it financed, and tight control of the choice and implementation of the project so as to assure achievement of project objectives. Accordingly, the framing of each country lending programme was preceded by an economic analysis; the preparation of individual projects followed after extensive pre-investment studies; international competitive bidding procedures helped to ensure that the goods and services financed would be purchased at the lowest possible cost to the borrower; in many loans, institution-building was a principal objective or a by-product; and, as its articles required, the Bank followed procedures to ensure that funds were disbursed only for expenditures actually incurred, and for purposes which had been agreed upon.

24. The Bank had always monitored the progress of projects as they were being carried out. Five years previously, it had started to evaluate the economic benefits and developmental consequences of projects once they were completed. To ensure a systematic and objective evaluation, the Bank had set up an independent Operations Evaluation Department under a Director-General. The Department prepared a "Project Performance Audit Report" for every project financed by the Bank about a year after the loan was fully disbursed. That report assessed what had actually been accomplished compared with what had been planned, and evaluated the usefulness and efficiency of the Bank's involvement. The reports went from the Director-General directly to the President and the Executive Directors; the Bank's management did not review them first. Periodically, groups of audit reports were reviewed, and subjects were selected for more intensive investigation. Those more elaborate studies gave rise to specific recommendations for improvement of Bank policies or practices, which were then taken up with operating staff. Ultimately, the Director-General reported on the action taken to give effect to the recommendations of the studies. Member countries were invited to comment on the audit reports at the draft stage, and were urged to contribute to the evolution and development of the evaluation system by providing assistance for individual studies, as well as advice based on their own experience. The Bank hoped that

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(Mr. McNamara)

individual member countries themselves would also establish units to evaluate the effectiveness of their own development programmes. That evaluation system was relatively new and was still evolving, and it was sure to provide a solid basis for further improvement and streamlining of the Bank's organization and procedures.

25. Institutions were not, of course, ends in themselves, but the means for improvement of the quality of human life. The diverse institutions and programmes that made up the United Nations system could only support - they could not replace - the efforts of the peoples of the developing nations themselves to improve the quality of their own lives. External financial assistance, for example - from all sources, multilateral and bilateral - while critically important for a vast number of developing countries, represented only between 5 and 15 per cent of total development expenditure.

26. Whatever the outcome of the restructuring process, progress towards the eradication of poverty and the raising of the quality of life would still depend primarily on the degree of national commitment of the developing countries themselves to policies that would achieve those goals. Each country must search out for itself the root causes of poverty and gross inequality within its own society, and formulate those policies and develop those institutions that would attack those fundamental problems effectively. Outside agencies could assist in that effort; they could never be a substitute for it.

27. The United Nations system had at its disposal a remarkable array of expertise in the field of economic and social development. The institutions and programmes that were putting that expertise to work were diverse in function and varying in structure, each institution having its own characteristics and reflecting its special functions within the system as a whole. Uniformity was not necessary for effective collaboration, but efforts did have to be directed towards a broadly accepted set of objectives.

28. He thanked the Committee for its interest in the experience of the World Bank, and pledged its full co-operation.

29. Mr. FASLA (Algeria) asked whether, at a time when the international community was tending towards universality, the World Bank had given any thought to

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(Mr. Fasla, Algeria)

how to tear down the obstacles constituted by political realities which prevented certain countries from becoming members.

30. Mr. McNAMARA (President, World Bank) said that he interpreted the question to mean whether the Bank welcomed interest on the part of non-members in becoming members. The answer to that was yes.

31. Mr. ROBINSON (Deputy Executive Director, World Food Programme) said that the World Food Programme (WFP) recognized the need for initiating a restructuring of the United Nations system in order to make it more responsive to the requirements of the new international economic order and the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States. It pledged full co-operation with the Ad Hoc Committee.

32. WFP was a joint United Nations/FAO programme established by concurrent resolutions of the General Assembly and the Council of FAO, receiving voluntary pledges in the form of food, services and cash from States members of the two organizations and grains and cash from signatories of the Food Aid Convention. The food was used, on the one hand, to support economic and social development projects in developing countries, and, on the other, for emergency feeding operations. Projects assisted with WFP food were proposed by recipient Governments and executed by Governments. The Programme received policy direction from an Intergovernmental Committee half of whose members were elected by the Economic and Social Council and half by the FAO Council. Its Executive Director was appointed by the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the Director-General of FAO after consultation with the Intergovernmental Committee. WFP was represented in each country by the UNDP resident, the staff of which comprised at least one WFP officer. The Programme claimed no representative technical competence except in logistics and administration but relied on the United Nations and its specialized agencies in appraising the technical viability of projects proposed to it. Highest priority was given to projects in the least developed and the most seriously affected countries and, among projects, to those for the feeding of vulnerable groups including pregnant women, nursing mothers, infants and young children, and to those contributing to increased agricultural production. The volume of the Programme had risen from \$90 million in the first three years to over \$600 million in the biennium 1975-1976.

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(Mr. Robinson)

33. As recommended by the World Food Conference, the General Assembly and the FAO Conference had recently reconstituted the Intergovernmental Committee of the World Food Programme as the Committee on Food Aid Policies and Programmes and given it, in addition to responsibility for intergovernmental supervision of the Programme, important new tasks, namely, to provide a forum for intergovernmental consultations on food aid programmes and policies; to review general trends in food aid requirements and availabilities; to recommend to Governments, through the World Food Council, improvements in food aid policies and programmes on such matters as programme priorities and commodity composition of food aid; to formulate proposals for more effective co-ordination of multilateral, bilateral and non-governmental food aid programmes; and to review the implementation of the recommendations made by the World Food Conference on food aid policies.

34. The basic texts of the World Food Programme and its terms of reference could be amended only by the General Assembly and the Conference of FAO while the regulations governing its operations were subject to change by the Economic and Social Council and the FAO Council. These regulations were currently being reviewed in the light of the enlarged functions of the reconstituted governing body, for consideration by the United Nations and FAO.

35. Turning to the role and operation of the United Nations system, he said that one of the system's main aims was to improve the standard of living of the world's poor. Although it had contributed to the material welfare of developing countries, it had often been slow in adjusting to changing world situations, owing partly to the nature of its constituent organizations, but also to the absence of clear policy directives and political will on the part of Member States. Food aid had made a reasonable impact on social progress but it had suffered from inadequate co-ordination with other forms of development input at the national level. With the advent of country programming, increased technical support and material resource inputs from other bodies would enhance the effectiveness of food aid as a development resource. Co-ordination, perhaps through a central machinery at the national level, was essential for effective utilization of all forms of assistance, and the United Nations bodies should assist Governments in setting up such systems. The office of the resident representative would seem the most logical centre from which to help Governments to co-ordinate all United Nations development inputs,

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(Mr. Robinson)

including food aid, and, through expanded country programming machinery, to co-ordinate assistance from bilateral and non-governmental sources as well. In addition, such national machinery might deal with policy-making and analysis of new development aid issues and the preparation of a co-ordinated national view on development assistance to enable different members of the Government to speak with one voice. Strengthening of national co-ordination would enhance co-ordination at the international level, as indicated in paragraph 160 of the Report of the Group of Experts on the Structure of the United Nations System (E/AC.62/9).

36. With reference to that report, and specifically to the recommendations in paragraphs 141 and 144 concerning the consolidation of United Nations funds for technical assistance and pre-investment activities into a new United Nations Development Authority and the consolidation of intergovernmental structures such as the UNDP and UNEP Governing Councils and the Intergovernmental Committee of WFP into a single Operations Board which would exercise all the powers delegated to it by the Economic and Social Council, said that, as had been pointed out at the Joint Meeting of the Policy and Programmes Co-ordination Committee and the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination, the case for consolidating WFP into UNDA might require special consideration. The Programme was neither a technical assistance fund nor a pre-investment agency, but an investment programme using food aid as an investment tool to stimulate economic and social development. However, with disbursements already at an annual rate of \$275 million in 1975 and on an upward trend, the Programme could not be qualified either as one of the "small funds for capital investment". Moreover, the bulk of its resources was in food-stuffs, the handling of which required special skills which the Programme had built up over the last 13 years. While UNDA could retain or develop such skills, in the process there might be loss of momentum in food aid projects. Paragraph 142 of the report referred to maintaining separate identity of the funds in order to enable donors to continue earmarking contributions for particular purposes. That was particularly important in the case of WFP because of the special character of its resources, use of which particularly stimulated rural development and enhanced social welfare. Paragraph 146 noted that the separate identities of certain administrative units should be maintained where that would facilitate fund-raising operations. WFP would be one such administrative unit.

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(Mr. Robinson)

The integration of intergovernmental policy-making organs into a single Operations Board would tend to make it difficult for members to acquire intimate knowledge of the policies, management and operations of each of the consolidated programmes. It might also erode confidence between Governments and the secretariats of the various programmes. In WFP, a practice had grown up by which Governments had available at all times means of examining what use the Programme made of resources pledged or contributed to it. Any reorganization would have to ensure that such a special relationship was maintained.

37. The Group of Experts, owing, inter alia, to the early stage of implementation of the World Food Conference's initiatives, had not been able to make recommendations for food and agriculture. One institutional arrangement arising from the Conference had been the reconstitution of the Programme's governing body into the Committee on Food Aid Policies and Programmes which, in addition to managing an operational fund would serve as a forum for consultations on national food policies, to review food aid availabilities and requirements, and the co-ordination of multilateral, bilateral and non-governmental food aid programmes. It should be considered whether those additional non-operational consultative functions could be entrusted to the proposed Operations Board. Lastly, since WFP had been created jointly by the United Nations and FAO, its consolidation into UNDA would require consultations and agreement between the two organizations.

38. While recognizing the need for harmonizing interrelated operational activities and strengthening the economic sector of the United Nations system, he urged that, in instituting the fundamental structural changes which had been suggested by the Group of Experts, every effort should be made to ensure that the basic foundations already laid were effectively utilized to support the new institutional framework.

The meeting rose at 4.45 p.m.

11th MEETING

Friday, 13 February 1976, 10.30 a.m.

RESTRUCTURING OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL SECTORS OF THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM
(continued)

1. Dr. MAHLER (Director-General, World Health Organization) recalled that the General Assembly, at its seventh special session, had included the social dimension in the new international economic order, with particular reference to the health sector. Indeed, since the well-being of men was the *raison d'être* of the new economic order, the health sector had a much more important role to play than was generally realized. It was a terrifying fact that one quarter of all the people who had died from natural causes since the establishment of the World Health Organization had succumbed to preventable infectious diseases and that uncountable tens of millions of persons had physical and mental impairments which prevented them from living productive lives in the economies of their countries. Setting aside the human aspect of the question, in purely economic terms that was an intolerable waste of what was probably the world's greatest resource: human beings.
2. In spite of impressive advances in medicine, not enough headway had been made in meeting the health needs of the vast majority of mankind. For example, in its early days, WHO had tried to apply in the developing world the methods which had seemed a productive way of raising health standards in developed countries, whereas the political, economic and social conditions necessary for the success of those methods had not existed in the recipient countries.
3. WHO had now undertaken a systematic change in its philosophy by seeking to adopt a genuinely multisectoral approach. To reorient its activities, it used the concept of social poverty, which was a combination of the following elements: unemployment and underemployment, economic poverty, low level of education, poor housing, poor sanitation, malnutrition, ill health, social apathy and, above all, the lack of will and initiative. The improvement of any of these conditions, whether economic or social, tended to stimulate an improvement in all of them. Thus, by trying to ensure the improved integration of all sectors, WHO had had greater success in reaching the millions of the most underserved, rather than, as

(Dr. Mahler)

it had done previously, by insisting on the technical excellence of modern medicine from which only the privileged few benefited.

4. Structurally, WHO was the most decentralized of the specialized agencies. It was pushing decentralization even further, by transferring more and more authority to the country level, thereby making increasing use of local expertise. At the regional level, it was endeavouring to harness the collective political will through its regional committees and, at the global level, it was trying to move the Executive Board and the World Health Assembly away from focusing on technical details, towards their proper policy-making roles.

5. Perhaps the organs of the United Nations system and countries large and small were handicapped by too narrow a conception of their task and perhaps each at times thought it had the unique answer to the problems of under-development. Yet, it now seemed clear that no approach to the problems of development had any chance of success unless it took into account the economic, social, cultural and political concerns of developing countries. In an increasingly interdependent world, that would require an increasing sacrifice of national sovereignty by rich and poor countries alike, if economic and social solidarity was to become a political reality at the international level.

6. It was in the United Nations system that that sacrifice would prove most profitable. However, if the United Nations system was successfully to undertake a total development effort, it would be necessary to break down the strong barriers between sectors, establish mechanisms enabling all United Nations organs to adopt an integrated approach and confront common objectives.

7. Three types of measures were necessary if the United Nations system, that storehouse of expertise and experience in all fields, was to be brought to bear in a more meaningful way on social poverty problems. Firstly, at the international level, the policy objectives and strategies determined at the national level must be taken fully into account. To that end, the Ad Hoc Committee might consider the establishment of an intergovernmental policy-making body which, with the necessary tools, would help United Nations bodies set global priorities and arrive at a series of common strategic approaches; both internationally and nationally, it would give guidance as to the path to follow and would establish yardsticks against which to judge the effectiveness of the system. The enormous

(Dr. Mahler)

responsibility that would fall on that central body would require that it receive the full political support of Member States and all the relevant input from the specialized agencies and other United Nations institutions.

8. Concurrently, an aggregation of some of the existing machinery, including funds, would be helpful. The formation of planning and programming teams for the entire United Nations system, consisting of staff members seconded from the various sectoral subsystems, might become a logical extensor of the central body. However, even more important than central planning, it was essential to ensure that the programmes were actually implemented, by using fully the interdisciplinary capacity of the United Nations system. To that end, UNDP could, with the necessary political support, play the leadership role in the over-all international development programme.

9. Secondly, at the national level, most Member States required more flexible and effective mechanisms to cut across sectoral lines and come up with a clear and comprehensive picture of needs and problems. In order to avoid the too frequent errors made in the field of technical co-operation, new forms of co-operation should be developed and all methods which did not work should be discarded quickly. To that end, he envisaged the establishment of mechanisms and structures which were consonant with national traditions and which at the national level could give the same impetus to development in all its ramifications that he envisaged for the United Nations system at the international level.

10. Thirdly, to promote such an evolution, operational authority and responsibility should be further decentralized, so that resources and expertise would be used locally within the framework of internationally agreed guidelines and doctrines. Additional regional and national development institutions should also be established, in which the huge reservoirs of talent in developing countries could be put to use. Lastly, it was also necessary to have the courage to weed out needless co-ordinating bureaucracies and procedures that did not contribute to the new economic order. More effective co-ordination certainly would be useful, but what was needed above all was the political will to challenge the whole United Nations system, and not least its individual Member States, to use all available resources to eliminate social poverty before it was too late.

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11. Count YORK (Federal Republic of Germany) said that the second session of the Ad Hoc Committee should be decisive, for it was no longer a question, at that stage, of debating general principles; rather, it was essential to examine the basic areas where reform was deemed necessary and, in so doing, to lay the groundwork required by the Working Group. The Working Group should be given as elaborate a mandate as possible of particular items with which it should deal and a few common tendencies which would be agreed upon during the discussion. Clearly, there could be no question of drawing a first sketch of the over-all reform at the outset. The Ad Hoc Committee had before it the report of the Group of Experts (E/AC.62/9) which listed a certain number of problems. While that report was not the Committee's only reference document, it could be profitably used as a diagnosis of weak points in the system and an attempt to suggest possible cures.

12. However, his delegation did not subscribe forthwith to the conclusions in the report, in particular, concerning areas such as the international monetary system where decisions had been taken only recently, or matters relating to industrialization and trade which were currently under discussion in other forums (UNIDO, GATT, UNCTAD IV etc.).

13. Furthermore, it did not seem the best course to draw up a new organizational blueprint at once since the Ad Hoc Committee would thus run the risk of remaining in the realm of generalities. It would be better to begin with a few practical problems from which certain guidelines as to the balance to be maintained between institutions, the merger of entities and the creation of new structural patterns might be drawn. There was no question of waging a power game between institutions or groups of countries, but rather of making the necessary reforms in order to adapt the United Nations system better to changes in international relations, so that it could use available resources to yield the highest benefit, specifically for development.

14. The system had become so unwieldy and incoherent owing to a constant, rather haphazard proliferation of bodies and offices with increasingly overlapping functions, that its manpower and financial resources were largely absorbed by handling and co-ordinating the complex machinery. Yet there was no denying the tremendous potential of the apparatus as such, with 40,000 people and more than

(Count York, Federal Republic of Germany)

- \$2 billion annually at its disposal. That potential should be preserved, while the machinery needed strengthening, streamlining and shaping into a more coherent pattern so as to respond more effectively to current requirements.
15. Generally speaking, there was agreement that the Ad Hoc Committee should deal basically with the three following areas: the intergovernmental decision-making machinery, the international Secretariat and the relationship between the various agencies and organizations.
16. Regarding the United Nations itself, one of the main problems was the strengthening of the Economic and Social Council. The problem was not so much a matter of constitutional ruling as of enabling the Council itself to assume the power which it already had. None the less, the Ad Hoc Committee might usefully work out directives aimed at strengthening the role of the Council in the policy-making process. It was certainly an unfavourable, time-consuming process to discuss each question of substance at three different levels - at committee or commission level, then in the Economic and Social Council itself and finally in the General Assembly. However, rather than bypass the first stage by abolishing subsidiary commissions and committees and overload the Council by bringing it down to the level of technical discussions, an effort should be made to equip the Council better for working out over-all guidelines and for giving general directives to its subsidiary bodies. That could be done, for instance, by grouping items to be dealt with by the Council according to their substance. The Council could then discuss them during the year at short sessions apart from its two main sessions. Those main sessions - one reserved for social questions and the other for economic questions - would then be devoted basically to general policy aspects.
17. In future, the Council should not devote so much of its energy to preparing world conferences on particular subjects, except in areas which could not be linked up with existing organizations. Small negotiating groups could be useful instruments for preparing consensus on difficult substantive questions. The work currently undertaken in Paris in the four commissions of the Conference on International Economic Co-operation could be regarded as a step in that direction.
18. It was vital that programming be improved and intensified. The decision to strengthen the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination, taken by the General

(Count York, Federal Republic of Germany)

Assembly at its thirtieth session, was a first step in that direction. The programming function of the Economic and Social Council should also be strengthened by creating a close link between it and the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions. If, for instance, a direct link was established between the Advisory Committee and the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination (CPC), there would be closer co-ordination between programming and budgetary procedures, better use would be made of the accumulated knowledge within the Advisory Committee and the intergovernmental nature of the programming function would be preserved.

19. Proper programme evaluation, which was virtually non-existent at the present time, was also vital. There again, CPC could bring together results obtained in the various committees, then transmit them to the Economic and Social Council together with its own recommendations.

20. Furthermore, experience had shown that intergovernmental bodies functioned best if their work was well prepared by the secretariats concerned. The United Nations Secretariat did its best to perform that task. However, its support activities were inextricably linked with the operational activities of each of its offices or units. That parallelism was beneficial in some cases while in many others, where operational activities could as well be carried out by the specialized agencies concerned, it hampered proper programme and budgetary control and individual programme evaluation.

21. The multiplicity of funds allocated to individual units had prompted the idea of distinguishing between the two functions of policy analysis and technical assistance, and putting the latter together with the existing group of specialized agencies under a separate authority. There was some merit in that suggestion, but in the case of the Secretariat it would be very difficult to determine where to draw the dividing line. That question clearly needed to be examined more fully.

22. Regarding the consolidation of all operational funds and programmes, his delegation supported any measures designed to give greater coherence to technical assistance activities, but it was anxious not to lose the co-operation of well-established entities such as UNDP, UNEP or UNICEF as long as the new superstructure to be adopted had not proved its worth.

23. While it was necessary to define and clarify the functions of the

(Count York, Federal Republic of Germany)

Secretariat, his delegation viewed with caution the proposal by the Group of Experts that the post of a Director-General for Economic Affairs be created; that would split the United Nations into two almost autonomous parts. The internal unity of the United Nations must be preserved if it was to keep its supreme policy authority within the system. The best solution would be to strengthen the central nucleus while maintaining a decentralized structure. In that connexion, the regional economic commissions should participate more fully in the activities of the United Nations in their respective regions. The special role of the Economic Commission for Europe and its emphasis on co-operation between East and West should of course be preserved.

24. At all events, the most difficult problem was still that of co-ordination. None the less, it did not seem possible in the present situation to solve that problem by radically overhauling the whole system. A reasonable solution would be to draw up a list of areas where there was unnecessary overlapping or fruitless competition. Each of those areas would then become the subject of separate negotiations. Salvation did not lie in grand new designs or in a reform of the Charter. Above all, the potential of the existing system should be preserved, while reshaping that system in order to make it more responsive to present needs and to make the best possible use of common resources.

25. Mr. ROUGE (France) said that, regarding the question of subsidiary bodies of the Economic and Social Council, the proposal of the Group of Experts contained in document E/AC.62/9 to the effect that the Council should directly assume responsibility for work currently carried out by its subsidiary bodies, did not seem to be the best solution. Indeed, that proposal might have the effect of dividing States Members of the United Nations into two groups, one of which would deal with all subjects while the other would not participate fully in any discussions carried out in a restricted context under the auspices of the Council. Such a situation would hardly be reasonable. States should be able to study certain questions while leaving other questions to States which were better equipped to deal with them. The Group of Experts had been well aware of that difficulty and had made suggestions as to how to overcome it, but had left the choice of methods to the Assembly.

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(Mr. Rouge, France)

26. In its report, the Group of Experts had presented the Ad Hoc Committee with stimulating arguments, but the Committee must accordingly feel perfectly free to study other possibilities as well.

27. Generally speaking, the maximum number of functional commissions of the Council should be allowed to continue, without their composition, mandate and methods of work being systematically altered. Some commissions should of course be discontinued, but the case of the Committee on Science and Technology for Development, the World Food Council and the Commission on the Status of Women, to quote only three examples, made him sceptical about the chances of success of a campaign to abolish any body whatsoever. It was surprising that the report of the Group of Experts had not suggested the discontinuance of the World Food Council, since it had so rightly stressed the fact that the United Nations system must have a central body within which the contributions of the various United Nations agencies could be forged into coherent policies for development and international economic co-operation.

28. Regarding the restructuring of the Economic and Social Council, he proposed that the Council should no longer debate the substance of technical questions already considered by smaller intergovernmental bodies and should leave the General Assembly to study those questions from a political angle, with the participation of all Member States. When the sessional report of a subsidiary body, the governing body of a specialized agency or of a programme became available, the Council would meet immediately, but would limit itself to incorporating the work thus brought to its attention into the over-all activities of the entire United Nations system. For instance, it might suggest that certain problems be studied more fully, draw attention to related work carried out in other bodies, recommend that new questions be examined or that subjects whose importance had diminished be dropped. It might likewise advise the General Assembly on the follow-up to be given to proposals and transmit, with appropriate comments, any reports that it received to other bodies within the system or even directly to Governments.

29. If that arrangement was adopted, the spring and summer sessions of the Council could be significantly shortened, an essential development if the level of representation of Member States was to increase. The sessions could be devoted

(Mr. Rouge, France)

to discussions in preparation for the General Assembly's debates on economic and social issues, to considering proposals on system-wide programmes and co-ordination, or to drawing up documents of general scope, such as a revised International Development Strategy.

30. It was not a matter of giving the Council new powers which would give it an authority rivalling that of the General Assembly. It was desirable, on the contrary, that the Council should be at the service of the Assembly and other competent governmental and intergovernmental organs in promoting, by gentle, steady pressure and encouragement, coherent policy and uniformity of purpose.

31. The General Assembly should remain the central political organ of the system, and the General Committee should continue to be absolutely free to allocate economic and social items to plenary meetings or meetings of the Main Committees, as it saw fit.

32. On the subject of the trend towards "depoliticizing" the United Nations, he believed that two separate species should not be confused: in technical bodies the technical approach should predominate, and the politicization of discussions should be avoided as far as possible. In political organs, on the other hand, political views should be expressed freely, even on technical subjects. Accordingly, anything which damaged the unity and authority of the supreme political organs established by the United Nations Charter was to be avoided at all costs.

33. What was true of the General Assembly was true also of the Secretary-General, whose primacy over the other executive heads of organizations of the United Nations system was essentially the result of the political prestige of his important functions. It was for that reason that he himself did not see how an international civil servant other than the Secretary-General could possess the influence over the whole of the system envisaged by the Group of Experts for the holder of the post of Director-General for Development and International Economic Co-operation, the creation of which had been recommended.

34. It seemed reasonable to concentrate the resources available to the Department of Economic and Social Affairs on those tasks which it alone could handle or which were essential for the proper operation of the Economic and Social Council, and to transfer other tasks to the specialized agencies or even abandon

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(Mr. Rouge, France)

them. In the former case, the relevant operational activities would be transferred at the same time. In that connexion, it should be noted that until such time as the scope of such transfers of competence was known, no stand could be taken on the possibility of having the UNDP administration attached to the Department of Economic and Social Affairs.

35. With regard to the Department's relationships with other secretariats, he supported the idea that the Council and the secretariat which worked for it should make greater use of the knowledge and experience of the specialized agencies. In that connexion, there was some justification for considering the interagency Advisory Committee proposed by the Group of Experts to be an unduly formalistic arrangement, and it might be best to leave it to the parties concerned to ask for or offer, depending on the circumstances, such support as each of them could provide for activities of common interest.

36. It was probably too early for the Ad Hoc Committee to consider problems concerning institutional structures in the international trade sector, and to do so might adversely affect the progress of the multilateral trade negotiations and the fourth session of UNCTAD.

37. In addition, following the work of the thirtieth session of the General Assembly and of the Council's latest organizational session, the question of programming machinery and budget examination should be considered settled.

38. Turning to the question of the negotiating machinery, he drew attention to the fact that the remarkable achievements in the field during, for example, the seventh special session of the General Assembly or the Conference on the Law of the Sea should not cause one to forget the numerous instances in which the will to succeed, and even the desire to negotiate, had been lacking. In that connexion, there was no question but that the new international economic order would be the work not of the United Nations system alone, but actually of States themselves. The effectiveness of the system, which was the object of the restructuring exercise, was to be judged not so much by the usefulness of what the system itself achieved as by the success of action undertaken jointly by the Member States.

39. With respect to the methods of work of intergovernmental meetings, it should be possible with the existing machinery to speed up debates and make them more effective, in particular, by giving a more important role to the chairmen of the

(Mr. Rouge, France)

various bodies in the conduct of their work. In addition, there was no reason to forgo the advice and suggestions of the Secretariat. If the Secretariat often spoke on matters of procedure, it had tended to keep silent on matters of substance. Yet there was every indication that the work of the Economic and Social Council, in particular, would be much more effective if it could obtain the Secretariat's active participation, as it already obtained that of the executive heads of the specialized agencies. It was therefore to be hoped that that trend would grow stronger, for it was one of the best ways of increasing the coherence of the United Nations system.

40. Finally, he agreed that the Secretariat's capacity for economic analysis and general studies should be appreciably strengthened and that it should be provided with the "flexible mechanism" which, according to the Group of Experts, would make it possible to draw upon the expertise and knowledge of international organizations, non-governmental organizations, national Governments and the private sector generally.

41. Mr. ROSSI (Italy) said it had been observed that an international institution could only be what its member Governments wanted it to be. The seventh special session of the General Assembly was a case in point; despite the system's many acknowledged defects, an important political agreement which other bodies had sought in vain during months of laborious negotiations had been reached in two weeks.

42. The deficiencies of the system were the result, first, of actions by Member States, and, second, of the dramatic changes that had occurred in functions entrusted to the United Nations in the economic field since its inception. As to the first point, Member States, for reasons of their own, had alternately favoured centralization and decentralization, responding to new and very real needs by creating a new department, a new specialized agency or a new ad hoc fund instead of by making better use of existing resources. As to the second point, there had been a shift of emphasis towards the other aspect of the dual role of the United Nations, namely, maintaining peace and security and ensuring the economic and social development of the international community as a whole. For example, in 1974, four fifths of the resources spent had been devoted to the economic and social sector. At its sixth and seventh special sessions, the General Assembly

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(Mr. Rossi, Italy)

had set for the international community an ambitious programme of work aimed at establishing a new and more just international economic order. It was for the United Nations to supervise its implementation, and in order to do so it would obviously need a better and more streamlined machinery than it now had. The Ad Hoc Committee's task was to consider changes in the machinery, and his delegation suggested that it should concentrate on five main areas.

43. With regard to the Economic and Social Council, consideration should be given, first, to means of strengthening its co-ordinating authority with respect to global policy formulation and implementation and the setting of priorities for the system as a whole, and, second, to reorganization of its programme of work and calendar of sessions, revision of the rules of procedure with respect to the convening of special sessions, and negotiating methods.

44. In the case of subsidiary bodies of the Council, consideration should be given, first, to the reduction of their number through the elimination of some and the merging of others, and, second, to the revision of their calendar of work and of the frequency of their sessions, and the possibility of joint sessions whenever appropriate.

45. Regarding the role of the Bureau, and in particular of the presiding officer, in the various bodies and that of the Secretariat, he considered that the presiding officer could be explicitly entrusted with the right to conduct consultations, present documents and propose draft decisions. As for the Secretariat, the staff of the competent departments should be allowed to intervene freely in the discussions and negotiations and perhaps even to propose draft decisions, as was the normal practice in the European Economic Community.

46. With respect to the operational activities of the United Nations system, which should be decentralized as much as possible, there should be closer co-ordination of medium-term plans and programmes carried out by the specialized agencies and other United Nations bodies, in the context of a revised country programming system. Secondly, consideration might be given to a revision of the existing cost-benefit evaluation procedures and, if appropriate, to the establishment of an ad hoc independent evaluating body similar to ACABQ. Lastly, certain funds might be consolidated.

(Mr. Rossi, Italy)

47. The last problem area would be reorganization of the Secretariat. That point could be dealt with only after some agreement was reached on the other four issues. His delegation believed that a reorganization of the Secretariat should aim at creating an organic link between the centralized departments dealing with research, planning and analysis and those dealing with the planning and management of decentralized operational activities. The Ad Hoc Committee might also examine recruiting methods.

48. The list of suggestions he had given was certainly not exhaustive, and his delegation was ready to start consultations on the subject; such consultations might usefully be based on conference room papers prepared for the purpose. The Ad Hoc Committee should then consider procedural questions; his delegation believed that the intersessional working group which the Committee had decided to set up should be open to all interested delegations. Finally, the Committee should give the Bureau a mandate to conduct consultations so as to be able to produce a conference room paper on each of the problem areas, for the working group.

49. His delegation would be inclined to accept the report of the Group of Experts (E/AC.62/9) as a starting-point for the Ad Hoc Committee's deliberations if all members of the Committee agreed with that approach.

The meeting rose at 12.35 p.m.

12th MEETING

Tuesday, 17 February 1976, 3 p.m.

RESTRUCTURING OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL SECTORS OF THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM
(A/AC.179/3 and Add.1) (continued)

1. Mr. M'BOW (Director-General, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) stressed the importance of making the United Nations more responsive to economic and social changes and said that UNESCO, which had been an integral part of the United Nations system from the start, was anxious to make its contribution to rationalizing and improving the functioning and effectiveness of the system. While the importance of other instruments of international co-operation, whether regional, subregional or bilateral, must not be underestimated, nothing could replace the United Nations system, which alone was capable of devising actions that were in the interest of all men while respecting the independence and equality of all nations.

2. The system's first task was to study the major problems facing mankind objectively and in depth in order to determine what were the obstacles to harmonious development and what action could be taken. Such a study should take full account of the deep disparities between developed and developing countries, and even among developing countries, and of their different potentials. Next, it should facilitate talks between States or groups of States, and, finally, it should elaborate specific programmes of action which it would help to implement with the active participation of all the agencies in the system. The system's main weakness was that as yet it was not able to act really as a system. While problems of co-ordination could generally be resolved without too much difficulty, a tremendous amount remained to be done to assure the coherence and convergence of strategies, programmes and activities within the framework of a general policy based upon full awareness of existing situations and trends and a forecast of the future. Moreover, the decisions taken by the General Assembly at its sixth and seventh special sessions and the plans of action adopted at various international conferences had shown clearly that the many economic and social difficulties currently hampering development could be surmounted not by sectoral measures but by broad action encompassing various disciplines and requiring the capacity and the expertise of numerous organizations.

(Mr. M'Bow)

3. Because of the importance of UNESCO's role in the system, its secretariat had studied the problem of restructuring in detail. The views of the Executive Board of UNESCO were reproduced in one of the documents before the Committee, as were the ideas which he had expressed at the joint meeting of the Programme and Policy Co-ordination Committee of the Economic and Social Council and the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination and during the fifty-ninth session of the Economic and Social Council, and which the Executive Board had subsequently endorsed.

4. Structural reform should be based on three major principles, namely, establishment of a new international economic order as a matter of priority, increase in representativity within the agencies of the system to include all Member States, and improvement of co-ordination among those agencies for greater effectiveness. Since those principles were set forth in detail in one of the documents before the Committee, he would concentrate on the structural and co-ordination aspects of reform.

5. In his view, the concept of co-ordination was too narrow. The action of the United Nations system should be based on harmonized or even joint planning, which in turn would stem from a forward-looking study of the modern world and from concerted action in every field requiring the expertise of various organizations. It would fall to the Economic and Social Council to promote and co-ordinate that programming. While the General Assembly would continue to determine major orientations and give over-all guidelines, as it had done at the sixth and seventh special sessions, the Economic and Social Council would be responsible for analysing problems, reviewing solutions which had been put forward, discussing and approving programmes of action. There seemed to be a broad measure of agreement on that point within the various agencies of the system, and the Executive Board of UNESCO, at its May 1975 session, had been quite specific on that matter.

6. In order to be able to play its role fully, the Council would probably have to revise its working methods in certain respects. While it was not for him to make specific proposals, it would probably be desirable for the Council to hold shorter and more frequent meetings focused on a specific subject or, at least, on groups of subjects. It might equip itself with appropriate machinery for

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preparing its decisions - either a team or an interagency study or planning unit which would undertake long-term analysis of problems and propose strategies for the entire system. If the Council was to play such a central role, the agencies of the system must be able to participate fully in the formulation of Council decisions; that was not always the case, however. The specialized agencies often got the impression that they were reduced to playing the role of passive observers, indeed of ordinary spectators. Similarly, they should participate actively in the General Assembly when it examined matters relating to the system as a whole and in major conferences on specialized subjects. In addition, they should be entrusted with organizing such conferences when the subject fell within their area of competence.

7. Finally, the Council should also consider how any actions it might decide upon were to be financed. Currently, the Council adopted numerous decisions the implementation of which was wholly or partly the responsibility of the specialized agencies, without considering whether the latter had the necessary resources. If that problem was not tackled in a realistic manner, recommended reforms might remain unimplemented.

8. The Administrative Committee on Co-ordination must support the policy-making organs of the United Nations system in their task of programming and, if it was decided to establish a joint interagency planning unit, should ensure that the latter was provided with the means it needed. The role of ACC would be especially important whenever concerted implementation of General Assembly and Council decisions was needed. ACC would also have to organize joint action at the technical level, whether by entrusting the distribution of tasks to its sub-committees, by assigning main responsibility in a specific field to a particular agency or by setting up ad hoc interagency committees.

9. In summary, the model of the United Nations system designed to improve the planning and execution of its action in favour of development and the New Economic and Social Order might be as follows: the General Assembly (possibly aided by major specialized conferences) would determine general policy and establish global objectives and priorities; the Economic and Social Council would analyse problems, consider options and approve plans of action on the basis of data and studies prepared for it by the joint interagency planning unit and, in so doing,

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would state what resources were needed to finance the action proposed; ACC would co-ordinate the implementation of programmes adopted by the Council, assign the tasks, supervise implementation and evaluate the results; and the member agencies of the system, each in its own field, would elaborate and implement programmes of activity. Such a plan could function harmoniously only to the extent that Member States made a similar effort to co-ordinate their action, adopted a coherent policy vis-à-vis the system as a whole and refrained from issuing conflicting instructions to the policy-making organs of the various organizations of which they were members.

10. One of the areas in which stronger and more coherent action within the framework of the establishment of a new international economic order was needed was that of science and technology. In UNESCO's programme, the development of scientific policies, assistance for scientific and technological research, training of technicians and action to develop national infrastructures and promote the transfer of science and technology occupied an important place. Moreover, UNESCO seemed to be the only agency in the system whose activities embraced all areas and all branches of science and which maintained continued relations with the entire world scientific community. Naturally, other agencies had their own programmes in those fields, which accounted for the need for better planning and co-ordination so as to achieve a real United Nations science and technology policy. It would, however, be pointless and even detrimental to establish new agencies or new organs, such as the ad hoc scientific committees or the post of scientific adviser to the Secretary-General proposed by the Group of Experts on the Structure of the United Nations System. Existing organizations were fully able to provide the Secretary-General and the Council with all the services and advice necessary.

11. On a broader question, he expressed concern at the apparent proliferation of new institutional machinery. So far, whenever a new problem had arisen or an existing one had changed in nature or magnitude, there had been a tendency to establish new institutions or set up new programmes with institutional autonomy. That had led to the creation of a complex system of institutions whose responsibilities could not help but overlap with those of neighbouring institutions. There was no proof that such action increased the effectiveness of the system; by diminishing the role of the General Assembly or that of the general

(Mr. M'Bow)

conferences of the specialized agencies in which all Member States were represented, proliferation was detrimental to the needed democratization of the system. It would therefore seem appropriate to make a critical analysis of existing bodies in order to see what measures might be taken to increase cohesion, effectiveness and output.

12. Turning to the problem of resources, he said that the gap between the material resources available to the United Nations system, on the one hand, and the needs of the international community, the tasks which nations would like to assign to international organizations and the hopes which they placed in those organizations, on the other, was so great that any attempt at restructuring which did not at the same time tackle the problem of resources might be missing the main point. Production of and commerce in weapons of destruction not only diverted resources from the development effort but also involved a complex system of production and trade which was the real obstacle to the establishment of a new economic order. Restructuring was not only a question of institutional machinery; for, however thorough they might be, structural reforms were no substitute for the political will of Member States, which alone could give the United Nations system a specific orientation, a goal and the means needed to attain it. Although in view of the many cultures and ideologies in the world it was not easy for nations to agree on values, goals or means, the United Nations system, once overhauled, should be better able than in the past to encourage dialogue among Member States and to determine from such dialogue guidelines for action by the international community.

13. Mr. STRAUSS (Czechoslovakia) said that, in drawing up its recommendations, the Committee should take account of the appropriate documents, including the report on a new United Nations structure for global economic co-operation (E/AC.62/9). In the introductory part of that report, the Group of Experts recalled the recognition by the founders of the United Nations that peaceful and friendly relations among nations also required co-operation in the economic and social area. A prerequisite for the development of economic co-operation was the unanimous adoption and observance of the progressive principles by which those relations should be governed. It was in that light that proposals pertaining to changes in the structure of the United Nations system should be considered.

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(Mr. Strauss, Czechoslovakia)

His delegation did not think that all possibilities under the present structure had yet been exploited. In the consideration of structural changes, account should also be taken of the provisions of the United Nations Charter, particularly those concerning the role of the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly, which were competent to discuss questions relating to the international political, economic and social situation. The success of negotiations in those forums did not depend on techniques or modalities but on the political will of the Members to adopt measures which would place international political, economic and social relations on a just basis. The United Nations Charter had been in force for more than 30 years and had proved to be fully adequate. Such important documents as the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States had been based upon the United Nations Charter and were fully in keeping with the principles contained therein. It would be necessary in future to continue to develop and carry out the existing provisions of the United Nations Charter, which the Committee should respect in working out its recommendations. Account should also be taken of the just demands of the developing countries, of the effort to establish a new international economic order and of the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States, which emphasized the principle of peaceful coexistence and the inseparable relationship between economic and social development and the strengthening of peace and security.

14. In formulating its recommendations, the Committee should aim at greater effectiveness, lower administrative costs and elimination of duplication of work. The main objectives of restructuring should be the following. The role of the United Nations as the international forum for promoting economic and social development should be strengthened, without changing the United Nations Charter and with due regard for the interests of all Member States. It should not, however, be forgotten that the main task of the United Nations was to maintain peace and security in the world. The principles of justice, equality, sovereignty, mutual advantage, non-discrimination and peaceful coexistence should be the guidelines in the restructuring of the economic and social sectors. The role of the Economic and Social Council with respect to global policy formulation and implementation should be strengthened to enable it to play a more effective role in world economic affairs. Some of the proposals in document E/AC.62/9 might be considered in that

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connexion. In order to achieve maximum efficiency, the possibility of merging or abolishing unnecessary or superfluous bodies and reducing the number of meetings should be studied. The regional commissions should be given a more important role to play with regard to matters concerning their respective regions. As to methods of work, the establishment of negotiating groups to deal with economic issues might sometimes be useful but should not be considered the chief method of work.

15. Mr. WITTEVEEN (Managing Director, International Monetary Fund) said he wished to join the Chairman in stressing the need for unity of purpose as well as for that functional decentralization of effort which provided the sharpest focus on specific tasks. He also agreed with the Chairman on the dangers of excessive fragmentation of activities and the importance of an organizational structure which could best support the desired unity of purpose. With those objectives in mind, he believed it might be useful to describe the experience of the International Monetary Fund in those very areas.

16. The international monetary system and the Fund itself had gone through a period of major adaptation in the wake of the monetary events of the early 1970s. The recent Jamaica accord had constituted a milestone in that process, providing for a fundamental charter revision coupled with an important overhaul of operational policies and a one-third increase in financial resources. It had also proved that the Fund was an effective forum for international collaboration and the reconciliation of divergent interests in an interdependent and changing world. After several years of negotiations, it had been decided that a gradual evolution of the international monetary system was preferable to the sudden introduction of a comprehensive new system. The amendment of the Fund's Articles of Agreement that would soon be proposed to the Board of Governors would therefore give the Fund a charter adapted to current circumstances and foreseeable requirements in the period ahead and capable of further evolution through the exercise of powers with a large degree of consensus. At the same time, decisions had been taken which did not involve amendments to the Articles of Agreement, namely, the liberalization of operational policies in the area of financial assistance to member countries to enable them to meet their current problems. Those policy changes included major

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liberalization of the Fund's compensatory financing facility, agreement on a trust fund for balance-of-payments assistance to the poorest developing countries, and an important extension of access to the regular resources of the Fund until the new, increased quotas became effective and permitted larger assistance on a permanent basis.

17. The Jamaica accord could not have been reached without close and continuous consultations at all levels of government, and it was part of that accord that such consultations at both the technical and the political levels could remain a basic instrument for the future. Throughout that experience, the Fund had been a centre for co-operation and consultation on international monetary problems. Those activities had been conducted in the Board of Governors and the Executive Board. Additional forums had been established for the purpose, such as the Committee of 20 from 1972 to 1974, the present Interim Committee and the Joint Bank-Fund Development Committee, all three composed nearly equally of cabinet members from developed and developing countries. The 20 members of those Committees represented all 128 member countries of the Fund, and the fact that each member had seven associates enabled a larger number of representatives to attend meetings. The Committees had thus proved to be effective bodies and had been sufficiently representative of the whole membership. Experience had confirmed the usefulness of a compact top-level forum where the most important issues could be discussed and agreed, and guidance could be given to the Executive Board, the Fund organ in continuous session. The Interim Committee gave all groups of members an opportunity to exchange views on a broad range of economic and financial questions, so that an international consensus could be reached at the political level. Under the amendment to the Articles of Agreement, it would be possible to transform the Interim Committee into a permanent organ of the Fund. In the light of that experience, it appeared that the same concept of well-prepared, periodic consultation on common problems in a compact forum of representative national political authorities might have merit in other contexts as an important instrument for reaching agreement on global issues.

18. Under the over-all guidance of the Board of Governors, the Fund's Executive Board and its management and staff constituted the daily functioning structure of IMF. The Executive Board of 20 Executive Directors, each with an alternate,

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(Mr. Witteveen)

reflected the combined membership of the Fund and was responsible for the conduct of the general operations of the Fund. During most of the year it met three times weekly. However, with the pressure for the work on amendment and other issues, which included individual reviews of the situation in over 100 member countries, the Executive Board had held no fewer than 208 formal meetings in 1975 alone. That was only one indication of the intensive efforts of the Executive Directors to arrive at decisions on as many aspects of the reform amendment as possible, and also to reach decisions on important operational policies.

19. The process of consultation and reconciliation in the past few years had involved not only a dialogue at the intergovernmental level but also the close participation of management and staff. The Fund made special efforts to maintain a wide geographical distribution, and the current staff included 89 nationalities. The Fund did not, however, have any formal nationality distribution requirement, although it was accepted policy that the five area departments should be headed by nationals of the geographical areas involved. Because the main requirement was for economists with special training in the Fund's area of responsibility, a formal geographical quota system would impose a nearly impossible limitation. Technical competence had to be the paramount consideration. Equally important, however, were the close and confidential relations the Fund maintained with individual member countries through regular staff consultation missions to national capitals, and other contacts on a year-round basis. In that way, management and staff were well informed of the ideas and policies of member countries and could draw on them in evolving their proposals. That close relationship and mutual esteem could give member countries confidence as they conducted a dialogue with the staff, followed by discussion in the Executive Board, on matters of policy in a joint effort to give weight to political considerations in arriving at technical conclusions. In that climate, it had also been possible for the staff to participate in the Executive Board's work. Working closely with the Board, the staff participated in a constant exchange of information and opinions from which decisions acceptable to the entire membership could be developed. The staff's working papers usually included not only factual data and analysis but also evaluations and recommendations for Executive Board action. In major policy discussions, the staff might offer a choice of alternative approaches. In such

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(Mr. Witteveen)

cases, the Executive Board often requested further exploration of the issues on the basis of additional directives. That constant exchange, particularly between the staff and the Executive Board, was vital for the functioning of the Fund, and the high level of expertise of those speaking on behalf of member countries greatly enriched the dialogue. The Managing Director was the link between the staff and the Board because he was not only the head of the staff but also the Chairman of the Executive Board. The fact that the Board was in continuous session at headquarters made it possible for Executive Directors and staff to maintain close contact, which contributed considerably to the smooth working of the organization. He and his predecessors had always felt that the staff structure of the Fund should be taut and lean, with short lines of command and a minimum of bureaucracy. Improvements were always possible, but they would continue to be based on the principles and practices he had described earlier. He was a strong believer in the need for continuous interaction between Governments and the staff of international organizations, not only in administrative matters or questions of implementation, but also in the development of substantive policies.

20. Although functional decentralization was necessary, it was important to avoid unnecessary duplication of effort. The co-operation among various organizational entities required the active concern of Governments. It was Governments which had determined the policies of the separate organizations they had established for particular purposes. Intersecretariat relations up to the executive level were useful. Exchanges of views, technical expertise and joint planning and programming could all contribute to the better functioning of the organizations. They could not, however, replace the harmonization of views between their different political principles. At the same time, the different characteristics of each organization could not be overlooked. The jurisdiction of a national government department or an international agency was an important element in its relationship with other departments or agencies.

21. The Fund's weighted voting system made it different from most other, non-financial organizations. The inequality of voting power and quotas among member countries was based on their economic importance and their related contributions to the financial resources of the Fund. The recent discussions on the general increase of quotas had given no indication that the principle would

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(Mr. Witteveen)

be abandoned. However, the proposed general increase reflected the constantly changing pattern of economic relations, in that it proposed a doubling of the quotas and the voting strength of the major oil-exporting countries, a corresponding decrease for the developed countries and maintenance of the voting strength of the non-oil-exporting developing countries. Nevertheless, because of the Fund's system of constituencies which elected Executive Directors, the representation of developed and developing countries was approximately equal in the Executive Board and the Interim Committee even though the developing countries had a far smaller percentage of total quotas than the industrial countries. Furthermore, as actual voting was the exception rather than the rule, decisions were normally taken by establishing the "sense of the meeting", which gave the participants from developing countries a voice that was more effective than might be assumed solely on the basis of their relative voting power.

22. With regard to the report of the Group of Experts on the Structure of the United Nations System (E/AC.62/9), he felt that the usefulness of an advisory committee of the executive heads of the various United Nations agencies depended greatly upon an effective division of responsibilities between those agencies. If there was overlapping in certain fields between agencies that were directed by differently composed governing bodies, it would often be extremely difficult to arrive at agreed conclusions or recommendations. As it had done in the past, the Fund would co-operate closely with other parts of the system in a variety of forms and on many levels. The Fund had co-operated with a number of other organizations, including the World Bank, GATT, UNCTAD and the United Nations itself. Other forms might be considered, but it would be counterproductive to suggest new instruments where a tried and proven liaison apparatus existed and could, if necessary, be improved. The Chairman had referred to the fact that the responsibility for related problems was becoming more diffused among an increasingly large number of institutions. He felt that it was more practical, pragmatic and even economical not to propose new organizations or programmes without first exploring, with the best available technical guidance, whether existing instruments could not respond to those needs. It was especially necessary to avoid such a proliferation of institutions in the monetary field, although regional organizations would naturally play a useful role for certain groups of countries consistent with a world approach.

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(Mr. Witteveen)

23. The growing interdependence of the world economy underlined the desirability of approaching the various means for monetary co-ordination within one international institution in which as many countries participated as possible. For that purpose, member Governments had created new institutional forums in the Fund's field of responsibility, such as the Interim Committee and the Joint Bank-Fund Development Committee, both of which were concerned with all aspects of the broad questions of the transfer of real resources to developing countries and the urgent problems of the least developed countries and of the developing countries most seriously affected by balance-of-payments difficulties. Those concerns were in complete accord with the spirit and letter of the resolutions of the sixth and seventh special sessions of the General Assembly. The Jamaica accord included important changes in the Fund's financial assistance policies and offered new operational facilities under the proposed amendment to the Articles of Agreement.

24. Mr. HASHMI (India) asked whether the agreement reached in Jamaica should not be seen as the result of a series of national decisions on the part of Governments and of discussions in various forums, rather than solely as the work of the International Monetary Fund. Some participants in such national and regional discussions on monetary matters often said that certain decisions should be left to the Fund; in his view, however, the Fund lacked universality of membership and its decision-making process was not entirely democratic, and he asked whether the Managing Director saw any inconvenience to the Fund in having those matters discussed in such forums.

25. Mr. WITTEVEEN (Managing Director, International Monetary Fund) said that the decisions reached by the Fund were the result of international negotiations. Those present at the meetings of the Fund were Ministers of Finance; they discussed and negotiated the various issues before the Fund. Such discussions naturally followed discussions at the national level. The important contribution of the Fund was to provide the necessary expertise and a forum for arriving at a convergence of views. With regard to any inconvenience to the Fund in having those issues discussed previously in other forums, he felt that such discussions required the necessary expertise and the will to reach agreement and compromise. If discussions led to conciliatory attitudes, they were helpful; if they led to confrontation, they made the work of the Fund more difficult.

26. Mr. HARRY (Australia) noted that the rate of economic growth in many parts of the world had not shown any dramatic increase and that the condition of an enormous number of people in the world remained tragic. The question of economic and social growth had become more complex with the introduction of new elements, such as the conservation of the environment and the need for husbanding resources. The processes of co-ordination therefore required a greater degree of sophistication. Currently, the intimate relationship between peace and security issues and economic and social issues was clearer than ever and had resulted most recently in the articulation of a call for a new international economic order.

27. The international machinery which had evolved to assist the economic and social advancement of mankind was derived from a myriad of decisions, not all of which were interrelated. Some of the specialized agencies had been developed to play rather narrow specific roles, only subsequently to be given a very much broadened mandate, requiring greater interaction with other elements of the system. Before embarking upon an assessment of the structure needed to implement basic policy objectives of the system, those objectives needed to be defined. Given different attitudes and levels of development in various parts of the world, the machinery must be flexible, responsive and dynamic enough to generate a genuine improvement in the living conditions of peoples.

28. Central to the current discussion of the restructuring of the economic and social sectors of the United Nations system was the transfer of technology, both ideas and hardware. The treasury of knowledge within the United Nations system should be fully and properly utilized. Central policy direction should be sought in areas where that direction was necessary, but specialized areas of competence should not be centralized and a considerable devolution of functions should be allowed to occur through recourse to suitably reorganized regional structures.

29. Proper co-ordination was a fundamental requirement and should be dealt with at various stages of each problem - at the programming and budgetary level, where the dangers of duplication should become apparent and be avoided, and at the higher policy levels within the system. Government representatives must participate more closely and actively in the process. A possible contribution to co-ordination might be the drafting of documentation by ad hoc joint secretariats.

(Mr. Harry, Australia)

Experience had shown that the practice of having staff from various agencies sit down with the Secretariat in New York and prepare joint papers was very valuable. Documentation should range across the whole spectrum of a problem and enunciate the various options available to Governments. Such co-ordination would only be effective if undertaken in a spirit of co-operation and mutual respect, and if provided with the right kind of leadership.

30. The experience of 30 years had shown that paramount questions of peace and security occupied much of the Secretary-General's time and that he might feel it advisable to delegate responsibility for developmental issues to a senior colleague. Such an appointee would want to be accepted by the executive heads of the agencies as having primacy in economic and social matters. The implications of such an appointment for the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination, as the principal co-ordinating machinery of the United Nations system, should be carefully examined. The Secretary-General might see advantage in having a senior aide follow closely the preparatory work of ACC, particularly on economic and social matters, and to brief him before he presided over the meetings of ACC.

31. The recommendations of the Group of Experts seemed to tend towards the creation of a more authoritative and specialized Economic and Social Council than had been seen in the past. To a considerable extent, the present somewhat diminished role of the Council was the result of previous decisions to delegate consideration of matters to subsidiary bodies. There were now some 160 such specialist bodies, and some rationalization of their number and their functions would seem inescapable. The Council's debates might well be stimulated if it were to assume direct responsibility for some matters and if the debates focused on groups of related subjects. The Council played a special role as a channel for communicating the political will of the General Assembly to the governing bodies of the specialized agencies, which could be expected to be responsive only to Council decisions which were soundly based on sufficient knowledge of the subject in question. The influence of the Council and the General Assembly on agency programmes would be more effective if their recommendations and proposals were addressed to governing bodies, which alone had the legislative authority to authorize implementation, rather than to executive heads.

(Mr. Harry, Australia)

32. He was concerned that some of the advantages of the existing decision-making arrangements, notably their informality and flexibility, might be lost if consultations were conducted on a more institutionalized basis, through formalized small negotiating groups dealing with key issues. On matters of such importance as economic co-operation, it was desirable that the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council should continue to take major decisions by consensus.

33. The Australian Government was sympathetic to the proposed consolidation of the United Nations funds for technical assistance and pre-investment activities. The existing fragmentation of funds was reducing their total effectiveness while the problems of development and development assistance were growing increasingly complex. There was nevertheless a need to maintain the separate identity of the funds, and his delegation supported the proposal that donors should be free to earmark their contributions for a particular purpose.

34. With regard to strengthening the role that the regional economic commissions played in the United Nations system, he felt that the commissions should play a more active role in the initiation and execution of regional and subregional programmes, including co-ordination and review.

35. Efforts to restructure the economic and social sectors of the United Nations system would be in vain if they were not backed by the necessary political will on the part of Member States; a useful complementary step in the direction of co-ordination might therefore be the co-ordination of policies towards the United Nations at the national level.

36. His delegation had been impressed by the view expressed by several executive heads at the meeting of ACC with the Economic and Social Council, in June 1975, that any administrative changes in the economic and social sectors of the United Nations should be introduced quickly, rather than over an extended period.

The meeting rose at 5.30 p.m.

13th MEETING

Wednesday, 18 February 1976, 10.30 a.m.

RESTRUCTURING OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL SECTORS OF THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM
(A/AC.179/3 and Add.1) (continued)

1. Mr. SRIVASTAVA (Secretary-General, Inter-Governmental Maritime Consultative Organization) said that since its establishment in 1959 the Inter-Governmental Maritime Consultative Organization (IMCO) had concluded agreements and established working arrangements with various other United Nations organizations and participated actively in their work through the Economic and Social Council and the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination, inter alia.
2. IMCO was an organization whose mandate concerned exclusively maritime subjects and included the provision of machinery for promoting co-operation in the field of regulations and practices relating to technical matters of all kinds affecting shipping engaged in international trade, the promotion and adoption of standards in matters concerning maritime safety, the efficiency of navigation, the prevention and control of marine pollution from shipping and the establishment of legal and technical procedures to achieve the above objectives.
3. With regard to the structure of the Organization, he said that IMCO had a membership of nearly a hundred member States, more than two thirds of which were developing countries, and functioned through three main organs (the Assembly, the Council and the Maritime Safety Committee) and some subsidiary bodies. Except for the Council and the Maritime Safety Committee, participation in the bodies was open to all member States. In accordance with the decision taken by the Assembly in 1975, the size of the Council would soon be increased so as to guarantee developing countries a better representation in that body; all member States of the Organization would have the right to membership in the Maritime Safety Committee.
4. With regard to the actual activities of IMCO, the significant impact of the development of trade and maritime transport on general economic development should be recognized, in particular as it affected third world countries. Similarly, the work of the Organization in the field of the prevention and control of marine pollution could only contribute to efforts to preserve the quality of the marine environment, an activity of particular concern to many developing countries as well.

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(Mr. Srivastava, IMCO)

5. In that connexion, the work of IMCO should be seen in the context of the International Development Strategy, the Programme of Action on the Establishment of a New International Economic Order and, above all, the proposed restructuring of the economic and social sectors of the United Nations system.
6. Noting the report on a new United Nations structure for global economic co-operation (E/AC.62/9), he welcomed the fact that the Group of Experts had emphasized technical assistance to developing countries, an area of particular concern to IMCO, in view of the fact that those countries wished increasingly to develop their own national shipping lines, so as to share more actively in world trade on terms which would not pose serious problems to their balance-of-payments positions. To help them overcome their handicap in the area of shipping, IMCO had developed a major programme of technical assistance for the establishment of training institutions and the development of national shipping lines and shipping administrations and the provision of teams of highly qualified experts in co-operation with UNDP.
7. With particular regard to the recommendation of the Group of Experts that the implementation of projects should no longer be automatically assigned to the specialized agencies and that more emphasis should be placed on the initiative of organizations in the recipient countries, he said that in some technical areas, including shipping, it was not advisable, and perhaps not possible, to divorce the standard-setting operation from the provision of assistance to implement the standards set. In those specific areas it was necessary, on the one hand, to show a measure of flexibility which would enable the resources available in the specialized agencies to be utilized as sensibly as possible and, on the other hand, to ensure that countries were encouraged to seek and utilize expertise and assistance from the specialized bodies directly involved in the development of the standards and procedures which had to be incorporated into national programmes.
8. With regard to the recommendation on the establishment of an advisory committee on economic co-operation and development, he felt that participation in the work of that committee should also be open to the smaller organizations, such as IMCO, whose activities had a crucial impact on the economic development of States.

9. Mr. TUKAN (Jordan) said that it was necessary, before undertaking the restructuring of the economic and social sectors, to define the objectives of the current exercise and to seek to clarify the rather vague terms of the mandate given to the Committee in resolution 3343 (XXIX) of the General Assembly.
10. While the idea of administrative reforms within the United Nations dated back to the 1950s or even earlier and was not the outcome of any particular development, the scope and urgency of the reform envisaged currently were perhaps to some extent the outcome of recent developments within and outside the United Nations system. The initiative for a restructuring, which had begun during the twenty-eighth session of the General Assembly and had later been taken up at the twenty-ninth session, was parallel to the initiative calling for a special session to deal with international economic co-operation at the twenty-ninth session. That initiative reflected the determination of the international community to deal with the severe problems of developing countries. Since that time those problems had become more serious, as a result of world-wide inflation, unemployment and shortages of basic raw materials. Since the time when the international community had endorsed the idea of restructuring, there had been a constant evolution of ideas and developments and a de facto restructuring had taken place. Those facts should be taken into account in any discussion of restructuring.
11. Three options seemed to present themselves: the restructuring exercise could be either a process of purely administrative reform, or a political development to accommodate the developments in international economic relations in the last two years, or a balanced combination of the above two alternatives. The third option seemed to his delegation to be the most desirable.
12. His delegation therefore accepted the goal proposed by the Group of Experts, namely to make the United Nations a more effective instrument for the promotion of development and international co-operation in the economic and social areas. The report of the Group of Experts offered a very useful set of general guidelines, but Member Governments themselves should establish a list of the basic problem areas which needed to be dealt with.
13. The experts had made several proposals aimed at strengthening the role of the Economic and Social Council. Almost all of the proposals in the area were constructive in the view of his delegation. Instead of ratifying the findings of

(Mr. Tukan, Jordan)

the functional commissions, the Council would assume its responsibilities in the economic and social spheres through frequent, short, subject-oriented sessions. That would necessitate changing the level and type of representation as well as strengthening and perhaps enlarging the Secretariat support facilities. It might lead to a depoliticizing of the Council to some extent. However, the Council would still hold ministerial and substantive sessions to formulate general policies. It would eliminate some of the duplication of efforts characterizing the United Nations system. It seemed sensible that the Council should assume the responsibilities of its subsidiary bodies, if that would prevent the examination of the same question at three different levels, as was presently the case.

14. Planning, programming and budgeting were more seriously affected than any other activities by the dispersion and fragmentation of procedures. The adoption of some intersectoral approach and more effective co-ordination were necessary, especially in connexion with the planning and reviewing of the implementation of plans, whether through a strengthened CPC or ACABQ or some joint unit.

15. With regard to the intergovernmental decision-making process, it was clear that concrete commitments could be reached only through consensus. However, he shared the doubts of the representative of Australia as to the wisdom of institutionalizing such procedures, which in cases of disagreement might produce uncalled for complications. He shared the view of the representative of the Federal Republic of Germany that experience to be gained from the Paris Conference on International Co-operation might shed more light on the issue.

16. On the operational side, the experts' report contained a set of constructive proposals but, before responding to them, his delegation would like to know what the impact of such proposals on the operations of the specialized agencies might be. While the majority of the agencies had felt that there was no reason to change their present structure, some had expended efforts which were worthy of acknowledgement. In that connexion he wished to underline the importance of two principles: more active participation by the regional commissions in the field as well as in the planning process, and decentralization of operational activities to the extent possible.

17. Besides those major problems there were others, such as the proliferation and overlapping of activities, which sometimes led to the taking of contradictory

(Mr. Tukan, Jordan)

decisions as well as the multiplicity of funds. However, those were only relatively minor problems in the view of Jordan, which as a developing country was convinced that the role played by the United Nations system was indispensable. For that reason his delegation appreciated the untiring efforts of the Secretariat which had to a large extent contributed to solving many problems of developing countries, and it urgently invited the members of the Committee to participate in a true and positive dialogue. In the view of his delegation, there was perhaps not so much a need for radical restructuring of the scope envisaged by the Group of Experts but simply a more efficient utilization of the existing capacities. It was furthermore fitting to recall that no structuring could replace the political will of Member States and that the process of restructuring could not be an end in itself.

18. Mr. AASEN (Norway) said that a truly universal United Nations system would be the most effective instrument to ensure the international co-operation which was becoming necessary in all spheres. However, it should not be forgotten that such co-operation depended on the will of independent and sovereign States and that the United Nations system, particularly in the field of economic and social development, should inspire in Member States sufficient confidence for them to make use of it and put at its disposal the necessary means and resources.

19. He recalled that the Group of Experts had based its proposals for restructuring the United Nations system on the principles concerning the establishment of a new and more equitable international economic order (set forth in the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States). He therefore called on delegations which had difficulty in accepting the set of principles in detail to take a broader view of the issue so that full consensus could be achieved on the conceptual framework for the proposed restructuring. It would then be for the international community to ensure rapid implementation of the decisions taken, so as to strengthen the political goodwill that was a prerequisite for an effective United Nations system and for the establishment of a more just social order.

20. However, some obstacles would have to be overcome, particularly in respect of structures and organization, and an overhaul of the United Nations system would be necessary in order to attain the objectives fixed. The Committee's mandate

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(Mr. Aasen, Norway)

therefore consisted in strengthening and improving the inadequate means of co-operation available to the international community to carry out the immense tasks which confronted it.

21. In that difficult task, on which it would have to embark without delay, the Committee was assisted by the many documents prepared by the Secretariat and more particularly by the report of the Group of Experts, which was the most recent study of the structure of the United Nations. The general debate had made it clear that practically all delegations believed that the problems of restructuring should be approached in a gradual manner and that the Committee should therefore try to identify the areas to which priority should be given.

22. His delegation felt that the intersessional working group should concentrate first on the role of the Economic and Social Council. Norway had been actively involved in efforts to strengthen the role of the Council for years and had submitted a resolution to that effect during the twenty-ninth session of the General Assembly. The fundamental weakness of the United Nations in the economic and social fields, in the opinion of his Government, was that it was sectoral at a time when it was generally recognized that the problems of development could be resolved only through an integrated and multidisciplinary approach. The Group of Experts, which recognized that basic problem, had stressed the need for better co-ordination and over-all planning; it had drawn attention to the potential of the Economic and Social Council in that connexion in a way which appealed to his Government, which had long advocated the idea of an Economic and Social Council in permanent session.

23. His delegation did not subscribe to the idea of simply abolishing all the subsidiary organs of the Council. A rationalization of the work of the Council was strongly called for; that should be accomplished in a flexible way after careful study. For example, some of the organs of the Council itself could be integrated and there could be a merger between organs which overlapped each other and a rescheduling of the frequency of the sessions of subsidiary bodies since it was quite probable, as there were 168 such organs, that some of them did not serve their purpose.

24. Whatever might be decided about the subsidiary organs of the Council, the idea of holding shorter and more subject-oriented sessions of the Council merited

(Mr. Aasen, Norway)

consideration, as it might make it easier for delegations to draw on expertise from their own countries.

25. Since the Council was completely dependent, in order to discharge its duties, on inputs not only from its own subsidiary organs but also from the Secretariat and the specialized agencies, the working group should examine the question of the support facilities of the Secretariat including the reorientation of the functions of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, co-ordination arrangements, planning, programming and budgeting. There would be no point in expanding the role of the Council in the field of policy formulation and co-ordination unless at the same time the machinery to give advice and guidance to the Council was improved, at the intergovernmental and interagency level. While supporting the idea of establishing a single body to facilitate the review, approval and evaluation of programmes and budgets, Norway considered that for the time being it was necessary to strengthen the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination and thus enable it to review programmes and determine priorities in a more effective way than was currently the case. His delegation considered that the decisions taken at the recent session of the Economic and Social Council with regard to CPC represented a step in the right direction. In the field of planning, programming and budgeting, the Committee should try to formulate proposals which could serve as guidelines for the Council in setting the priorities of the United Nations system.

26. Since the Council was also dependent on guidance from the specialized agencies, his delegation was glad that the representatives of those agencies had requested that they should be brought more systematically into the policy-making process of the Council. The agencies represented a source of experience and expertise which had not been fully utilized either by the Council or by the General Assembly; the working group should therefore focus also on relations between ACC and the Economic and Social Council.

27. His delegation had an open mind regarding the establishment of an advisory committee on economic co-operation and development, which would serve a useful purpose by bringing to the attention of the Council certain policy options, assessments and recommendations requiring a decision by it, thus assisting the task of the policy-making organs. The role of the committee should, however, be defined in a way which did not reduce but enhanced the role of ACC and which would ensure liaison between the policy-making organs of the United Nations and the various organs of the system.

(Mr. Aasen, Norway)

28. With regard to the role of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, his delegation considered that the capacities of the Secretariat should be strengthened in the analytical field too. It was in favour of the proposal to establish a post of director-general for development and international economic co-operation and considered that the centre or "brain" of the economic and social sector should be strengthened so as to achieve meaningful decentralization.

29. His Government supported in principle the idea of consolidating funds, provided that the operation did not reduce the total amount of resources available. The expertise which the various specialized funds had acquired should also be preserved for the system.

30. His delegation would spare no effort to contribute to the success of the joint efforts. It would listen with interest to the views of the developing countries as to how the United Nations could cater more effectively to their needs, which should be considered as the basic needs of the whole of mankind.

31. Mr. KAUFMANN (Netherlands) referred to his earlier statements on the matter and supported the four problem areas proposed by the Chairman: the role of the Economic and Social Council, the role of the Secretariat, the evaluation of a consolidation of operational funds and greater cohesion of interagency co-operation. He said the Council should meet virtually continuously with regular short sessions to deal with specific problems. The items for consideration should be arranged under several headings so that it would be possible to concentrate on the questions which had the highest priority. Furthermore, the relationship and division of labour between the General Assembly and the Council, as well as the decision-making process of the two bodies, should be borne in mind. Negotiating processes of highly sensitive matters should be based on reaching consensus, but on certain more secondary matters arrangements could provide for majority votes.

32. With regard to the role of the Secretariat, he also believed that as part of the operation for restructuring the system, the Ad Hoc Committee should invite the Secretary-General to give his views on the proposals of the Group of Experts and the ideas expressed during the session.

33. Furthermore, the Ad Hoc Committee should study the possibility of consolidating the various funds, taking care that that operation did not lead to

(Mr. Kaufmann, Netherlands)

a severance between the intellectual and analytical work of the specialized agencies and the operational activities.

34. With regard to interagency co-operation, it would be very useful for ACC to tell the Ad Hoc Committee how it would see its task in a restructured system and how an advisory committee on economic and social issues might operate under its auspices.

35. The exercise of restructuring was in his opinion advantageous to everybody and no national or regional conflicts of interest seemed to impede agreement between countries or groups of countries. He opted for a gradual implementation of the changes proposed and for an early start of informal discussions.

The meeting rose at 12.25 p.m.

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14th MEETING

Thursday, 19 February 1976, 3 p.m.

RESTRUCTURING OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL SECTORS OF THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM
(A/AC.179/3 and Add.1) (continued)

1. Mr. KOTAITE (Secretary General, International Civil Aviation Organization) said few would contest that it was desirable to review, from time to time, the objectives, structures and methods of operation of institutions to ensure that their aims remained valid and their structures provided efficient mechanisms for attaining those aims.
2. ICAO, established to ensure that all States derived the greatest possible benefits from a technically innovative form of transport, such as civil aviation, had been well aware of the need to adapt to changing requirements, since it operated in an environment in which rapid technological change was the accepted norm. The Convention on International Civil Aviation had been concluded to promote co-operation between nations and peoples of the world and to ensure that international civil aviation, developed in a safe and orderly manner, could greatly help to create and preserve friendship and understanding. Those considerations were amplified by more precise aims and objectives, established by article 44 of the Convention, that were reproduced in the memorandum on ICAO which had been made available to members of the Committee.
3. Although ICAO dealt with a well-defined part of the transport sector, civil aviation, it was worth noting the comprehensive nature of its concern with that form of transport. Because aviation was a technically complex activity requiring the application of many disciplines to ensure its efficiency and, in particular, the safety of human life, ICAO's technical work covered a wide gamut of interests ranging from such specifically aeronautical branches of knowledge as those concerned with air traffic services or the airworthiness of aircraft to specialized applications of telecommunications, meteorology or medicine. ICAO also had large and significant work programmes in the economic and legal fields.
4. ICAO directed its efforts to the achievement of eminently practical aims. In the technical or air safety field, it established international standards and recommended practices to be applied all over the world to ensure the efficient

(Mr. Kotaite, ICAO)

operation and development of a co-operative activity such as civil aviation. In fact, the Rules of the Air adopted by ICAO had the force of international law over the high seas. Regional meetings convened by the ICAO Council periodically reviewed and updated the world-wide network of ground-based facilities and services required for international civil aviation. An extensive facilitation programme ensured that the intrinsic speed of aviation was not reduced by excessive documentary requirements and border crossing formalities.

5. A comprehensive statistical programme co-ordinated with those of the United Nations and other agencies constituted a fundamental tool for aviation planning and for all aspects of the economic work of the organization, which was increasingly emphasizing the solution of major air transport problems. ICAO was actively involved in the elaboration of international multilateral agreements for the unification of private and public air law. The system of the Warsaw Convention, as amended by subsequent modifications agreed on under the aegis of ICAO, constituted one of the most widely accepted agreements of that nature, with 101 parties to the original instrument and 79 to the Hague Protocol of 1955 amending it. ICAO had promptly responded to the wave of threats to the security of civil aviation by the preparation of the 1970 Hague Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Seizure of Aircraft and of the 1971 Montreal Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts Against the Safety of Civil Aviation; those Conventions had entered into force less than one year after their signature, and at present there were 71 parties to the Hague Convention and 62 to the Montreal Convention. In all, 12 international instruments had been elaborated under the auspices of ICAO.

6. The very rapidly growing technical co-operation activities of the organization, financed for the greater part through UNDP, were a clear indication of the realization by developing countries of the importance to them of acquiring the necessary technology to derive all possible social and economic benefits from civil aviation. A high proportion of technical co-operation projects were concerned with training, and a significant element of the organization's regular programme was also concerned with the provision of guidance material to aid in aeronautical training and to facilitate the acquisition of aeronautical technology.

(Mr. Kotaite, ICAO)

In fact, it was difficult for ICAO to treat the question of the transfer of technology as a separate subject, since it was indissolubly a part of its most important activities.

7. In the same practical spirit, ICAO had endeavoured to approach the question of co-ordination and positive collaboration with other international organizations, including those that were part of the United Nations family. As might be expected, its closest and most active collaboration, within the United Nations system, had been with those organizations such as WMO, ITU, IMCO and UPU whose interests lay in closely related fields.

8. The ICAO Assembly of All Contracting States (with a membership of 133 at present) was the supreme body of the organization and met every three years. The Assembly reviewed and established the policy of the organization in all aspects of its activity, determined the work programme and approved the budgets of the organization for the ensuing three years, and also elected the Contracting States to be represented on the Council during the next three years.

9. The Council was a body in virtually continuous session, at the headquarters of the organization, responsible to the Assembly for overseeing and directing the work of the organization in accordance with the policies established by the Assembly. Its permanence and wide responsibilities constituted a feature unique to ICAO among agencies of the United Nations family.

10. From the start, the member States had realized that, unless ICAO could keep pace with the rapidly changing technical and economic requirements of civil aviation, it would fail to meet the objectives set for it. It had therefore been necessary to gear the organization for quick action at the governmental level that would match the pace of aeronautical developments. To that end, it had been agreed that the States elected to the ICAO Council should commit themselves, as a prerequisite for election, to maintaining permanent delegations at ICAO headquarters to oversee the organization's work and to ensure that it was responsive to the aeronautical requirements of States. The Council, which at the outset had been composed of 21 States elected every three years by the ICAO Assembly, was now composed of 30 members in order to represent ICAO's growing membership more adequately. An amendment to the Convention now awaiting ratification would increase the membership to 33.

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(Mr. Kotaite, ICAO)

11. The structure and working methods of the organization had evolved constantly in response to changing requirements since ICAO had been first established. The changes had primarily been concerned with the process of regional planning of facilities and services required to permit aircraft to operate with equal safety and economy throughout the world and with the development of the International Standards to match the growing complexity and interdependence of the various disciplines required to ensure the safety and economy of international flight. In addition, regional civil aviation bodies had been established by States members of ICAO in Europe, Africa, Latin America and the Middle East to consider the problems of international civil aviation, particularly in their economic aspects, from the points of view of their respective regions. Three of them were served by the ICAO secretariat and worked in close liaison with ICAO as well as with other intergovernmental regional bodies.

12. So far as the international secretariat of the organization was concerned, the increasing volume of ICAO's technical co-operation activities had resulted in the creation of a new subdivision of the secretariat, the Technical Assistance Bureau; the six Regional Offices of ICAO, originally established principally to further the implementation of regional plans for air navigation facilities and services, had been substantially strengthened to cover more effectively the economic aspects of ICAO's work and to permit greater regional decentralization of technical co-operation activities.

13. Clearly, ICAO's development must be closely attuned to the pulse of civil aviation. It was none the less a member of the United Nations family and, within the limit of its resources and of the restrictions imposed by the nature of its activities under the Convention on International Civil Aviation, was ready to play its proper role in the attainment of the over-all objectives of the United Nations family. Means of communication - and civil aviation constituted one of the essential links between nations - were basic prerequisites for economic development, and ICAO had followed with much interest the discussions on development and international co-operation and on the restructuring of the United Nations system.

14. So far, consideration of structures had centred largely on the report of the Group of Experts on a new United Nations structure for global economic co-operation (E/AC.62/9), on which a preliminary but interesting and illuminating exchange of

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(Mr. Kotaite, ICAO)

views had taken place in July 1975 during the joint meetings of the Policy and Programme Co-ordination Committee of the Economic and Social Council and ACC. ICAO's interest, like that of most other organizations, had two aspects, namely, changes in its own structure that might be deemed necessary to facilitate achievement of the objectives of General Assembly resolution 3362 (S-VII), and changes in the structure and working methods of the United Nations as a whole, with the same objectives.

15. The Group of Experts, which had given attention to a limited number of sectoral activities, had made no recommendations dealing specifically with ICAO's field. Certainly if suggestions related to ICAO were to emerge from the deliberations of the Committee, they would come to the immediate attention of the ICAO Council and, on the basis of its recommendations, be referred as appropriate to the Assembly of ICAO. However, there being no such suggestions (or recommendations) at present, he would confine his remarks to some of the questions affecting the United Nations system as a whole in which ICAO, as one of its constituents, had an interest.

16. ICAO would certainly endorse all constructive efforts to reinforce the cohesion of the system, thus increasing the value of the work accomplished by each of its parts. Cohesion should not, however, be equated with centralization. It was hardly surprising that the United Nations system, being composed of organizations of widely varying characteristics that had been created to bring an international consensus to bear on many different facets of human endeavour, should be complex. That complexity reflected a real world in which diversity prevailed.

17. In the long run, the cohesion and unity of purpose of the system would not be achieved simply by changes in organization. It was certainly possible that a few features might make for unnecessary complexity, or even lead parts of the system to work at cross purposes on occasion. Any such features should be altered; but cohesion in the long run could only be achieved by the political will of States acting consistently with an agreed purpose, through the various autonomous elements of the system. That agreed purpose, though subject to changes of emphasis, should always take into account the underlying requirements that made sustained international co-operation essential to mankind. ICAO believed that its

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(Mr. Kotaite, ICAO)

efforts towards the establishment and consolidation of the international infrastructure in a part of the transport sector constituted a positive, albeit modest, contribution towards the achievement of that enduring aim.

18. The various organizations that made up the system had been established in response to different needs. It would therefore be counterproductive to treat them as if certain underlying differences did not or should not exist and to expect from them compliance with strictly standardized patterns. Different structures were generally required to reflect different immediate objectives.

19. The Group of Experts had recognized that differences - not only of size, but organic ones - existed among the organizations of the system; thus, it had recommended (while recognizing that all other agencies should participate in the Committee when they were involved) that only certain organizations of the United Nations system that dealt with the broad aspects of economic, social and financial questions should be ex officio members of the proposed Advisory Committee on Economic Co-operation and Development. ICAO considered that to be a desirable and realistic approach; it did not, however, consider it equally realistic to expect all organizations, regardless of substantial organic differences, to adopt a common budgetary cycle which might be relevant to a major group of organizations but which for others of a more limited and specialized nature, such as ICAO, would only add unnecessarily to the cost burden on the international community by increasing the frequency of the ICAO Assembly sessions. Nor did it appear to ICAO that the suggestion that the budgets and programmes of the agencies should be approved by the Economic and Social Council and by the United Nations General Assembly before they were considered by the agencies' own general conferences or assemblies would increase effective programme or budgetary control or help in achieving over-all cohesion. The budgets of technical regulatory agencies such as ICAO were relatively small and their programmes were of such a highly specialized nature as to make a constructive scrutiny by the Council and the General Assembly difficult to achieve. On the other hand, such a measure would make it necessary to increase very considerably the lead time between initial preparation of programmes and budgets and their implementation, thus seriously reducing efficient control by States over programmes and budgets.

(Mr. Kotaite, ICAO)

20. The Group of Experts had formulated a number of important recommendations on operational activities, including the consolidation of funds and the integration of management bodies. On those recommendations, he had no specific comment except to emphasize the value that was derived, both by the States involved and by ICAO, from ICAO's operational participation as an executing agency in technical co-operation projects. The fact that the organization responsible for over-all international co-operation in a certain sector should have corresponding operational activities for economic development in the same sector could prove - provided that the organization concerned was able to fit itself to carry out such a role - the best way to ensure cohesion of the system. The organization's regular and operational activities were mutually supportive and helped to make the organization a better instrument to serve the needs of its member States, particularly in cases where, as in aviation, international networks of common standards and procedures and compatible facilities were essential to permit aviation to provide one of the elements of the infrastructure necessary for economic development.

21. ICAO had consistently recognized its obligations stemming from its relationship with the United Nations. It had conscientiously co-operated with other members of the United Nations family, not only in the passive aspect of eschewing duplication, but actively in the dovetailing of complementary activities at the programming stage. Naturally, that had been done more often and more effectively with the organizations whose interests and activities were closest to those of ICAO.

22. ICAO desired to continue to play its role, specialized and limited though it might be, in further reinforcing the United Nations system. He therefore reiterated the importance ICAO attached to the work of the Ad Hoc Committee as well as his own readiness to co-operate with it in every possible way.

23. Mr. BOGSCH (Director-General, World Intellectual Property Organization), recalling General Assembly resolution 3362 (S-VII), said that at the early stages of the Committee's work it was only natural that no requests for specific information, data or views had so far been addressed to WIPO. He would therefore give only some general information on the organization, and its place in the present structure of the United Nations system, and very preliminary and tentative views on how to make the system more fully capable of dealing with problems of

(Mr. Bogsch, WIPO)

international economic co-operation and development and more responsive to the requirements of the establishment of a new international economic order and of the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States.

24. WIPO was active in the field of intellectual creations. Such creations were principally of two kinds: inventions and literary and artistic works. The volume of both kinds of intellectual creations was enormous. Each day, some 1,000 new inventions, claiming advances in technology for industrial application, were announced to the competent national authorities of the various countries of the world with the request that they should be recognized by the grant of patents. There was an even greater volume of literary, artistic and scientific works, including not only books, newspapers, periodicals, paintings and sculpture but also musical works, motion pictures, dramatic works, architectural works and designs, which also contributed to economic, social and cultural advancement. Their legal recognition at the national, regional and international levels was important because it encouraged creativity and dissemination and use of such creations in the various countries of the world. Effective, rapid transfer of technology was unthinkable without reliance on a properly functioning international patent system. Transfer of technology from abroad, and especially the creation of technology at home, were indispensable for development and for the creation of a new economic order.

25. Of course, such legal protection was always limited. It was always subject to the public interest - to the economic and social interests of the community and of the State - in furtherance of a country's economic and social goals. The essence of patent and copyright laws and international treaties was precisely the establishment of the supremacy of the public interest without stifling creativity. Those were the fields in which WIPO was active, and its role in the creation of a new economic order and in the implementation of the economic rights and duties of States was significant.

26. That role had been foremost in the minds of Governments when they had decided at the twenty-ninth session of the General Assembly that WIPO should be a specialized agency. The Agreement they had approved placed emphasis on WIPO's role in promoting creative intellectual activity, in facilitating the transfer of technology to developing countries, in co-operating with the United Nations in

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(Mr. Bogsch, WIPO)

the provision of technical assistance for development in those fields, and in assisting the United Nations in giving effect to the decisions regarding the well-being of all peoples in their attainment of self-government. WIPO worked towards these goals by helping to build national institutions which encouraged and rewarded intellectual creativity, by training government officials of developing countries in the administration of their patent and copyright systems, by helping developing countries in assembling, selecting and digesting that part of the immense wealth of patent documentation which interested them because of its usefulness in their industrialization, by administering international treaties regulating relations between States in the field of patents, trade-marks and copyright, and by preparing their constant revision in the light of changing circumstances. At present, for example, a revision of the basic international treaty on industrial property - the Paris Convention - was under way mainly in order to write into it provisions designed to be of special benefit to developing countries.

27. With respect to information, WIPO was not the only organization in the United Nations system which dealt with patent and trade-mark matters or with copyright. Under a different name, and in a slightly different form, the World Intellectual Property Organization had been in existence since 1883 and thus, together with what were called today UPU and ITU, it was one of the oldest of the intergovernmental organizations. However, soon after UNESCO had been created in 1945, that organization had begun to interest itself in matters of copyright. The respective programmes of the two organizations in that field were very similar. The intergovernmental bodies specializing in copyright in UNESCO and WIPO frequently held joint meetings, and the two secretariats were in almost daily contact. They discussed with each other their draft programmes and budgets in the field of copyright and tried to make their action joint or at least co-ordinated. Of course, decision-making remained with the different intergovernmental bodies, but so far those bodies too had paid attention to the need for co-ordination and, whenever practicable, joint action. There was duplication in the sense that many programme items appeared in the programmes of both agencies; but there was generally no waste of money or talent because the secretariats divided work

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between themselves, and the specialized intergovernmental bodies were, in fact, co-ordinated. That kind of co-operation with UNESCO had started more than 20 years before and had been particularly satisfactory in recent years.

28. As far as patents were concerned, the situation was different. Patents played an important role in the transfer of technology and, of course, each agency of the United Nations system had responsibilities in the field of transfer of technology. UNCTAD, UNIDO, ILO, UNESCO and FAO also played important roles. Co-ordination was more difficult because, unlike the copyright situation, where on most substantive questions the specialized committees established under UNESCO's and WIPO's auspices sat together, no such practice existed for specialized committees dealing with transfer of technology and sponsored by various organizations.

29. His views were very preliminary and tentative for several reasons. Firstly, WIPO was a relative newcomer to the United Nations system. Secondly, although intellectual creations were the motor of human advancement and therefore inventions had a decisive impact on the betterment of material life in developing countries, and although literacy and artistic works had the same impact on a spiritually more enjoyable life, WIPO was a small agency in terms of staff and budgetary resources when compared with most of the other United Nations agencies. The third, and foremost, reason was that his views, if they were to be of any value to the Committee, should be related to questions of implementing a policy to be determined by the members of the Ad Hoc Committee as representatives of the Member States and not by heads of secretariats whose duty was to carry out a policy fixed by Governments.

30. Notwithstanding those considerations, and subject to review and complement once the Committee's policy options were known, he would say that at present, and without any revolutionary change in the existing structure, he saw two practical, pragmatic steps that could be taken. One was that the Economic and Social Council should strengthen its role as co-ordinator; the other was that the secretariats should increase their contacts and consultations when they prepared their proposals for their respective programmes and budgets, somewhat along the lines of what was already done by the secretariats of WIPO and UNESCO. There was absolutely nothing new in what he had just said. It was a matter of implementation. It was a matter of will - and also of sheer time and physical stamina - for the Governments

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represented on the Economic and Social Council to try to comprehend and channel, on the basis of an agreed general policy, the myriad activities that went on in the various agencies. For the secretariats, too, it was a matter of willingness and of having the time and physical stamina to discuss and co-ordinate. Those truths, although well known, seemed to bear repetition, since their implementation was difficult in practice and required constant encouragement.

31. Mr. GONZALEZ DE COSSIO (Mexico) asked the Director-General of WIPO what co-ordinating procedures his organization hoped to have with the recently established UNCTAD Committee on Transfer of Technology, with the data bank which it had been decided at the seventh special session of the General Assembly should be established and with the future transfer of technology centres.

32. Mr. BOGSCH (Director-General, World Intellectual Property Organization) said that WIPO's co-operation with UNCTAD on the transfer of technology was quite close and the two bodies were in constant consultation. The main difference between their respective responsibilities was that UNCTAD was interested mainly in the economic and commercial aspects of the problem while WIPO's prime interest was in the legal aspect. With regard to the establishment of a data bank containing material of use in the transfer of technology, WIPO could make a great contribution because of its store of documentation concerning patents. Securing access to such documentation was a problem even for the smaller developed countries and WIPO could help in two respects. Firstly, it had established a classification system with 52,000 subdivisions for easier tracing of documents, and, secondly, it had established an International Patent Documentation Centre in Vienna, where bibliographical data on patent documents were stored on a computer.

33. Mr. GONZALEZ DE COSSIO (Mexico) recalled that his Government had always maintained that the most serious problem in the United Nations was the gap between the principles embodied in the Charter and their implementation in good faith by Member States. Indeed, if the entire international community had been genuinely and sincerely prepared to speedily establish the New International Economic Order, there would have been no need for restructuring the economic and social sectors of the United Nations system. His delegation viewed the current exercise within that policy framework; for it should not be forgotten that, in initiating the

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restructuring attempt which had culminated in the adoption of General Assembly resolution 3343 (XXIX) concerning the seventh special session of the General Assembly, the Group of 77 had requested a comprehensive report on the state of international economic activities, focusing on constraints of a general policy nature which faced the implementation of the Programme of Action on the Establishment of a New International Economic Order as well as the International Development Strategy for the Second United Nations Development Decade. Unfortunately, the report had been disappointing, hence the need to return to a consideration of sectoral interests and the examination of the restrictions of general policy which impeded the establishment of the New International Economic Order. So far, the practice had been to establish new bodies in order to fill the gaps caused by the lack of political will and to seek to correct inadequate situations. That had led to a proliferation of machinery with few practical results. Indeed, it was possible that UNCTAD would not have been established had the Havana precepts for orderly international trade been applied. It should be remembered, therefore, that the United Nations system was not the result of a rational plan but the product of historical events over the past 30 years and it could not operate like a profit-seeking private enterprise but must respond to the development needs of the developing countries. Accordingly, rather than aiming for internal restructuring in order to produce a change in outward behaviour, it would be better to start the exercise with a systematic analysis of trade, development financing, monetary questions, industrialization, science, education and culture, food and agriculture, and so on, so that, once policy measures had been decided on, agreement could be reached on restructuring measures which would affect respectively UNCTAD and GATT, the World Bank and IMF, UNIDO, UNESCC, FAO, and so on. Once the policy measures were decided on - and he believed that was all that there was time for before the end of the current session - the Committee could proceed horizontally and analyse what changes were needed in the relevant organs and in the General Assembly and what changes were required in the secretariat of the system in order to adapt it to the new sectoral situation. Then, and only then, should the Committee consider whether or not it was necessary to create a post of Director-General for Development and International Economic Co-operation, to consolidate funds into a United Nations Development Authority or

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to establish an advisory committee on economic co-operation and development. It would be a mistake to express an opinion on the specific recommendation made by the Group of Experts without first completing the sectoral analysis, for such an approach would lead nowhere.

34. Accordingly, his delegation proposed that a working group should be established to start the sectoral analysis immediately. It was with that in mind that his delegation had suggested at a previous meeting that the Committee's report should include, in addition to annexes reproducing the records of the debates, a substantive part prepared by government representatives analysing priority areas of action and had asked the Director-General of GATT for a document outlining the relationship between GATT and the United Nations system. Trade should be the first priority area to be analysed, since the institutional aspects of trade would be discussed at the forthcoming fourth session of UNCTAD.

35. Mr. MARSHALL (United Kingdom) said that he very much agreed with the general trend of the comments made in the Committee by representatives of States members of the European Economic Community and others. In order not to duplicate what others had stated, he would simply consider three aspects of the Committee's work, namely, the role of the report of the Group of Experts (E/AC.62/9), the process of United Nations economic and social co-operation, and the Economic and Social Council.

36. The report of the Group of Experts had been invaluable in stimulating thought and discussion. It was comprehensive. It was clear. It was concise. It was unanimous. The Ad Hoc Committee could not ask for more. It would prove a useful reference document; it in no way relieved the Ad Hoc Committee of the duty to discharge its own mandate. It must consider General Assembly resolution 3362 (S-VII) when evaluating resolution 3343 (XXIX). Although in some respects he did not follow what the representative of Mexico had just said, he did agree that the Committee must view the restructuring exercise in the context in which it had been launched and in the light of present and foreseeable circumstances.

37. With regard to the process of international economic and social co-operation, his delegation took it as axiomatic that the starting point of the Ad Hoc Committee's work was not administrative efficiency in itself so much as the

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collective purpose which the economic and social sectors of the United Nations system were designed to serve. The debate had strengthened his conviction that the system was so complicated that a great deal more information was needed before the Ad Hoc Committee could make detailed action proposals to the General Assembly. However, the Committee should not be perfectionist and its prescriptions should be action-oriented, for effectiveness was what really mattered. Against that background, his delegation agreed with the Chairman's suggestion that the Committee should begin by identifying the main problem areas. A first problem area, on which a good start had already been made, was finding out more comprehensively what the system was and did, what additional information was needed and how the information that was still lacking could be brought together. His delegation also agreed with the priorities set out in the Chairman's report to the Second Committee at the end of the thirtieth session of the General Assembly, the first of those priorities being the Economic and Social Council.

38. Without going into the relationship between the General Assembly and the Council as defined in the Charter, it could be said that the Council's prime task was to help the Members of the United Nations in the General Assembly in both an advisory and an executive character. The Council's basic problem appeared to be an inferiority complex; all too often it seemed to consider itself competent neither to deal with technical questions nor to take major policy decisions. It had failed to grasp the middle ground between what was a matter for technical, functional or regional discussion, on the one hand, and the highest over-all policy decisions, on the other. It must be prepared to grapple with issues which it currently delegated to other bodies and to assume and retain responsibility for some of the issues it now passed on to the Second Committee.

39. When the responsibilities of the Economic and Social Council were viewed in that light, a number of issues fell into place. For instance, it was agreed that the Council should not duplicate the work of the General Assembly. If it differentiated its functions from those of the Assembly clearly enough such duplication would be avoided. It was also agreed that the Council's subordinate machinery should be pruned. Some advocated abolishing a good many of the subordinate bodies, while others were in favour of the Council's limiting its work to processing, from a managerial and executive point of view, the work of the

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expert bodies. Both positions were valid; for while the Council could not, as constituted at present, usefully oversee the work of 160 subordinate bodies and must indeed tackle that problem, it should not encourage the feeling that there was no intermediate point between the General Assembly, on the one hand, and the bodies of more limited membership where functional or geographical or expert issues were considered by those most directly concerned, on the other. Co-ordination was neither synonymous with nor a substitute for specialist knowledge; the two were complementary and came together in the Council. It followed that to talk of discussion at three levels could be misleading. Although the General Assembly and the Council were two separate levels, it was not realistic to portray discussions beyond and beneath the Council as corresponding to a third level in any uniform way. What could be said was that the Council should be clear about the relationship between any such discussion and its own work. Finally, while there was a good deal of merit in the proposals contained in Economic and Social Council resolution 1768 (LIV), rationalization had not gone far enough. His delegation would be ready to make specific suggestions to follow up its remarks at the appropriate moment.

40. Mr. KANAZAWA (Japan) said that, although everyone recognized the need to make the United Nations system more capable of achieving its objectives, no effective and satisfactory solution had yet been found. His delegation supported General Assembly resolution 3362 (S-VII), which stated that the purpose of restructuring the United Nations system was to make it more fully capable of dealing with problems of international economic co-operation and development. However, the fact that the existing system had fallen short of meeting even the old requirements showed how difficult it would be to enable it to meet new challenges.

41. He agreed with the Chairman that the Committee should first try to identify the problem areas. However, it would also be useful to consider what solutions were available and then see which problems could be solved by available means. As the Committee was dealing with structure, the means available to it were either to establish new machineries or to abolish existing machineries, merge them or change the relationships among them. If one of the main problems to be solved was the one caused by the proliferation of committees, agencies and organizations, the solution

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might not necessarily lie in the establishment of yet another committee or agency but rather in the more efficient functioning of the various machineries and the establishment of better relationships among them. The aim should be to restore confidence in the ability of the United Nations to formulate a global policy in the economic and social sectors based on a co-ordination of activities and to ensure an efficient mechanism to implement such a policy.

42. As to the identification of problem areas, he agreed with the representative of the Federal Republic of Germany that the Committee should address itself to three main areas: the intergovernmental decision-making machinery, the international secretariat, and the relationship between the various organizations.

43. With regard to the intergovernmental decision-making machinery, he considered it essential to introduce a mechanism for conducting negotiations until agreement was achieved by consensus. He agreed with the Group of Experts on the importance of enhancing the effectiveness of the United Nations system in influencing its Members to undertake appropriate policies in development and international economic co-operation, and felt that that could be achieved only by reaching consensus through negotiation. It was essential to strengthen the capability of the United Nations to adopt a comprehensive approach to multidisciplinary and multisectoral problems. To that end, the Economic and Social Council should be strengthened to enable it to carry out the crucial role given to it in the Charter. His delegation had long believed that the Council should play the central role with regard to global policy formulation and implementation and the setting of priorities in the economic and social sectors. His delegation agreed with the recommendation by the Group of Experts that the Council's calendar and programme of work should be examined. In particular, it favoured short Council sessions to discuss major policy matters with the participation of high-level representatives, to deal with the programme budget and medium-term plan, without, however, infringing on the General Assembly's authority to adopt the budget, and to review operational activities. Planning and programming were one area where fruitful results could be expected, and his delegation was encouraged by the limited progress already made towards common methods and standards in programme formulation and presentation. The Council, with the assistance of a strengthened Committee for Programme and Co-ordination, could further promote the trend in that direction. Closer

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co-operation between CPC and the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions would also be desirable. The report of the Working Group on United Nations Programme and Budget Machinery to the General Assembly at its thirtieth session would be helpful in that regard. It was essential to strengthen the function of assessment in the United Nations system, including the capability to obtain information and data quickly, to analyse them and to provide a concrete basis for policy decisions.

44. Where the international secretariat was concerned, greater coherence was obviously a primary goal. Nothing should be done to dilute the authority of the Secretary-General as the chief administrative officer under the Charter. The danger of further compartmentalization of the Secretariat should be avoided. As 75 per cent of the United Nations budget was devoted to staff costs, it was in the interest of all Member States to ensure that the Secretariat was run within a simplified, economical and well-disciplined administrative framework. As the questions related to organizational matters required a full examination of the coherence of the total system, his delegation welcomed the development of an effective system of evaluation, which was a prerequisite for the rational allocation of resources, and noted that the General Assembly would have an opportunity at its next session to consider the matter in conjunction with a review of the role and functions of the Joint Inspection Unit.

45. As to the relationship between the various institutions and organizations, measures should be adopted to rationalize and simplify the system in order to achieve economies and avoid duplication. A careful balance should be struck between the merits of functional and geographical decentralization and the need to preserve central direction and guidance. That subject should be approached both from the intergovernmental angle of the Economic and Social Council and through the intersecretariat perspective based on a fuller use of the potentials of ACC. Greater interaction between the legislative and executive branches of the system should prove helpful. ACC and its subsidiary bodies could assist the Council and its subsidiary bodies in identifying priorities and eliminating overlapping and duplication. However, nothing could replace the ultimate responsibility of intergovernmental organs, and consequently of the sovereign Governments which constituted their membership, in ensuring the unity of purpose of the United Nations

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system. In the area of personnel, the work of the International Civil Service Commission would be of vital importance in securing common personnel standards and procedures throughout the system and in facilitating the transferability of staff.

46. The report of the Group of Experts contained many valuable ideas and suggestions in the three areas he had referred to, and his delegation was prepared to join other members of the Committee in a systematic and pragmatic search for concrete steps for reform on which all could agree.

47. Mr. LUCHTERHAND (German Democratic Republic) said that his country had supported the establishment of the Ad Hoc Committee, which was an appropriate forum to consider problems related to justified changes in the economic and social sectors of the United Nations system on the basis of the United Nations Charter, the decisions of the General Assembly at its sixth and seventh special sessions and the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States.

48. Recent experience had confirmed that the favourable new political climate, the progress made in détente, the increasing application of the principles of peaceful coexistence and of the right to self-determination and the elimination of the last vestiges of colonialism had furthered the mutually advantageous development of international economic relations.

49. The primary concern should be to enhance the effectiveness of United Nations bodies and to overcome existing short-comings. His delegation would support the effort to make the economic and social activities of the United Nations more effective, in the interest of all States, particularly the developing countries.

50. The continuation of détente and the increased application of the principles of the United Nations Charter in the practice of international relations had created the prerequisites for taking account of new trends and requirements in international economic relations. At the same time, economic and scientific co-operation, based on such principles of the Charter as respect for the independence, sovereignty, equality and territorial integrity of States, non-use of force and non-interference in the internal affairs of States, was apt to promote the process of détente and strengthen peace and security. Such a development was in the interests of all States. His delegation therefore felt that

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the views expressed in paragraphs 2 and 3 of the report of the Group of Experts (E/AC.62/9) should be principles which governed the work of the Ad Hoc Committee.

51. In improving the economic and social activities of the United Nations system, the following principles should be taken into consideration. A restructuring of the United Nations system could take place only in full conformity with, and on the basis of, the principles contained in the United Nations Charter, which reflected the interests of all groups of States and could provide the basis for agreements to realize the goals of the United Nations. The same applied to the rules and regulations concerning the functioning and structure of the United Nations which had been derived from the basic principles of the Charter. The mandate of the Committee was defined in General Assembly resolution 3362 (S-VII). That mandate was also in harmony with the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States, article 11 of which, called on States to co-operate to strengthen and continuously improve the efficiency of international organizations in implementing measures to stimulate the general economic progress of all countries, particularly of developing countries. At the same time, article 33 stated that nothing in the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties should be construed as impairing or derogating from the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations. In connexion with resolution 3362 (S-VII), section II, paragraph 13, he drew attention to the need for the developing countries to participate in the decision-making process of the international financial institutions. The democratic principles of the United Nations Charter were not being applied in the activities of these institutions, some of which even engaged in operations contrary to conclusions and decisions of the United Nations. In that regard, he referred to articles in The Washington Post of 12 and 13 February 1976 relating to the activities of the World Bank. His delegation therefore considered it appropriate for the Committee to include in its deliberations the demands made in the resolutions of the sixth and seventh special sessions, and by some representatives during the debate in the Ad Hoc Committee, for the international financial organizations to bring their activities into line with the provisions of the United Nations Charter.

52. A decisive criterion for changes in the economic and social sectors of the United Nations system should be the principle of rationalizing the activities in those sectors and enhancing their effectiveness. Efforts should be made to avoid

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(Mr. Luchterhand, German Democratic Republic)

duplication of work in administration, to promote concentration on priorities and to achieve genuine economies. His delegation was in favour of strengthening the Economic and Social Council as the central organ of the United Nations in the economic, political and social fields. In order to rationalize and optimize the Council's activities, a close look should be taken at the effectiveness of the Council's subsidiary bodies. Another matter which deserved the Committee's attention was the synchronization and optimization of the planning, programming and budgeting activities of the United Nations. In order to improve the operational activities of the United Nations, particularly in the field of technical assistance, the regional economic commissions should be given a greater role in the drafting and implementation of specific programmes and projects. Account should also be taken of the principle of universality and the just interests and views of all States, with particular emphasis on the needs of the developing countries.

53. In drawing up recommendations for future work in the economic and social sectors, the Committee should apply the principle of consensus in order to arrive at constructive recommendations corresponding to the interests of all parties concerned.

54. In accordance with resolution 3362 (S-VII), the Committee was responsible for drafting proposals for the restructuring of the economic and social sectors, and it therefore had to make the main contribution in such work. If the Committee carried out its complex and broad functions on the basis of the principles of the United Nations Charter, taking account of the interests of all States, its work would be successful.

The meeting rose at 5.20 p.m.

15th MEETING

Friday, 20 February 1976, 10.30 a.m.

RESTRUCTURING OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL SECTORS OF THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM
(A/AC.179/3 and Add.1) (continued)

1. Mr. SALAS (Executive Director, United Nations Fund for Population Activities) said that the restructuring of the United Nations system, though a complex matter, was of the utmost importance, since it involved fashioning the instruments which would enable the United Nations system to be more efficient and responsible in dealing with the basic human problem of all - the problem of poverty. Poverty was at the root of most of the problems currently confronting the modern world, such as hunger, the need for a new economic order, population growth, crime and environment. The demographic forecast was that before the United Nations reached twice its present age, the world population needing to share the material resources of the planet would have doubled. The international community must therefore be given the means to deal adequately with the situation as it developed and to solve problems which were basically human problems. UNFPA had shown that it was capable of responding to those growing needs, and its responsiveness was the reason for its acceptance by all the countries contributing to the Fund's resources. Since 1967, when the Trust Fund for Population Activities had been established, the resources of that Fund, which had been of the order of \$1 million, had grown to some \$250 million through the generosity of the donors; among those donors were many of the developing countries, which had evinced great interest in population activities.
2. The Fund's character had changed considerably since the time it had been established as a Trust Fund. The aims and purposes of UNFPA, as constituted at present, were laid down in Economic and Social Council resolution 1763 (LIV). In pursuance of those aims, the Fund was now supporting some 1,400 projects, large and small, in more than 100 developing countries. Those projects involved, inter alia, data collection through census programmes in Africa and the Middle East, family health through family planning programmes in India, Bangladesh and Tunisia, population policy in El Salvador and Guatemala, and research and training activities at the regional and interregional levels. In

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(Mr. Salas)

addition, the Fund supported large-scale multisectoral programmes in 20 developing countries. It therefore had responsibility for funding and co-ordinating projects in nearly all the developing countries.

3. The Fund was regarded by Governments and non-governmental organizations as a responsible institution and as an effective and neutral instrument for international assistance. It was also a bank of ideas on population and an innovator of techniques designed to support demographic activities. UNFPA had thus been evolving into a world-wide population programme, and its activities had entered the broader context of the World Population Year and the World Population Conference. All population agencies, governmental as well as non-governmental, recognized the leadership role given to UNFPA by the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council. If the Fund enjoyed a privileged relationship with Governments, it was because it had always been governed by three cardinal principles: the sovereign right of nations to formulate and promote their own population policies and programmes; the freedom of individuals to determine the size of their family; and the pre-eminence, in the field of assistance, of activities designed to develop self-reliance in the communities. On the basis of those principles, UNFPA had introduced new managerial methods in delivering assistance which had led it, in the past few years, to provide direct funding to government agencies or government-approved agencies, to replace foreign experts with local experts and programme managers, paying their salaries when necessary, and to provide funds for the purchase of local materials and equipment. The advantages of that direct assistance were evident, and the reactions of countries had been immediate, as was obvious from their support for the Fund's programmes.

4. It was worth noting that the Fund's evolution towards a world-wide population programme delivering \$80 million in assistance for 1975 had been achieved by a small staff of 50 professionals at Headquarters and some 20 in the field. UNFPA's administrative costs were thus fairly low compared with the results obtained. It had succeeded in maintaining an unprogrammed reserve of \$20 million, and it authorized expenditure only on the basis of firm commitments for financial contributions.

5. It appeared then that the Fund should be encouraged to pursue its current

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managerial techniques, thereby maintaining its momentum. Attempts at general improvements should not be allowed to hamper a machinery which was functioning satisfactorily.

6. In determining the future structure of development activities in the United Nations system so as to obtain an instrument better geared to the requirements of a new international economic order, the following four factors should be considered: subject-matter, allocation of resources, delivery of project services, and time-frame of the activity. With respect to population activities, the experience of UNFPA in those four areas was clearly relevant.

7. The long-neglected population question was now recognized as a distinct factor in the complex problem of poverty. Most developing countries had already adopted a national population policy or established a governmental agency to deal with population. It was therefore essential to avoid an untimely consolidation of various development activities that would again consign to obscurity a crucial question which had just come into the limelight.

8. With regard to the allocation of resources, it should be borne in mind that the Governing Council of UNFPA and the Economic and Social Council had repeatedly stated that resources for population assistance should not be allocated according to a single world-wide formula as in the case of general development assistance. In view of the sensitivity of the population question and the varied nature of cultural and national approaches to it, population assistance policies should be responsive to the varying needs of different countries.

9. The delivery of population programmes required a constantly innovative and flexible approach. UNFPA's experience had shown that the standard traditional methods of delivery had not always been effective and that the imposition of a uniform method of delivery should be avoided.

10. The time-frame of the increasing need for population assistance was finite. The essential point was not a matter of numbers but a question of balance between population and accessible resources. Present action, whether at the international or the national level, had to be envisaged within the framework of an irreversible and finite process if such action was to have any real impact. What was needed was effective and immediate action to devise the institutions and

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programmes for assistance aimed at solving the population problem before it became too big and complex to be dealt with in an orderly manner.

11. With regard to the comments and recommendations of the Group of Experts on the Restructuring of the United Nations system (E/AC.62/9), UNFPA could not challenge the assumption that economic development and population were closely related; that assumption had been endorsed by consensus at the United Nations World Population Conference and was a guiding principle in the World Population Plan of Action. The experts had rightly stressed the need to simplify the system and make it more efficient by drawing together related elements under a unified direction. Whatever its apparent advantages, however, such an arrangement involved immense dangers. One danger was that some of those elements might lose their essential distinctness and much of their usefulness if they were too tightly or inappropriately integrated into a general system. It appeared that, in order to avoid duplication of effort, it would be sufficient to define clearly the responsibilities and boundaries of functions of specialized agencies or organs instead of moving methodically towards complete integration. The immense flow of contributions to UNFPA at a time when money was scarce everywhere else was a clear indication that countries viewed population assistance as an urgent concern. Consolidation of those resources with other funds in the name of simplification - which, in itself, could be a good thing - might in the case of UNFPA produce the opposite of the desired effect by impairing efficiency. What mattered was not so much to keep distinct accounts as to maintain a clear profile.

12. For those reasons, in discussions on effective changes in the system, UNFPA should be regarded as a special case and treated as a distinct programme. Such a programme could function in close co-operation with the system as a whole, both in establishing policies and in organizing operational activities, pursuant to the resolutions of the Economic and Social Council and the UNDP Governing Council. Thus, in consultation with the principal officer responsible for the over-all direction of assistance and development, the head of the programme would report to the Economic and Social Council and the proposed Operations Board, and he would also participate in any consultative institution which might be established to co-ordinate the developmental activities of the United Nations and its specialized agencies. That would avoid any threat to the evolution and dynamic drive of UNFPA.

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(Mr. Salas)

13. Reorganization should aim primarily at preserving or creating viable institutions. So far as UNFPA was concerned, the best solution seemed to be to maintain it as a distinct programme while at the same time integrating it with developmental activities as a whole by establishing the appropriate co-ordinating mechanisms.

14. Mr. HOVEYDA (Iran) said that the reasons for restructuring the social and economic sectors were too well known to be discussed further. It was therefore regrettable that the heads of the secretariats of United Nations bodies had made statements which dealt less with the question under discussion than with the history of the operational details of their organization. The Ad Hoc Committee had invited them to participate in its work precisely in order to hear their views on the recommendations of the Group of Experts and on the question of restructuring in general.

15. The report of the Group of Experts (E/AC.62/9) was extremely useful by reason of its many interesting ideas and its recommendations. It was also refreshing to note that the experts had not avoided substantive problems, as was frequently done in order not to hurt people's feelings; they had shouted out truths which were normally spoken in a whisper. Furthermore, judging from their reaction, the feelings of some of the heads of specialized agencies had been hurt. However, the report of the Group of Experts should not be regarded as the only basis for the Committee's discussions. At the same time, the Committee must not give the impression that it wished to transform itself into a kind of specialized agency.

16. Since 1945, two opposite trends had emerged, one favouring centralization, the other favouring decentralization and even autonomy. The Group of Experts seemed to favour the first alternative. His delegation felt that neither excessive centralization nor a general fragmentation would be beneficial; it was preferable to establish a balance between those two tendencies in order to make the system more efficient. Efficiency depended less on the recommendations or decisions of any given body than on the manner in which they were applied by the responsible officers of the various bodies. Over the years, a certain competitive spirit had appeared among the specialized agencies and various other bodies, whereas the Charter and the Member States advocated co-operation. Rather than make new recommendations, therefore, the Committee should draw attention once more to basic principles.

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(Mr. Hoveyda, Iran)

17. In connexion with the report (E/AC.62/9), he stressed the the Group of Experts had paid little attention to available resources. It was obvious that even the most advanced administration would remain ineffective if it did not have the necessary tools at its disposal.

18. The recommendation of the Group of Experts to convene a special session of the General Assembly or to establish a new commission for development, rather than to organize world conferences to study particular questions, seemed attractive at first sight but would increase the burden placed on the General Assembly and might adversely affect the quality of its work.

19. So far as the revitalization of the Economic and Social Council was concerned, its co-ordinating role in the economic and social sectors should certainly be reinforced, but the Council itself could not do efficiently the work carried out by its subsidiary organs; the risks involved in abolishing such organs should not be forgotten. The Group's recommendations in that respect should therefore be studied with great care.

20. In many cases, the small negotiating groups recommended by the Group of Experts existed already. It seemed preferable to continue establishing such groups on an ad hoc basis rather than to institutionalize the procedure. Similarly, the tendency to adopt decisions by consensus already existed. It would be enough to support that tendency, since any rigidity in that area would mean that if difficulties arose, there would be as many rights of veto as there were members.

21. As the Experts themselves admitted, it was impossible to predict the practical effects of establishing a post of Director-General for Development and International Economic Co-operation. It did not seem realistic to believe that anyone other than the Secretary-General could impose directives on institutions and bodies which were already jealous of their prerogatives. Furthermore, such a post might, in a sense, establish a secretariat within the Secretariat and thus endanger its unity. The same goal could be achieved by reorganizing the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, or perhaps even the entire Secretariat. Under the provisions of the Charter, the Secretary-General himself could - and must - be the one to undertake such a reform, apparently without waiting for instructions

(Mr. Hoveyda, Iran)

from the Committee. In that connexion, it was unfortunate that the Secretary-General had not seen fit to inform the Committee about his views on restructuring.

22. With regard to the consolidation of operational activities and funds, the ideas of the Group of Experts were acceptable in principle. However, the implications of such a proposal, particularly in connexion with the participation of Governments in the joint governing council, must be studied with care. It was not the same Governments that participated in all the Governing Councils of the various funds. Furthermore, some of those funds, for example UNFPA, were working well; should each case be treated on its own merits, or should they be treated collectively?

23. The members of the Committee must now study suggestions made during the general discussion and the recommendations of the Group of Experts. At the same time, they should not forget that, as U Thant had said, the problems lay in world conditions rather than in the structure of the United Nations. However, the Committee had the enormous advantage of having at its disposal an extremely solid basis for work in the form of the recommendations made by the Group of Experts.

24. Mr. GORITZA (Romania) said that the Ad Hoc Committee should make an effort, in the light of the mandate given to it by the General Assembly, to define specific objectives so that the working group could draw up concrete proposals for the restructuring of the United Nations system, in order to place it in a better position to deal effectively with the problems of development and international economic co-operation from a new angle. The establishment of the Ad Hoc Committee was in itself a further indication of the importance which Member States attached to such action. His delegation felt that the time had come to take measures that would permit the improvement of the capacity for action of the United Nations and would accord to economic and social problems the attention that they merited and would give them distinct boundaries within the system. In the opinion of his delegation the process of restructuring ought to be included in the wider perspective of reaffirming the role of the United Nations in international life, in the improvement and democratization of the entire system with a view to adapting its structures to the needs of establishing the New International Economic Order.

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(Mr. Gorilza, Romania)

25. His country - which was both a socialist and developing country - took an active interest in improving the role of the United Nations, and he expressed the hope that the proposals it had submitted in various documents would be taken into account in the formulation of recommendations concerning the restructuring of the economic and social sectors of the United Nations.

26. His delegation felt that restructuring should make it possible to achieve two basic goals, namely, the increased effectiveness of the United Nations system in the economic and social field, to suit the changing circumstances, and the democratization of the system.

27. As to the first of those goals, various measures should be contemplated such as measures to rationalize the work of the legislative bodies, and especially the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council to include new areas of co-operation in a way that would lead to the enlargement of their roles (energy, science and technology, development of marine resources etc.) in the work of the United Nations machinery to strengthen the role of the regional economic commissions in the identification, elaboration and execution of regional co-operation programmes, to eliminate duplication and intermediary machinery which impaired the proper functioning of the system and to enhance the effectiveness of operational activities for development by improving the management of assistance funds and encouraging all countries to participate more extensively in the implementation of projects.

28. Within the context of those measures it would also be necessary to strengthen the role of the Economic and Social Council by giving it the means of taking a more direct approach to the consideration of solutions for urgent economic problems, partly by enabling it to hold special sessions. The Council should also hold periodic ministerial sessions devoted to a general examination of the international economic situation. Furthermore, it should be remembered that the Council should oversee and co-ordinate the implementation of the objectives of the Programme of Action on the Establishment of a New International Economic Order and those of the International Development Strategy. As to the proposal that the Council should be given direct responsibility for the work currently carried out by some of its subsidiary bodies, his delegation stressed the need to study the question in depth. If such a transfer of responsibility was to be achieved satisfactorily, it would be

(Mr. Goritza, Romania)

necessary to take adequate organizational steps and to ensure, at all events, that the Council was not required to undertake tasks that were too technical in nature.

29. To achieve the second objective, namely the democratization of the United Nations system, the restructuring process must be oriented in such a way as to ensure the participation of all States, on conditions of full equality, in the consideration and solution of economic and social problems of general interest and in the adoption of measures aimed at the development of international economic co-operation. The restructuring process should also make it possible to improve the system's negotiating machinery, through the elaboration of rules designed to ensure the proper functioning of such machinery on a democratic basis. With the same end in view, the principle of the geographical distribution of States in all United Nations organs would have to be observed and applied more strictly, the voting system used in certain institutions, such as the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, would need to be revised, and the policies and procedures for the recruitment of staff for the Secretariat of the United Nations and its agencies would need to be improved so as to increase the proportion of officers from developing countries and of women and young people throughout the United Nations system.

30. Mr. RYDBECK (Sweden) said that, in view of the complexity of its task, the Ad Hoc Committee should for the time being concentrate its attention on areas in which it was possible and necessary to take action without delay. The restructuring should on no account be an end in itself but should be designed to ensure that the structure of the economic and social sectors of the United Nations was better suited to present economic relations between countries and that the cohesion of the system was sufficient to enable it to play a more effective part in the implementation of the new international economic order. Any changes to be agreed upon should be in accordance with the United Nations Charter; certain changes would even seem necessary in order to bring present practices more into line with the provisions of the Charter.

31. The mandate to be given to the working group should in his delegation's view cover the following subjects: the agenda and methods of work of the Second

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(Mr. Rydbeck, Sweden)

Committee; the organization of the sessions of the Economic and Social Council, the Council's subsidiary bodies and negotiating procedures within the Council; and, with regard to the Secretariat, measures to provide for more coherent leadership in the economic and social field and the role of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs. In addition, a preliminary discussion might deal with the possible establishment of a United Nations Development Authority.

32. His delegation felt that nothing should be done to diminish the importance of the General Assembly. On the contrary, its role should be increased. The working group could therefore consider modifying the work of the Second Committee so as to make it a still more adequate instrument. It had been suggested that the Second Committee should be made a "Development Committee". Although there were good reasons for bringing development issues together, it should not be forgotten that the heavy workload of the Second Committee did not permit the addition of further items to its agenda. The possibility of establishing a new special economic committee to discuss some clearly defined items could therefore be investigated.

33. Apparently in common with many other delegations, his delegation supported the recommendation by the Group of Experts that the Council should meet in frequent subject-oriented sets of short sessions spread throughout the calendar year (E/AC.62/9, para. 46). Such an arrangement would facilitate increased participation by Member States and the specialized agencies and would thus contribute to a more thorough treatment of subjects. Although such a change would, of course, have consequences for the functioning of the Council's subsidiary bodies, that question should not be taken up until it had been seen how the Council would function under the new formula.

34. As had been suggested, the Council could sometimes hold sessions at the ministerial level in view of its role as an economic and social policy forum.

35. The idea of setting up small negotiating groups deserved further consideration, but he was not sure that such a procedure should be formalized. The working group could give thought to other solutions which would make for greater flexibility, among them the possibility of appointing only the chairman of a negotiating group and of giving him the mandate to carry out the appropriate consultations. In any case, all States Members of the United Nations, and not only the members of the Council, should be able to participate in such negotiations.

(Mr. Rydbeck, Sweden)

36. The Economic and Social Council had not yet been in a position to perform the co-ordinating function given to it under the Charter in a very satisfying manner. If it held subject-oriented sessions, more active participation by the specialized agencies, and therefore improved co-ordination, would be possible. The efforts already made to synchronize the budget and programming cycles of the components of the United Nations system should also be continued and intensified.

37. Although certain aspects of the reorganization within the Secretariat could only be discussed after clear ideas had emerged as to the general direction of the restructuring, it was already evident that the role of the Secretariat in the economic and social field should be strengthened. Even at the present stage consideration could be given to the establishment of a new post of Director-General for Development, which would not, as some seemed to fear, entail any separation of the two essential functions of the United Nations but would, instead, make possible a higher degree of integration.

38. A future Department of Economic and Social Affairs secretariat should be considerably strengthened as regards its conceptual and analytic functions, without any necessary limitation in the scope of activities. There was an urgent need for a strong secretariat working across the whole field. However, the Department of Economic and Social Affairs should be relieved in principle of all its operational activities. The desirable integration between those two fields of activity could be provided for by other means, for example, by creating opportunities for the exchange of personnel between the various organs within the United Nations system. In that connexion, the proposal to establish an Advisory Committee consisting of the heads of key organizations under the chairmanship of the new Director-General merited careful consideration.

39. His delegation favoured a further integration of development-oriented activities and funds in principle, but considered it necessary to look very carefully at each organ or fund before deciding on its integration. In some cases, such as UNEP and the environment fund, there were valid arguments against integration. In the event that the development-oriented funds were integrated within a United Nations Development Authority, the working group would have to consider what division of responsibilities there should be between the Economic and Social Council and that Authority.

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(Mr. Rydbeck, Sweden)

40. In conclusion he emphasized the importance, in the new structure to be established, of safeguarding possibilities for changes so that the United Nations system would be able to adapt to continually changing conditions.

The meeting rose at 12.30 p.m.

16TH MEETING

Friday, 20 February 1976, 3 p.m.

RESTRUCTURING OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL SECTORS OF THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM
(A/AC.179/3 and Add.1) (continued)

1. Mr. JANKOWITSCH (Austria) said it must have been clear to the founders of the United Nations that, to a great extent, peace must be founded on the economic and social progress of mankind as a whole. However, the structures established to achieve the purposes of the United Nations were now in some need of reform. There were two main reasons for that. First, in the past 30 years unprecedented political, economic and social development had created a highly complex pattern of interdependence between the world economy and the national economies and social structures of the 144 Member States and a few more which, although outside the Organization, were certainly part of the world economy. The structures of the United Nations had therefore lost much of their earlier relevance. Second, the gradual expansion of the organizational arrangements of the United Nations in the economic and social field had created a kind of "functional federalism" but had not resulted in an optimal planning effort or the establishment of clear priorities and sufficient intersectoral co-operation. The latter fact was all the more disturbing as the bulk of the United Nations system's activities and spending was now devoted to economic and social affairs. The work of the Committee should therefore have two basic goals: elaboration of proposals to modernize the economic and social machinery of the United Nations so that it might better cope with the social and economic aspirations of its increased membership, particularly the aspirations for a new international economic order, and determination of the functional priorities which that machinery had to serve and help to achieve.

2. The following basic ideas should be taken into account. The establishment of a new United Nations structure for global economic co-operation could essentially be achieved on the basis of and within the existing framework of the Charter. In view of the importance of the question, decisions on restructuring should be based on consensus. Revitalization of the Economic and Social Council must be the focus of the Committee's efforts, as recommended by the Group of Experts on the Structure of the United Nations System in its report (E/AC.62/9), which should not, however, be the sole document used by the Committee. The

(Mr. Jankowitsch, Austria)

functions and working methods of the Council must be improved to enable it to regain the position assigned to it in the Charter, namely, to be the central United Nations organ for the preparation of global policy decisions in the economic and social sector, for the establishment of priorities in that sector, for the co-ordination and supervision of the manifold economic and social activities of all United Nations organizations, for the reconciliation of differing viewpoints and for the drafting of appropriate recommendations to the General Assembly. If the Council was to achieve those aims, it would have to perform an essentially political role. That could only be ensured by relieving it of its operational responsibilities in favour of policy formulation. The Council should cease to delegate political functions, thus creating the need for a feedback which it had difficulty in handling. Such duplication, especially in the operational field, appeared unnecessary. His delegation favoured fewer, but more carefully selected and definitely political, responsibilities for the Council. That would help to avoid double or even triple level discussion of substantive questions.

3. In that connexion, he recommended that possibilities for adjustments in the number of the Council's subsidiary bodies should be studied. Such a study should permit a streamlining of the Council's work and facilitate its reorientation towards more policy formulation and more planning activity. Document E/5453/Rev.1 apparently did not mention all the specialist organs. It would therefore be useful to hear from the Secretariat how many there really were.

4. Any successful effort to revitalize and streamline the Council should also take account of the proposals made in a report by the Secretary-General to the General Assembly at its thirtieth session under item 100. In his report, the Secretary-General deplored the dispersal of the functional groupings in the economic, social and humanitarian activities of the Organization and made suggestions concerning functional regrouping which deserved the full attention of the Committee. Upgrading of the Council also required that its pattern of meetings should obtain, under all circumstances, the necessary priority with regard to other bodies. That could be achieved by a rationalization of the calendar of meetings of the subsidiary bodies and also by more frequent, though

(Mr. Jankowitsch, Austria)

shorter, meetings of the Council itself. That would, as a side effect, result in a higher level of representation, which was another important prerequisite for the Council's political renaissance and for the improvement of its status and work.

5. Another way of strengthening the political role of United Nations bodies such as the Economic and Social Council might consist in giving their officers a stronger voice. The Committee should therefore consider the possibility of investing the office of the President of the Council with somewhat larger responsibilities. The fact that that office was already endowed with much greater continuity than some corresponding political offices might be of some help. That should make the Council more effective in dealing with important developments between its main sessions. In addition, more effective use of the regional commissions would help to free the Council from unnecessary and duplicating work, and closer co-operation with ACABQ and CPC would enhance the Council's efficiency.

6. He supported suggestions made by other speakers and contained in different documents concerning the consolidation of the present large number of separate funds in the United Nations system. Such a step might improve, if not fund management, at least resource and expenditure planning and might reduce administrative costs, thus guaranteeing better control through the governing organs, which had a higher degree of centralization than the funds themselves. He did not believe that proliferation of funds led to an increase in national contributions. Governments were sophisticated enough to be able to differentiate between the various purposes for which their contributions would be used under an integrated system.

7. He reminded the Committee of a proposal concerning the work of the United Nations system in the energy field which had been made on 22 April 1974 by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Austria at the sixth special session of the General Assembly. The Minister had recommended a central role for work in the field of energy for the International Atomic Energy Agency.

8. The Group of Experts had evolved new and highly original ideas on the subject of the role of the Secretariat in the restructuring effort. Successful modernization of the United Nations system in the economic and social field must include all levels of the administration. A central proposal in that regard was

(Mr. Jankowitsch, Austria)

the establishment of the post of Director-General for Economic Affairs. His delegation would warn that the creation of a single new office was not a panacea for dealing with ills which had to be attacked from many sides, on many levels and by more instruments than one. In addition, the creation of new offices had to be seen in relation to the well-established and accepted authority of the Secretary-General. It might be unwise to diminish that source of United Nations authority and dismantle some of the few central points of reference in the system before the workability of alternative solutions had been clearly established. His delegation had somewhat less doubt about the possibility of improving the Secretary-General's policy co-ordination functions in the economic and social field. As to the Secretariat, the centre must be strengthened, while on the other hand all occasions for controlled decentralization should be encouraged. The Committee should examine all possibilities of freeing the Secretariat on all levels from its frequent fear of taking initiatives and being a real partner in United Nations organs. The Secretariat should feel free to take initiatives, in meetings and outside, to advance discussion and compromise. The fact that the United Nations had become a very pluralistic body should considerably reduce the risk that the Secretariat might be isolated or run into confrontation.

9. Another problem was the need to streamline and concentrate efforts in the information work of the United Nations. There was a disquieting tendency towards the proliferation of publications financed and issued by the United Nations, its agencies and its funds. One of the arguments in favour of such proliferation was the supposed unwillingness of the mass media to print news relating to the United Nations. However, if the activities of the United Nations were newsworthy, the media would be forced to publicize them and there was little point, therefore, to try to create some kind of "counterculture".

10. The great number of meetings which at present were held put a strain on the smaller delegations. If restructuring was to be effective, some thought would have to be given to that question.

11. His delegation felt that the exchange of opinions which was taking place in the Committee should enable it and its Working Group to pin-point the weak areas in the system and to draw up a list of short-term and long-term remedies. The Committee's work would be an important step towards meeting the global challenge

(Mr. Jankowitsch, Austria)

for advancement in the economic and social field in accordance with the guidelines laid down in recent decisions of the General Assembly.

12. Mr. CORDOVEZ (Secretary of the Committee) said that document E/5453/Rev.1 contained information on all the subsidiary bodies of the Economic and Social Council. As shown by the chart on page 5 of that document, there were five types of subsidiary bodies, in the following numbers: six functional commissions, eight standing committees, five regional economic commissions, eight standing expert bodies and one ad hoc intergovernmental body. The subsidiary bodies which reported directly to the Council had also set up subsidiary bodies of their own in varying numbers. The Economic Commission for Europe, with 84 subsidiary bodies, had by far the largest number. The total number of subsidiary bodies and of subsidiary bodies of subsidiary bodies was 167. The total duration of meetings of those bodies which reported directly to the Council remained at the level of about 70 weeks a year.

13. Mr. TURIN (Deputy Secretary-General, Habitat: United Nations Conference on Human Settlements) said that Habitat was being convened in accordance with General Assembly resolution 3001 (XXVII). Both the original title and the proposed dates of the Conference had been changed by General Assembly resolutions 3128 (XXVIII) and 3325 (XXIX). The main purpose of the Conference had been defined in resolution 3128 (XXVIII) as "to serve as a practical means to exchange information about solutions to problems of human settlements against a broad background of environmental and other concerns which may lead to the formation of policies and actions by Governments and international organizations". That resolution had stressed in particular the involvement of specialized agencies, regional commissions and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations. At the Secretariat level, the General Assembly had requested that the Secretary-General of the Conference should report through the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme and work in close co-operation with the Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs, the executive secretaries of the regional commissions and the executive heads of the specialized agencies. The basic statutory texts set out clearly the relationship between the object of the Conference and the major issues of concern to the international community, as well as the challenges implied in such a complex enterprise of intergovernmental and

(Mr. Turin)

intersecretariat co-operation. It was no accident that the question of human settlements had been chosen to provide such a challenge, since human settlements were not a specific field and could not be isolated from the context of development. A conference on human settlements was bound to be concerned with the interrelationships and interactions between sectoral policies and programmes to which human settlements provided the geographical locus. Although "human settlements" as such did not appear in the title of any international organization, they entered into the programmes of practically every agency and organ of the United Nations system to an extent which was probably comparable only to the equally broad concept of education or training.

14. Truly co-operative consultations had been held throughout the preparations for the Conference, but there was still a need for a comprehensive, integrated approach at the national level, which international co-operation was principally designed to serve. It was at that level that the formulation and implementation of human settlement policies revealed most dramatically the short-comings of a sectoral approach, the need for innovation in institutions, the urgency of popular participation and the advantages of planning geared to the satisfaction of basic human needs. Beginning with the first informal intergovernmental consultations, the expressed views of Governments had guided the Secretariat in its preparations for the Conference. Within the over-all framework agreed to early in the preparations, a continuous process of consultation had gradually refined concepts and focused with increasing precision on the main issues which appeared to be of concern to Governments. Those issues were now reflected in the agenda for the Conference and were dealt with in great detail in the policy papers which would be submitted to the Conference.

15. From the very beginning, Governments had stressed the central place occupied by action at the national level in the field of human settlements, for which the declaration of principles to be adopted by the Conference should provide inspiration and guidance and in support of which international co-operation should be conceived. Before submitting proposals for programmes of international co-operation in the field of human settlements to Governments for their consideration, the Secretariat had undertaken two surveys of the current activities

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(Mr. Turin)

of the United Nations system in that field. Both studies, and the comments made on them by Governments, had revealed a broad consensus on a number of criteria that should inspire any proposals for new programmes and consequently any new institutional arrangements to implement them. Those criteria could be summarized as follows. Much more needed to be done if national efforts were to be adequately supported by international co-operation. In the meantime, the resources currently available could be used more effectively both within and outside the United Nations system and at all levels, global, regional and national. The components of the system must be able and willing to plan programmes and analyse jointly a concerted effort. A global intergovernmental body should deal specifically with human settlements with a view to promoting the concepts evolved by the Conference, providing over-all policy guidance and acting as a forum with which national decision-makers could identify. The global body should be matched, at the level of the regional commissions, by an intergovernmental policy-making body having close links with the regional parent and the global body. The global body should be served by a small central staff, preferably located within an existing unit of the United Nations system, to be headed by a high-level administrator and capable of providing the required leadership. A human settlements secretariat should assume operational responsibilities only in the last resort, so as to concentrate its resources in areas where it could not be replaced. Activities of international co-operation in the field of human settlements should be decentralized as much as possible, the central secretariat undertaking only those tasks for which the regional level was inadequate or inappropriate. Close links should be established at all levels with the regional and global financing institutions concerned with human settlements, in particular the regional development banks. In the first instance, a regrouping and consequent rationalization of the resources currently allocated to human settlements should yield greater results; in the longer term, additional resources would be needed but should preferably come from voluntary contributions. The United Nations system and, within it, any new institutional arrangement should provide the focus not only for the system itself but also for other concerned organizations at both the intergovernmental and the non-governmental levels. Any new institutional arrangement should have as its main objective the harmonization of policies and programmes of international co-operation in the field of human settlements.

(Mr. Turin)

16. The secretariat of Habitat felt that the above criteria were sufficient to outline a common profile for an institutional arrangement, at both the intergovernmental and the secretariat levels, without prejudging the institutional place of such an arrangement within the United Nations system. A proposal to that effect would be submitted to the Conference. The secretariat was convinced that the timing of the Conference was suitable for a general discussion of institutional arrangements on the subject, coming as it did after the sixth and seventh special sessions of the General Assembly and the establishment of the Ad Hoc Committee. Any proposals which emerged from the Conference would be brought to the attention of the Committee as well as the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly. Human settlements could become a suitable ground for exploring and possibly testing the kind of innovative approaches which underlay the mood of recent international consultations, and of which the Committee was for the time being the most visible and promising manifestation.

17. Mrs. DERRE (France) said that her delegation did not understand in what framework the Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements had spoken. Habitat was a Conference that was currently being prepared; it was neither a specialized agency nor an international organization, and her delegation was at a loss to understand how the preparation of that Conference was related to the restructuring of the economic and social sectors of the United Nations system.

18. Mr. CORDOVEZ (Secretary of the Committee) said that invitations had been issued to various heads of agencies and senior officials of the Secretariat to address the Committee in order to inform it of the various aspects bearing on its work. The Habitat secretariat dealt with the institutional arrangements for the Conference and would be submitting a paper on such matters to the Conference. It had been felt that the Committee might wish to have some information on such institutional arrangements.

19. The CHAIRMAN said that the Committee had adopted a flexible attitude regarding the Secretariat officials that were invited to address it, and he believed that practical advantages should continue to be the guiding principle in issuing such invitations.

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20. Mr. OLIVERI LOPEZ (Argentina) said that the arrangements for Habitat were relevant to the Committee's work, and it was worth while for the Committee to be informed of the problems arising in a new sector of United Nations activities. Even though the situation was still fluid, a new global body was quite likely to be established on the basis of existing organs, and the Committee should therefore be provided with information on the operations of all existing organs. In that connexion, the Secretariat had correctly interpreted the wishes of the Committee in issuing invitations to various officials to address it.

21. Mr. MYERSON (United States of America) said that no one could afford to underestimate the significance or the difficulty of the task assigned to the Committee. Its mandate should be regarded as a necessary complement to the many policy and operational measures set in motion by the seventh special session. His delegation continued to believe that reform of the United Nations economic and social system should be a priority consideration in any over-all strategy for development.

22. He reminded the Committee that in confirming its acceptance of General Assembly resolution 3362 (S-VII), the United States of America had entered a reservation regarding references to certain General Assembly resolutions including those of the sixth special session. He indicated the belief that firmly maintaining those resolutions need not interfere with the work of the Committee as long as the will to co-operate existed on all sides, regarding which he expressed full confidence.

23. Restructuring was necessary because the increasing scope and complexity of economic and social problems confronting the system and the inescapable pressures for fiscal austerity required considered, practical and timely responses. All Governments, and those of developing countries in particular, had a right to expect maximum benefits from funds put into the operations and other activities of the bodies concerned. That was not to deny the many and varied contributions of the institutions as they had developed over the years. In the world of today, however, something more than a "business as usual" approach was required, and an improved and smoothly functioning system would enhance the reputation of the United Nations with the peoples and parliaments of Member States.

(Mr. Myerson, United States)

24. His delegation was both heartened and a little concerned by the formal and informal statements of other delegations: it was heartened by the sober and practical attitudes which had been encountered, and concerned by the views of some about the enormity of the task and the admittedly heavy schedule of other United Nations-related activities. It agreed that the Committee should proceed with prudence, sensitivity and thoroughness, and it recognized that events scheduled for 1976 - for example, the fourth session of UNCTAD - would have a major bearing on the Committee's work. On the other hand, it believed that the time to begin was now; the Committee's mandate was clear and the situation required a response.

25. The fact that the leadership and senior management positions of many agencies had recently changed created a brief moment of flexibility conducive to restructuring of the system. The recent session of the Governing Council of UNDP had made it clear that the system was fragile; the financial difficulties of UNDP had had, and might continue to have, a disturbing effect on the cohesiveness of the system as a whole. Several United Nations bodies were currently considering their own reorganization and new bodies were being created. Those developments need not be cause for concern, provided that they were part of a coherent and comprehensive pattern. The Committee should make its contribution, since otherwise there would be a kind of de facto restructuring with serious risk of uncertain and even negative results. Poorly co-ordinated systems wasted resources, frustrated intellectual energies and provided mixed results at best. Unless the Committee began its efforts in earnest, there would be the possibility that the year intended for restructuring might end with the system in greater disarray than before. While it was possible that a complete plan might not be developed and approved in 1976, the Committee should concentrate immediately on a programme of work that was commensurate with the challenge and was susceptible of fulfilment.

26. His delegation wished to propose a two-level approach. The first level would involve identification of major problem areas requiring priority attention - "priority" meaning to refer to those large and significant aspects of restructuring that it was reasonable to take up, given the availability of factual information and policy data in relation to the Committee's calendar. The second level of

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(Mr. Myerson, United States)

activity, to be started simultaneously with the first, would involve the identification of several specific actions which would be difficult but of a less comprehensive character. The objective would be to reach agreement in the near term on several of those specific issues. Action at the second level need not prejudice ultimate recommendations or decisions regarding a more comprehensive adaptation of the system as a whole. The approach suggested was intended to help ensure the necessary momentum for the Committee's work, make clear to the international community and to member Government capitals the Committee's serious and practical approach to its responsibilities and, above all, result in actions indisputably beneficial in their own right.

27. With respect to the first level of activity, i.e. the broader questions, his delegation was prepared to consider any reasonable method of identifying major priority areas for examination, and it believed that the most logical place to begin was with the report of the Group of Experts (E/AC.62/9) which was the most recent and comprehensive analysis of the restructuring problem available. His delegation could not at that time endorse specific recommendations in the report but believed that all the experts' findings, along with other pertinent material should be considered by the Committee. For the first level, he wished to recall the five major problem areas identified by the Secretary of State of the United States in his statement at the seventh special session: firstly, rationalization of the United Nations system's fragmented assistance programmes; secondly, strengthening of the leadership within the central secretariat for international economic co-operation and development; thirdly, streamlining of the Economic and Social Council; fourthly, better consultation procedures to assure effective agreement among members with a general interest in a subject under consideration; fifthly, a mechanism to provide member Governments with an independent evaluation of the implementation of United Nations programmes.

28. With respect to the second level, all were aware of the long-standing problems of personnel management in the United Nations system resulting from the cumbersome and largely separate operation of individual agency personnel programmes. His delegation believed that the Committee should recognize the need for a thorough examination of the merits and possibilities of a unified personnel system. The International Civil Service Commission, an expert body established to bring about

(Mr. Myerson, United States)

the realization of that concept, had not so far been in a position to tackle the issues related to a unified personnel system, and the Ad Hoc Committee, as an intergovernmental body, might well provide the catalyst for early action by making an appropriate recommendation. The virtues of a unified system in terms of improved manpower utilization, possible economies, increased staff morale and equivalence in job classifications could be significant. Furthermore, such a system could significantly enhance the possibilities for reform of the standard cost concept which had been causing considerable difficulties for some of the larger operational agencies.

29. His delegation also believed that the possibilities for a unified procurement system had not received adequate attention. A significant proportion of materials purchased and utilized within the United Nations system was common to all organizations and was therefore susceptible of standardization and bulk purchasing.

30. A third possible area for concrete action concerned the early establishment of an effective and independent programme evaluation mechanism. In that connexion, the facts and views presented to the Committee by the President of the World Bank seemed to his delegation suggestive of what might be accomplished in the United Nations. A capacity for providing governing bodies and member Government with systematic reports and assessments of programmes and their implementation would strengthen confidence in the individual components of the system and in the system as a whole. Such assessments should be prepared by highly qualified and independent professionals. They would serve to measure systematically the extent to which programme objectives were achieved, permit the evaluation of the impact of programmes in relation to the over-all development efforts of which they were a part and provide a tool with which to assess the effectiveness and the efficiency of the United Nations bodies responsible for programme execution. A constructive approach to evaluation could improve efficiency and morale and could help developing countries to obtain maximum benefit from available resources. His delegation believed that that idea should be considered in the context of restructuring. Furthermore, the mandate of the Joint Inspection Unit, which might be converted to perform such a function, was to be reviewed at the thirty-first session of the General Assembly.

(Mr. Myerson, United States)

31. His delegation was open-minded and prepared to consider different methods and time-tables. However, it considered it important that the Committee should come to grips with the issues before it and produce some practical recommendations in 1976. With goodwill and perseverance, it could contribute significantly to a strengthened United Nations, better equipped to face the challenges of economic and social development and to meet the needs of all member Governments in serving mankind.

32. Mr. MARCUARD (Switzerland) said that the report of the Group of Experts (E/AC.62/9) was a very thought-provoking document which his Government would be ready to accept as a basis for discussion on the understanding that the practical application of the principles it contained would in each case be the object of study in detail by the Committee before being applied. The principles of centralization, co-ordination, harmonization and efficiency which the Group of Experts suggested should be the basis for a coherent United Nations system had been advocated repeatedly by the Swiss Government in the bodies of which it was a member. However, his delegation believed that excessive centralization and rigidity was also not without dangers. While it was true that the specialized agencies had their own, often widely differing, structural characteristics and methods of work, there were merits to the existing system, not the least of which was its adaptability to changing circumstances. Indeed, the advantages of a certain empiricism shaped over the years should not be ignored.

33. It was certain that such subjects as population and the status of women could have been discussed in special sessions of the General Assembly rather than at special conferences. His delegation nevertheless doubted that such special sessions would have had as great an impact on public opinion.

34. Despite its fears regarding the danger of over-centralization, his delegation would be prepared to consider favourably the proposal regarding consolidation of the various funds, provided that the separate identity of each could be preserved and to ensure that the final outcome would not be a reduction of voluntary contributions. Subject to more detailed study, his delegation could also envisage the establishment of an Operations Board consolidating certain intergovernmental bodies. In that case, all States contributing to the funds,

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(Mr. Marcuard, Switzerland)

whether or not they were Members of the United Nations, should be eligible for election to the new body responsible for administering them.

35. He drew attention to two problems which the Group of Experts had barely touched upon, namely, the social dimension of development problems and the failure to take into account the special situation of non-member States of the United Nations. As to the first point, his delegation entirely agreed with the Finnish delegation that any structural reform should take fully into account the social elements of development. As to the second, although the report noted, in another context, the need for truly universal participation and international co-operation, his delegation felt that it would be contrary to the spirit behind the restructuring plan and international co-operation to exclude States not Members of the United Nations from activities in which they regularly participated and for which they assumed all the remaining obligations.

36. With regard to the Ad Hoc Committee's future work, his delegation agreed that the Committee should attempt to define the main problems involved in restructuring and to assign priorities to them. They could then be considered by an intersessional working group, in which all States should be free to air their views and which could formulate proposals for reforms. The restructuring process should be done in stages over a period of time, and on completion of the process an over-all review should be made in order to ascertain that the new system was more advantageous than the existing one. With regard to the areas to which the Committee should give priority, his delegation could support nearly all the proposals made at a previous meeting by the representative of Italy.

37. The Economic and Social Council should be one of the first subjects to which the Committee gave its attention. Without entering into the matter in detail, he would point out that the role of the Council ought to be viewed not only within the framework of the United Nations system but also within the broader context of international economic relations as a whole. That approach would make it possible to assign to the Council a role that would enable it to supplement existing mechanisms and to integrate harmoniously itself in the present system of international relations. The same global approach should be adopted when the Committee turned to the question of negotiating groups referred to in paragraph 49 of the report. His delegation agreed with the Group of Experts that the Council

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(Mr. Marcuard, Switzerland)

should prune its structures and review its programme of work so as to concentrate more on fundamental problems. In practice that could be done by systematically reviewing all the subsidiary organs to see whether their existence was justified. Such an examination, which might lead to the elimination or merging of some organs and a redefinition of the terms of reference of others, should be conducted without prejudice but equally without complacency. The idea of requesting Governments to assign experts or senior officials more often as representatives to sessions of the Council would be more easily realized if the role of the Council were revalued. Finally, the recommendation that the Council should organize its programme on a biennial basis seemed very sensible.

38. Restructuring of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs was a very sensitive question which should not be tackled until members of the Committee had had sufficient time to ponder fully on and evaluate the consequences of such a reform.

39. Mr. DHARAT (Libyan Arab Republic) said that unless collective efforts were undertaken to strengthen the Organization's role in the field of multilateral development co-operation, recent basic resolutions, including the Industrial Development Strategy for the Second United Nations Development Decade, the Declaration and Programme of Action on the Establishment of a New International Economic Order and the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States, would prove to be empty shells. The growing problems of population, food production and environmental control made it increasingly important that the restructuring exercise should be directed at increasing the absorptive capacity of the developing countries. There should be the necessary flexibility and appropriate mechanisms for evaluation and orientation of the restructuring process, and the particular needs of each country should be taken into account.

40. Commenting briefly on the report of the Group of Experts (E/AC.62/9), he said that the report clearly defined the importance of strengthening the existing evaluation machinery. The independent evaluation and monitoring system recommended by the Group of Experts to oversee all critical stages of project operations should benefit from all relevant intellectual inputs, including those of government authorities and agencies, in order that policy directives might be speedily implemented. He drew attention to the need mentioned in the report for a co-ordinated and unified programme to eliminate duplication and inefficient

(Mr. Dharat, Libyan Arab Republic)

communication between the various bodies of the United Nations system. His delegation agreed that the Economic and Social Council's role as central organ in the United Nations system should be strengthened, but it perceived specific disadvantages that would stem from some of the ensuing proposals, such as the proposal to eliminate the Council's subsidiary bodies. His delegation believed that the structure of subsidiary bodies possessed great potential within a changed framework of effective organization and direction and that reform should come from within the existing structure rather than by doing away with the existing system. The proposal that all subsidiary bodies should be eliminated ignored the progress that had been achieved with the existing system and seemed to deny that reform could be a viable solution. While restructuring provided a means to achieve the objectives of the United Nations Charter, that would be possible only if Member States demonstrated the necessary political will. His delegation endorsed the recommendation that the United Nations funds for technical and pre-investment activities should be consolidated under a single authority, and stressed the need to examine closely the ambiguous relationship between the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly in order to eliminate overlapping in the functions of the two bodies.

41. His delegation supported the proposal that the Secretary-General should comment on the recommendations contained in the report of the Group of Experts and on the proposals put forward by the Ad Hoc Committee at the present session, as those comments would be valuable to the Committee in its work. His delegation believed that the statements by the heads of specialized agencies would facilitate the work of the Ad Hoc Committee.

The meeting rose at 5.15 p.m.

17th MEETING

Monday, 23 February 1976, 10.30 a.m.

RESTRUCTURING OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL SECTORS OF THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM
(A/AC.179/3 and Add.1) (continued)

1. Mr. BERTRAND (Vice-Chairman, Joint Inspection Unit) described what constituted the originality of the composition and methods of work of the Joint Inspection Unit, in that its members, of which there were only eight, had very broad investigative powers and considerable autonomy in their work. He then listed the major questions with which JIU had dealt since its establishment in 1968.

2. With regard to the mandate of the Ad Hoc Committee, he felt that it was in the field of planning and programming that solutions to some of the major short-comings of the United Nations system could be found. In 1966, the Committee of 14 had made many recommendations to the General Assembly in that regard, and it was only in the early 1970s that they had begun to be implemented. At that time, those organizations which had not yet done so - such as the United Nations and WHO - had adopted the system of biennial programme budgeting; medium-term plans had also been prepared for the first time by UNESCO, followed by FAO, ILO and, lastly, the United Nations; moreover, programming units had been established in all the organizations, while the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination had decided to hold interagency meetings on a regular basis. Furthermore, more recently, the methodology of planning and evaluation had received special attention, in particular, from the Working Group on United Nations Programme and Budget Machinery and the Group of Experts on the Structure of the United Nations System, respectively. Notwithstanding all those efforts, another 10 years might well be needed to arrive at a programming system which could be judged reasonably satisfactory. That delay could seem excessive, given the urgency of the world's major problems and the fact that the improved and more realistic organization of the United Nations system could effectively help to solve them.

3. The Ad Hoc Committee should therefore accelerate the process of reform and, with regard to programming, should close the gap which now existed between the ambitious and general directives contained in the resolutions adopted by Member

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(Mr. Bertrand, JIU)

States and the very modest results of the work of the secretariats. In carrying out those directives, the organizations of the system produced a flood of documents and publications, held innumerable meetings and carried out some projects in the field whose coverage was very limited and whose true impact was rarely known. It was hardly necessary to underscore the difference between ambition - however praiseworthy - and possibilities, a difference which was virtually the same in all the spheres of activity in which the organizations of the United Nations were involved.

4. To enable the United Nations system to carry out effective objective-oriented programming and thus to become one of the major development tools to which Governments could have recourse, and thereby to enable it to attain a certain measure of credibility, the first solution would be to increase very substantially the financial means at the disposal of the organizations. That solution could not be envisaged. The second solution would be to reorganize the development assistance machinery in such a way that it would permit the attainment of objectives which, although limited, were clear-cut and significant. That implied, firstly, that the United Nations system would be able to provide Governments with information and proposals for action which would enable them to define attainable objectives, and, next, that the means provided were precisely adapted to the objectives so that it would be possible to control and verify the quality and the nature of the results. To that end, one option open to the Ad Hoc Committee was to establish or modify certain secretariat units or services, particularly in the framework of a truly effective interagency administrative machinery, which did not appear to exist at present. Such a reform should make it possible to achieve substantial progress in the field of planning and programming. In that regard, he endorsed the proposal of the Group of Experts on the Structure of the United Nations System calling for the establishment of a small joint research, planning and programming unit. That unit, which would be composed of some 15 senior Professional staff seconded by the major organizations of the system, could ensure greater coherence, on the one hand, among the various planning exercises and, on the other hand, among the activities financed by the regular budgets and those financed by extrabudgetary funds. By ensuring co-operation among specialists

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(Mr. Bertrand, JIU)

from various sectors, the unit could also help present to the Economic and Social Council a table containing a synthesis of the activities of the system, which might finally enable it to establish priorities.

5. With regard to evaluation activities, the essential complement to programming, he felt that it was virtually impossible to establish too ambitious a machinery for systematic evaluation. Member States and executive heads should therefore agree on what appeared truly reasonable and feasible in that field. It would appear essential in that regard to establish within each organization units responsible for evaluation activities. It did not seem rational to entrust all those evaluation tasks to an outside body (which might, in circumstances which remain to be defined, be the Joint Inspection Unit). The functions of that body should be defined very precisely, and should be limited to advice to the organizations on internal evaluation methods, periodic checks on the use of those methods, interagency comparisons of the results of the internal evaluation exercises and, lastly, a limited number of evaluation operations relating to certain projects and activities.

6. Attention should also be drawn to the paradoxical absence of links between the activities financed under regular programmes and those financed with extrabudgetary resources. Even in UNDP - where at one time there had been reason to believe that such a link had been established with the introduction of "country programming" - a feeling of mistrust appeared to have developed vis-à-vis the executing agencies. The gap between the programming of extrabudgetary activities and planning in the organizations of the system was growing and, as a result, with very few exceptions, the gap was still growing between the activities of those organizations and the national planning operations of the various countries. The same was true for the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, despite the fact that there existed within the Centre for Development Planning, Projections and Policies a specialized unit entitled "Development Planning Advisory Services". Because most of the organizations were now concerned with helping countries plan their policies in their respective fields, it was extremely urgent to take into account the real problems which countries faced and to ensure the integration of the programmes of the various organizations and extrabudgetary

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(Mr. Bertrand, JIU)

programmes. That task could be entrusted to an interagency unit, namely, the Development Planning Advisory Services, to which the major agencies would second officials.

7. It was also necessary to improve co-ordination among the organizations themselves and among the organizations and Governments. To that end, resident representatives should become what they should always have been, namely, representatives of the United Nations system, and not representatives of UNDP alone, and the representation of all the major agencies at the country level should be reconsidered and strengthened.

8. Lastly, it went without saying that no reform could prove effective unless steps were taken to guarantee the recruitment of staff of the highest possible calibre. To that end, the key proposals of the Group of Experts appeared to be those relating to competitive examinations for recruitment and the establishment of a programme of pre-recruitment training.

9. Mr. Parsi (Iran) took the Chair.

10. Mr. RAKOTONAIVO (Madagascar) recalled that at its first session the Ad Hoc Committee on the Restructuring of the Economic and Social Sectors of the United Nations System had organized its work and had decided to establish an intersessional working group to examine in detail the problems raised. The general debate now under way should provide that working group with a basis for its work. To that end, attention should be drawn to the fundamental principles and objectives of restructuring and the major areas in which restructuring was necessary should be identified.

11. With regard to the first point, it was first necessary to state clearly the different political and other parameters which should guide the Ad Hoc Committee's work. The task of restructuring undertaken by the Ad Hoc Committee was not an objective in itself. It could not be a pretext for glossing over the differences which divided the various groups on the substance of pending problems or for justifying the blocking of negotiations which should follow their normal course. It was clear that the envisaged restructuring was interpreted by several delegations as an exercise in simplification through the elimination of superfluous bodies. His delegation did not have a rigid position in that regard and did not

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rule out the establishment of new bodies, either through the merging of existing ones or if new requirements so dictated. However, it was determined to defend the attainments which the existence of certain organizations such as UNCTAD and UNIDO - whose role could not be reduced and whose importance could not be lessened - represented for the developing countries. The envisaged restructuring must in no case lead to a reduction of the system's capacity to meet the needs of the third world.

12. It was also necessary to safeguard and promote democratic rules within the United Nations system. The central role of the General Assembly, assisted by the Economic and Social Council, in defining directions and determining priorities was paramount in that regard. All countries should be able to take part in decisions which affected them. The new international economic order would be no different from the old one unless it encouraged, rather than limited, the participation of small countries in the adoption of policy decisions and unless it recognized the importance of those countries as a "group".

13. The fact that the developed countries had not sufficiently implemented, or had failed to implement, resolutions and decisions adopted by the General Assembly was a source of concern to his Government. The Ad Hoc Committee should study that problem and consider ways and means which would enable the system to arrive at negotiated, clear-cut commitments, with the appropriate machinery to ensure that they were honoured. His Government also attached considerable importance to development objectives and philosophy as expounded, inter alia, in the International Development Strategy, the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States and the Declaration and Programme of Action on the Establishment of a New International Economic Order. The Ad Hoc Committee should adopt the approach defined in those documents, namely, an integrated and multidisciplinary approach to problems, which alone would make it possible to establish a revised, coherent and effective structure. That body of texts should enable the Ad Hoc Committee to discharge its task while avoiding the disorder and lack of co-ordination which had prevailed during the establishment of the current system. It was clear, however, that reforms could be made only gradually and that it was not a question of establishing a definitive and fixed structure which would not make allowance for the highly evolutive nature of international economic and social problems.

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14. As to the second item - the identification of the main areas for structural reform - it was important to adopt from the outset a well-defined methodology. An initial static analysis of the existing structure could be followed by a dynamic analysis of the interrelationship between the various components of the system. The working group could undertake that in-depth analysis and, on the basis of the results, formulate any proposals it might have.

15. The system seemed to be characterized by an impressive number of agencies which had proliferated over the past 30 years, sometimes in riotous fashion, under the pressure of events. The working group's first task would therefore be to identify any overlapping and duplication of functions which would need to be eliminated. Experience had shown, for instance, that the subsidiary organs established with very clear and precise mandates to advise the Economic and Social Council had a tendency to perpetuate themselves. One remedy which might be considered would be to abolish such organs on the termination of their mandate. The basic issue was to define the role of the Economic and Social Council and its relationship to the other organs of the system such as the specialized agencies. Those agencies received recommendations from the General Assembly through the Council, but they also had their own programmes which were financed from separate budgets. It would be useful to determine the extent to which those agencies tended to give priority to their programmes at the expense of the directives or recommendations forwarded to them by the Council.

16. As far as the functioning of the system was concerned, a dynamic analysis of the relationship between the various elements would have to be made. With regard to the relationship between the policy-making organs and the functional organs, for instance, the reports submitted by the functional organs did not always receive due consideration from the Economic and Social Council, which consequently could not adequately fulfil the co-ordinating role given to it by the Charter. As a result, it was also very difficult to arrive at a rational integration of the programmes within the system. It was important that even those agencies which had their own administrative organs should follow the guidelines laid down by the General Assembly, and just as important that the democratic process governing the formulation of those guidelines should be respected. The Ad Hoc Committee should

(Mr. Rakotonaivo, Madagascar)

therefore devise a formula whereby the General Assembly, through the Economic and Social Council, would exert genuine influence over those agencies. In that connexion, the provisions of the Charter concerning the functions and powers of the Council, in particular Article 63, paragraph 2, should be clarified.

17. As for the relationship between central organs and regional organs, the latter were clearly subordinate. It could not be denied, however, that at the regional level guidelines laid down by the central organ would be accepted only in so far as they were responsive to the actual needs of the countries concerned. In that field, it would therefore be desirable to decentralize functions so as to give the regional commissions a certain freedom of action in identifying, formulating and implementing programmes and projects for their respective areas, and to provide them with adequate resources.

18. Relationships between the various organs of the system and the Secretariat had basically to do with programming and planning questions. In view of the proliferation of organs, a new programming system was clearly required. The Ad Hoc Committee had at its disposal studies made by the Group of Experts to assist it in that task.

19. Obviously, whatever structure was adopted, its functioning would depend on the resources made available to the various agencies operating within the framework of international co-operation. The United Nations, and UNDP in particular, were going through a serious financial crisis which could only check the activities of the agencies which the Ad Hoc Committee was attempting to reorganize. That situation should be brought to the urgent attention of the rich countries. Furthermore, criticisms concerning the excessive costs of United Nations-supported programmes could not be ignored. Such programmes were devised according to the standards of the developed countries and required a considerable effort from the recipient countries. It was therefore essential to devise a new and more effective system of assessment.

20. The world's current economic situation made the establishment of a new structure imperative. It was clear, however, that no matter how perfect the system, it would never function effectively without a resolute political will on the part of Member States. It had to be admitted that, despite the efforts made,

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(Mr. Rakotonaivo, Madagascar)

it had so far been impossible to help the third world countries to improve their situation. It was therefore high time to reform the system to stop wastage and restore confidence in the United Nations.

21. Mr. CZARKOWSKI (Poland) said that his delegation ascribed great importance to the efforts devoted to restructuring the economic and social sectors of the United Nations. The task assigned to the Ad Hoc Committee called for imaginative vision and foresight in devising changes, as well as extreme caution to safeguard the gains made by the United Nations system over the past 30 years. It was important always to bear in mind the primary purpose of the United Nations which, according to the Charter, was the maintenance of international peace and security. The Charter, which in 30 years had proven to be an effective instrument for the relaxation of international tension, and without which major achievements such as the formulation of the Declaration and Programme of Action on the Establishment of a New International Economic Order and the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States would have been impossible, should serve as the framework for the Committee's work. Moreover, in the Committee's efforts to improve the functioning of the system, it should not disregard the experience acquired over the years and the significant achievements of the various sectors, despite the criticisms to which they had been subjected.

22. One of the main features of the system was its universality, and that major asset should be preserved. The United Nations brought together States differing widely in all respects, and their various contributions had already led to the establishment of effective machinery of co-operation. In considering eventual changes in the system, the Committee had to take into account the interests of all States so as to establish a permanent and solid base for international co-operation. In that context, he felt that the interests of Poland and other socialist States had been insufficiently taken into account by the economic and social agencies of the United Nations. For example, the socialist States, which bore about one fifth of the cost of the United Nations budget, were not represented at the head of any of the specialized agencies. That tendency to disregard the interests of the socialist countries made it impossible for economic issues to be dealt with in a comprehensive manner.

(Mr. Czarkowski, Poland)

23. In its efforts to achieve greater effectiveness of the system in the economic and social sectors, the Committee should define its objectives precisely, make more rational use of personnel and money, and devise less bureaucratic mechanisms and structures to better serve the interests of all Member States, in particular the developing countries. The socialist countries supported the developing nations in their struggle for political and economic independence and were entitled to expect reciprocal support for their own interests.

24. It appeared essential to halt the proliferation of organs, programmes and funds, which led to duplication of assignments and overlapping, and to establish better co-ordination between the various organs. That required a thorough consideration of the terms of reference of the organs, identification of the problem areas and harmonization of the conceptual and operational activities through a clear definition of the responsibilities of each organ.

25. He suggested that the role of certain organs should be considered in particular. The Committee should try to reach solutions which would permit the General Assembly, the main organ of the United Nations, to concentrate on key issues of general interest, and allow it to rely on recommendations and conclusions of other organs and specialized agencies on issues falling within their competence.

26. The Economic and Social Council should fully reassume its vast responsibilities, as provided in the Charter, and, to that end, should organize its activities in a more effective manner at both the sectoral and the institutional level. It was for the Committee to propose reforms to permit the Council to establish real priorities. For example, the functioning of the Economic and Social Council could be improved by the proposal that summer sessions should be devoted, alternately, one year predominantly to conceptual issues and the following year to matters concerning operational activities and co-ordination. The idea had in fact already been included in one of the Council's resolutions regarding its organization of work. The organizational structure and methods of work of the Council needed to be reformed. There were too many subsidiary organs and the existing links between the specialized agencies and the Council were too passive. His delegation was not advocating a review of the agreements governing relations between the United Nations and its agencies, but it was in favour of a better delineation and division of responsibilities.

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(Mr. Czarkowski, Poland)

27. The success of the attempt to strengthen and improve economic and social co-operation largely depended on the performance of international secretariats, which were indispensable in implementing the decisions taken by the intergovernmental bodies of the United Nations system. The Committee's task was not so much to assess the work of those secretariats as to analyse and improve their mutual interrelationship. Consequently, his delegation opposed the creation of the unnecessary superstructures envisaged by the Group of Experts. It would, on the other hand, support the proposal that recruitment standards should be raised and suggest that in some of the secretariats the principle of equitable geographical distribution should be more strictly applied. The secretariats of the United Nations system were also playing a crucial role in the delivery of multilateral assistance, technical assistance in particular. The only change which appeared really useful would involve consolidating the existing funds or checking their proliferation. Obviously, the multiplication of funds brought about an increase in overhead costs and diminished the stock of resources available for respective programmes.

28. The Committee was confronted with a complex and difficult task. In formulating its conclusions and recommendations, it would need to show not only foresight and vision, but also caution, and to keep past experience in mind.

29. Miss GARCIA DONOSO (Ecuador) said that the need for a restructuring of the United Nations system was a logical outcome of the feeling of frustration that overcame the international community when it noted that the problems afflicting mankind, particularly the developing countries, not only persisted but, what was more serious, were becoming increasingly acute, jeopardizing international peace and security. The lack of real progress, which was revealed by the first biennial appraisal of the implementation of the International Development Strategy and the changing economic situation in recent years that had had serious repercussions on the developing countries had led to the convening of two special sessions of the General Assembly devoted exclusively to economic questions and had convinced the international community of the need to establish a new and more equitable international economic order. If that objective was to be attained, there must be a restructuring of the United Nations system and of the machinery established

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(Miss Garcia Donoso, Ecuador)

30 years earlier to promote co-operation among States in the interests of mankind as a whole. The principles embodied in the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States and in the resolution adopted by the General Assembly at its seventh special session rendered that need even more imperative. Already in 1972, at its twenty-seventh session, the General Assembly had adopted a resolution entitled "Strengthening of the role of the United Nations with regard to the maintenance and consolidation of international peace and security, the development of co-operation among all nations and the promotion of the rules of international law in relations between States". In her delegation's view, the task assigned to the Ad Hoc Committee was also linked to that resolution. It should therefore first of all proceed from the principle that no restructuring could be effective unless it reflected a real political will on the part of Member States.

30. In the opinion of her delegation the work of restructuring would be an arduous one which would require time and could only proceed gradually. It was therefore essential to define beforehand the priority areas for reform, while taking care not to overlook the fact that restructuring did not signify a complete upheaval. Accordingly, while awaiting the outcome of the fourth session of UNCTAD, which should serve as a basis for sectoral restructuring, the Ad Hoc Committee might undertake to define those main areas, which in the view of her delegation were four in number.

31. First, the role to be played by the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council in the formulation of policies, programming and planning of activities concerning development and international economic co-operation should be clearly defined. The rationalization of machinery for the adoption of general policies must necessarily follow that course. It had been noted, however, that on various occasions the Second Committee and the Economic and Social Council had debated the same questions during prolonged discussions which had generally merely provided an opportunity for digressions unrelated to the essential purpose of the debate. The Economic and Social Council was the co-ordinating body for the economic and social activities of the United Nations system. Its role should therefore consist mainly in adopting measures for the implementation of the options set forth by the General Assembly, planning economic and social activities and co-ordinating the activities of all the executing agencies in the system.

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(Miss Garcia Donoso, Ecuador)

32. Secondly, the activities of the subsidiary organs of the Council should be rationalized. Those organs had been established in pursuance of resolutions adopted by the Economic and Social Council for the purpose of dealing with specific economic and social problems at the technical level. The Group of Experts had recommended the abolition of the standing commissions and committees. Her delegation took the view that, for that purpose, a case-by-case analysis should be carried out. Depending on the results, certain organs whose activities were linked might perhaps be amalgamated in order to avoid any duplication. Her delegation did not completely rule out the recommendation by the Group of Experts which, if applied in the manner she had indicated, would make it possible to simplify the system and enhance its effectiveness. The experts had also suggested recourse to negotiating groups, a procedure which had already been followed by the Second Committee and which had also proved its worth during the seventh special session of the General Assembly. To institutionalize such a procedure, however, might detract from the flexibility and dynamism that should characterize negotiations of that kind. That would also apply in the case of consensus. Consensus was always desirable but to make it mandatory, would perhaps reduce the dynamism of the adoption of policies and procedures.

33. Thirdly, her delegation felt that consideration should be given to ways in which to rationalize the joint activities which ought to be implemented by the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination (CPC) and the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination (ACC). At its thirtieth session, the General Assembly had concerned itself with strengthening CPC, a step which to some extent had also helped to strengthen the co-ordinating functions of the Economic and Social Council. CPC was entrusted with planning and programming as well as with the evaluation of the results of the programmes with regard to the application of the guidelines, which would make it possible to assess the degree to which the system was well co-ordinated. As a result of the measures decided upon, CPC would in the future be in a better position to attain its objectives, but it was also none the less necessary to achieve the rationalization of the activities common to CPC and ACC.

34. Finally, the Ad Hoc Committee should consider how the activities of the Secretariat could be reoriented to meet the new demands of economic and social

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(Miss Garcia Donoso, Ecuador)

policy as it evolved. It was for the Secretary-General of the United Nations to direct the Committee's work in that field and the Committee should be given an assessment of the structural potential of the Secretariat vis-à-vis the objectives that had been defined in the economic and social field. Her delegation was ready to co-operate fully in the work of the working group. It was convinced that that work would proceed in a spirit of mutual co-operation and understanding which would enable the Ad Hoc Committee to submit specific proposals to the General Assembly.

35. Mr. LAHLOU (Morocco) said that whatever the formula adopted - reorganization, reform or simply adaptation to the new circumstances - the purpose was the same, namely, to perfect machinery that would make it possible to direct international co-operation as States currently conceived it. The United Nations system must adapt itself to realities at the operational level and must assume the role of a catalyst at the level of its policy-making organs. It would therefore need to be both realistic in its activities and ambitious in its plans. If it was to function effectively, it was therefore essential to eliminate the weaknesses which prevented it from being the true instrument for the promotion of international co-operation. It was for that very purpose that the United Nations had been founded. It was a complex system whose main elements, namely, the principal organs and the specialized agencies, were well known, yet it comprised no fewer than 160 subsidiary bodies whose functions and activities were more difficult to discern. That complexity was, however, only apparent if the question of restructuring was considered in a methodical and rational manner.

36. The inadequacy of the United Nations had become apparent when it had been seen that the Organization had not been able to devise solutions to the problems which it was normally responsible for solving. The first stage should therefore consist in analysing those problems in order to define the sectors which called for reforms and to work out the necessary changes. The task was obviously a difficult one since it consisted in making a detailed analysis of the machinery of the system while at the same time trying not to impede its functioning. It was feasible, however, just as it was feasible to remodel a station without stopping the trains from running. Once the stage of analysis had been completed, it would be possible to seek solutions to the different problems. The soundest approach in

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that regard - and that also seemed to be the opinion of the experts - would be to draw up a list of priorities. That was an administrative task which should not give rise to any particular difficulty except that it would be necessary to avoid excessive uniformity, in view of the great number of organizations, operational programmes, agencies and organs.

37. As to the question of whether or not centralization was desirable, his delegation felt that the complexity of the United Nations machinery made it very difficult to centralize activities effectively. That would imply the existence of an authority which would act as an arbitrator between the various organs and agencies; that was another question. There was, of course, a need to put an end to the duplication, overlapping of responsibilities and legal conflicts which sometimes arose in situations where more than one sector was involved. The Ad Hoc Committee should not have to intervene in that field since the difficulties could be smoothed out if the organs genuinely abided by the principles which had governed the definition of their mandates. Administrative authority existed in the person of the Secretary-General, who should ensure the harmonious development of the activities of the United Nations in the promotion of the economic and social welfare of peoples. If, with the support of the international community, he was unable to make United Nations organs comply with his requests, it would be unrealistic to believe that the situation could be remedied by creating the post of Director-General for Development and International Economic Co-operation, as the Group of Experts had suggested. His delegation therefore considered it preferable to support the Secretary-General in his efforts by drawing his attention to the difficulties and suggesting solutions at the administrative level.

38. The Moroccan Government was in favour of an economic and institutional restructuring of international life. It considered that the new strategy for co-operation among nations irrespective of their economic and social systems should command the full attention of the international community. The main danger to be avoided in that field would be to try to solve specifically international problems through the juxtaposition of unconcerted national solutions. The international community had in the General Assembly, which had proved its effectiveness during its sixth and seventh special sessions, the most logical forum for concerted action. Moreover, it had been seen that contact and negotiating groups had, for their part, made it possible to achieve substantial progress.

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39. Obviously, the Economic and Social Council also had an important role to play. The Council was not at present in command of all its responsibilities, nor did it totally assimilate the mass of information with which it was provided. The main reason for that was that the agenda for its sessions was overloaded; in order to revitalize the Council, consideration might be given to the holding of short sessions with a limited agenda or even devoted entirely to a single question.

40. His delegation felt that the new structure to be adopted should be such as to make the United Nations the true centre for the harmonization of the efforts of nations which were working, in accordance with the principles of the Charter, to achieve common goals, while avoiding both the excessive fragmentation and proliferation and the paralysing centralization which obscured and made harder to attain the paramount objective of the United Nations, which was to promote development and strengthen international co-operation. In order to establish an institutional framework which would be sufficiently flexible to be able to adapt constantly to the realities of the world, it would therefore be necessary to devise new procedures for decision-making and for consultation among Members, to achieve universality in the agencies and, above all, to strengthen the authority of both the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council. If that was done, the United Nations system would be given the means to promote the establishment of the desired new international economic order properly.

The meeting rose at 12.45 p.m.

18th MEETING

Monday, 23 February 1976, 3 p.m.

RESTRUCTURING OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL SECTORS OF THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM
(A/AC.179/3 and Add.1) (continued)

1. Mr. HALASZ (Hungary) said it was becoming apparent from the debate that, despite the expansion of organizations entrusted with economic and social tasks, the United Nations system could barely grasp the increasingly complicated and urgent problems. The task of the Group of Experts on the Structure of the United Nations System had been to define the problems, leaving their solution to the Ad Hoc Committee. The report of the Group of Experts deserved careful consideration; although his delegation did not agree with all the recommendations contained in it, it appreciated the comprehensive analysis which had preceded their elaboration and would comment upon them in detail at a later stage.
2. His delegation approached the question of improving the economic and social sectors of the United Nations system from the viewpoint of making the Organization an effective instrument for strengthening international peace and security and international co-operation. It was convinced that, while there might be problems in certain areas, that was due to faulty implementation of the Charter. Thus, the efficiency and authority of the Organization could be enhanced by making better use of the possibilities offered by the Charter. Any proposal regarding restructuring must be based on the Charter, and his delegation would support any initiative taken by the Ad Hoc Committee with a view to strengthening the integrity of the Charter.
3. His delegation agreed with the Group of Experts that restructuring was no substitute for the political will of Member States to discharge their obligations under Article 56 of the Charter and that there was no ideal institutional design which would fully meet the short-term and long-term interests of every Member State. Any decision on restructuring must be based on respect for the principles of sovereignty, mutual interest, universality, equal rights, peaceful coexistence and equitable geographical distribution and should take into account the long-term political and economic interests of Member States.

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4. It would be useful for the Ad Hoc Committee to concentrate on the problems hampering realization of the basic objectives of the Charter, and in so doing it should take into account the interests of the Member States as a whole and of the developing countries in particular. Priority should be given to consideration of the following areas: strengthening the role of the Economic and Social Council and its decision-making mechanism and eliminating duplication in its work; increasing the effectiveness of United Nations technical assistance; modernizing the work of the United Nations Secretariat.

5. Finally, he wished to reiterate that, while his delegation did not oppose informal consultations between sessions, its position of principle was that priority should be given to the formal meetings of the Ad Hoc Committee and that, owing to the nature of the task it was engaging in, the Committee should act by consensus.

6. Mr. TOLBA (Executive Director, United Nations Environment Programme) drew attention to the preliminary draft of his report (UNEP/GC/75) - submitted to the Ad Hoc Committee for its information - which dealt with the institutional arrangements for UNEP as they stood, as they might be affected by the restructuring exercise, and as they related to the possible outcome of Habitat: United Nations Conference on Human Settlements.

7. The issue before the Committee was of prime importance for the continuity of the vital role that the United Nations should be playing. If the economic and social sectors of the United Nations were to become a dynamic instrument for the creation of the new international economic order, the betterment of the quality of life and the provision of the basic needs of all peoples, everyone must work together to improve the operation of the system in all areas, not only administratively.

8. UNEP felt that central to its concern was the satisfaction of the basic needs he had mentioned. It attached great importance to the linkages between environment and the development process which must be fully supported if those needs were to be satisfied. Although the development process sometimes had deleterious effects upon the environment when development was haphazard or was viewed in too narrow a context, in fact it should improve the environment from the viewpoint of man's

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(Mr. Tolba, UNEP)

needs. In order to ensure that environmental concerns were met in planning for the future, a firm commitment to the concept of sustainable development was required. The interrelationship between environment and development had been recognized for several years, and environmental concerns were reflected in the Declaration on the Establishment of a New International Economic Order. The interrelationship of population, resources, environment and development issues had been recognized at the third session of the Governing Council of UNEP, as had the fact that solutions to those problems must form part of an integrated strategy directed towards harmonized objectives. The Governing Council had further considered that environmental management implied sustainable development of all countries, aimed at meeting basic human needs without transgressing the outer limits set to man's endeavours by the biosphere. Accordingly, UNEP considered that alternative patterns of development and life styles must be advanced and, to that end, it had developed a series of activities including exploration of the basic linkages between environment and development, research into alternative patterns of development and, within that general concern, improvement of the concept of "eco-development". Those activities were supported by UNEP's Earthwatch Programme, whose functions included the provision of a data base on which sound development policies could be founded. He had expanded on that conceptual linkage in order to emphasize that sustained development for the provision of basic human needs had a direct relevance to UNEP's two main activities, namely, environmental assessment and environmental management.

9. Turning to some of the themes underlying the activities of UNEP as they related to the possible restructuring of the economic and social sectors of the United Nations system, he said that co-ordination was central to the integrity of UNEP's programming process, manifesting itself at the working level in the Inter-Divisional Task Forces established to undertake a more integrated approach to UNEP's activities in all three stages of its "programmatic process". The first level was concerned with the identification of gaps in knowledge about the environment and proposals for general remedial steps, the second with outlining more specifically the objectives and strategies to be followed to fill in the gaps and to utilize the existing knowledge, and the third with using the UNEP Fund as

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(Mr. Tolba, UNEP)

a catalyst for action in the critical areas of the approved strategies. It was clear from General Assembly resolution 2997 (XXVII) that co-ordination was intended to be a primary role of UNEP. The development of GEMS, IRS and IRPTC, joint programming with members of the United Nations system in fields of protection of oceans and their marine resources, ecological and habitat management of pests, and co-operation in preparations for the United Nations Conference on Desertification were examples of how that co-ordination role was implemented.

10. The Environment Co-ordination Board (ECB), one of the four elements of UNEP's institutional base, was by definition a mechanism for co-ordination among all United Nations bodies involved in implementing environmental programmes. It thus assisted UNEP in establishing the first level of its programmatic process, in co-ordinating activities carried out by the various members of the United Nations system in the field of environment and in ensuring that the programmes of other United Nations organs and agencies took into full consideration the environmental impact of their activities. Through the Board, the agencies and UNEP could influence one another. Although concern had been expressed over the apparent overlapping roles of ECB and ACC, there was no need for any conflict between the two bodies; for, whereas ACC was responsible for over-all interagency co-ordination, ECB was the mechanism for co-ordinating the environmental aspects of many of the same activities. Theoretically, it would thus be entirely consistent to have both ECB and ACC committees on some of the same subjects. In practice, that should be necessary only where the environmental aspects of an issue were of special importance and of such dimension that they could not be adequately dealt with through ACC or, as in the case of Earthwatch, where the environmental issue concerned cut across several sectors and related agency activities.

11. The Governing Council in turn was the mechanism for co-ordination at the intergovernmental level. It established a balanced programme satisfying the requirements of developed and developing countries, set criteria for selection of areas of concentrated actions, reviewed implementation and lent its support to the Secretariat to ensure that Governments co-operated and co-ordinated their activities. An example of the latter function was the agreement of the coastal States of the Mediterranean on a plan of action for the protection and integrated development of the Mediterranean Sea region.

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(Mr. Tolba, UNEP)

12. Accordingly, UNEP hoped that co-ordination would become a major concern of the Ad Hoc Committee. Any restructuring of the United Nations system must ensure that Governments assisted the system in the implementation of the recommendations they themselves made in such forums as the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council. That could be done only by ensuring that the recommendations were not contradictory or overlapping but rather complementary and that they formed part of a cohesive strategy aimed at attaining specific objectives. The Committee might wish to consider recommending the identification of a few issues such as arid lands, marine sciences or science and technology and the evaluation of the resolutions and recommendations adopted by Governments in the various forums within a given period of time in order to see how far they met the criterion of complementarity.

13. The Environment Fund was an indispensable element in the institutional structure of UNEP, and its operation as an integral part of UNEP was essential to the programmatic approach, especially the third level of UNEP's activities. The ability to support from the Fund important elements in the programme, including the addition of an environmental dimension to relevant development-related activities, was vital to the effectiveness of its catalytic role. The Environment Fund must therefore operate as an integral part of the UNEP programming process and in close physical proximity to that part of UNEP which dealt with the development of the programme objectives and strategies. Naturally, it could not meet more than a small fraction of the major challenges of environmental protection, and it should be regarded as providing the "seed money" and the technical know-how to get particular activities started. The completion of such activities, however, required financial support far beyond the Fund's resources, and UNEP was responsible for ensuring that adequate funds from multilateral and bilateral sources were available to continue the task it had initiated. The principal objective of the Fund was to ensure that environmental considerations were taken fully into account in development planning, not to provide development assistance.

14. Turning to the subject of UNEP in direct relationship to the restructuring effort he pointed out that, although most of UNEP's work was directly relevant to

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(Mr. Tolba, UNEP)

development problems and to the new international economic order, basic portions of the programme emphasized assessment and evaluation of problems that were largely in the future. Accordingly, if UNEP was to be included in any reshaping of the system, the uniqueness of its role must be preserved and the specific functions entrusted to it and to its Fund should continue to be highly visible. To that end, the following principles - outlined in document UNEP/GC/75 - should be maintained: its special responsibilities for catalysing and co-ordinating efforts to deal with environmental issues of a global nature and its concern with environmental problems of industrialized and developing countries alike; its being a source of guidance in international co-operation in the field of environment; its particular role in providing suitable forums for treaty-making at the global and regional levels in the field of environmental protection; its responsibility to identify, through its programmatic approach, emerging environmental problems, to propose possible solutions and to contribute to their implementation by managing a small Fund as an integral part of its programmatic process; its major role in advocating the interdependence of environment and development and its continued effort to ensure the presentation, in co-operation with other members of the United Nations system, of options for continued growth and development without harming the resource base on whose existence the well-being of the peoples of the world depended.

15. Finally, he recalled that UNEP had always favoured greater integration of the United Nations system in order to tackle the challenges set forth by the requirements of the new international economic order. The system had a wealth of information, experience and talents from the various countries and it was for the Member States, in co-operation with the Secretariat, to identify the most appropriate means of making the best use of those resources.

16. Mr. HASHMI (India) noted that the report of the Group of Experts stated that research could be kept separate from operations, and asked the Executive Director of UNEP whether operations would not suffer if that were so.

17. Mr. TOLBA (Executive Director, United Nations Environment Programme) replied that UNEP was not an operational agency but rather worked with existing agencies. Operations could not be separated from research. The application of

(Mr. Tolba, UNEP)

existing knowledge was simply a beginning. The operations themselves would identify those areas in which additional knowledge had to be obtained through further research.

18. Mr. MILLS (Jamaica) reiterated his delegation's position that the major requirement in so far as the United Nations system was concerned was that it should be made a more cohesive system, and should be equipped with the capability for overall policy-planning, analysis and research and for exploring the processes of development at the national and international levels. It should be made more capable of monitoring and analysing the factors and problems related to development and the experience of different cultures across the world. It should be equipped to provide maximum opportunity for the full play of the energies and experience of the agencies and other bodies of the United Nations working in different fields, and for the interaction between those agencies.

19. The Committee was not concerned with the task of fashioning a new institutional framework where none had existed before. That would be in itself a very difficult task, especially since there would be little to go by in terms of precedent. What it was required to do was to look at an existing set of institutions which had evolved over a long period and which were in full operation, to diagnose the effectiveness of the system in meeting the current and foreseeable requirements for international development and, in the light of that review, to try to devise means for making significant improvements in the structure of those institutions and in the manner of their operation. In some respects, therefore, the task was not unlike that which had been given to the Group of Experts. However, the Group had had the task of producing in a very short period a thorough diagnosis and a coherent set of recommendations concerning improvement of the United Nations system for consideration by the Preparatory Committee for the Seventh Special Session of the General Assembly. In its report, it had sought to express first of all its judgements regarding those aspects of the system which called for improvement, and to make recommendations about the institutional changes which would seem to be appropriate, in order to make the system more effective. The Group had put forward, in some instances, alternative approaches to the solution of certain problems and indicated differences of view on some important issues. It had also been unable to deal in full with the question of the various economic sectors and

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(Mr. Mills, Jamaica)

the manner in which the institutional framework of the United Nations might be improved in order to improve work in those areas.

20. The report of the Group should provide a very useful input for the work of the Committee, but it was by no means the only source from which the Committee should draw. There were, in addition, many official reports and documents containing the views of individuals from inside and outside of the United Nations, as well as of agencies of the United Nations. In addition, it was assumed that the intersessional working group would have detailed discussions with various interests in the United Nations and related agencies, and would engage in far-reaching discussions among members of the working group itself. Out of all that would come many ideas about possible institutional changes or innovations, and in the final analysis there would be a major task of reconciling different views which would inevitably emerge from among members of the working group. The Ad Hoc Committee would need to have before it some coherent set of proposals based on a balancing of the varying interests of Member States. Governments would have to study very carefully the proposals which came forward and to take definitive positions on them, since the proposals were likely to have far-reaching implications for the future of the United Nations system and the processes of international economic co-operation.

21. Restructuring of the United Nations system was essentially a political exercise. If it were merely a question of establishing a more efficient system in the technical sense of the term, the task could be given to a firm of management consultants. The United Nations represented a complex of political, administrative, technical and other factors, stemming from operational considerations as well as from the interests and concerns of individual Member States, groups of countries and the membership as a whole. The task involved both in the operating of the system and in the consideration of restructuring was one of balancing those various interests and ensuring that the system operated for the greater good of the global community.

22. While prevailing political realities would play a dominant part in restructuring, many other influences and considerations would also be involved, and the Committee should weigh all of those elements carefully. It should be

(Mr. Mills, Jamaica)

recalled that the exercise of restructuring derived from a very strong expression of concern about the capability of the United Nations system to carry out the particularly heavy responsibilities which it would have in the creation of a just and equitable international economic system, in line with the concept of a new international economic order. There was inevitably an extremely close association between the exercise of restructuring and the move towards fundamental change in the international economic system. The degree to which the necessary consensus concerning restructuring would be achieved must be regarded as a direct derivative of the attitudes of Member States towards a serious pursuit of the task of establishing the new economic order. That did not mean that there were no other grounds for calling for improvement of the economic and social sectors of the United Nations, but the development of a strong conviction of the need for a fundamental review of the United Nations was part and parcel of the evolution of concern about the inadequacies of the international economic system and the call for the New International Economic Order.

23. The view had been expressed that the creation of the complex of international institutions centring on the United Nations had resulted from the tremendous burst of creative energy which had taken place during the 1940s, and had represented the second attempt in modern times to establish a world system. Such movements arose out of very special circumstances and in the face of grave dangers and challenges to the world community. The central question now facing the Committee was whether the world community was on the eve of a similar creative exercise directed towards the establishment of the New International Economic Order and the refashioning of those elements of the United Nations system which called for change. It was therefore necessary to consider whether there was sufficient agreement and conviction regarding the far-reaching steps that needed to be taken to deal with the questions relating to international development and the establishment of an equitable international economic system. If there was, then there was a good prospect of success; if there was not, then the Committee would not be able to achieve very much.

24. In that connexion, any move to depoliticize the United Nations, which was basically a political body where the interests of a large number of sovereign

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(Mr. Mills, Jamaica)

States were represented, should be discouraged. That point had some bearing on the very interesting and useful statement made at the 10th meeting of the Committee by the President of the World Bank, who had said that one source of the Bank's strength was its non-political character and that programme direction and investment decisions were founded upon economic as contrasted with political considerations. However, he had added, that was not an easy constraint to live with, particularly since the political situation and the political character of a country might have economic consequences and repercussions. In discussing the Bank's development philosophy, he had outlined the approach taken in the early days, where the emphasis in investment had been on infrastructure, and had described the change to an increasing emphasis on agriculture, the needs of small farmers, education, and the social aspects of economic growth. The clear implication of the statement was that the Bank now recognized that the trickle-down theory of economic development had not conferred any significant benefits on the masses of poor persons in developing countries. The Bank, therefore, was currently placing much greater emphasis on policies and projects designed explicitly to increase directly the productivity of the absolute poor, and not merely to encourage economic growth. That new approach focused on an attack on poverty primarily through rural development projects which cut across sector lines. Having initiated the attack on poverty in rural areas where the overwhelming majority of the poor lived, the Bank was moving to strengthen its capacity to help Governments to reduce poverty in the cities.

25. There were important lessons there concerning the nature and operation of the United Nations system in the field of development. The Bank, to its credit, had gradually changed its approach to development in the light of a growing realization of the political and social facts of life where development was concerned. Other agencies of the United Nations had moved in the same direction for the same reason, but it was arguable that the United Nations, the Bank and other institutions might have moved farther and faster had they been operating in an atmosphere and under a set of influences which allowed a more ready and frank recognition of the basic elements and dynamics of the development process, including the relevant social and political factors. The United Nations system and its institutions were creatures of the member countries, and suffered to a certain

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(Mr. Mills, Jamaica)

extent all the limitations from which the members suffered. In order to emancipate the United Nations system from such constraints, restructuring must set out to ensure that freedom of exploration and search in the matter of development which was essential to the establishment of the sort of world envisaged.

26. The International Monetary Fund was another institution which had extended and liberalized its approach to its functions quite considerably over the past 30 years. Nevertheless, it was essentially the creature of the time of its creation and its structure, and the question faced in the restructuring process was how to ensure broad political influence in matters relating to development without affecting those aspects of the Fund's structure and operation which were essential to it. That was no easy task. One approach suggested by the Group of Experts was the establishment of a forum in which the heads of the major economic agencies, including the Bank and the Fund, would meet from time to time with officials of the United Nations Secretariat to discuss matters and to exchange ideas. In that way there would be significant interaction and each one would in some way influence the other.

27. An important consideration which should be taken into account in the process of restructuring related to the widening range of activities of a global nature which could already be envisaged. In such matters as the exploitation of the resources of the sea-bed, development of the use of outer space and the application of the technology related to the science of information, including remote sensing, it was essential to broaden the scope of the United Nations system so that it could encompass those and other activities. Perhaps the not too distant future would see the establishment of truly multinational enterprises operating in the interest of the world community.

28. Among the issues which had commanded attention in the consideration of restructuring were the general questions of the degree of centralization or decentralization of the United Nations system, and the matter of co-ordination. While those questions were crucial, they were not primary, since the task was not to establish a new system but rather to examine an ongoing, operating set of institutions and to make proposals for significant improvement in their operations and effectiveness. Accordingly, the system itself and its operations should be

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(Mr. Mills, Jamaica)

studied and judgements made about its effectiveness in relation to existing and anticipated requirements. The judgement about centralization or decentralization would have to be made on empirical grounds, for one could envisage a perfect system, centralized or decentralized, and well co-ordinated, but still failing to meet the basic requirement of the international community.

29. Another important question was the development of conventions about consensus, or the establishment of negotiating groups. The resolution of that question would depend on political factors, including the feeling of the developing countries as to the extent to which, on any individual issue, a point had been reached where there was sufficient prospect of agreement. The Committee would be concerned with a possible United Nations structure which might endure for 20 or 30 years, and an attempt should be made to work out a system to allow for an improvement in the machinery for negotiation on some issues. It should also be clear that nothing in any such arrangements should seek to diminish, or result in diminishing, the basic political influence of developing countries as a whole in the system.

30. The major themes in the Committee's discussions would inevitably include the future operation of the General Assembly and in particular the Second Committee, and the organization of the United Nations Secretariat. In addition, the future role of the Economic and Social Council and of its subsidiary bodies, the future operation of UNCTAD, and the relationship of the specialized agencies and GATT to the central United Nations system would be important issues. A major question would be the organization of the development activities of the United Nations, the possible rationalization of the institutional framework involved, and the establishment of a more effective relationship with institutions like the World Bank. The question of the creation of machinery for continuous review of the structure of the United Nations system and possible changes should also receive attention, including the question how proposals calling for significant structural innovations might be dealt with in future.

31. With the effort to make significant changes in the international economic system and in the operation of the United Nations, there would inevitably be a need to ensure a fuller public understanding of those matters. The public information and public relations services of the United Nations system, as they related to development and international economic affairs, must therefore be fully

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(Mr. Mills, Jamaica)

geared to make their contribution to greater effectiveness in the work of the United Nations, and to promote a better understanding on the part of member countries of those activities of the United Nations system. If the purposes of restructuring were to be achieved, and if a more meaningful and effective system of international economic relations was to emerge, member countries must significantly improve their machinery and procedures for dealing with the United Nations system. The United Nations, on the other hand, must establish a better understanding and appreciation of the nature of the societies of Member States, so that in its approach to development matters it could be more effective. Finally, most of the effort towards achieving the aims outlined must come by way of increasing public interest in member countries in matters related to international development, and by way of the activities of institutions outside the United Nations system. It was vital, therefore, that the United Nations should be in a position to foster and to monitor such activities as far as necessary.

32. Mr. STANOVNIK (Executive Secretary, Economic Commission for Europe) said that he wished to comment on the structure of the regional commissions and the problem of decentralization. ECE had been established 30 years previously with the mandate to deal with the reconstruction of war-ravaged Europe. That mandate, however, had been subsequently adapted in keeping with certain changes. First of all, there had been a change in the membership of the Commission, which was now universal, and included all of Europe, the United States and Canada. Its major concern had therefore become economic co-operation between countries with different social and economic systems, between East and West. Secondly, the climate had also changed from one of cold war, with all of its concomitant obstacles, to one of détente, which was far more favourable to the Commission's work.

33. The structure of the Commission had also evolved. There were 15 main subsidiary bodies, which were in turn divided into ad hoc groups and subgroups of experts. The structure was therefore very complex, and its proper co-ordination was extremely important. Co-ordination was not a problem of duplication, which would mean that there had been no effective co-ordination in the beginning.

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(Mr. Stanovnik, ECE)

Co-ordination had to be ex ante rather than post factum. There was a permanent dialogue between the Commission, its secretariat and subsidiary bodies. The Commission and the executive secretariat indicated to the subsidiary bodies what other bodies were doing and even what they were likely to do. That involved forward thinking and co-ordination for rational planning. Thus, the problem of co-ordination was largely one of programme planning.

34. The Commission's programmes were carried out through governmental committees. There was therefore no proliferation of controlling bodies. The governmental committees were working bodies; they did not deliberate on what other bodies were doing. That meant that the committees, while carrying out specific tasks, adopted decisions which as a rule were arrived at by consensus, because the structure of ECE was such that Western countries could always out-vote the socialist countries of Eastern Europe. What was important for the implementation of a technical agreement was not whether that agreement had been reached by a majority vote but, rather, whether all parties were prepared to implement it. Thus, while conference diplomacy or negotiations in ECE were a slow process, the agreements reached were invariably implemented.

35. The secretariat, nine of whose 10 divisions were technical ones servicing individual committees, also played a crucial role. It prepared specialized documentation for study by Governments, and that highly technical work was carried out in response to governmental committees which usually requested strictly policy-oriented studies.

36. In recent years, during which there had been a multidisciplinary approach to programming procedures, there had been a tendency to establish so-called horizontal committees which, in reality, were subco-ordinators of co-ordinators. The Commission had decided that such a practice should be avoided.

37. The secretariat enjoyed the full confidence of member States, and its work was under almost daily control of Governments. The question then arose as to what was the correct relationship between a regional body such as ECE and the global parent body, the United Nations. The matter of decentralization had been discussed continually over the years and experience in ECE had led to the conclusion that it was a non-issue: there was no basic difference between centralization and decentralization. A theory of multilevel decision-making held that, for maximum

(Mr. Stanovnik, ECE)

efficiency, decisions should be taken at the level at which there was the optimal convergence of interests. For example, a decision on sewage management would have to be taken at the local rather than at the national level. Of course, certain strategic decisions had to be taken centrally. He therefore suggested that, to ensure maximum efficiency, there might be a system of multilevel and multisectoral decision-making. As the 1961 report of the Committee of Experts on the Review of the Activities and Organization of the Secretariat (A/4776) had stated, the vital question was the translation of the policy of decentralization into terms of practical administration. That statement was still valid today.

38. ECE was also concerned with the vital question of proper on-the-spot co-ordination with the activities of the specialized agencies. He had therefore been surprised to learn from the statement made by the Director-General of UNESCO at the 12th meeting of the Committee that UNESCO regarded the direction taken by the regional economic commissions as ambiguous and doubted whether the commissions could effect co-ordination by seeking to replace the specialized agencies. ECE had always had friendly co-operation with UNESCO on many activities and he had therefore been unaware that the UNESCO secretariat, and in particular the Director-General, entertained such feelings. ECE also co-operated with other agencies, particularly FAO, with which it had two joint divisions, and was prepared to undertake the same type of co-operation with all agencies. It had no intention of attempting to replace the specialized agencies.

39. ECE's major task was to contribute to the attainment of a just world economic order. It operated in a region which had 25 per cent of the world's population and covered 25 per cent of its land area, but which produced 70 per cent of global output and had 90 per cent of the world's scientific research resources. ECE was therefore continually called on to make a major contribution to the work of the United Nations. Its work of maintaining a just relationship between countries with different economic and social systems was already a contribution. However, more positive measures should be taken, since ECE worked in the developed world and had vast technical knowledge at its disposal. It must therefore establish the means of channelling that knowledge to the developing countries, and it should undertake more projects for the developing countries in the region, thereby aiding those outside the region. In other words, ECE should remain an outward-looking, though regional, organization while lending services to less privileged areas.

40. Mr. CZARKOWSKI (Poland) said that the statement made by the Executive Secretary of ECE was very important for the future work of the Committee. The Executive Secretary had indicated interesting interrelations between resolutions of the General Assembly and the problems facing the Committee, and his delegation agreed that the implications of General Assembly resolution 3508 (XXX), which his delegation had initiated, should be given due consideration by the Committee.

The meeting rose at 5.15 p.m.

19th MEETING

Tuesday, 24 February 1976, 10.30 a.m.

RESTRUCTURING OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL SECTORS OF THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM
(A/AC.179/3 and Add.1) (continued)

1. Mr. KOLEV (Bulgaria) said that in his view the task of the Committee was the elaboration of measures which would increase the effectiveness of the United Nations activities in the economic and social fields, thus making the United Nations a more effective instrument for maintaining international peace and security and for the development of international economic co-operation among all countries. Consequently, the main question was not to change one or another body; more important was the creation of a system responsive to the new realities that had come into being during the last few years in the field of international relations with the relaxation of international tensions and the improvement of the political climate.

2. The work of the Ad Hoc Committee should be based on the United Nations Charter, on the decisions of the sixth and seventh special sessions of the General Assembly and on the charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States. Any rationalization of the economic and social structure of the United Nations system should contribute to translating into life the purposes, goals and principles of the United Nations Charter, and first of all of those relating to the strengthening of world peace, which was the basis of the Declaration and the Programme of Action on the Establishment of a New International Economic Order and the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States.

3. The performance of the Ad Hoc Committee's work required full observance of the principles of equality, universality, mutual benefit and non-discrimination and should take into account the interests of all countries, particular attention being given to the needs and problems of the developing countries in their efforts to achieve economic independence and accelerated economic development. The recommendations and decisions of the Committee should contribute to the expansion of co-operation among all countries in the world, regardless of their economic and social system, size, geographical situation, and so on.

4. Since the task before the Committee required a gradual approach, efforts might be concentrated at the beginning on avoiding duplications and parallelism in the

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(Mr. Kolev, Bulgaria)

work of the economic and social bodies and on reversing the tendency to increase the number and length of unofficial meetings at the expense of the official ones. In that respect, the establishment of negotiating groups could be useful in some cases. The idea of nationalizing the calendar of conferences was also worthy of attention, with a view to enabling all delegations to participate in the consideration and solution of important economic problems.

5. His delegation agreed on the necessity of improving the work of the Economic and Social Council and of increasing its role and efficiency in accordance with the United Nations Charter. Particular attention should be paid to the agenda, the choice of priorities and the organization of the Council's sessions and to improving its co-ordination functions.

6. Finally, the Ad Hoc Committee should take due account of the financial implications of any changes and their effect upon the current activities of the economic and social sectors of the United Nations system.

7. Mr. CHEREDNIK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that, after the task of preserving peace and security, the principal task of the United Nations was international economic co-operation. A new situation had arisen in relations among States, marked by a very definite trend towards détente. The principle of peaceful coexistence between States with different economic and social systems was constantly gaining ground, as were the principles of the independence and sovereignty of States, equality, territorial integrity, non-use of force, non-intervention, and so on. Those principles had found expression in the Declaration and the Programme of Action on the Establishment of a New International Economic Order and the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States, and they should form the basis of the Committee's work.

8. The Soviet delegation approached the question of the restructuring of the economic and social sectors of the United Nations system primarily from the viewpoint of increasing the effectiveness of the Organization's action in that sphere. Yet his delegation was not inclined to dramatize the situation, as some speakers had done, and he would stress the importance of not underestimating what had been achieved particularly in the last few years; in particular, the significance of the decisions concerning a reshaping of international economic

(Mr. Cherednik, USSR)

relations along progressive lines was reflected in the Declaration and Programme of Action and in the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States.

9. The mandate of the Ad Hoc Committee was very broad; it was to concern itself with a restructuring of the system so as to make it more fully capable of dealing with problems of international economic co-operation and development as a whole. The Committee's decisions must be acceptable to all. At the same time, his delegation attached vital importance to the fact that resolution 3362 (S-VII) specially provided that account should be taken of the principles of the Declaration and the Programme of Action and of the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States.

10. Before accepting any recommendations for changes in a given organ, his delegation would have to be convinced that there really was a structural problem; for there might in fact be no direct link between the reorganization of international economic relations and the structure of the United Nations system in those fields. The simplest solution would be for the Committee to take purely formal measures, such as establishing new posts or changing the names of some bodies. However, his delegation was not convinced, for example, that the creation of a post of Director-General for Development and International Economic Co-operation would in itself enhance the efficiency of the system. Nor would changing the name of the Second Committee have much effect. The proposal that it should be allowed to meet when the General Assembly was not in session was quite unacceptable and would simply mean creating one more standing body. The Committee should take account of the progressive provisions of the instruments mentioned in its mandate not by creating an additional administrative superstructure but improving the actual work of the various bodies.

11. The members of the Committee seemed to agree that any action taken to improve the efficiency of the system should not have the effect of increasing the number of organs, causing even more parallelism or increasing expenditure. His delegation welcomed that agreement of principle and would stress that, before making any recommendations, the Committee should carefully consider their financial implications on the basis of statements prepared by the Secretariat.

12. Many delegations had rightly emphasized that the process of restructuring should be carried out within the framework of the United Nations Charter and that

(Mr. Cherednik, USSR)

the role of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council should on no account be weakened. The Soviet delegation was ready to participate in a discussion of the reasons why the Council was not performing the role conferred on it by the Charter. In that connexion, the Committee should closely scrutinize the recommendation that the Council should be in permanent session, in view of the administrative and financial implications which that would entail, and also the recommendation that some of its subsidiary bodies should be abolished. The Council could hardly take over the work of its subsidiary bodies without becoming a functional organ instead of performing the co-ordinating role conferred on it by the Charter. Consideration should be given to the idea that some world conferences on certain economic questions should be replaced by special sessions of the General Assembly.

13. The idea of merging operational activities and funds was interesting in principle. His delegation was opposed to proliferation of similar bodies. A word of caution was necessary, however, because retention of the autonomy of the existing funds might mean creating a new superstructure, of which there were already too many.

14. His delegation fully agreed with those who were opposed to institutionalizing certain methods of work, such as the setting up of negotiating groups or the taking of decisions by consensus. It also doubted the desirability of recommending States to send representatives of a certain level to a given meeting, since it was the prerogative of each State to decide on the level of its representation according to the needs.

15. Although a number of the recommendations of the Group of Experts (E/AC.62/9) were obscure or controversial, the report taken as whole represented a considerable achievement. The Group was right in stating that organizational changes should not entail amendment of the Charter and that the objective should be to strengthen the role of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council. In the short time allotted for its work, the Ad Hoc Committee should not attempt to grapple immediately with the entire problem, but should be satisfied to make a few specific and practical recommendations. What it must therefore do was to consider those questions that were susceptible of speedy solution, and not consider, for example, recruitment practices and policies, planning, preparation

(Mr. Cherednik, USSR)

of the programme budget, and regional structures. In principle, it would be highly advisable to consider the social and economic activities of the United Nations sector by sector but the Committee could hardly do that in so short a time. It would obviously confine itself to the following questions: the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and operational activities, and possible changes in the Secretariat in connexion with those three points.

16. In connexion with the decision to establish the Working Group, which would meet between sessions of the Committee, his delegation would have preferred the Group to meet during sessions; failing all else, the Group could meet briefly, for example, immediately before the next session of the Committee. The Group should be given not only a list of the questions to be considered but also some general guidelines resulting from the general debate.

The meeting rose at 11.45 a.m.

20th MEETING

Tuesday, 24 February 1976, 3 p.m.

RESTRUCTURING OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL SECTORS OF THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM
(A/AC.179/3 and Add.1) (continued)

1. Mr. HASHMI (India) said that, at the present stage, the Committee could not go beyond agreeing on certain principles of restructuring, leaving it to informal consultations between the second and third sessions to fill out the details. His delegation did not believe that, in achieving optimum efficiency, cost-benefit was the overriding element. Efficiency should be judged to the extent that it facilitated dialogue between States, keeping in view all the imperatives of political decision-making, equity and justice.
2. Principles on which agreement should be reached could be, for example, the following: firstly, the competences of the various organs, programmes and agencies of the system should be clearly defined in order to avoid wasteful duplication and diffusion of effort; secondly, the system should be coherent both at the level of professional support and at the decision-making level; thirdly, flexibility and resilience should be built into the structures to enable them to adapt themselves to changing conditions and to respond to new demands made on them, particularly with respect to the needs and requirements of developing countries, in accordance with the preamble and Article 1 of the Charter.
3. The system should be able to perform three basic functions: firstly, it should provide negotiating forums in which sovereign States could discuss issues of common concern and arrive at viable decisions; secondly, it should facilitate negotiations through research and information centres which could define the issues and bring all relevant facts to the attention of the negotiators; thirdly, through a vigorous operational effort, the system should assist those sections of the international community which needed assistance in economic and social fields to become better partners of each other.
4. With respect to negotiations, a distinction should be made between two types of issues: those which lay within the national competence of Member States but which needed international support and mutual sharing of experiences, and those which required changes in international structures and mechanisms where decisions of the international community as a whole became imperative.

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(Mr. Hashmi, India)

5. The United Nations had two bodies whose responsibilities cut across narrow sectoral divisions, namely, the Economic and Social Council and UNCTAD. Following its expansion, the Economic and Social Council had become relatively more representative. However, it had always been clear that it could not be revitalized or made effective at the expense of existing sectoral and other organizations, and in that matter the Committee needed to take a broad view that was pragmatic, constructive and objective. The varied range of subjects before the Council made it an appropriate body to co-ordinate the activities of the system in the sectors indicated in Article 62 of the Charter. It was also an appropriate forum in which States could share their national experiences and seek mutual support for national programmes on such matters as population, health, environment, status of women, social development and human rights. The Council should also keep abreast of all international negotiations in other forums such as the World Bank, IMF, UNCTAD and UNIDO.

6. The Economic and Social Council could not be encumbered with negotiations of a detailed, technical nature which required sustained negotiating effort at a high professional and political level over a period of time. UNCTAD, as could be seen from General Assembly resolution 1995 (XIX), had been created to fill that gap. It was obvious that UNCTAD's role in negotiations, policy formulation and adoption of multilateral legal instruments must always be oriented to keep the interests of developing countries in focus. While respecting the jurisdiction of other specialized agencies, UNCTAD's role in matters of trade and related development issues gave it a mandate to negotiate matters in the entire field of trade and development, since they were all interrelated. Those functions should be strengthened, as indicated in the Manila Declaration of the Group of 77 adopted at the ministerial level on 7 February 1976. It was therefore only logical that UNCTAD should have its own research and information facilities and the possibility of participating in all relevant negotiations in other agencies and international forums. While the idea of arriving at negotiated decisions was good and desirable, it could not be a substitute for the normal democratic procedures of deciding non-negotiable issues on the basis of majority vote. There could be no question of eliminating public debate and expression of views on issues of major concern to developing countries, and such debate could be carried on within UNCTAD, in the Economic and Social Council and at regular or special sessions of the General Assembly.

(Mr. Hashmi, India)

7. The research and information facilities available to the Department of Economic and Social Affairs should be strengthened not only on subjects under discussion in the Economic and Social Council, but also to serve as an added input to the United Nations system as a whole. That reorganization should take into account the requirements of interdisciplinary approaches to research, and the Department already had the advantage of highly competent staff and dynamic leadership. In that context, his delegation would only suggest that its senior personnel should reflect more fully the range and variety of national experiences. The present distribution of posts showed that there was not a single national of any of the Asian developing countries occupying a senior position in that very crucial department of the United Nations Secretariat.

8. The proposal of the Group of Experts to amalgamate various funds under a United Nations Development Authority should be very carefully considered, but care should be taken to avoid the risk of the proposed UNDA becoming unwieldy and ineffective by having too many funds under its umbrella. While some streamlining in the operational activities of the system could be achieved, research could not be divested from operations, since the two must enrich each other with their results.

9. The fact that the United Nations system had endured for years was a tribute to its resilience, and change should not be brought about merely for the sake of change itself. Agencies and programmes had multiplied over the years because for each one of them a certain need or justification had been felt. It was, however, a healthy sign that innovation for the future was being sought in order to make the system respond better to the needs of the international community as a whole, but more particularly to the needs of the developing countries.

10. Mr. DAVIDSON (Under-Secretary-General for Administration and Management) said that the solution of the problems facing the United Nations system could have a significant impact on its future effectiveness. The Committee had embarked on a rigorous examination of the structure of the system with a view to determining its adequacy to meet the strains of the future, not just in terms of its ongoing responsibilities, but more practically with an eye to the additional burdens which would be placed on the structure as the world moved into a new phase of its complex and interrelated system of political, economic and social relationships.

(Mr. Davidson)

11. In formulating the Programme of Action on the Establishment of a New International Economic Order, Member States had turned the face of the United Nations in a new direction, and the system was now expected to rise to the new challenge. It was in that context that the question had been raised as to whether the system, as it now existed, could stand the strains of the new demands to be placed on it and whether it could produce the results which the world community would inevitably expect of it.

12. The analogy inevitably came to mind of a heavily laden convoy of trucks, bearing the marks of considerable use, moving uncertainly along a highway built years before to carry vehicles of considerably less load-bearing capacity. The convoy was now approaching a bridge which, like the road of which it was a contemporary, bore the signs of heavy use over many years and stood as an all too uncertain link to the future on the other side. The next question raised was that of the drivers: did they have licences testifying to their competence, trustworthiness and reliability? Did they possess road maps and did they know where they were going? Were they experienced veterans, eager neophytes, or perhaps in some cases aging, travel-weary drivers who had been too long on the road? Clearly some questions had arisen in the minds of delegations regarding the capacity of the existing system to continue to carry, as effectively as desired, the responsibilities with which it was at present entrusted, to say nothing of the heavy additional burdens of the future.

13. The evidence to confirm those doubts was to be seen everywhere. Member States had become increasingly restive regarding the ability of individual entities of the system to perform as they should under existing conditions. They had set out to change individual structures, and the situation in UNIDO was an example. Member States were not satisfied that, in the distribution of funds for development purposes, sufficient priority was being given to particular sectors or possibly to particular constituencies. A decision to create a special voluntary fund for a particular purpose then resulted. There were several such examples. Sometimes in the desire to build strength where weakness was perceived, or to reinforce structures to meet heightened demands or real emergencies, new structures were added to existing ones, not always with an eye to symmetry, cohesion or effectiveness of concerted integrated action. Four entities now in the field of agriculture testified to that.

(Mr. Davidson)

14. There were specific areas in which Member States had manifested their doubts and their questioning of the status quo. Beginning with the twenty-eighth session of the General Assembly, followed by the sixth special session, the report of the Group of Experts and, most importantly, the seventh special session, the repetition of that questioning theme had risen to a crescendo. The result had been the establishment of the Ad Hoc Committee.

15. He interpreted the task of the Committee to be a continuation, in the context of participation by Member States, of what the Group of Experts had been requested to undertake, namely, an examination of how to make the United Nations system fully capable of dealing with problems of international economic co-operation in a comprehensive manner, how to ensure the strengthening and improve the methods of work and functioning of both the central and sectoral institutions of the system, how and where to restructure the organizational components of the system with a view to ensuring more effective achievement and how to improve and streamline the sometimes cumbersome, always complicated working methods and procedures of the Secretariat units and the legislative bodies in order to speed up the achievement of the objectives for which that increasingly complex machinery had been created in the first place.

16. Perhaps the only respect in which he could be useful to the Committee was to direct its attention to some aspects of the problem of an organizational, managerial and administrative nature. First of all, the support services, including financial, personnel, conference, information and general administrative services, were in effect the backbone of any organization. No international organization could function without them. The question then arose whether those services as they now existed were adequate to meet the needs of the future. Should there, for example, be a system-wide conference service secretariat? Conference services constituted an indispensable element in the life of every international organization, and the same could be said of financial services, personnel services and general administrative services. Information services constituted the fifth essential element in the system, because they had a critical effect not only on how an organization was seen to be functioning but on how it actually functioned. Organizations functioned best when they were responsive to

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(Mr. Davidson)

the needs for which they operated. To respond effectively, they must be in contact with the outside world, and information services, both inside and outside the organization, provided that communications link.

17. The chronic difficulties in the financial structure of the United Nations were well known. The Organization existed literally from month to month, and its financial weakness and uncertainty were the best argument for a thorough examination of the precarious financial structure. The exhaustion of the Working Capital Fund, the growing practice of withholding assessments and delays in the payment of them by Member States, left the United Nations in a constant state of uncertainty and reduced prudent financial management to a scramble for survival. The financial state of the United Nations was not an isolated case, as the current situation in UNDP, ILO and UNESCO could attest to. That aspect of the restructuring problem had not been given any attention by the Group of Experts, apart from an expression of hope that its proposals would result in significant economies. One thing was certain: any hope for major achievement of the objectives set would depend heavily on the assurance that a sound financial substructure existed as the basis for carrying out the functions with which the United Nations system was now charged.

18. While he was in general agreement with most of the recommendations of the Group of Experts with respect to planning, programming and budgeting, those recommendations could not be implemented overnight. He had some reservations about the thematic approach to the establishment of priorities and about the suggestion for a single body responsible for programming and budgeting.

19. The United Nations was currently engaged in restructuring its personnel services and, with the establishment of the International Civil Service Commission, there was now a system-wide body that was potentially capable of assessing and monitoring the capacity of the system's personnel substructures. Most of the proposals of the Group of Experts regarding personnel policies and practices were helpful and sound. Whether they would suffice, except over a long period of time, to provide the organizations with the policies, structures and, above all, cadres in the personnel field to support the major restructuring which some assumed was a prerequisite to the achievement of the new international economic order was a question which only time could decide.

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(Mr. Davidson)

20. Similar issues arose with respect to the other support areas within both the United Nations and the specialized agencies. In the general service area, some consolidation and merging or pooling of facilities and services had taken place in some centres. In others, each agency was on its own and there was not even agreement, for understandable reasons, on the choice of regional locations. Perhaps that problem deserved study in the context of restructuring.

21. With respect to information services, it would be argued that additional staff and funds were needed to meet the increased workload. The question was whether more of the same was good enough or whether better use could be made of the existing services and facilities. There was also the question of pooling information services throughout the system, even though some organizational units preferred their own service.

22. The real issue was not restructuring in and for itself, but the ability of the United Nations system to "deliver the goods". It was against that criterion that the system as a whole and its various elements must be tested. If it was found wanting, then more drastic and dramatic reforms would have to be undertaken if the system was to remain vital and able to meet the needs of today and tomorrow.

23. Mr. SCOTT (Deputy Director-General, Universal Postal Union) said that he was somewhat unclear about the charge laid on the Ad Hoc Committee. Read in isolation, its terms of reference seemed to require it to formulate proposals for the medium-to-long-term reorganization of the system; on the other hand, according to General Assembly resolution 3362 (S-VII), that reorganization was only one of a series of measures forming the framework for immediate action to achieve the economic and social development of the developing countries. He wondered, therefore, whether the Committee intended to formulate interim remedial proposals which would keep the system going as well as serving as the first steps towards more radical reform.

24. With regard to the problem of the fundamental institutional change, it seemed to be axiomatic that the end-product should be a system of international co-operation which would best sustain development in every sector of economic and social activity. Since that concept of integrated development could involve changes in pace, direction or scope of effort, the reshaped institutional system should have a built-in capacity to adapt to changing requirements.

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(Mr. Scott, UPU)

25. The existing situation suggested a pattern of possible solutions to the long-term and short-term problems. For the long term, the following would seem in order: firstly, a review of the role and authority of the General Assembly with a view to making it the sole plenipotentiary decision-making body in the field of strategic policy; secondly, a review of the contributing roles which the Economic and Social Council and other organizations, possibly remodelled, could best play with a view to achieving a streamlining and a cohesion of the total effort without losing the benefit of the technical competence which the present organizations could bring to bear; thirdly, a review of the operational machinery in the direction of greater decentralization of responsibility for the implementation of strategic policies; fourthly, a review of the essential procedures demanded by the basic policy proposals, without seeking to standardize simply for the sake of standardization, particularly in areas of activity outside the mainstream; fifthly, a review of the consequential effects at the secretariat level. In so far as the basic policy proposals were concerned, it would be essential to guard against swinging from the extreme of excessive fragmentation to that of excessive centralization. Moreover, ideally the Committee should recommend how the transition from the present situation to that adumbrated in its proposals was to be achieved.

26. As to the interim measures, the initiatives taken in 1975 by the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination to improve and reinforce the intersecretariat co-ordination machinery, especially with regard to implementation of General Assembly resolution 3362 (S-VII), if generally applied and coupled with an enhancement of the role of ACC along the lines suggested by the Group of Experts on the Structure of the United Nations System, might suffice until longer-term proposals could be introduced.

27. Organization must, of course, remain a means to an end and not become an end in itself. Moreover, since even the best organization would not work with the wrong people, the personnel policy of the system could play a vital part in the success of the Ad Hoc Committee's proposals. However, by far the most important requirement was political will, for without it all efforts would be vain.

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28. Mr. PIRSON (Belgium) noted that, although the United Nations system was not the product of harmonized planning, Chapters IX and X of the Charter did give the Organization the necessary powers to develop a system which would make it possible to take effective over-all action on problems of international economic and social co-operation.

29. The restructuring exercise should assign first priority to overhauling the central structures; for, as the Group of Experts had pointed out, one of the system's main weaknesses was that there was no complex of central organs to elaborate coherent world-wide policies. Consideration of the regional structures and review of the sectoral activities (including GATT and UNCTAD) would be premature at the present time and could be left until later.

30. The central organs - primarily the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and the supporting intergovernmental or intersecretariat organs - should be the moving force behind the system, defining over-all policies and priorities and laying down guidelines for action in the economic and social fields. Secondly, the agencies and organs of the system must be much more closely associated in defining over-all objectives. His delegation agreed with the Director-General of UNESCO that it would be preferable for the basic programme elements to be jointly planned in order to guarantee concentrated action. At present, consultations on the programmes of the system as a whole were, in effect, limited to such bodies as ACC, which mainly sought to eliminate overlapping between established programmes. In short, the lack of harmonized over-all planning necessitated costly co-ordination within the system. Accordingly, the working group must seek ways of improving planning and programming; for without a synthesized view of the over-all system, priorities could not be established. The very interesting comments on the subject made by the Vice-Chairman of the Joint Inspection Unit at the 17th meeting deserved careful consideration. Thirdly, the central organs should divest themselves of technical sectoral functions - at least those which fell within the area of competence of any agency - and, generally speaking, of operational sectoral responsibilities, so as to be free to concentrate on over-all policy formulation. Fourthly, the system's functioning and cohesion depended upon the political will of States working towards jointly set goals. His delegation joined the Group of Experts in hoping that decisions on economic

(Mr. Pirson, Belgium)

and social matters could be reached by consensus as far as possible, since experience had shown that general agreement, or at least agreement among the parties directly concerned, often led to significant progress. However, his delegation would not go so far as to say that the proposed negotiating procedures should be institutionalized. Finally, the overhauling of the system would provide an opportunity to re-evaluate the usefulness of individual organs and to try to increase efficiency, particularly in operational areas where administrative costs were excessively high.

31. In the light of the foregoing, priority should be given to certain aspects, the first of which was the role of the Economic and Social Council and its subsidiary bodies. His delegation could, on the whole, associate itself with the outline given by the representative of France concerning the role of a reactivated Council. However, there was no need to assign to the Council tasks that were currently the responsibility of subsidiary bodies. As described, the Council would act more like a governing council, guiding the work of its subsidiary bodies, deciding what follow-up action to take in the light of the latter's discussions and devoting its main sessions to general debates on interdisciplinary subjects of interest to the entire United Nations system. It would thus become the central body in which contributions from the various agencies could be merged into coherent international development and co-operation policies. The review of the role of the Council's subsidiary bodies should provide an opportunity to evaluate their usefulness and to determine whether some of their activities did not fall within the competence of a specialized agency or some other existing organ.

32. Priority should also be given to the role of the Secretariat; while his delegation had a very flexible position on the subject, it had no fundamental objection to the recommendations of the Group of Experts. It appreciated the sensitive nature of the division of responsibilities in the Secretariat but did not share the apprehension of certain delegations that implementation of the Group of Experts' recommendations would divide the Organization into two separate sectors, one economic and the other political. Moreover, it would have difficulty in agreeing that the current situation regarding intersecretariat consultative

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(Mr. Pirson, Belgium)

organs was satisfactory. It supported the proposal to establish automatic mechanisms enabling the Secretariat to call on the skills and experience of specialized agencies.

33. Subject to consideration of the advantages and disadvantages of consolidation in every case, his delegation was tempted to agree with the suggestion that the operational activities and funds should be consolidated in a United Nations Development Authority while retaining their separate identity. The suggestion that there should be a single governing body responsible for reviewing the operational activities of the United Nations system as a whole and providing over-all policy guidance also seemed desirable. In addition, provided that the composition of the Operations Board was sufficiently broad, the proposal that it should be responsible for the conduct of the general operations of UNDA could be accepted. Finally, an independent system of evaluation and monitoring of projects was urgently needed, as was a reduction of administrative costs. Efforts should also be made to avoid the repetition of studies at various levels prior to project implementation.

34. In conclusion, he said that the step-by-step solution of the complex problem which the Committee was considering would require sustained effort and a will to succeed. His delegation would expand on its comments in the working group.

35. Mr. MARAMIS (Executive Secretary, Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific) said that the major challenges facing the human race, and especially the developing countries, could be met only through multilateral action within the United Nations system. Accordingly, there was an urgent need to revitalize the system in order to make it more responsive to the requirements of social and economic development.

36. Duplication of efforts was painfully evident in the organizational structures at the regional level, particularly in substantive programming. Little progress had been made in the United Nations system to implement an integrated and multidisciplinary approach to development. Restructuring should therefore seek to integrate planning and operations not only at the centre but also in the regions.

37. The United Nations system must be brought much closer to the problems of the

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(Mr. Maramis, ESCAP)

rural masses and must secure the capability to provide more timely responses to developmental needs and to meet emergency situations. Its activities should be geared largely to research and studies leading to action-oriented programmes in priority areas.

38. ESCAP had its own experience with restructuring. It had been generally felt that its meagre resources were perhaps being spread far too thinly over a wide range of activities, thereby reducing their effectiveness, and that it was imperative to identify the more vital sectors of activity to which the Commission and its secretariat should devote attention. Efforts had therefore been made, in close consultation with member Governments and other agencies concerned, to formulate an integrated and multidisciplinary programme of work, particularly in the priority areas, consisting of projects carefully selected for maximum feasibility. In order to implement that integrated programme, the conference system of ESCAP had been restructured and its secretariat reorganized. The structure of the legislative committees had been reorganized, the subsidiary structure had been streamlined to provide for ad hoc consultations, the calendar of meetings had been rationalized, and efforts had been made to bridge the gap between problem identification and project implementation and to improve the secretariat's capacity for research, dissemination of information and provision of technical assistance.

39. The recommendations of the Group of Experts on the central role of the Economic and Social Council were constructive. The Council should be concerned with the over-all policies and programmes related to development and should, with inputs from various sources, particularly the regional commissions, provide a reservoir of concepts and ideas to promote development. It should determine priorities for action, provide a clearing-house of information and experience at the global level and co-ordinate activities in the economic and social sectors, working in very close collaboration with the regional commissions. The co-ordination of work relating to economic and social development at the global level must be accompanied by similar co-ordination at the regional level. The regional commissions were centres for the conceptualization of regional development and must be ensured a special role in co-ordinating, as well as initiating, the processes of regional development.

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(Mr. Maramis, ESCAP)

40. The general problem of proliferation of institutions and concomitant multiplicity of operational responsibilities was particularly evident at the regional level. ESCAP had therefore made every effort to promote an integrated and multidisciplinary approach to development and to move away from the traditional fragmentation of work in compartmentalized disciplines. It had also taken action to intensify interagency co-operation and co-ordination; however, that co-ordination still remained to be institutionalized on a continuing basis. Co-ordination must be firmly secured at the regional level by according primacy of place to regional commissions in both the conceptualization and co-ordination of development.

41. Regional structures must also be strengthened to enable them to undertake operational responsibilities and effectively monitor, evaluate and appraise the implementation of programmes and activities. It was unfortunate that the decentralization of activities to regional commissions continued to take place on an ad hoc and piecemeal basis, with difficulties in securing decentralization of financial, administrative and human resources. The complicated existing system of dual or even multiple control and supervision over projects in the regional commissions, especially those assisted by UNDP, involved cumbersome administrative procedures and resulted in unnecessary duplication of effort. It was essential that regional commissions should retain the full responsibility for supervising and monitoring the implementation of projects decentralized to them and that UNDP operations should be decentralized to the regions in order to expedite administrative and financial procedures involved in the approval and subsequent follow-up of projects.

42. If regional structures were to be strengthened, the regional commissions themselves must reorganize so as to be able to handle additional responsibilities more effectively. A primary preoccupation for them would be to provide in their internal structures focal points for executing agency functions; for that purpose, it was essential to ensure a scheme of programme monitoring on a continuing basis. It was especially urgent to decentralize to the regional commissions matters relating to personnel and staff recruitment. Unless the commissions had administrative autonomy, it would be extremely difficult for them to improve the efficiency of their secretariats. Greater flexibility of administrative procedures was also required in order for them to mobilize the additional

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(Mr. Maramis, ESCAP)

resources they needed to implement their activities, especially in view of the present difficulties in the liquidity situation.

43. There were still major limitations of a financial and administrative nature to the promotion of interregional co-operation, but much could be gained through exchange of information and experiences between the regional commissions.

The meeting rose at 5.30 p.m.

21st MEETING

Wednesday, 25 February 1976, 10.30 a.m.

RESTRUCTURING OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL SECTORS OF THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM
(A/AC.179/3 and Add.1) (continued)

1. Mr. SIDDIQ (Afghanistan) said that there had been a fundamental evolution in relations between States which were at different levels of economic development. That evolution had found expression in the decisions, recommendations and resolutions of the sixth and seventh special sessions of the General Assembly, on the basis of which there was to be a restructuring of the economic and social sectors of the United Nations system. However, it was clear, that some of the structural deficiencies of the system were attributable to the Member States and that no restructuring could take place without the political will of Member States.
2. The Group of Experts had presented in its report a set of recommendations for first steps to be considered by the Committee. The main focus of those measures was the strengthening and improving of methods of work and of the functioning of the present institutions of the United Nations system.
3. While the idea of administrative reform was not new, the urgency of the need for reform was due to recent developments within and without the United Nations system, and there was now an obvious need to make the system more responsive in implementing the goals and objectives of the new international economic order, in particular with relation to the needs of the developing countries.
4. It was in the interests of all the members of the international community to make the United Nations a more effective instrument for the maintenance and strengthening of international peace and security and for economic and social co-operation. The mere fact that the United Nations had endured for more than 30 years meant that there was a need for evaluation and restructuring of the system, in the light of changes in the political, economic and social spheres. However, any modernization should be within the framework of the existing provisions of the United Nations Charter. On the basis of the views of Member States and of the heads of the specialized agencies, as expressed at the current session of the Ad Hoc Committee, appropriate solutions could be found.
5. The main object of restructuring was the centralization of objectives and the decentralization of decision-making, and it was therefore the view of his delegation

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(Mr. Siddiq, Afghanistan)

that the various agencies of the United Nations system should be made more decision-oriented. An example of that was UNCTAD, which had thus far been largely limited to negotiation. Restructuring would serve its purpose by strengthening the economic sector of the system, and by creating central units as outlined in the report of the Group of Experts.

6. It appeared that a majority of the members of the Committee supported a gradual approach to the problem of restructuring. Some recommendations had been made, such as that of strengthening the role of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council with a view to making those organs a centre for determining global policy, programming and operational activities. There was no doubt that much emphasis should be placed on the role of the Council and the need for rationalization of its work. As far as the subsidiary bodies of the Council were concerned, his delegation believed that everything should be done to avoid duplication, including, if necessary, the consolidation of some bodies.

7. The idea of scheduling short, subject-oriented sessions of the Council, as well as ministerial sessions every year, merited consideration. Likewise, his delegation welcomed the idea of the specialized agencies fully taking part in the decision-making of the Council, in view of their expertise in related fields. The Council, for its part, should endeavour to co-ordinate the activities of the specialized agencies more effectively.

8. His delegation supported in principle the idea of strengthening the Secretariat in the economic and social fields. The creation of the post of Director-General for Development and International Economic Co-operation would achieve the purpose of decentralization of the activities of the system, while also achieving increased unity and leadership in the economic and social sectors.

9. His delegation also supported the incorporation of UNCTAD and GATT into a single international trade organization, and the establishment of a separate sector in the Secretariat devoted exclusively to the needs and problems of the land-locked countries and the least developed among the developing countries.

10. His delegation was confident that, as a result of the current session and of the informal consultations that would follow, it would be possible for the Ad Hoc Committee to initiate the necessary action towards a restructuring of the economic and social sectors.

11. Mr. VELESKO (Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic) said that, in his view, the main purpose of the restructuring of the economic and social sectors of the United Nations system should be to strengthen world peace and security and co-operation between countries in all fields, particularly the economic field, within the framework of the provisions of the Charter. It was the strict application of the immutable principles of the Charter that had enabled the United Nations to overcome its difficulties without damage to the interests of its Member States, and to adopt measures conducive to international détente. It was on the basis of the principles of the Charter that the United Nations had been able to adopt the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States and to proclaim the establishment of a new international economic order.

12. Since under the terms of the Charter the Economic and Social Council was the principal organ responsible for ensuring international co-operation in the economic and social fields, whatever measures the Ad Hoc Committee proposed should be such as to strengthen the effectiveness of the Council, enabling it to make relevant recommendations to the General Assembly and to take decisions with due regard to the interests of all, and in particular of the developing countries.

13. The restructuring of the economic and social sectors should not, however, result automatically in the creation of new organs at the risk of even more duplication and overlapping. His delegation agreed with the idea of drawing up a list of the questions to which the Ad Hoc Committee should give more thorough consideration; it also agreed with the establishment of a working group of the whole to consider preliminary proposals and the wishes of Member States. His delegation considered it appropriate that the Ad Hoc Committee itself should take its decisions by consensus.

14. Mr. HARRIMAN (Nigeria) observed that the responsibility which General Assembly resolution 3362 (S-VII) had entrusted to the Ad Hoc Committee, if properly discharged, would be of tremendous importance for the survival of the United Nations as an effective instrument of economic co-operation. What was required was not merely administrative reform, but changes in the system that would render it capable of making a reality of the basic tenets of the new international economic order and of the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States.

(Mr. Harriman, Nigeria)

15. In the view of his delegation, the first problem to be tackled was the widening economic and social disparities between developed and developing countries. The United Nations must evolve a framework for the systematic and rapid removal of those disparities. However, the developed countries must make a firm commitment to co-operate meaningfully with the developing countries in order to translate the agreed principles into concrete results. In his view, political subterfuge and vagueness should not be tolerated at the present stage in the evolution of the United Nations.

16. The developing countries had wished to take full advantage of the enlargement of the Economic and Social Council to propose measures which would expedite the establishment of the new international economic order, but the Council had been unable to grapple effectively with those measures.

17. The Economic and Social Council had enough powers under the Charter to endow its decisions with sufficient authority, provided that it organized its work in such a way as to concentrate on the major problems of development and international economic co-operation by delegating the more routine aspects to its subsidiary organs. For instance, there was no need for the Council to review the recommendations of organs in which many of its members were represented.

18. His delegation believed that the regional economic commissions should be strengthened to play a more active role, particularly in matters which concerned their regions. To facilitate that change, the personnel of the regional economic commissions should include a substantial element of those who understood the problems of the region and could evolve solutions broadly acceptable to the Governments of the area.

19. At the country level, there was much to commend the UNDP consensus of 1970, which sought to ensure effective co-ordination of all United Nations operational activities for development. However, it was important to link the operational functions of the regional offices of UNDP more closely with the regional economic commissions. For the past year that principle had been accepted in Africa, and his delegation would like the Economic Commission for Africa to undertake a more active role in the direction and co-ordination of UNDP regional activities, particularly in the field of transfer of technology and technical co-operation among the developing countries of the region.

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(Mr. Harriman, Nigeria)

20. The Ad Hoc Committee should combat the proliferation of committees and see whether they could be integrated into more manageable units. It would also be desirable to replace the flood of Secretariat documents that were too technical to facilitate government decisions with carefully prepared documents based on an interdisciplinary methodology.

21. It was unfortunate that the Secretariat had not produced a summary of the report of the Group of Experts (E/AC.62/9) to assist Governments in the formulation of their views.

The meeting rose at 11.35 a.m.

22nd MEETING

Wednesday, 25 February 1976, 3 p.m.

RESTRUCTURING OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL SECTORS OF THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM (A/AC.179/3 and Add.1) (continued)

1. Mr. VAN LAETHEM (Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs) emphasized the fact that the problems on which the Ad Hoc Committee would have to focus its efforts were many. While those problems sometimes had to do with structures, they more often related to the use made of those structures and the potential use of them, subject to only a few minor adjustments in certain cases. He, personally, had come to the conclusion that many of the difficulties encountered in the economic and social sector of the United Nations system were of two orders: those which had to do with the massive and sudden growth in the responsibilities of the international community in the economic and social field and those deriving from the changed nature of those responsibilities and the effort of adjustment required of the United Nations system.
2. The growth in responsibilities was certainly not surprising since it was inherent in the vocation of the United Nations. However, the resources of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs were not increasing at the same rate, and it had to resort to policies and techniques which had been tried and tested elsewhere in similar circumstances. First, it had to proceed with greater caution than in the past in the selection of tasks and in the search for new approaches. In the case of the selection of tasks it was not so much a question of discarding particular tasks as of making a careful study, when a new problem arose, of its true dimensions in order to assess the Department's commitment at the outset in terms of its capacities and the probable effectiveness of the action to be taken. In some cases the Department would have, at the beginning, to set time-limits for its action, even if they had to be subsequently revised, which would mean calling upon agencies that could take over at a later stage. In fact, in many fields, the Department could only serve as a catalyst.
3. Being obliged to place restraints on its own action, the Department had to identify new approaches to problems, in particular, seeking means of intensifying the participation of all agencies, both within and outside the system, that could save its objectives. Policy-making organs would have to be fully conversant with

(Mr. Van Laethem)

the problem when taking their decisions and make their own contribution to the charting of new courses. Finally, the growing concern with selection should not be expressed only within the Department. It should also motivate the policy-making organs, whether those were General Assembly and its committees or the Economic and Social Council and its subsidiary organs.

4. At the same time, the decentralization of some of the work of implementation would need to become a reality since that was the only way in which those responsible in the Department could perform the tasks of devising and directing policies and the functions of supervision and appraisal of results for which they were responsible and which they were not at present in a position to carry out satisfactorily. In that connexion the Ad Hoc Committee had been presented with suggestions concerning the need to strengthen co-operation between the main components of the system concerned with development and concerning the role which the Department of Economic and Social Affairs should play in promoting that co-operation. The application of those formulas pre-supposed some lightening of the duties of the Department in other spheres.

5. Lastly, the growth of the responsibilities of the Organization called for some modernization of its means of action, techniques and management machinery. He pointed out, for example, that certain data-processing methods and administrative practices should be adapted to that end.

6. In addition to increasing the responsibilities of the Department, the events of recent years had quite radically altered the nature of its tasks. While it had originally been expected mainly to collate economic and social data and identify and analyse problems, an increasing part of its present work was directed towards the search for solutions and towards participation in development assistance in various forms. In addition to that change in nature there was marked pressure in favour of action designed to achieve more accessible goals, of research and of the application of all means of accelerating development. The concept of development had itself greatly evolved, requiring policy-makers to resort to multiple disciplines which urgently needed to be combined. Moreover, the scope of the problems dealt with by the Department had considerably expanded, widening the gap between its possibilities of action and the needs to be met and calling attention to the greater catalysing function it must increasingly undertake.

(Mr. Van Laethem)

7. The main question was whether the Department was prepared for those new tasks, and that problem might be considered by a working group of the Committee. The group should, for example, consider the diversification and in-service training of personnel, ways and means of enlisting competent outside assistance to a greater extent in the development work of the Department and the necessary strengthening of co-operation with the beneficiaries of the activities undertaken by the United Nations and between those beneficiaries themselves.

8. The problems encountered by the United Nations system in the economic and social fields certainly called for some reforms at the level of the leading organs of the system, but they also had a great deal to do with day-to-day management. In fact, the Department had begun a determined drive to tackle them. The first task was to strengthen executive functions and functions relating to the implementation of policy guidelines, and also to ensure that staff were better prepared for the new missions entrusted to them. Accordingly, a new office had been established within the office of the Under-Secretary-General, with a view to increasing the capacity for study and availability for outside contacts at the executive level. The arrangement of interdisciplinary "working groups" had been introduced to strengthen co-operation within the Department. In a wider context, with a view to involving the regional commissions and specialized agencies in its work, the Department had begun to prepare a survey of developments in the world economy. In order to facilitate the adaptation of staff to new concerns and new tasks, a system of refresher seminars had been devised in co-operation with the University of Boston: the first of them would deal with the field of energy. Members of the Department were also expected to participate actively in the design and execution of projects in the field, to keep in closer touch with outside events and to prepare themselves, when necessary, to take part in them. With that end in view, arrangements had been made for the Department to participate in the Conference on International Economic Co-operation which had opened in Paris in December.

9. The effort of adaptation made by the Department had led it to seek various back-stopping arrangements and outside support. Thus, the principle of decentralization towards the regional economic commissions was now accepted, even if some misgivings remained to be overcome and administrative constraints needed to be relaxed. The diversification of contacts and co-operation outside the

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(Mr. Van Laethem)

United Nations system was in progress, and that desire to open up new channels was not encountering any resistance among the parties concerned; in fact, the reverse was true.

10. In order to meet the problems of co-operation among developing countries and the concern for self-reliance expressed by those countries the Department had decided to establish a central information systems unit. The unit would strive progressively for improved integration of the data available within the Department, and would seek to link them up with the data in the possession of the regional economic commissions and United Nations agencies and to make all those resources more accessible not only for use by the United Nations system but also by Member States.

11. In view of the limitations to which the Department of Economic and Social Affairs was subject in its efforts at adaptation and innovation, there was reason to wonder whether it might be possible to conceive of an over-all plan to better adapt the economic and social sectors of the United Nations to the expectations placed in its actions. Faced with that problem, he himself was keenly aware of the need to undertake very broad consultations at various levels before formulating any revolutionary plans. He was inclined to fear that the quality of the institutions and the people who manned them might be adversely affected by hasty decisions, that team-work might be disrupted or that co-ordination, already achieved at some expense, might be compromised. He was particularly aware of the need to avoid suspending or even slowing down action in progress in order to rebuild, under obviously uncertain conditions, a structure more in keeping with the general wishes.

12. At the same time he was weighing the possible advantages of a new approach to the process of United Nations intervention where major development projects were involved, an approach which would make the Organization's eagerness for change more apparent to the world at large. Indeed, the political guidelines formulated by the main organs were still being translated into reality too slowly, even though they had the unanimous and whole-hearted support of all Governments. Perhaps it might be possible, therefore, to find a formula that would give the political organ responsible for laying down general guidelines certain levers that would enable it to oversee the application of those guidelines at the time of formulation and approval of at least some of the projects.

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(Mr. Van Laethem)

13. Encouraged by the deep and sincere dedication of senior United Nations officials to the general guidelines and principles of development laid down by the main organs, he thought that it should not prove impossible to establish close liaison between those who decided policies and those who allocated the resources for their implementation.

14. It should therefore be possible to undertake pilot projects, attempting to incorporate as many as possible of the ideas which the political echelons sought to promote - projects which throughout the phases of design and execution would involve the participation of all elements of the United Nations system, not forgetting the regional commissions. Furthermore, such an experiment would set an example and encourage involvement and emulation. Indeed, experience showed that it was easier to rally support for a concrete and well-defined project than for a structure whose future operations could always be clearly perceived at the outset. Needless to say, if that suggestion was accepted, the Department of Economic and Social Affairs would be ready to help investigate it in co-operation with the organs concerned.

15. In conclusion, he stressed that, whatever progress the Ad Hoc Committee made, it was essential that its proceedings should result in a clear affirmation of a desire for change which would encourage the emergence at all levels of suggestions and initiatives that were useful to the Committee. Once recommendations had been decided upon, consideration would need to be given to the establishment of machinery for overseeing their application and ensuring that the various obstacles could be overcome. The will for change which the Committee succeeded in inspiring must be sustained, and the Committee's task could not simply end with a report since it implied continuity, perseverance and determination. He again assured the Committee that the various services in the Department were ready to give it their active, and often enthusiastic, support.

16. Mr. MANSFIELD (New Zealand) said that the objective of restructuring, which was necessary if the United Nations system was not to grow haphazardly and become less responsive to development needs, was to make sure that the system delivered more "goods" more effectively, particularly to the developing world: the system had to be adjusted so that it was capable of bringing into being, in

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(Mr. Mansfield, New Zealand)

the shortest period of time, the New International Economic Order. The complexity and the urgency of the task could be reconciled by concentrating on the need to produce practicable and realizable proposals by proceeding on the basis that all had a common interest in restructuring.

17. His delegation welcomed the report of the Group of Experts (E/AC.62/9); although it might not be possible to implement every one of the recommendations of the experts precisely and in the form they envisaged, that did not invalidate their analysis or their objectives.

18. The first task was to decide what the main problem areas were, and his delegation agreed with others in emphasizing the role of the Economic and Social Council, the role of the Secretariat, the consolidation of operational funds and interagency co-operation. There was also the problem of the inadequacy of the decision-making process, but his delegation was inclined to doubt that the Group of Experts' proposals about formalizing consultative procedures were still relevant in the light, inter alia, of the seventh special session of the General Assembly. Taking an important decision in the economic field whose force was advisory rather than mandatory did not achieve anything quickly because of the lack of commitment on the part of those who did not support it. The trend was towards taking such decisions by consensus.

19. Revitalizing the Economic and Social Council to make sure it did what the Charter said it should do was made difficult by the number of subsidiary bodies which had grown up over the years, often on an ad hoc basis rather than in a systematic and co-ordinated manner. It was essential to look at the terms of reference of all those bodies with a view to eliminating duplication and identifying possibilities for rationalization. Such rationalization could be accompanied by a reorganization of the Council's work calendar to provide for short, subject-oriented sessions on a trial basis and with the participation of high-level experts so that discussions would be meaningful and decisions substantive.

20. Directly related to the problem of revitalization of the Economic and Social Council was the need for the Secretariat to have greater flexibility to participate in debates and to prepare conceptual and analytical documents for meetings. An activist Secretariat, as was demonstrated by the administration of UNDP, could

(Mr. Mansfield, New Zealand)

play a highly valuable role by preparing papers which served to focus debate and to contribute to its substance. Unless the secretariat of the Economic and Social Council played a similarly stimulating role, delegations would continue to flounder in a sea of long background documents which they could not digest, and focal points for decisions would be absent.

21. His delegation found the case for the appointment of a Director-General for Economic Development persuasive. There was a clear-cut need for the sort of direction on the economic side of the Secretariat which only a high-ranking officer could provide. Moreover, in the early stages of restructuring such an appointment would be essential to provide the drive to carry through any reforms which might be agreed upon. On the other hand, the suggestion that there should be a certain ratio between developed and developing countries in the top appointments in the United Nations system might be contrary to the provisions of the Charter, which specified that merit must be the overriding consideration in making appointments. The Secretary-General could ensure that no one region or group of countries monopolized positions.

22. With respect to the third priority area, his delegation agreed that the consolidation of development assistance funds was desirable, but thought that judgement should be reserved until there had been a case-by-case examination of proposals for consolidation. The test which must be applied to each consolidation proposal was whether it would result in the delivery of more resources, more effectively, in the field; and the answer to that could not be given until the implications had been thoroughly explored in the informal working group of the Ad Hoc Committee. His delegation also wondered whether it made sense to involve the Economic and Social Council directly in the development assistance field by having it give policy guidance to the proposed Operations Board of UNDA as was suggested in the Group of Experts' report. That could lead to the very duplication of debate which restructuring sought to avoid. The UNDP Governing Council dealt with both policy and management, and that arrangement worked well. Lastly, his delegation doubted whether the experts' recommendation for an operations board with a membership of 18 to 27 was realistic in the light of the interest which many Governments would have in serving on it. It therefore found

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(Mr. Mansfield, New Zealand)

some attraction in the Finnish suggestion that the membership of the governing board of any UNDA might be made open-ended.

23. With respect to interagency co-ordination, that was an area where the views of the Secretary-General on the proposals in the report of the Group of Experts would be welcome. It was also necessary to digest the views which were still being received from the various agencies. The proposed Advisory Committee on Economic Co-operation and Development appeared to be a good idea, but the objective might be achieved just as well by a strengthened and expanded ACC. It should be borne in mind that there was also room for improvement in co-ordination among the government departments concerned with member agencies in individual countries. Too often Governments spoke with different voices in different places, and that lack of a coherent approach within national Governments to international developmental problems might lie at the root of much of the problem of co-ordination.

24. The Ad Hoc Committee should aim at reaching agreement on the broad objectives and leave it to others who were closer to many of the problems to do much of the detailed work and report back to it. With respect to the priority areas under consideration, his delegation proposed that the informal working group might try to prepare four draft resolutions for consideration by the General Assembly. The first might be addressed to the Economic and Social Council and might request it to investigate and report on various possibilities such as holding short, subject-oriented sessions, amalgamating some subsidiary bodies and perhaps abolishing others. The second might address similar requests to the Secretary-General with respect to the role envisaged for the Secretariat. The third might be addressed to the Administrator of UNDP, asking him, in consultation with other agencies, to investigate the possibility of consolidating a particular fund and to inform the Committee of his conclusions. The fourth might ask the Secretary-General and ACC to look in certain specified directions at the possibility of improving interagency co-operation.

25. Mr. Czarkowski (Poland) took the Chair.

26. Mr. BUTLER (Deputy Secretary-General, International Telecommunication Union) said that one of the principal purposes of ITU was to maintain and extend

(Mr. Butler)

international co-operation for the improvement and rational use of telecommunications of all kinds. While recognizing the sovereign right of each country to regulate its own telecommunications, the member Governments had adopted policies and regulatory texts in an International Telecommunication Convention and related Administrative Regulations, which were binding on the contracting Governments.

27. The supreme organ of ITU was its Plenipotentiary Conference, which was the only body competent to revise the Convention and formalize agreements. The revision of the Administrative Regulations fell within the competence of member Governments participating in administrative conferences of the Union. International agreement on telecommunications policies and regulations was thus achieved through multilateral negotiations and consensus, the control over international communications being exercised at the national level. In implementing the principles of the Administrative Regulations, members complied with recommendations and instructions established by members meeting in the consultative committees of ITU. Those recommendations and instructions did not have the force of law but were important in guiding the operational staff in the application of the Regulations.

28. Because of the volume of capital involved, government investment in telecommunication systems and services called for sound advice on technical and economic factors, and ITU was ideally placed to offer such advice by virtue of both its international character and the wide expertise available to it. Its members reached agreement on the harmonization of diverse technical developments resulting from individual contributions of national research and development efforts. The consultative committees established telecommunication standards, which, although not imposed by any regulatory provisions, were generally respected on an international scale.

29. The successful transfer of knowledge relating to telecommunication technology required the participation of both developed and developing countries in the execution of technical studies. However, short-comings in the institutional infrastructures in developing countries and the shortage of suitably qualified personnel placed serious constraints on their participation in such studies. They did not normally maintain large telecommunication departments concerned with

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(Mr. Butler)

technical study and research, and their available experts were fully occupied with day-to-day operational and development problems. ITU helped to lessen those constraints by assisting and building up the national telecommunication infrastructure in developing countries and by providing training for personnel.

30. Another important function of ITU was to act as a clearing-house for members in the collection and dissemination of the detailed information essential for the rational planning and operation of telecommunication services. Also important was its fiscal policy. That policy was determined by the Plenipotentiary Conference, which set limits on expenditure under the ordinary budget until the next Plenipotentiary Conference. The limits were determined after consideration of the expenses involved in maintaining the permanent organs of ITU and executing the planned programme of conferences and meetings. The Administrative Council of the Union was charged with the review and approval of detailed annual ordinary budgets established within the limits determined by the Plenipotentiary Conference. A special accounts budget was also established to show income from all sources and expenditure incurred by the ITU participation in UNDP and other technical co-operation projects.

31. ITU operational activities in the developing countries were almost entirely dependent on extrabudgetary funds, UNDP being the most significant source of financing; accordingly, no appreciable permanent staff mechanism was maintained for the planning and promotion of such activities. Resources for operational activities were normally made available to the Union to execute specific projects planned in co-operation with recipient countries. Therefore the resources available to it for participation in intersectoral planning exercises undertaken in response to policy decisions at the intergovernmental level within the United Nations system were almost negligible.

32. The interdependence of the work carried out by the different organs of ITU was such that it had not been possible to define clear programme sectors on which a satisfactory detailed programme budget could be structured. Most ITU activities concerned science and technology, but it also had clearly identifiable interests in telecommunication systems for education, in the fields of trade and industry and in many other areas which were fundamental for development.

(Mr. Butler)

33. The United Nations was the focal point for the implementation of decisions relating to the introduction of a new global economic order and international co-operation in the provision of development aid. That required not only appropriate policy directives and the necessary resources but also planning in order to ensure balanced economic development in the recipient countries. Policies already established by the General Assembly relating to special consideration for the least developed among the countries could be reflected in the planned distribution of the available resources, as could decisions and policies relating to other priorities.

34. The system was faced with the difficult task of planning the effective use and equitable distribution of the limited multilateral funds available to it. That multilateral aid was but a small fraction of the total development assistance available to the developing countries from bilateral and other sources and must therefore be examined in that context. In making most effective use of the relatively limited resources available, the United Nations system had been compelled to refine co-ordination within the system in the interest of improved quality of aid delivery. However, co-ordination could in itself be an expensive exercise demanding a detailed examination of development problems and the planning of the various responses required in the different sectors of the economy of a developing country or region. The question of resource availability for the preparation of a co-ordinated development plan was frequently overlooked by some of the policy-making organs.

35. Any restructuring of the United Nations should take account of the proportions of resources allocated for development. In its role as a focal point, a further question arose as to the extent to which the system could assist co-ordination and effective collaboration with other institutions in the development process. Both at the United Nations policy-making levels and at the country level, the preparation of effective and acceptable development plans was dependent on the acquisition and use of information on needs and resources. While it was generally appreciated that there was no lack of information, difficulties had been encountered in collecting and presenting it in a form that would assist management decisions at the agency, country and system-wide levels. Current

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(Mr. Butler)

co-ordinated efforts to introduce common concepts and the harmonized presentation of development-oriented information should be encouraged and extended. The establishment of a modest operational information system on development activities, within the United Nations and the agencies, would be of immediate use to the governing bodies of the various agencies and organs of the system. A comprehensive reference system of that type would also emphasize the role of the United Nations as the focal point in the global development effort.

36. The United Nations system was ideally constituted to provide impartial advice to the developing countries in virtually all sectors of the economy. That was particularly important when considering in which sectors the system's multilateral aid would be most effective and appropriate. In the capital-intensive telecommunication sector, where pressures could be intense, multilateral aid could ensure a balanced assessment of development needs prior to the adoption of investment policies and decisions. There were no constitutional barriers to the full participation of ITU in multisectoral activities within the United Nations system. Particularly fruitful collaboration was maintained with organs and agencies having a special interest, with ITU, in the utilization and the development of communications. The presence of an adequate communications infrastructure was a basic necessity for development, and ITU would welcome the opportunity to participate more actively in intersectoral planning in areas such as rural development, trade and industry, and economic co-operation among developing countries. ITU, through its members, had the capacity to identify the type of telecommunications expertise required. Despite a lack of resources, ITU had demonstrated its capacity to handle a substantial increase in the delivery of assistance, at marginal cost, as a follow-up to the decentralized country programming concepts. Furthermore, that capacity could be readily and effectively enlarged.

37. The complexity of international co-operation in the telecommunication sector required that that co-operation should be centred through the headquarters of the Union, or at the national level. The few ITU expert advisers to the regional economic commissions were entirely financed by UNDP from intercountry project resources. ITU maintained very close liaison with ECA and ESCAP. Its contribution to the other regional economic commissions had been intermittent and

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(Mr. Butler)

inadequate. Regrettably, ITU had been obliged to reduce the modest number of regional experts in the field because of the lack of UNDP funds for that type of assistance. The role of the UNDP resident representative in drawing the attention of the country to inadequacies in the telecommunication sector in country planning was vital for the efficient use of the limited resources available to ITU, which therefore saw great merit in having a single official playing a leadership role in United Nations matters at the country level.

38. The traditional work of ITU in regulating, standardizing and co-ordinating essential operational requirements must be continued and reinforced in the interest of harmonized telecommunication development. The extension of ITU assistance to the developing countries and the reinforcement of ITU participation in multisectoral planning within the United Nations system required that more resources should be made available to it on a stable and continuing basis.

39. After an exchange of views in the ITU Administrative Council on the report of the Group of Experts, the following preliminary comments had emerged: (a) ITU action on the recommendations concerning the strengthening of the capacity of the United Nations Secretariat with regard to intersectoral analysis and synthesis of options of principle would be considered following the decision of Governments on the acceptance of those recommendations; (b) the report did not deal in a comprehensive manner with all aspects of the work of the United Nations system relating to development and international economic co-operation, and in particular insufficient attention was devoted to the decisive role played by basic infrastructure services, such as telecommunications and transportation, in the development process; (c) future progress on trade and transport and the development of industrial complexes and modern educational systems were closely linked to communications and depended on the associated development of the telecommunication infrastructure; (d) should the recommended changes in the United Nations Secretariat structure, including the decision-making powers of the proposed Director-General for Development and International Economic Co-operation, be adopted, then it would be desirable for ITU, in view of the vital role played by telecommunications in economic and social development, to be a full member of the proposed Advisory Committee on Economic Co-operation and Development.

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(Mr. Butler)

40. Any restructuring of the United Nations system should take into account the problem of uneven development within sectors or between sectors within individual countries, or indeed within regions. In establishing priorities, the Committee should also bear in mind that development was dependent on certain basic services such as communications. Priority should be given to multisectoral planning at the delivery end - country and regional - maximizing inputs and opportunities for decentralized activity. In that connexion, it should be noted that ITU was the most decentralized agency in the system. That had been recognized as one of the basic strengths of the Union, which had existed for over 100 years. The ITU Administrative Council had placed emphasis on essential services in the establishment of any planning objectives. Those essential services were not confined to the large programme agencies, and in that connexion it should be noted that, just as there was uneven development between countries, there was also uneven allocation of resources to agencies to fulfil their obligations to the system, especially with respect to multisectoral planning at the delivery end. The Committee should consider that problem in the context of the totality of available resources, and ITU would expect the United Nations to provide the necessary resources to meet any new obligations imposed on the Union.

The meeting rose at 4.55 p.m.

23rd MEETING

Thursday, 26 February 1976, 10.30 a.m.

RESTRUCTURING OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL SECTORS OF THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM
(A/AC.17/3 and Add.1) (continued)

1. Mr. DAVIES (Secretary-General, World Meteorological Organization) said that the World Meteorological Organization, being a highly technical body, might not be so directly involved in the restructuring exercise as some other organizations of the United Nations system. Nevertheless, the influence of the subjects with which WMO was concerned upon almost all fields of human endeavour made it necessary to co-ordinate its activities with those of the other organizations in the system.
2. It should be mentioned that WMO had been created at a time, more than a century previously, when the idea of international organizations as they now existed had not been thought of. Thus, it was at a late stage that WMO had become a specialized agency. Its secretariat had for long been practically non-existent and could still be considered relatively small. The organization had been enabled to function primarily by the national meteorological services, which had displayed a genuine spirit of international collaboration that had been maintained into the present times. To give one example, in 1960 WMO had wanted, pursuant to General Assembly resolution 1721 (XVI), to study the possible use of outer space vehicles for improving man's knowledge of the atmospheric processes. Instead of hurriedly establishing a new department in the secretariat, which at the time had had no specialists in that field, WMO had simply invited the United States and the USSR to send two of their top experts to Geneva to study the question. The report which they had produced had led in due course to a new operational programme of WMO, to which the name "World Weather Watch" had been given.
3. The present activities of WMO were classified into six major programme areas. The first, World Weather Watch, enabled the meteorological service of every country to give the best possible meteorological information to meet national needs. It involved the maintenance of a vast network of meteorological stations, observations taken by some 3,000 merchant ships and special ocean vessels, and the use of meteorological satellites and the latest telecommunications systems. As he had said, General Assembly resolution 1721 (XVI) had greatly facilitated the development

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(Mr. Davies, WMO)

of that programme. The Global Atmospheric Research Programme, which had arisen from General Assembly resolution 1802 (XVII), ensured that modern technological devices were applied in meteorological research. The Meteorological Applications Programme ensured that certain specialized needs for meteorological information were given due attention. WMO also had a Programme for Hydrology and Water Resources and an Education and Training Programme. Finally, it assisted in development through its Technical Co-operation Programme. The relevance of those programmes to economic and social development was apparent, in view of their relationship to world food production, transportation by air, sea and land, better knowledge of such phenomena as natural disasters - drought, floods and tropical cyclones - studies of the possible effects of atmospheric pollution, and so on.

4. Consequently, the importance of co-operation between WMO and other organizations, especially the United Nations Development Programme and the United Nations Environment Programme, could not be over-emphasized. It seemed to him that, in its relation with both programmes, WMO had the correct approach concerning the role of the specialized agencies. UNDP and UNEP in their respective fields had clear responsibilities; WMO on the other hand had its own responsibilities. Continuing to strengthen the existing links between them and to combine their knowledge and experience would make possible a most fruitful co-operation. Under its agreement with the United Nations, WMO could not of course confine itself to collaborating with those two programmes. He had already referred to its contribution to the implementation of General Assembly resolutions 1721 (XVI) and 1802 (XVII). General Assembly resolution 2733 (XXV) had resulted in a greatly increased activity by WMO in its Tropical Cyclone Project, and it was at present considering its response to General Assembly resolution 3362 (S-VII), particularly sections II and V. WMO also had agreements providing for co-operation with a number of other organizations, including WHO, FAO, ICAO, UNESCO, ITU and IMCO. In some cases the collaboration was so close and so effective as to be perhaps unnoticed.

5. Consequently, the Group of Experts on the Structure of the United Nations System had undoubtedly been correct in making co-operation and collaboration the key problem in restructuring. Restructuring was obviously necessary, having regard

(Mr. Davies, WMO)

to the changes in the world situation after 30 years of existence of the United Nations. The system should therefore be made more rational and more effective, and that would mean abolishing many subsidiary bodies; the proposals of the Group of Experts on that point deserved careful attention, although he himself would make an exception of UNEP. He agreed with the Executive Director of UNEP that substantive questions should be considered by the Economic and Social Council, and not by the subsidiary bodies; that would be more rational and would prevent situations in which the Council might have to decide between conflicting courses of action, as could happen when more than one subsidiary body was dealing with the same question.

6. With regard to the proposed centralization of decision-making, programme planning and operational activities under a new authority to be assisted by a new Advisory Committee for Economic Co-operation and Development, he feared that to restrict the representation of the "big" agencies was dangerous because it might introduce a self-perpetuating trend, contrary to the basic concept of restructuring and to the detriment of the other agencies, whose important roles should not be overlooked. Perhaps the best course would be to leave representation in the United Nations open to all agencies, with an understanding that only those which felt they had a contribution to make would in fact attend. With regard to the proposed joint research planning staff, it was doubtful whether WMO would be able to second a staff member for that purpose unless the necessary financial resources were provided under article XIII of the United Nations/WMO Agreement. On the question of relations between the Economic and Social Council and the specialized agencies, it seemed to him that the way in which the Council and the General Assembly could influence the programmes of the agencies would be for the Council to address itself to the governing bodies of the agencies rather than to the executive heads; evidence of that was the results which had been achieved from the General Assembly resolutions addressed to WMO.

7. On the subject of science and technology, he believed that the Ad Hoc Committee would need to be extremely careful, since it would be a dangerous oversimplification to look upon science and technology as a field of interest similar to such specific fields as oceanography or outer space. Science and technology constituted the basis of all human activities, so that virtually every specialized

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(Mr. Davison, WMO)

agency was concerned with them in one form or shape. The agencies should therefore be fully consulted before any decision was taken in that field.

8. Mr. OCHIRBAL (Mongolia) said that on several occasions his delegation had advocated a rationalization of the United Nations system in the economic and social fields, believing, in particular, that it was important to put an end to the proliferation of subsidiary organs and to cases of unproductive duplication and overlapping in the activities of those organs. Moreover, the general improvement in the international climate, the strengthening of understanding and co-operation among countries belonging to different economic and social systems and the need to accelerate the development of the developing countries made it more essential than ever to make the United Nations a focal point for the efforts made by the international community to resolve the economic and social problems in the world and thereby contribute to the strengthening of peace and security.

9. His delegation believed that, in view of the importance and complexity of the question, decisions should be taken only after careful consideration and bearing in mind the political, administrative and financial implications which they might have. It was important, in particular, to try as far as possible to identify the points of similarity in the approaches of delegations as well as the valuable views expressed by the heads of the specialized agencies, useful ideas which could serve as a basis for the future work of the Ad Hoc Committee in undertaking the task entrusted to it. In that connexion, it would be useful if the Secretariat would prepare a summary of the ideas put forward during the general debate and circulate it to the members of the Committee in the various working languages. In the view of his delegation, that would introduce a simplification into the Committee's work and would thus undoubtedly justify the expenditure of effort involved.

10. As far as the position of his own delegation was concerned, it was important to bear the following points in mind in any study of the restructuring of the economic and social sectors. First, the restructuring should be carried out within the framework of the Charter and its main object should be to enhance efficiency, eliminate duplication and ease the strain on the administrative apparatus. Care should be taken to ensure that the restructuring did not prevent the United Nations from effectively carrying out its primary task of maintaining peace and security in the world.

(Mr. Ochirbal, Mongolia)

11. An attempt should be made to define more precisely the role of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council. The Council had an important part to play in the formulation of the economic policy of the whole system and in the co-ordination of the activities of its subsidiary organs. The establishment of temporary or more or less permanent organs for the purpose of holding constructive negotiations and harmonizing the views of countries should not have the result of weakening the position of the Council as an intergovernmental policy-making organ, but should, on the contrary, enable the Council to concentrate on the consideration and adoption of recommendations relating to the most important problems of international economic co-operation and development.
12. The restructuring of the economic and social sectors of the system should permit the more effective implementation of the decisions of the General Assembly and of the main principles underlying the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States and the new international economic order. It should be subordinated to the interests of all countries and take into account the universal nature of the problems to be dealt with in the economic and social sectors of the United Nations.
13. Mongolia was aware of the fact that, as the Group of Experts had pointed out, most of the structural deficiencies of the United Nations were attributable to the Member States themselves and that, since it was not a world government, the United Nations could only act by promoting international co-operation. All those real possibilities and the limitations inherent in the United Nations should be taken into account in the task of restructuring which was to be undertaken.
14. As far as the future organization of the Committee's work was concerned, Mongolia had no difficulty in accepting the solution which seemed to have emerged during unofficial consultations, for example, the proposal regarding the establishment of a working group to formulate draft recommendations, provided that the meetings of that group were co-ordinated with those of the Committee.
15. Mr. HANNAH (Executive Director, World Food Council) said that the World Food Council was the only organ created since the adoption of the Declaration and the Programme of Action on the Establishment of a New International Economic Order and the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States and that it must therefore operate in accordance with the principles set forth in those instruments.

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(Mr. Hannah)

16. Starting from the principle that no economic or social problem was more basic than that of food, he said that he would like to discuss the dimensions of the food problem in a historical perspective. That might perhaps lead to a better understanding of the reasons for the creation of the World Food Council and of its purposes and functions. After pointing out that the General Assembly, in December 1973, had decided to convene the World Food Conference in response to a request from the fourth Conference of Non-Aligned Countries held in Algiers in September 1973 and following a proposal by the United States of America, he stressed the importance of the resolutions adopted by the Conference, in particular, the high priority placed on effective follow-up action. The World Food Council, he said, represented the Conference's recommendation to ensure effective follow-up action.

17. He wished to emphasize the role of "co-ordinating mechanism" which had been given to the World Food Council in accordance with resolution XXII adopted by the World Food Conference. He also pointed out that the Council had been established at the ministerial or plenipotentiary level and that it had been directed to establish its own programme of action for co-ordination of relevant United Nations bodies and agencies and to maintain contacts with, receive reports from, give advice to, and make recommendations to such bodies and agencies with regard to the formulation and follow-up of world food policies.

18. World food problems had many aspects, involving, among other issues, food aid, food security and food stocks, food trade and investment in agriculture and food production and human nutrition. To deal with them effectively required the assistance of a political body, such as the World Food Council, which had the potential to mobilize the support of Governments in all areas where it was required and to co-ordinate the activities of the United Nations system. By making the World Food Council the highest political body on food matters, the General Assembly had acknowledged that political problems required political remedies.

19. At its first session, the Council had agreed that its primary functions would be: (a) to monitor the world food situation in all its aspects, including what international organizations and Governments were doing to develop short-term and long-term solutions to food problems; (b) to look at the total food picture and

(Mr. Hannah)

determine in its co-ordinating role whether the world food strategy as a whole made sense; (c) to make recommendations to the General Assembly in order to use the political influence of the United Nations to bring about the desired results.

20. The role of the secretariat of the Council - which numbered about 20 staff members - was to maintain a continuing review over the efforts made by international organizations and Governments to increase food production and to improve world food security, and to scrutinize, review and comment frankly and impartially on actual situations and suggest improvements to the Council as and when necessary. The World Food Council was determined that there should be no duplication of effort and that its secretariat would not undertake major research efforts on its own. In the preparation of its reports, which would be of a high evaluative and analytical nature, the Council would rely on all appropriate United Nations bodies for the information it required in a spirit of co-operation and shared concern. It was important that the reports of the Council should convey the pulse of happenings on the world food scene and thus command international attention.

21. The ministerial sessions of the Council, which in principle would be held once a year, would not last longer than two or three days but they would be preceded by diligent preparatory meetings. Special sessions of the Council might be convened when necessary to meet emergency situations.

22. At its seventh special session, the General Assembly had entrusted the World Food Council with specific responsibilities to monitor the implementation of the provisions concerning food and agriculture in its resolution 3362 (S-VII) and that served to reinforce the special role of the Council and expand its functions.

23. He then referred to another aspect of the Council's work which he regarded as important for the Committee's deliberations in so far as they related to the establishment of a new body in the economic and social sector, namely the International Fund for Agricultural Development. The preparatory arrangements had been successfully concluded by the secretariat of the World Food Council and it would not be long before the Fund was formally established as a specialized agency of the United Nations. He described the arrangements regarding the financing of the Fund and the composition of its governing bodies and said that it was tentatively planned that the Secretary-General would be able to convene a

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(Mr. Hannah)

plenipotentiary conference to complete ratification of the articles of agreement and receive pledges in early May. The creation of the Fund would mark an important step towards the attainment of the goal of substantial increases in food production in the food-deficit developing countries.

24. The search for effective solutions to world food problems required the participation of many United Nations agencies and bodies whose prodigious efforts in the field of food and agriculture had in the past often been jeopardized by a lack of co-ordination. Moreover, the solutions would be meaningful only if there was the political will within each country to carry out the decisions taken by the Government. The United Nations had at its disposal great resources in machinery and expertise which should enable it to solve many of the world's economic and social problems provided that those resources could be effectively structured. It was therefore important to strengthen co-ordination and reduce fragmentation and overlapping of efforts within the United Nations system. It was in that spirit that the World Food Council had been established.

25. He pointed out to the members of the Committee that the World Food Council was not an operational organ. It was the first United Nations body of a political character capable of taking a broad overview of the problems of food and agriculture which were dealt with by nearly all the specialized agencies and organs.

26. The effectiveness of its influence would depend on its ability to establish constructive co-operation among agencies and Governments, to focus on the most important problems and to devise solutions which Governments and agencies would see as reasonable, workable and able to make measurable improvements in the food situation in the developing countries, particularly in the least developed countries.

27. The World Food Council was not designed to compete with agencies and bodies such as FAO, UNDP, UNICEF, UNIDO, the World Bank and regional banks, but to strengthen their capacity to discharge their respective responsibilities with maximum effectiveness. In order to play its role of political co-ordination, the Council must be sufficiently independent to be able to suggest the solutions that might be required.

(Mr. Hannah)

28. If the Council was to live up to the expectations of the World Food Conference and be able to implement the tasks assigned to it by the General Assembly, it would need the fullest co-operation of all Governments and of the various agencies and bodies in the United Nations system. The health, lives and well-being of tens of millions of people on all the continents were at stake.

29. Mr. CABRIC (Yugoslavia) said that the development of international economic relations since the establishment of the United Nations had made a restructuring of the economic and social sectors of the United Nations system indispensable. It was a complex undertaking of a primarily political nature, and the Committee should not adopt any decision without carefully weighing all its implications. There was no doubt that the United Nations was an irreplaceable universal mechanism of international economic co-operation whose effectiveness depended on the political will of Member States and whose weaknesses were primarily due to an inadequate implementation of decisions. The restructuring of the economic and social sectors of the United Nations system was not therefore an end in itself; its purpose must be to improve the functioning of the system so as to make it "more fully capable of dealing with problems of international economic co-operation and development in a comprehensive and effective manner", as stipulated in section VII, paragraph 1, of General Assembly resolution 3362 (S-VII).

30. His delegation was grateful to the representatives of the specialized agencies and other bodies in the United Nations system for having expressed their views on the problems before the Committee, but regretted that it had not been possible to find elements in those statements that would usefully contribute to the consideration of the problem. According to those statements, relations within the United Nations system were ideal and there was no need for change. That did not, however, seem to be the case. His delegation noted for example the weaknesses reported recently in the relations between some specialized agencies and UNDP which had a harmful impact on the implementation of the programme of operational activities. In the opinion of his delegation, the Committee should adopt a more open and more critical approach and should not take the view that no change was needed. His delegation therefore hoped that more direct contacts would be established and that specific answers would be found to the questions raised.

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(Mr. Cabric, Yugoslavia)

31. His delegation considered that during the current session the Committee should try to identify the problems and priorities on which the Working Group could base its work. Before discussing the most important problems, his delegation wished to express its views on two questions of principle, the question of centralization and decentralization in the United Nations and that of the depoliticization of the Organization. His delegation felt that the problems of centralization and decentralization had been over-emphasized in the context of the restructuring of the economic and social sectors of the United Nations, and that they were in fact two complementary approaches. The Committee should adhere to the course which had been agreed on at the special session of the General Assembly, namely, that the formulation of general policies and guidelines for development and economic co-operation, as well as the assessment of the implementation of political agreements should be centralized, and the implementation of political agreements and negotiations aimed at finding concrete solutions should be decentralized.

32. There was no need to fear a depoliticization of the United Nations because the problem of international economic co-operation and development was a predominantly political problem which concerned all countries.

33. Turning to the question of the role of certain United Nations organs, he said his delegation was convinced that the General Assembly, because of its highly political nature, was the only competent international body to take political decisions aimed at solving the most important international economic problems, and that it was therefore necessary to strengthen its role in all spheres of economic co-operation. The organs of the United Nations and the specialized agencies should be under an obligation to implement the global policies laid down by the General Assembly.

34. The methods of work of the General Assembly and the Second Committee should be improved so as to take into account the development of international economic relations. Thus, the agenda should be radically altered so that all items would be considered within the context of the establishment of a new international economic order. His delegation was not convinced that it was either opportune or useful to divide the items on the agenda of the Second Committee into matters of general importance and questions of narrower significance, and even less to set up two committees with them. Furthermore, as the results of the sixth and seventh special

(Mr. Cabric, Yugoslavia)

sessions of the General Assembly had shown, it was useful for the General Assembly to hold special sessions; that did not, of course, preclude the organization of world conferences, since the two practices were complementary and made an effective contribution to the search for solutions to international economic problems.

35. As far as the Economic and Social Council was concerned, he observed that if it had not always carried out its tasks in the way expected by the international community, and particularly by the developing countries, it was because some of its members simply did not wish to see any progress made towards solving problems of development and international economic co-operation and, especially, did not wish to use any solutions in the United Nations. The Programme of Action on the Establishment of a New International Economic Order, adopted at the sixth special session, and the resolutions adopted at the seventh special session defined the role which the Council should play in a strengthened system. The task of the Ad Hoc Committee was to elaborate procedures and a programme of work which would enable the Council to play its role effectively. The Council should hold special sessions or, better still, permanent sessions, and possibly sessions at the ministerial level. Special attention should be paid to the Council's role as the main co-ordinating organ. UNCTAD should play an exceptional role in the process of negotiations for implementation of the goals and objectives of the New International Economic Order. To that end, UNCTAD should be strengthened in order to be an effective institution of the United Nations system for deliberation, negotiation and review in the field of trade and development within the framework of its mandate, as formulated in General Assembly resolution 1995 (XIX). That would be a step towards the final objective of creating a comprehensive world trade and development organization.

36. In the view of his delegation, the basic criterion to be followed in deciding whether or not to abolish some of the subsidiary organs of the Council was not duplication of work, since it might be useful to consider the same questions more than once in order to reach solutions. Instead, it should be determined whether the work of a given organ was useful and adapted to contemporary requirements. In the light of that criterion, it was important not to exclude the possibility of proposals being submitted concerning the establishment of new organs, particularly

(Mr. Cabric, Yugoslavia)

in the case of the regional economic commissions which would unquestionably require structural reform if they were to be strengthened. The consolidation of the situation in the field of operative activities for development was one of the most delicate questions. The most recent developments regarding UNDP had convinced them that it was necessary to consolidate matters in that field. However, the question was so complicated that, in spite of all the available materials, it called for further research and, in particular, for intensive exchange of opinions with all interested factors. His delegation was ready to examine every solution, including the consolidation of funds. It was, moreover, necessary to review the relationship between the United Nations and the specialized agencies and to adjust it to contemporary conditions.

37. The Secretariat would also have to be reorganized so that it could be adapted to the changes in the United Nations system and in any event, even if no changes were made, to the requirements of the new international economic order. The Department of Economic and Social Affairs, in particular, did not seem to be in a position to respond effectively to contemporary needs. Radical changes should be considered, starting with changes in personnel, which should not only possess the necessary knowledge but should also be imbued with the enthusiasm essential for the establishment of a new international economic order. The principle of equitable geographical representation should likewise not be ignored. In conclusion, he pointed out, in connexion with the procedure for decision-taking in the United Nations system, that the adoption of decisions by consensus was a practice which had been very widely applied for a number of years in the economic organs, whether in the Second Committee, the Economic and Social Council or the Governing Council of UNDP. That practice should be further developed, but it would be politically inadmissible to institutionalize the system of consensus and the practice of negotiations.

38. Consensus could not become a new veto and the practice of negotiations could not be replaced by the taking of decisions in the name of others by exclusive groups. His delegation was in favour of the current practice which should be further promoted while fully respecting the irreplaceable principle of voting on the basis of "one country - one vote".

39. Mr. RIVAS (Colombia) emphasized the complexity of the Ad Hoc Committee's task. If it wished to achieve anything other than theoretical formulas, the Committee must exercise extreme caution in its recommendations. At the current stage of the debate, the Committee could only lay down certain guidelines for the intersessional Working Group. To do so, it would be necessary, first of all, to make a general diagnosis of the weaknesses and deficiencies of the system as a whole and to analyse carefully the links established between the various organizations and agencies, many of which had come into being spontaneously as a result of constantly changing circumstances. Consequently, it was possible to contemplate only gradual and rule-of-thumb reforms. The weaknesses of the system seemed to be attributable firstly to the multiplicity of bodies which often performed similar or complementary functions and which could in many cases be combined, and secondly - as was particularly apparent in the case of the Economic and Social Council - to the lack of criteria and machinery for defining priorities and determining their order.

40. In the first case, in order to avoid overlapping of functions, a specialized body might be set up to perform the same function in respect of General Assembly decisions calling for the establishment of new bodies or the allocation of new functions to existing bodies as that performed, for example, by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions in respect of the financial implications of draft resolutions. Those functions which would consist of weighing the purely administrative consequences of such General Assembly decisions could also be entrusted to that same Advisory Committee. In any case, its membership should be enlarged in order to ensure proper representation of the regional groups.

41. The strengthening of the Economic and Social Council's intermediate role between the General Assembly, which laid down major policy guidelines, and the specialized subsidiary bodies called for a precise redefinition of the Council's role. In that connexion, his delegation had listened with great interest to the observations of the representative of France who wished to see the Economic and Social Council act as a centre for the allocation and co-ordination of tasks, thus forming the link between the Assembly and the technical subsidiary bodies. The absence of links between the Economic and Social Council's planning-programming, co-ordinating and activity evaluating functions was one of the system's most

(Mr. Rivas, Colombia)

obvious deficiencies. Without going so far as to set up an exclusively sectoral type of organization, which inevitably led to a high degree of specialization precluding any over-all view, it was necessary to establish a functional structure harmoniously combining the functions of planning, co-ordination and evaluation, each of which could be entrusted to specialized committees of the Council. As far as evaluation was concerned, however, it would be necessary to provide for machinery allowing greater participation by the countries concerned.

42. It was obviously necessary, as the Group of Experts had recommended, to avoid and eliminate the proliferation of subsidiary bodies. However, his delegation was not of the view that most of the permanent commissions and committees should be abolished and the Economic and Social Council made directly responsible for their tasks. In order to rationalize those tasks, the bodies in question could be combined into broad categories depending on their fields of activity. Caution should also be exercised with regard to the merging, as envisaged by the experts, of all special United Nations funds for technical assistance and pre-investment activities. A gradual approach should be adopted in that respect, given the broad scope of the operational activities of the system. In any event, it was clear that UNICEF should retain its administrative identity, and it would probably be found that certain other funds and programmes should be allowed some degree of autonomy.

43. The experts had also considered the question of negotiation procedures and the machinery which might be set up in order to ensure their effectiveness. For that purpose, they had envisaged properly regulated consultation procedures and the institutionalization of consensus. While the advantages of consultation and consensus were obvious, his delegation felt that over-regulation could render such methods ineffectual. It was essential that the consultation and negotiation machinery should retain its informal character and flexibility if it was to serve any useful purpose. However, the authority of the President of the Council and of the chairmen of commissions and committees could be strengthened to enable them to take certain steps in connexion with unofficial consultations without running the risk of being accused of partiality. Current practice, by which the Secretariat was prohibited except in exceptional circumstances, from intervening in questions concerning it, should be abandoned.

(Mr. Rivas, Colombia)

44. He expressed satisfaction at the establishment of a working group open to all States wishing to present their points of view on the question of restructuring; such a measure would certainly stimulate the work of the Ad Hoc Committee. Nevertheless, it was clear that a task of such scope as that taken on by the Committee could not be accomplished without the full participation of the whole United Nations, for without that participation the results achieved by the Committee would be meaningless.

45. Mr. ADEDEJI (Executive Secretary, Economic Commission for Africa) said that it would be unrealistic to consider only the global aspects of the restructuring of the economic and social sectors of the system at the expense of the regional aspects of the question. In order to function, the system must be based on a strong, viable and rational regional structure. The regional economic commissions played a crucial role in the regional structure and, although efforts had been made from time to time, particularly by the Economic and Social Council, to give them additional responsibility and specific tasks, no attempt had been made to redefine their role in the light of the changes that had taken place in the world economy. The Committee should undertake that assignment so that international economic co-operation and development efforts could be based on a coherent and realistic regional structure.

46. In his view, attention should be directed to four main issues during consideration of restructuring of the economic and social sectors of the United Nations system as it affected the regional economic commissions. Those issues concerned the need to redefine the role of the regional economic commissions under the new international economic order, to entrust the regional commissions with certain activities which had thus far been undertaken by Headquarters and the specialized agencies, to provide adequate resources to the regional commissions and to co-ordinate United Nations development and international co-operation activities at the regional level.

47. With regard to the first point, namely the need to redefine the role, tasks and responsibilities of the regional commissions, he said that a redefinition of the role of ECA within the context of African economic co-operation and development, which had been sought for many years, could only be done within the global context,

(Mr. Adedeji)

since ECA was an integral part of the United Nations Secretariat. Because of Africa's under-development, its large number of small countries and their newness to international co-operation, much more was expected of ECA than it was capable of delivering unless there was a redefinition of its tasks and responsibilities.

48. The main features of the African region were the following: a small, widely dispersed population - most African States had a population of less than 10 million; a high ratio of land-locked countries - 14 out of the total of 19 land-locked countries in the developing world; a high ratio of least-developed among developing countries; a pluralistic socio-economic system - increasingly unmanageable conurbations, enclaves of foreign economic activity and vast areas of rural backwardness; poor links between African countries, except for purposes of transit traffic, and poor use of inland waterways and coastal transport; inadequate institutional machinery and manpower for development administration and planning, accentuated by increasing unemployment and the unsatisfactory quality of high-level manpower supplied by higher educational establishments; socio-economic problems aggravated by the low level of development within the region; the absence both of outstanding pacemakers among the countries of the region and of a non-United Nations intergovernmental regional organization in the economic and social fields.

49. Given the features of the African region, the role of ECA within that region could be summarized along the following lines: to promote concerted action among African countries, taking account of their complex economic and social patterns and using as effective instruments for that purpose the ECA subregional offices and the United Nations Multinational Interdisciplinary Development Advisory Teams (UNDATs); to develop a system for the collection and dissemination of development information and experience, supplemented by some measure of analysis and critical appraisal designed to shorten the process of trial and error and to create an invaluable store of knowledge on problems of African development, to be supported by an appropriate machinery; to provide consultation and technical advice and discharge various functions within a well-conceived programme of action; to serve as the focal point where the economic and social needs of Africa could be expressed, where action designed to meet those needs could be taken and where the regional positions in the global activities of the United Nations system could be defined, account

(Mr. Adedeji)

being taken also of the reverse process whereby those global activities would be reflected at the regional level by ECA; to establish a close relationship with the various United Nations programmes; to create appropriate conditions for generating investment in development programmes and projects; to promote technical co-operation among the African developing countries; and to establish and operate regional and subregional projects, particularly of an interdisciplinary nature, in those areas which did not fall directly within the responsibility of the specialized agencies. Unless ECA could perform those tasks effectively, the African countries would bypass it and find alternative arrangements at considerable cost and with all the problems of duplication.

50. The Group of Experts had stressed the importance of decentralization in its report (E/AC.62/9) and ECA had passed resolution after resolution calling for effective and well-conceived decentralization, in particular resolutions 187 (IX), 189 (IX) and 211 (IX), certain passages of which he read out. Such decentralization should enable ECA to fulfil its role more effectively as the regional institution for promoting and accelerating African development. Moreover, ECA had gradually acquired experience as an executing agency by taking on responsibility for various operational activities such as the development of transport networks in Africa, the development of natural resources, social development, including programmes for the participation of women in development activities, the promotion of intra-African trade in co-operation with UNCTAD, the promotion of small-scale industries in co-operation with UNIDO, the promotion and development of agricultural projects in co-operation with FAO, the establishment of various training institutions and the promotion of various types of institution for the implementation of regional and subregional programmes for economic and technical co-operation.

51. Regarding the provision of adequate resources to the regional economic commissions, those commissions had to depend increasingly on bilateral aid because of the United Nations financial situation. If ECA was to be able to perform its role and functions in Africa effectively, the administrative and substantive support for programmes and projects to be executed by ECA would have to be strengthened both at ECA headquarters and at the subregional offices.

52. Regarding the fourth point, namely, co-ordination of activities at the regional level, it was becoming increasingly evident that United Nations agencies operating

(Mr. Adedeji)

in the African region could not afford to ignore the need for concerted effort in mobilizing available resources in the search for and application of the formulas which would be most conducive to accelerated development and economic growth. The success of United Nations efforts at the regional level would be greatly facilitated if the United Nations agencies concerned co-ordinated the formulation and execution of their development programmes within the framework of over-all development objectives and strategies. There was at present no uniform procedure for the co-ordination of United Nations activities at the regional level, although various arrangements had been concluded between different United Nations agencies or between them and other organizations. The study of co-ordination of activities should take into account the interrelationship of objectives of United Nations bodies operating in the African region, the functions and authority of such bodies, and existing arrangements and their inadequacies for co-ordinating the work of United Nations bodies in the region with a view to optimizing the use of United Nations resources and promoting development and economic growth. The Ad Hoc Committee might study the desirability of establishing at the regional level a Permanent Committee for Interagency Co-ordination of United Nations Development and International Co-operation Activities. Such a committee would enable the United Nations to deliver a co-ordinated programme for development at the regional level. There was an urgent need for such a committee in the African region. At an informal meeting held at Nairobi in December 1975 and attended by representatives of the United Nations, the specialized agencies and the African intergovernmental organizations, it had been agreed that until a Permanent Committee was institutionalized as part of the restructuring process, such unofficial meetings should continue and ECA should be the focal point for co-ordinating international efforts in the fields of development and co-operation in Africa.

53. He wished to conclude by quoting a passage from the Jackson Study of the Capacity of the United Nations Development System dealing with the regional aspect of development. He welcomed the recommendation by the Group of Experts on the establishment of an Advisory Committee on Economic Co-operation and Development and hoped that efforts in that connexion would continue and similar arrangements would be adopted at the regional level.

The meeting rose at 1.35 p.m.

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24th MEETING

Thursday, 26 February 1976, 3 p.m.

RESTRUCTURING OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL SECTORS OF THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM
(A/AC.179/3 and Add.1) (continued)

1. Mr. NICOL (Executive Director, United Nations Institute for Training and Research) said that he would like to put on record UNITAR's appreciation of the work done by previous bodies resulting in the Jackson and Pearson reports and others which had sought to tackle certain aspects of the question under consideration.

2. Any co-ordination of the United Nations system must begin with co-ordination within Member States; in other words, questions pertaining to the United Nations should perhaps be considered at cabinet level by each Government instead of being left for a final decision to the ministry or department concerned. Delegations to the specialized agencies would thus have made their national colleagues aware of the political ramifications of various questions, and representatives of the State concerned, being aware of decisions which had been taken both internally and externally, would be able to make more meaningful contributions to debates in the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council. That internal co-ordination resulting in a more uniform external approach by Member States would then find a reflection in co-ordination within the United Nations system. Such co-ordination could best be achieved by strengthening the Preparatory Committee and the actual meetings of the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination, which should be able to tackle vital issues affecting not only internal staff conditions and the contributions of individual Member States, but also the political ramifications of major questions before the agencies and the General Assembly. Without co-ordination within Member States and among specialized agencies, little progress would be made on the questions under consideration. ACC should engage in joint planning and in making definite recommendations to be put to the General Assembly through the Economic and Social Council. Although provision was made for that in the joint CPC/ACC meetings, the effectiveness of those meetings had not, for some reason, made itself apparent throughout the system.

(Mr. Nicol)

3. Noting that discussions for a review of the Charter were proceeding concurrently with the restructuring exercise, he said that, although a report on the question of restructuring stated that the changes envisaged could be carried out without revising the Charter, the situation was fluid and the door should not, therefore, be closed. The two Committees involved might wish at some point to have a joint meeting to see whether their respective objectives could be met by coincident rather than contradictory measures. Whatever the decisions taken by both Committees, there was clearly a desire for change and that change should not be deferred for long.

4. With regard to UNITAR itself, while it did not have the same operational functions and responsibilities as other organizations, it had an important mandate, namely, to enhance, through its twin functions of training and research, the effectiveness of the United Nations in achieving its major objectives, in particular the maintenance of peace and security and the promotion of economic and social development. While UNITAR's work had a bearing on the economic and social activities of the United Nations, it also went beyond the economic and social sectors of the system. The training programmes were carried out in accordance with the policy guidelines formulated by UNITAR's Board of Trustees. One important segment of the programmes included specialized courses, seminars and similar programmes for members of permanent missions accredited to the United Nations; a second aspect related to programmes such as refresher courses in international law, training programmes in international procurement and other subjects of current concern to Members of the United Nations; the third related to interagency-oriented training courses for staff members. Programmes were chosen in consultation with Members of the United Nations and senior officials of the various secretariats.

5. Turning to the question of the United Nations Staff College project, whose revival the Group of Experts had recommended in paragraph 94 (a) of its report, he noted that, although for financial reasons the proposal had not been accepted in 1973, there was general agreement on the need for interagency training in areas where interagency collaboration was important and where it was important that similar management techniques should be used. UNITAR had continued its efforts to establish such programmes in co-ordination with the other agencies in the system. It had been requested by the ACC Sub-Committee on Education and Training to prepare

(Mr. Nicol)

a paper on the reorientation needed in the content and method of training both for Headquarters staff and for field project personnel in the light of the concept of the new international economic order. It should be possible, through those mechanisms, to develop the co-ordination of training and the Staff College idea within the United Nations system.

6. UNITAR had completed research studies on such vital topics as the brain drain, transfer of technology and co-ordination within the United Nations system, and the studies had been quoted in various organs of the United Nations. It was currently engaged in a project on the participation of non-governmental organizations in the work of the Economic and Social Council and related bodies of the United Nations system. The importance of an active role for non-governmental organizations in development deserved special attention in the current efforts to establish a new international economic order. Clearly, the establishment of such an order required the elaboration of a framework with a long-term dimension. The new order was concerned with structural changes leading to a new international division of labour, the provision of adequate and secure food supplies, the prevention of ecological disasters and the reduction of intolerable inequalities between nations. With those objectives in mind, the Institute had undertaken a programme of future studies and conferences organized along three distinct lines. Firstly, UNITAR would be responsible for periodically providing analytical information on the results of global studies undertaken elsewhere and on the trends of thinking and research on long-term prospects. Secondly, it would endeavour to stimulate reflection on such prospects and on global interactions where such discipline had not yet been developed, notably in some of the developing regions, so that the diversity of viewpoints on the subject would become manifest. Lastly, it would undertake specific studies to help to bridge the knowledge gap affecting the reliability of global models and generalizations derived from them. Such studies were already under way in respect of alternative futures of countries with large arid zones and in respect of energy resources, where the future availability of hydrocarbon resources as well as new and existing developments in the field of microbiological energy would be the subject of studies and conferences in 1976. UNITAR was acting in close consultation with other parts of the United Nations system in those endeavours so as to ensure optimum utilization of resources.

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(Mr. Nicol)

7. With regard to the direction which the Institute would be expected to follow in coming years, he said that the efforts which the United Nations would be undertaking in the economic and social sectors as well as in other areas seemed to indicate a continued need for the vigorous functioning of the Institute. To allay any fears about possible duplication of activities, he pointed out that, while UNITAR studied the same subjects and carried out the same training programmes which were also within the general competence of other institutions, it did so with a distinct emphasis that distinguished its activities from theirs. With regard to queries that would undoubtedly arise as to whether the work of the newly created United Nations University would overlap with that of the Institute, he said that the Institute's Board of Trustees and the Council of the University had established a satisfactory working relationship to ensure that there was no duplication between the two institutions. Moreover, their roles were quite different, since the Institute directed research into matters of immediate and long-term interest to the secretariats and the governing bodies of the United Nations and its agencies, whereas the students and clientele of the University were more likely to be independent scholars who would carry out research into problems of global interest. It would nevertheless be advisable for the Assembly to call for a review, at the end of three years, of the necessity for further institutional co-operation between the University and UNITAR. Meanwhile, UNITAR's established programmes should not be put into a state of uncertainty by suggestions of a merger with the University. The latter should be allowed, initially, to establish its own philosophy of education and international development, although continued vigilance should be exercised over its function and that of existing institutions.

8. The Executive Director of UNITAR was entrusted with arrangements for annual meetings of the directors of all 12 research and training institutions within the United Nations system. Those meetings provided an opportunity to discuss current problems and programmes of work and to co-ordinate efforts. He also functioned as a bridge between the institutions in question and the United Nations University and other organizations in the system.

9. Finally, on the crucial subject of finances, he would point out, as he had pointed out to the Second Committee at the thirtieth session of the General

(Mr. Nicol)

Assembly, that world-wide inflation might have an effect upon the activities of the Institute, which depended upon voluntary contributions. He hoped that the Ad Hoc Committee would be able to recommend to other parts of the United Nations system measures to ensure that UNITAR received regular financial support from intergovernmental organizations, as it did from Member States.

10. Mr. VILLA (Philippines) said that his delegation regarded the report of the Group of Experts (E/AC.62/9) as an extremely important document and a good starting-point for the Committee's work, despite certain short-comings. While concentrating on the economic aspects of the Committee's work, the report neglected the equally important matter of the social structure of the system. Moreover, some of its proposals advocating drastic changes might not produce the desired results.

11. His delegation welcomed the growing consensus in the Committee with regard to priorities, in view of the practical benefits of pin-pointing specific topics or problem areas. The Committee should approach its task pragmatically, deliberately and cautiously, without, however, losing its sense of urgency.

12. One of the emerging priority areas was the role of the General Assembly. In that connexion, his delegation's view was that restructuring should not impair the role of the General Assembly as the supreme organ of the United Nations. The work of the Second and Third Committees should be rationalized in order to have a more systematic treatment of agenda items. The role of the Economic and Social Council as a co-ordinating and policy-formulating body should be strengthened, and it should be made more flexible in terms of membership. The question whether or not any subsidiary body should be abolished, or merged with or absorbed by another body, should be determined on a case-by-case basis.

13. An area of great interest to developing countries was international trade, and although UNCTAD had performed very well in that field it lacked the machinery to enable it fully to carry out its functions. It should therefore be strengthened as an instrument for formulating policies in trade and related matters and translating such policies into concrete measures and agreements.

14. There might be good reason for the creation of a new post, such as that of

(Dr. Villa, Philippines)

Director-General for Development recommended by the Group of Experts, as a means for ensuring greater coherence and more effective co-ordination of programmes and activities. It would not involve a derogation of the position or authority of the Secretary-General, since the Director-General would be directly responsible to him.

15. Nowhere in the United Nations system was the problem of duplication of efforts and lack of co-ordination of functions more flagrant than on the regional level.

The Committee should look closely into that area and draw clearly the lines between competing agencies and between Headquarters and the regional structures.

16. Dr. Gonzalez Arias (Paraguay) took the Chair.

17. Mr. AZZAP (Malaysia) said that his delegation agreed with most of the reasons that had been advanced for restructuring the economic and social sectors of the United Nations system. A structure that resulted in duplication of deliberations at the policy-making level and duplication of efforts in the area of operational activities would in time become a burden to many small developing countries with limited manpower and financial resources. Restructuring of institutions although no substitute for the political will of States, was important for they were important instruments for harmonizing efforts to improve the welfare of mankind. It should be pursued despite the many vested interests in the status quo for ultimately rationalization and improvement of the system would serve the common interests of all countries, the system and all who work in it.

18. His delegation was inclined to believe that the following areas could be identified. First, the function and procedures of the General Assembly as the supreme policy-making body should be examined in the light of the recommendations of the Group of Experts. Next, the Economic and Social Council: it should be strengthened by rationalizing its method of work and redefining its functions in relationship to other bodies. A study and analysis should be made of the organs or structures concerned with such matters as food and agriculture, trade, industrialization and science and technology. It was particularly in those areas that a restructuring would be in order. It was there too, in the rationalization of the structures in those sectors, that the key to strengthening the Economic and Social Council was to be found.

(Mr. Azzat, Malaysia)

19. The third area would be the various sectors of the economic and social fields in which the United Nations was involved. The recommendation to consolidate funds for technical assistance and pre-investment activities would require close examination, and care should be taken to ensure that any such consolidation would not affect the efficiency of their operations or erode the expertise that each, existing on its own, might have developed. There was also a need for effective evaluation of the operational activities undertaken.

20. A final area was the Secretariat which would service, support and assist the deliberative and policy-making organs of the system, and the Secretary-General should be invited to offer his views on the subject.

21. Mr. GUNA-KASEM (Thailand) said that it was necessary to reorganize the United Nations machinery so that it would become a more cohesive system with the capability of over-all policy planning, research and analysis for effective implementation of the development processes at the national and international levels. Adjustments or improvements of the existing structures and their manner of operation should be made in the light of a study of the present institutions and a diagnosis of the effectiveness of the system in meeting the requirements of international development.

22. It should, however, be kept in mind, firstly, that the United Nations was a voluntary association of independent sovereign States and had never been intended to be a world government. It could change and evolve only with the political will of its Members, and the new structures should maintain a certain degree of flexibility so that they could be further adapted to new changes and demands. Secondly, the task of restructuring would take a long time, and there was no need for the Committee to rush into quick decisions. The General Assembly could examine, at various stages, the measures needed to implement the restructuring, and all those measures should perhaps be reviewed at the end of a certain period to ensure that the restructuring at the centre was compatible with that in the sectoral areas.

23. On the question of the approach to the problem of restructuring, his delegation felt that the horizontal approach, which would begin with the restructuring of the central institutions, and the vertical approach, which would

(Mr. Guna-Kasem, Thailand)

begin with sectoral reorganization, were not incompatible and could even complement each other. Both should therefore be employed. The sectoral approach could offer an insight into the functional aspects and interrelationships of various United Nations institutions and would help to identify areas of overlapping responsibilities. The horizontal approach could be useful once the priority areas, such as policy-planning and policy-making processes and the structures of the central organs, were clearly defined. Restructuring of the Secretariat should wait until the Committee had delved deeply into the reorganization of the central institutions and the sectoral structures and had come up with certain solutions. 24. With regard to the recommendations put forward by the Group of Experts, his delegation felt that restructuring should not affect the General Assembly as the supreme legislative and policy-making body of the system. Participation in the Assembly was universal, and it had an important role in the promotion of international development and co-operation. The working methods of the Second Committee should be looked into more closely after the role of the Economic and Social Council had been thoroughly examined.

25. The functions of the Economic and Social Council and its subsidiary bodies could be a starting-point for the restructuring exercise. The Council should be a central organ within the system where input from the various United Nations bodies could be shaped into coherent policies for development and international co-operation and where there could be a central review of the mutual consistency of actions taken sectorally. Efforts to make the Council more effective should not, however, be carried out at the expense of the General Assembly. The abolition of certain committees and commissions and the convening of short, subject-oriented sessions were not necessarily desirable. The developing countries were short of experts for such sessions, and their frequency could also be a burden. In addition, there was great pressure for representation on the Council, and the discontinuance of a number of subsidiary bodies dealing with sectoral areas could create even greater pressure.

26. With respect to negotiating groups, that procedure had already been incorporated in the Second Committee and had proved useful when there existed the political will to reach agreement. The institutionalization of such a process,

(Mr. Guna-Kasem, Thailand)

however, might be harmful to developing countries and might arrest a dynamic movement towards the adoption of new measures for economic and social development.

27. Finally, his delegation's view was that the regional commissions should play a more active role in identifying, initiating, formulating and executing regional and subregional programmes and projects under the over-all policy guidance of the Economic and Social Council.

28. Mr. HACHANI (Tunisia) said that his delegation shared the feeling of the majority of delegations that there was a need for certain urgent changes in the economic and social system of the United Nations but also for a cautious approach in order not to upset irretrievably certain elements of the system which were at the basis of the Charter structure or which had proved their effectiveness. The Committee should also decide as soon as possible on the areas where it might deem changes to be useful so as not to prolong a situation of uncertainty which often encouraged inertia on substantive questions.

29. His delegation believed that the following considerations should be taken into account: the economic and social sectors which were to be restructured were, above all, an integral part of the global system the different elements of which complemented and influenced each other; the necessity to reform the system as a whole; the operation undertaken by the Committee was therefore only partial and there could be no claims consequently of an attempt to seek perfection; as for the rest of the existing structure the evolution of the economic and social sectors had been influenced by certain realities and certain needs and the Committee should attempt therefore to determine to what extent the present structure could, as rationally and as justly as possible, continue to reflect those realities and meet those needs.

30. Any changes should therefore be gradual and be implemented according to priorities that were as clear as possible. The sole purpose of those priorities should be to achieve the political objective of the United Nations in the field of international economic relations, namely, the establishment of a new international economic order that was more just and capable of offering all developing countries without distinction greater opportunities for development. To that end, perhaps priority should be given to reforming not only certain mechanisms but also certain

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(Mr. Hachani, Tunisia)

sectors in order to make them more capable of meeting the needs of all countries, particularly the developing countries. Ideally, the two types of reform should be carried out together in order to ensure maximum over-all success.

31. The Group of Experts had acknowledged that in the limited time available they had not been able to go to the root of the problems. Consequently, their work had been incomplete, and in certain respects their proposals did not reflect needs and realities. That did not mean that the Committee should summarily reject those proposals, which, along with others, could constitute a basis for its work.

32. The Committee should avoid any attempt to weaken the role of the General Assembly. Instead, the Assembly should be strengthened so that it would have greater political influence on all multilateral economic activities taking place within or outside the framework of the United Nations system. That need not and should not reduce the role played by special conferences to expedite agreement on specific urgent matters. Nor should the specialized agencies be deprived of their prerogatives under their own constitutions. Again, the strengthening of the General Assembly would not clash with the need to reactivate the Economic and Social Council in order to restore its powers and functions under the Charter and enable it to exercise them with the desired effectiveness, thus helping the General Assembly to play its role better. Furthermore, there should be no break with the current efforts to rationalize the work of the Council, and its role of co-ordination and general policy guidance should not be lost by involving it in discussions that were too technical. Such discussions had up to the present been entrusted to specialized bodies, whose activities should in due course be rationalized and in some cases merged.

33. Before considering any mergers or the establishment of new bodies, the Committee should determine whether the failure to achieve objectives in a given sector was the result of the existence or non-existence of a given organ or whether the causes were more profoundly political, in which case the most appropriate remedy might be to find the solution to those causes rather than to blame failure solely on the proliferation of organs. That was true with respect to activities within the Economic and Social Council and could also be true for operational activities, which in recent years had been substantially expanded. There could be no denying that that expansion had led to the establishment of a large - perhaps

(Mr. Hachani, Tunisia)

too large - number of organs. But neither could it be denied that each of those organs met a particular need and that they did not always receive support to the same degree or from the same sources. To what extent would "consolidation" lead to the saving of certain funds for which there was still a need? To what extent would integration of their intergovernmental and management organs allow them to retain, and in some cases strengthen, the effective power exercised by developing countries in determining the policies of those organs in the interest of all and without any discrimination? The answers to those questions would enable the Committee to take a position on the proposal, the advantage of which - at least in theory - from the standpoint of administrative efficiency escaped no one.

34. Several of the purely administrative proposals of the Group of Experts were worth while, especially where they were intended to improve co-ordination of activities between the Secretariat of the United Nations and the secretariats of the specialized agencies. Other proposals, such as the one for a central Secretariat, should be subjected in due course to the same question of whether too rigid centralization was useful and feasible in view of present realities.

35. Obviously, administrative and other machinery could not do what the representatives of Governments were unable to do. In recent years there had been a welcome tendency, on certain points and thanks to a measure of political will, to break away from rigid positions in order to reach reasonable solutions. What was currently needed - and perhaps in the future - was to see that will demonstrated with respect to other matters and in other sectors without enmeshing the organizations in time-consuming procedures.

36. Mr. Dadzie (Ghana) resumed the Chair.

37. Mr. OKEYO (Kenya), referring to the statement made by the Executive Director of the World Food Council at the 23rd meeting, said that most members of the Committee supported the recommendation of the Group of Experts that the Economic and Social Council should hold special sessions on major issues at the ministerial level. In such a situation, his delegation wondered what role the Executive Director envisaged for the World Food Council in relation to that of the Economic and Social Council. If WFC were given substantive responsibilities, his delegation wondered which body - WFC, FAO or the Economic and Social Council - would have the major United Nations voice in that area.

38. Mr. HANNAH (Executive Director, World Food Council) recalled that at the preceding meeting he had stated that it was not for him to advise the Committee on restructuring. WFC was a political body studying the problem of feeding hungry people throughout the world in the years ahead. It had been established because there had been the feeling that some agency was needed to implement the resolutions of the World Food Conference. The World Food Council reported to the General Assembly through the Economic and Social Council, and the question which body would make major decisions on food problems depended on how the Economic and Social Council was restructured.

39. Because WFC's decisions were made by government ministers, local food problems would not be solved unless there was the political will. One of the most significant changes in the world in the last 5 to 10 years was that each country now had its own group of educated citizens who had to solve its problems. In other words, it was the indigenous peoples themselves, not some group of bureaucrats or entities within the United Nations, that would have to find the solution. In his opinion, the major decisions on food problems within the United Nations system would have to be taken by the World Food Council.

40. Mr. CZARKOWSKI (Poland) said that the existence of both the World Food Council and FAO raised questions of global proportions which should be answered more broadly. His delegation wondered how the Executive Director of WFC evaluated the harmonization of work thus far achieved between WFC, FAO and other agencies concerned with food problems. The problems of food and hunger were in the terms of reference of FAO. UNIDO and UNCTAD were also involved, and for matters of co-ordination ACC was responsible. Still WFC was created.

41. Mr. HANNAH (Executive Director, World Food Council) said that, although it was no secret that FAO had not been pleased at the establishment of the World Food Council as the co-ordinator of all United Nations food problems, WFC did not anticipate any problems in co-operating with FAO, UNCTAD or UNESCO, because the General Assembly had made it clear that WFC would not be involved in operational activities. WFC's relations with all United Nations bodies had thus far been excellent.

(Mr. Hannah)

42. It should be recalled that the United Nations had decided that there were three objectives for the solution of basic food problems: increasing food production, not in North America, which produced 70 per cent of the world's food, but in other areas which were not self-sufficient, particularly the developing countries and the least developed among them; feeding hungry people, victims of natural disasters and victims of war; and managing available food stocks so that there would be no repetition of the problems of 1973, when there had been a shortfall in North American production. The basic responsibilities in those areas would be FAO's. WFC would therefore continue to seek information from and to co-operate with FAO, UNIDO, UNESCO, UNCTAD and WHO.

The meeting rose at 5.35 p.m.

25th MEETING

Friday, 27 February 1976, 10.30 a.m.

RESTRUCTURING OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL SECTORS OF THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM
(A/AC.179/3 and Add.1) (continued)

1. Mr. KARIM (Bangladesh) said that when the General Assembly had called for a special session devoted to development and international economic co-operation, it had also decided on the restructuring of the United Nations system to make it more fully capable of dealing with the problem and more responsive to the requirements of the New International Economic Order. Thus there was an organic link between the two decisions. The United Nations system should be, at one and the same time, both an instrument for and a reflection of the New International Economic Order.
2. It would be useful to keep that conceptual framework constantly in mind in order to give proper direction to the work of the Committee. That objective made restructuring qualitatively different from earlier efforts for administrative reforms. The Committee, therefore, would not be fulfilling its mandate by recommending proposals to achieve administrative neatness or financial efficiency only. Its primary concern should be to examine the functioning of the existing institutions with a view to ascertaining how far they reflected the realities of the new economic relations, to redefine their scope and to improve their method of work in order to give them a new orientation and a new thrust, rather than adding a few new institutions or abolishing some existing ones. The objective was therefore political in nature and in order to attain it the necessary political will must be forthcoming.
3. Furthermore, the restructuring should include not only the central institutions but also the sectoral structures, particularly in the five areas mentioned in paragraph 5 of General Assembly resolution 3343 (XXIX). Regardless of the point of departure, care must be taken not to concentrate on one aspect to the neglect of others or to propose solutions which were mutually incompatible. So far, consideration had been given basically to the central institutions. Thus, in its report, the Group of Experts focused mainly on the central institutions and admitted that, because of time constraints, it had not been able to consider

(Mr. Karim, Bangladesh)

sectoral activities in as detailed a manner as it would have wished. It would be unfortunate if the Committee acted in the same way.

4. In view of the complexity of the system, any programme of restructuring could only be gradual and his delegation shared the opinion of the Group of Experts which envisaged a process of institutional restructuring unfolding over a transitional period. Like the Chairman, he felt that at the current stage the Committee should try to identify the most important problem areas, such as the global decision-making process, the Secretariat support facilities and operational activities. In-depth examination of those problem areas could then be carried out in the intersessional working group. Commenting on certain aspects of the report of the Group of Experts (E/AC.62/9), he said that his delegation did not necessarily endorse all the recommendations of the Group or consider the report as a sufficient basis for the work of the Committee. But the report represented the most recent technical assessment of the functioning of the United Nations system and thus provided, if not a sufficient basis for the work of the Committee, at least a good starting-point.

5. With regard to the central structures for global policy making, the problem seemed to be to ensure centralization in the formulation of policies and at the same time achieve decentralization in their execution. The first issue to which the Group of Experts had addressed itself in that area had been the excessive diffusion of responsibility for global policy making, with a consequent loss of coherence; the Group had suggested strengthening the role of the General Assembly in that field by entrusting all such responsibilities to it. To that end, it had proposed among other things that special sessions of the General Assembly, rather than ad hoc world conferences, should be convened, and his delegation regarded that suggestion with favour. It was not however quite clear how the Second Committee could meet when the General Assembly was not in session. His delegation also doubted the practicability of converting the Second Committee, whose agenda was already very heavy, into a "Development Committee" by transferring to it from the Third Committee items relating to social development. On the other hand, his delegation regarded as practical the suggestion that the agenda of the Second Committee should be organized around meaningful clusters of issues.

(Mr. Karim, Bangladesh)

6. Concerning the revitalization of the Economic and Social Council, he thought that its role should be that of intermediary between the General Assembly on the one hand and the functional commissions and committees on the other. If the Council assumed the responsibilities of most of its subsidiary bodies, it would be reduced to a technical body and its workload would be too unmanageable.

Furthermore, amalgamating the work of such commissions and committees into the Council would deprive some countries of the opportunity of participating in deliberations on matters of interest to them. Reforms which tended to increase rather than reduce the inequality of participation of Member States, particularly of the developing countries, in the decision-making process ran counter to the aim of universal participation which it was hoped to achieve, unless the Economic and Social Council's membership was enlarged or made open-ended. However, his delegation found attractive the suggestion that the Council's programme should be reorganized on a biennial basis with its calendar subdivided into frequent subject-oriented sets of short sessions, since that would permit greater participation of national experts and the specialized agencies and would increase the effectiveness of the Council by rationalizing its work. The position of subsidiary bodies following such reorganization should be considered after some experience had been gained of the "reorganized" Council.

7. While recognizing the importance of consultative procedures for reaching consensus on important issues, his delegation had reservations about institutionalizing such procedures, which could lead to a virtual veto. Consensus was the result of political will and, involved judgement about the possibility of agreement and therefore no institutional arrangement could guarantee such a result. If the political will existed, it should not be difficult to find a formula which would make it possible to reach a consensus.

8. His delegation agreed with the need to strengthen the capacity of the Secretariat for intersectoral analysis and synthesis of policy options and in that respect found interesting the recommendation of the Group of Experts for reorientation of the functions of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, which occupied a central position in the Secretariat support facilities. It was not, however, convinced that the proposed reorganization of the Department required the creation of a new post of Director-General for Development and International

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(Mr. Karim, Bangladesh)

Economic Co-operation. He shared the apprehension that such a measure might tend to split the United Nations Secretariat into two segments, and thought that the reform within the Department of Economic and Social Affairs possibly could be carried out under the Secretary-General himself.

9. The recommendation that all technical assistance and pre-investment funds should be consolidated into a new United Nations Development Authority was a definite possibility, although the integration of the management bodies of those funds into a single governing body, presumably with restricted membership, again raised the question of representation mentioned by him in connexion with reorganization of the Economic and Social Council.

10. After recalling the importance of the institutions dealing with sectoral activities, he said he regretted that the Committee did not have adequate information or ideas on that subject to carry out a thorough assessment or formulate substantive proposals. In some of the sectors under consideration the Group of Experts had not made any recommendations at all and in others had merely outlined the need for reform in the five sectors under consideration; however, the Group had drawn the attention of the Committee to a large number of very important issues, which should be examined on a priority basis. He hoped that that could be done in the intersessional working group and in future sessions of the Committee.

Furthermore, the Committee must take into account the important developments which would certainly take place in certain sectors, e.g. UNCTAD IV. In any case it was essential that the work of all institutions dealing with sectoral activities should be brought into line with the policies already sanctioned by the General Assembly.

11. In conclusion, he expressed the hope that the heads of the specialized agencies some of whom had expressed their points of view during the general debate would be forthcoming in future in addressing themselves to the specific problems which were the focus of the Committee's concern.

12. Mr. SAOUMA (Director-General, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations) said that, within the general framework of the restructuring of the entire United Nations system, the agricultural sector was as much in need of reform as any other, and he had been asked to study the programmes, policy and structures of FAO to see if it could be better adapted to the needs of the times.

(Mr. Saouma)

13. The founding States of FAO, when drafting its Constitution, had affirmed their desire to raise levels of nutrition and standards of living of the peoples under their respective jurisdictions; to secure improvements in the efficiency of the production and distribution of all foods and agricultural products; to better the condition of rural populations, and thus to contribute towards an expanding world economy and to ensure humanity's freedom from hunger. Those aims remained fully valid but, at different times, they had been pursued in different ways. In the beginning, FAO had primarily been concerned to prepare and disseminate studies and data in the agricultural field for the information of Governments. In time, it has become operationally advisable for those studies to lead to investment involving concrete implementation. That trend, which was what Governments wanted and, at the same time, increased the capabilities of the United Nations system, should be encouraged - for it was on its effectiveness in the field, its concrete accomplishments, rather than on the number of its specialized publications or technical meetings that FAO would be judged.

14. FAO proclaimed its membership in the United Nations family and understood the needs for co-ordination that could arise from time to time. But, there were two pitfalls to be avoided. The first was that of erecting a United Nations structure that was both too cumbersome and too complex to be effective, and in which energies were directed more towards co-ordination than towards action. The second danger was that functions in the agricultural sector might be so fragmented as to lead to needless competition and even to duplications of effort.

15. The first of those dangers had been warned against long ago, and criticism in that regard had led to the creation of commissions and the launching of inquiries to rationalize structures, simplify procedures and make the whole more effective. FAO, for its part, considered itself an integral part of a complex whole and was persuaded both of its specific nature, since it had been entrusted with all agricultural problems within the United Nations system and of its necessarily complementary nature, since it could not do everything - hence its willingness to co-operate, which it had demonstrated time and again.

16. However, the proliferation of initiatives had made the United Nations system increasingly complex. In the case of the agricultural sector, the impossibility of

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(Mr. Saouma)

maintaining a balance between co-ordination of the different parts and their action in the field had resulted in co-ordination gaining the upper hand. The anxiety expressed over the proliferation of agencies in the agricultural sector which were oriented more towards co-ordination than towards action, made the conclusion of agreements between the different institutions with functions in the agricultural sector more necessary than ever.

17. In order to avert those dangers and make the United Nations system more effective, he thought that efforts should bear on three points: structures, co-ordination and operating principles. Restructuring would certainly help to make the United Nations system less complex. For some, the course of reducing the number of components of the United Nations system and precisely defining their broad functions would be the best means of avoiding a proliferation of mechanisms that had outlived their usefulness. However, any structural reform would take a great deal of time because the inertia of the existing structures and the complexity of their procedures were great. He therefore thought that it would be better not to call in question what was already in existence, particularly since the present situation seemed bound to develop into a United Nations system made up of a collection of subsystems, themselves consisting of specialized institutions dependent, in turn, on advisory and co-ordinating bodies. Thus, the economic and social sphere of the United Nations might become a system consisting of subsystems, each concerned with an individual sector, whose cohesion would be ensured by the centre - that is, the United Nations - while the principal technical organizations should be enabled to take the lead in their respective sectors. That would mean that each part of the system should know exactly its place in the system and the role of the other bodies in its subsystem.

18. There was no question of imposing anything whatever; however, in the agricultural sphere, for example, FAO could conclude agreements with the other bodies engaged in related activities, in order to avoid duplication of effort and ensure greater effectiveness. Thus, without upsetting any structures, it should be possible to reorganize the agricultural sector. He hoped that the Ad Hoc Committee would give careful study to the possibility of co-ordination agreements.

19. Obviously, other structural problems could arise too, particularly at the

(Mr. Saouma)

regional level. The evolution of the regional economic commissions was pushing them into an increasingly operational role on behalf of economic and social development in their respective regions. They thus came into competition with the specialized agencies, and he thought it would be desirable to specify their place within the United Nations system.

20. It was impossible to speak of structures and ways of making them evolve without also referring to co-ordination, so closely were those two concepts wedded to one another. He had therefore stressed the need for the conclusion of agreements between agencies with functions in the field of agriculture. Although most of the work of the agencies operating in the economic and social fields consisted of administrative tasks, the same was not true of matters that came up from day to day and which were soon found to have general policy implications and required a response from the economic and social system of the United Nations. It seemed to him that a pragmatic, problem-by-problem approach was the only one that could overcome those difficulties of co-ordination because it was impossible to assign to each entity operating in the agricultural sector a given category of problems or operations. Hence it was essential to establish close relations with various agencies, of the kind instituted between FAO and the World Food Programme, to mention an example. Being convinced of the cardinal importance of that matter, he had issued a call to the heads of all the agencies operating in the agricultural sector for a meeting to determine precisely how and by what methods it would be possible to co-ordinate operations better and avoid duplications of effort so that all available human technical and financial resources could be focused on agricultural development and the bodies concerned could help to strengthen the effectiveness of the system as a whole.

21. The collective action he advocated should, however, be grounded in certain principles. But first of all, the various institutions involved must be geared for action and given more flexibility so that they could cope with situations that required an emergency response. Then, measures must be taken to prevent the loss, waste or misuse of any resources allocated for development, because the needs were immense and the means available were limited. Efforts should also be directed towards clear objectives, set by the competent policy-making authority, and it was essential to ensure that the decisions taken in that assembly did not conflict with

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(Mr. Saouma)

those taken in another. It was therefore extremely desirable that agreement should be reached at the national level so that fully coherent operations undertaken by the United Nations might enjoy the support of public opinion. Finally, the men who applied the procedures must be not only technically competent but animated by the ideal of co-operation, and believers in the work of the United Nations.

22. In conclusion, he thought that, rather than overturning the present system, it would be preferable to conclude co-operation agreements that would make it possible to strengthen the effectiveness of the system as a whole and thus facilitate a better response to the legitimate aspirations of the developing countries.

23. Mr. HASHMI (India) wondered why, in enumerating the principal functions he attributed to the United Nations system, the Director-General of FAO had not mentioned negotiation which, in his delegation's opinion, was one of the outstandingly important tasks of the system, which distinguished it from bilateral assistance programmes. He also wondered what kind of relationship the Director-General of FAO envisaged between FAO and the World Food Council.

24. Mr. ROUGE (France) recalled that his delegation had expressed doubts about the rationality of the results of the Rome Conference in the institutional sphere. It had, in particular, referred to fragile compromises and spoken of a hastily constructed edifice. On the previous day the Executive Director of the World Food Council had sought to justify the present dispersal of responsibilities in the food sector solely on the basis of the texts which were responsible for that situation, and had said that it would be better if the present structure were allowed to operate for a few years before any restructuring was undertaken. The Director-General of FAO had also spoken of institutional fragmentation. It would be interesting to know if he thought that, regardless of all the palliatives that might be adopted, restructuring would be necessary sooner or later and, if so, how soon?

25. Mr. QUINTELA PAIXÃO (Portugal) said that he would like the Director-General of FAO to provide further details concerning the relationship between FAO and the World Food Programme.

26. Mr. MARSHALL (United Kingdom) wished to know what form the co-operation agreements mentioned by the Director-General of FAO would take.

27. Mr. KARIM (Bangladesh), noting the proliferation of bodies, asked whether there were any conflicts or co-ordination problems between the International Fund for Agricultural Development and the Consultative Group for Agricultural Production and Investment in Developing Countries.

28. Mr. OLIVERI-LOPEZ (Argentina) said that he shared the misgivings expressed by some delegations, and particularly the French and Indian delegations, concerning the constitutional measures adopted by the World Food Conference.

29. Mr. SAOUMA (Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations), replying first of all to the second question put by the representative of India, said that co-ordinating bodies often tended to encroach to some extent on the sphere of competence of the specialized agencies without necessarily producing better results. He believed that the role which the World Food Conference had conferred upon the World Food Council should be preserved and that all substantive questions concerning food and agriculture should continue to fall within the purview of FAO. In matters relating to the support to be accorded to the Council, he would comply with any instructions he might be given by the FAO Council.

30. As for the first question put by the representative of India, it was more appropriate, in the case of FAO, to speak of discussions rather than negotiations, since the Organization had not been used for the purpose of negotiations concerning trade or raw materials.

31. It was difficult to reply to the question put by the representative of France; there would probably be a de facto restructuring if not a de jure one. In any event, the World Food Council should be involved, but there was a strong likelihood, even if it did not produce satisfactory results, that it would be allowed to die a natural death rather than be suppressed. A pragmatic approach should therefore be adopted, based on negotiations between the Executive Director of the Council and the Director-General of FAO, since the Conference had entrusted the latter with the task of preparing co-operation agreements between FAO and new bodies established to deal with food questions. Replying to the United Kingdom representative, he pointed out that the agreements in question were not formal in the sense that they would have to be ratified by States but were rather in the nature of an understanding. FAO, which had existed for 20 years without the World Food Council

(Mr. Saouma)

could certainly function without that body. But FAO was of course prepared to co-operate with the Council. Having said that, he noted that the relationship was a difficult one: one could imagine the problems that could arise from the establishment of a world health council or a world education council, for example.

32. Replying to the representative of Portugal, he noted that the present arrangements between FAO and the World Food Programme were highly satisfactory and that very smooth and effective co-operation had existed between the two for some 10 years. He could not therefore endorse the recommendation of the Group of Experts to the effect that funds and operational programmes should be consolidated. WFP had its own features which distinguished it from other operational programmes and which would make it difficult to merge it with others. Moreover, the emergency relief functions of the Programme, to the extent that such relief was provided in the form of food-stuffs, could not be removed from the authority of the Director-General of FAO and placed under that of the United Nations Development Authority or a subdivision thereof.

33. Not long ago the Director-General, together with the President of the World Bank and the Administrator of UNDP, had decided to review the mandate of the Consultative Group on Food Production and Investment in Developing Countries; they would report to the governing bodies of their respective organizations.

34. The statute of the new International Fund for Agricultural Development, which would probably commence operations in early 1977, had only recently been finalized at an intergovernmental meeting, which had also defined the relationship between the Fund and FAO. His organization was prepared to provide the Fund with any technical assistance it might need, as was done in the case of WFP.

35. Mr. ABDEL MEGUID (Egypt) underlined the broad scope of the task entrusted to the Ad Hoc Committee by the General Assembly but expressed the hope, as others had before him, that it would be possible to carry out the restructuring exercise within the existing provisions of the Charter.

36. In studying the very useful ideas, including proposals and recommendations made by the Group of Experts and by various delegations during the general debate, the following basic principles should be kept in mind: any change in the existing structure should help to further accelerate the process of development and should

(Mr. Abdel Meguid, Egypt)

lead to enhancing mutual understanding between developed and developing countries; any proposed structure should be sufficiently flexible in order to ensure adaptability; existing practices and machinery must not be rejected without careful evaluation, nor should an excessive desire for innovation prevail; finally, in evaluating any proposal, an in-depth study of all its possible implications must be undertaken.

37. By way of example, all possible implications of the idea of consolidating assistance funds should be taken into account, particularly the effect of such a measure on the total volume of available resources. The institutionalization of the procedure of consensus might introduce additional rigidity into the negotiation process. The proposal to change the pattern of meetings of the Economic and Social Council and to hold special ministerial sessions was appealing; however, lessons must be drawn from past experience of ministerial sessions. The idea of abolishing or merging subsidiary organs of the Council or burdening the Council with the work of those organs should be approached with great caution.

38. In the area of planning, programming and budgeting systems, studies were already available which would ensure, if applied rationally, a considerable improvement in the co-ordination of the system. In that connexion, he emphasized the necessity of closer co-operation between programme and budget reviewing bodies, taking into consideration the different responsibilities and nature of the bodies in question which justified their continued existence.

39. The introduction of new tools of programme budgeting and medium-term planning would greatly facilitate the process of interagency co-ordination. The role and responsibility of ACC were of primary importance in that area. Closer co-operation between it and CPC would be desirable. It was to be hoped, in view of its potential role, that the Joint Inspection Unit would be established on a permanent basis by the General Assembly.

40. As the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme had pointed out, any restructuring of the United Nations system must ensure that Governments themselves assisted the system in efficiently implementing the recommendations which they themselves made.

41. Mr. González Arias (Paraguay) took the Chair.

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42. Mr. IGLESIAS (Executive Secretary, Economic Commission for Latin America) said that the Ad Hoc Committee had been entrusted with a difficult task of historic importance. Over the 30 years of the Organization's existence, the international situation had changed substantially and it was time to adapt the system to the new realities. The world had undergone far-reaching transformations and had witnessed the emergence of new economic and political powers, the development of a socialist community and the constitution of a third world consisting of new groups of countries. Those developments had gone hand in hand with changing perceptions of the nature of economic and social development programmes which, at the time of the establishment of the United Nations, had been understood only imperfectly and in a rather simplistic way. The complexity of those problems was now realized, and it was recognized that a great number of variables influenced the situation. That complexity had its effect, whether positive or otherwise, on the functioning of the United Nations; however, it should not be forgotten that the multiplicity of nations, ideologies and problems represented in the Organization gave it its unique authority. Nor should it be thought that the labyrinthine complexity of the Secretariat and its machinery for negotiation made any modernization impossible.

43. The Economic Commission for Latin America had given some consideration to that problem and, at its most recent session, had decided to review its own institutional machinery. The first question which arose was, in its view, to determine how the central node of the system was perceived by the peripheral organizations such as the regional commissions and what contribution they might make to the restructuring exercise. As seen from the periphery, the essential feature of the system was first and foremost the tremendous diversity of the problems it dealt with. The negative aspects of that diversity had been pointed out: the multiplicity of secretariats, overlapping mandates, geographically scattered offices, and so on. Nevertheless, the system's prodigious capacity for world-wide dialogue, at a variety of levels, could not be denied. The United Nations had demonstrated the ties of interdependence among countries and had aroused all sectors of public opinion to international problems of great moment.

44. If the system was to become more effective, it would appear to be necessary to strengthen the role of the central node in defining priorities at the global level. The importance of the functions of the General Assembly in that regard should

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(Mr. Iglesias)

therefore be emphasized. Similarly, the role of the Economic and Social Council as an instrument in implementing the directions given by the General Assembly should be strengthened by means of a series of flexible and permanent arrangements, and especially through machinery for evaluation. It would also be helpful to establish, at the point of contact between the centre and the periphery, a genuinely effective machinery for co-ordination or to improve further the machinery already available through ACC.

45. In defining priorities, all problems relating to the new international economic order, as well as horizontal co-operation between developing countries, should be given close attention. The peripheral elements would, in turn, clearly have to integrate those concepts into their respective structures. Thus, the problem of decentralization should be viewed from the standpoint of the periphery. Decentralization did not mean diffusion but rather shifting of certain functions away from the centre and towards the periphery with a view to enhancing implementation. However, if that view was adopted, decentralization implied existence of a highly structured and dynamic central node which would provide stimulation and guidance that would be felt and translated into action throughout the system. Decentralization should confer greater operational responsibilities on the regional commissions and the specialized agencies. At the same time, however, such a reorganization of the regional structures should not detract from a serious effort to revitalize the system's centre. The regional structures, which were in actuality the executive arms of the Economic and Social Council, had the great advantage of having very close ties with the countries in the region with which they were concerned and of being aware of the realities in those countries. They had a first-hand appreciation of sectoral problems and were in contact with Governments, a privilege of which they should take the fullest advantage. Consequently, restructuring the regional commissions could not but lend greater vigour to the restructuring of the system as a whole.

46. In order to carry out such restructuring at the regional level, the first task was to determine what were the functions of the regional commissions. Those functions were clear and consisted primarily in obtaining and disseminating information on economic and social conditions in the region, then in studying the

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(Mr. Iglesias)

basic problems common to the countries in the region, in encouraging consideration of the region's problems within an international framework by promoting a dialogue with the rest of the world and finally in mobilizing the potential for co-operation among the various countries. The best way of doing that was to adopt an interdisciplinary approach to problems, while taking as a basis a number of key ideas agreed upon at the outset. Experience had shown how far certain co-operation activities had proved fruitful when underscored by the idea of strengthening economic integration, planning procedures or financial co-operation. The United Nations must make its presence known in all countries by means of those major central issues, which were based on a community of interests.

47. In order to reorganize regional structures to good advantage, they must be prepared to make innovations and to put to good use the considerable experience acquired by countries in the different regions, in particular the countries of Latin America, which already had a substantial infrastructure. Governments should therefore be more closely associated in the activities of operational bodies and specialized agencies, the regional commissions serving as a catalyst rather than as a direct executing agency. Basically, the regional structures had a dual function: firstly that of co-operation - in that connexion the regional commissions had a major part to play in bringing together in a collective perspective the various aspects of regional problems submitted to them at sectoral level by the specialized agencies; and secondly that of negotiation - in that field procedures must be studied in depth but the regional commission could facilitate, through prenegotiation activities at the regional level, to promote negotiations within the Economic and Social Council.

48. Reorganization of regional structures must therefore start with a redefinition of their relations with the central nucleus of the system. The relationship of those structures with the specialized agencies should also be redefined. In that connexion, a similar machinery could be provided at the regional level to that envisaged at the world level for the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination. It was also extremely important that relations between the regional structures and UNDP be redefined. UNDP and the regional economic commissions dealt with the same issues and it was therefore vital that effective co-ordination be established between them without delay.

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(Mr. Iglesias)

49. The Economic Commission for Latin America was fully aware of the importance of restructuring and of how much Governments in the region wished to see an improvement in the effectiveness of the system and its actions at the regional level. Moreover, ECLA had in 1975 submitted a report on that subject. At its plenary session to be held in 1976 it would revise its structures; at the administrative level, it had already taken major steps to bring together its secretariat, the Latin American Economic and Social Planning Institute and the Latin American Demographic Centre in a single body under Government authority. Furthermore, permanent co-operation had been established between the Commission and the UNDP regional office in order to jointly plan activities. The Commission was also working in co-operation with regional bodies, in particular those responsible for co-operation on electric power and transport, and it had close links with the Latin American Economic System, a regional political organization which had been set up to promote projects for co-operation between countries or groups of countries, to facilitate the adoption of joint positions by negotiation and to back up integration machinery.

50. It was clear that the United Nations was still the universal forum vital to the international community for the maintenance of peace and security throughout the world. ECLA had always defended the principles which inspired the establishment of the Organization and was convinced that the changes required in the system were in fact the result of the dynamism of modern times, to which the system should be adapted by strengthening reciprocally the functions of its central and peripheral organs. However, it was obvious that the scope of such restructuring was not purely administrative but also had a profound political significance. Whatever form it took, the system would never do more than reflect how States saw it and what they expected from it, and in the end its functioning would always depend on the attitude which they adopted towards it.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.

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26th MEETING

Friday, 27 February 1976, 3 p.m.

RESTRUCTURING OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL SECTORS OF THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM
(A/AC.179/3 and Add.1) (continued)

1. Mr. MATSEIKO (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic) said that the purpose of restructuring should be to enable the United Nations to solve the problems of international economic co-operation and development in a more comprehensive and effective manner. That process must take into account the underlying principles of international economic co-operation, namely, universality, justice, equality, non-discrimination, mutual advantage, peaceful coexistence and co-operation between States regardless of their economic and social system. In the report to the Twenty-fifth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, in the section entitled "Programme for the further struggle for peace and international co-operation and for the freedom and independence of peoples", the General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, Mr. L. I. Brezhnev, proposed the following as one of the main goals: "To achieve the elimination of discrimination and all artificial obstacles in international trade, and the elimination of all manifestations of inequality, dictatorship and exploitation in international economic relations".

2. The most important pre-condition for a successful restructuring of the economic and social sectors of the United Nations system was that it should remain faithful to the provisions of the United Nations Charter and make effective use of the untapped possibilities of that instrument. His delegation also favoured increasing the role and broadening the area of responsibility of the Economic and Social Council so that it could concentrate on the most urgent problems. Its role as organizer and co-ordinator of the entire programme of work of the United Nations must be strengthened.

3. His delegation welcomed the valuable and interesting ideas presented to the Committee by the executive heads of the specialized agencies and agreed with them that the purpose of restructuring was to ensure maximum effectiveness in the work of the economic and social sectors of the system and an adjustment of both structure and machinery to the positive changes which were taking place in the

(Mr. Matseiko, Ukrainian SSR)

world. It was more important to increase the effectiveness of existing agencies and programmes than to permit new and autonomous ones to proliferate in response to problems as they arose.

4. With respect to the Committee's work, his delegation had no objection to the establishment of a working group to hold informal talks, but it did not approve of concentrating the practical work in that group, and thereby lessening the importance of the official meetings of the Committee. With respect to the activity of the working group in the intersessional period, his delegation wished to point out that a number of meetings of direct concern to the Ad Hoc Committee were about to be held by the Economic and Social Council, UNCTAD and the Governing Board of UNEP. It was essential that the Committee should give full consideration to the ideas and proposals which might emerge from those forums, and that should be taken into account in planning the schedule of the working group. Since many delegations, especially the smaller ones, would be occupied with the work of those meetings, certain difficulties might arise if the working group were to operate throughout the intersessional period, from March to May. It was necessary to agree on a shorter period, immediately before the third session of the Ad Hoc Committee.

5. Mr. KHANE (Executive Director, United Nations Industrial Development Organization) said that the work of the Ad Hoc Committee would be decisive in the future for the effectiveness of the United Nations system and its contribution to the establishment of the new international economic order, and in that connexion the report of the Group of Experts (E/AC.62/9) provided a sound basis for discussion. The Group of Experts had been clearly aware of the need for wide-ranging structural change if the United Nations was to maintain and enhance its role as an effective instrument for international economic and social co-operation.

6. The pragmatic development of the United Nations system - seen by the Group of Experts as a principal cause of the present intricacies of the system - was not necessarily an indication of inefficiency or an indication that the structure was unsound. The proliferation of programmes had not resulted from an uncontrolled pressure to expand the United Nations system but rather from the increasing number of problems confronting the global community. There was also greater awareness

(Mr. Khane)

that effective action in fields such as environment, health, telecommunications and meteorology required co-operation at the global level and that each of those problems called for solutions requiring specialized skills and approaches, which in turn had resulted in the establishment of the various programmes and agencies within the United Nations system.

7. The focal point for co-ordinating the wide range of activities encompassed by the United Nations economic and social programmes was, he believed, at the national level. For example, the Government of a developing country should ensure that the various flows of assistance encompassing education, industry, commerce, agriculture, health and other areas were integrated into a meaningful programme of assistance. UNIDO had been increasingly aware of the need to co-ordinate its own efforts in accelerating industrialization in the developing countries with those of other organizations within the United Nations system. To that end, efforts had been made to strengthen ties with the regional economic commissions and had resulted in the establishment of industrial units or joint divisions with four of the commissions. Furthermore, UNIDO had recently undergone a major reorganization in accordance with the directives of the Lima Declaration and Plan of Action on Industrial Development and Co-operation adopted at the Second General Conference of UNIDO and resolution 45 (IX) of the Industrial Development Board. Success in co-ordination would depend to a large extent on the willingness of the participants in the system to adopt a co-ordinated and co-operative programme of action.

8. UNIDO agreed with the Group of Experts that there was scope for a greater harmonization of planning and operational activities within the system. However, under the country programming system the programme of assistance was the responsibility of the Government of the developing country and a question therefore seemed to arise as to how planning at a global level could in turn be incorporated within national systems so that a more harmonious interaction was achieved between requirements, resources and priorities at different levels.

9. The Group of Experts had recommended that the central Secretariat should be strengthened in order to provide intellectual direction on issues of system-wide concern. UNIDO did not believe that it was merely a question of improving the intellectual level of the staff; rather, it was a question of creating a truly

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(Mr. Khane)

international civil service, which must be characterized by a high degree of awareness of, and active commitment to, the requirements of international co-operation, going well beyond the more narrow channels of national behaviour. Furthermore, the rigid application of the quota system governing the recruitment of international staff had in some cases tended to impede efforts at achieving higher efficiency. In some organizations particularly those with purely technical functions, it might be possible to consider flexible systems similar to those in effect at the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund.

10. The Group of Experts had drawn attention to those functions which were not yet adequately performed in the institutional structure, indicating as an example the need for a more integrated system for exchange of information so that investment decisions, particularly in industrial sectors, might be taken with a greater knowledge of the developments in other countries. A major thrust of UNIDO's operational programme had been feasibility studies undertaken on a case-by-case basis at the request of Governments. With the reorganization of UNIDO, greater emphasis had been placed on the systematic exchange of information influencing investment decisions. The International Centre for Industrial Studies was currently preparing an extensive programme of studies at a global, regional, country and sectoral level. The results of that work would enable developing countries to have a clear view of the growth potential of a particular industrial sector, taking full account of developments in that sector in other areas of the world. UNIDO was also endeavouring to introduce consultation and negotiation machinery in accordance with the directive of the Second General Conference, which had been endorsed by the General Assembly in its resolution 3362 (S-VII). Through that consultation machinery, the findings of the study programme could be translated into practical industrial advancement in the developing countries.

11. UNIDO was in general agreement with the view expressed by the Group of Experts concerning the decentralization of United Nations activities and the strengthening of the regional commissions. UNIDO had systematically strengthened its own ties with the regional commissions through joint divisions and liaison units. In approaching that problem, however, the Committee should exercise caution to ensure that decentralization was not taken to the point where the global aspect of United Nations activities was ignored. The need to approach specific problems on a global basis was one of the basic strengths of the United Nations system.

(Mr. Khane)

12. The Group of Experts saw the revitalization of the Economic and Social Council as an essential condition for strengthening the central structure of the system and enabling it to play an effective role in world economic affairs. However, the limited nature of the Council's membership might be a serious handicap to the full development of its policy-making role. He wondered whether there might not be some way of combining the functions of the Council with those of the Second Committee of the General Assembly, which the Group of Experts had suggested should be renamed the Committee on Development and International Economic Co-operation. UNIDO concurred with the view that items on social development should, on a case-by-case basis, be transferred from the Third Committee to the Development Committee. In addition, budgetary aspects relating to economic and social affairs should be reviewed by the Development Committee before going, if necessary, to the Fifth Committee. The Group of Experts had suggested that the work of the Development Committee should be supplemented by small negotiating groups. He would suggest that those negotiations should be serviced by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs in co-operation with the relevant United Nations agency primarily concerned with the topic under negotiation. The results achieved would be largely dependent on the level of representation at the negotiating sessions.

13. UNIDO doubted that successive special sessions of the General Assembly would have the same effect as world conferences in focusing awareness on particular issues. In fact, they might have the opposite effect, since the impact of special sessions of the General Assembly was likely to become eroded through repetition.

14. The recommendation of the Group of Experts that all United Nations funds for technical assistance and pre-investment activities should be consolidated, for the purpose of more effective policy-making, administration and management, into a new United Nations Development Authority would have far-reaching implications for UNIDO and other United Nations organizations concerned with economic and social development. The question of consolidation of funds should be carefully studied to ensure that the level of funds available for technical assistance activities was not endangered by the establishment of a common fund. At present, donor Governments preferred to allocate funds to specific sectors of United Nations activities, and the grouping of the various funds might lead to a decrease in the

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(Mr. Khane)

over-all level of contributions. The suggestion by the Group of Experts that the separate identity of the funds should be maintained so that donors could continue to have the right to earmark contributions for particular purposes was contrary to the basic concept of a common fund. Furthermore, a common fund would have to be supplemented with a series of sectoral studies on which basic decisions at a sectoral level could be taken. On the basis of the studies, the common fund could be divided with allocations to each sector, thus enabling the United Nations to set aid priorities in line with the requirements of developing countries. In turn, the United Nations could offer guidance to developing countries, on the basis of studies undertaken at the national level, on the formulation of their requests under the country programming system. Those requests would accurately reflect the assistance required by an individual country. Thus, development planning would incorporate the views of the global community. At present, voluntary contributions to specific funds served as a corrective supplementary support to UNDP financing, which was divided on a country basis.

15. There was one notably weak point in the report of the Group of Experts, namely, the role which the specialized agencies were to play following the restructuring of the economic and social sectors of the system. The Group of Experts had correctly pointed to the fact that for years the work of the specialized agencies had provided indispensable services to the member States. It was against that background that the General Assembly had agreed that UNIDO should be converted into a specialized agency. It would appear that the experts foresaw a restricted role for the specialized agencies within the restructured sectors of the United Nations system; the agencies would not necessarily be executing agencies for specific projects, but would be restricted to the preparation of a series of studies. In considering those recommendations, the Committee should bear in mind the amount of specialized skills which had been built up in individual agencies. The agencies should be seen as interdependent units undertaking studies, formulating policies and maintaining technical assistance in specialized areas. In any restructuring of the United Nations system, it would be essential that that close sectoral co-ordination should be maintained.

16. Considerable attention had been given to the amount of overlapping in the activities of different organizations within the system. However, that

(Mr. Khane)

overlapping did not necessarily lead to duplication of efforts, since a number of agencies might be considering the same problem but approaching it from different aspects. Furthermore, the purpose of restructuring was to improve the assistance being given to developing countries, and that goal should not be forgotten in the search for new administrative forms.

17. Mr. MORSE (Administrator, United Nations Development Programme) said that, when considering the question of restructuring, the questions to be asked should be for what purpose and for whose benefit the exercise was envisaged. Any restructuring of the United Nations system should promote balanced, equitable world development and careful management of resources for the benefit of all mankind. Within that wide spectrum, however, efforts should be focused on improving the condition of the disadvantaged millions who each day waged a battle for survival. The new international economic order, which was the reflection of momentous changes in the world, presented those objectives in a challenging context. The United Nations system for international economic and social co-operation must adjust itself so that it might respond dynamically, giving practical expression to the call for a new order. The adjustment would not be easy; for, as a result of trying to cope with each new development need, a great number of the functions of the different components of the development system now overlapped, and co-ordination was not the answer. Something better than remedial mechanisms was needed; it might even be that many of the basic impediments to more integrated programmes and more rational use of the limited resources for global action against poverty would only be eradicated by institutional amendments within the system. Until member Governments decided what changes were to be effected in the future, those responsible for the administration of organizations in the system should achieve as many improvements as possible on a pragmatic basis. However, whatever the structure, good management was a sine qua non, and the quality of the individuals working in the United Nations development system must therefore be a principal concern of Governments and secretariats alike.

18. Turning to issues more specific to UNDP, he pointed out that the basic principle determining the provision of technical co-operation by UNDP was full recognition of the national sovereignty of each country. That principle was founded in the consensus adopted by the Governing Council in 1970, which had

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(Mr. Horse)

marked a milestone in the evolution of multilateral technical co-operation by recognizing the "country-centred" approach. That approach raised a number of critical issues - such as the linkage between global policy and research and operational activities; decentralization and delegation of authority; and a comprehensive and multidisciplinary approach to development problems which were directly relevant to the organizational matters the Committee was dealing with.

19. With regard to the first of those issues, the connexion between the global economic and social policies enunciated in the United Nations system and the operational activities supported by UNDP in individual countries had been a subject of debate since the adoption of the consensus, the built-in paradox being that, whereas as a component part of the system UNDP had a direct interest in efforts to evolve global policies, as an operational agency it functioned in well over 100 countries with widely varying policies and requirements to which it must be responsive. Any attempt to introduce in country programmes activities stemming from global policies of the system but not figuring among the country's own priorities would be rightly seen as an erosion of the consensus. In fact the paradox was probably more apparent than real, for UNDP might fulfil its obligations as a member of the system by drawing the attention of Governments to global policies enunciated by United Nations bodies at the time when the country programmes were prepared, leaving the final decision to the Governments. Furthermore, as Governments became more involved with global economic issues, they would undoubtedly take them into account in deciding their development priorities. That would provide the most effective channel through which global policies might be translated into operational activities at the country level. At the same time, important organizational connotations flowed from the paradox; for, while UNDP was obligated to co-operate with the United Nations system, it was hard to see how the Programme, with its respect for national sovereignty, could operate effectively as an integral and subordinate part of any organization dealing primarily with the implementation of global economic policy. Although the decisions of Governments as to how far they wished to implement global policies with the co-operation of UNDP might well lead to the latter's playing a greater role in giving meaning to those policies, the process of national responses to global policies must be safeguarded. In addition, there was UNDP's global and interregional programme,

(Mr. Morse)

which would play an increasingly significant role in implementing global policies, especially in priority strategies concerning, for example, the world's fish resources. With regard to the structural requirements for research, he believed there was general agreement that the linkages between existing resources for research in world development were not as strong as they should be, and he therefore urged strong lateral linkages between research, policy and operational activities in any major restructuring.

20. On the question of decentralization and delegation of authority, he said that the "country-centred" philosophy adopted in the UNDP consensus necessitated transferring a good many of the responsibilities previously undertaken by headquarters to the field level, while maintaining the Administrator's over-all responsibility. One aspect was the delegation of authority to the resident representative; the other, and most fundamental, was the participation of developing countries in programming, project formulation and execution, evaluation and follow-up and a far greater reliance on national services and personnel. UNDP was now certainly the most decentralized of all the United Nations organizations, and, although recent developments had obliged temporary curtailment of the authority delegated to resident representatives, that situation would shortly be reversed. The increasing use of the resources of the countries themselves was a continuing process reflecting their growing capacity, with implications far beyond country programming in its initial form. The decentralization of UNDP and the increased involvement of national capabilities placed the focus of UNDP's activities at the country level and would affect the nature and size of the organization at the field level.

21. Concerning a comprehensive and multidisciplinary approach to development problems, he said that, if UNDP was to be responsive to the ultimate objectives he had referred to, it must take into account not only the political, economic and social developments in the countries it served but also the advances made in the theory of development and of development co-operation. There again, there was a built-in organizational paradox; because operational and development-oriented activities had not been envisaged as a primary function at the time of their creation, the specialized agencies had been established on an essentially sectoral basis. The achievement of an organic and integrated approach at the centre of the

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(Mr. Morse)

development co-operation process obviously gave rise to many complicated problems and, once again, the most suitable place to bring together the diverse threads was at the country level.

22. A consideration of those three issues made it clear that the organization and structures at the field level played a key role in resolving paradoxes and harmonizing contradictory tendencies. Experience had demonstrated that it was at the field level that the greatest advance was possible on a pragmatic basis. There had been a gradual integration of the United Nations development system in each country where the Programme operated, under the leadership of the resident representative in constant consultations with the Government. While more needed to be done, the system did not speak with as many different voices as it had some years earlier; for instance, in some cases, FAO and UNIDO advisers now worked directly under the resident representative. A parallel evolution had taken place within the individual Governments during that period, namely, the emergence of co-ordination and planning authorities in most countries, responsible for formulating development policy and harmonizing the sectoral interest of individual ministries. As a result of that historical evolution, UNDP had developed a comprehensive international field organization whose value far exceeded the amount of resources channelled through it. Accordingly, UNDP's present financial difficulties should not lead to any weakening of that network, and care should be taken to avoid any backward steps towards renewed fragmentation of the development system at the country level. Any changes were, of course, a matter to be decided by Governments; it was incumbent on them to decide on the official local channel for their communications with the United Nations system and to ensure the consistency of the policies and executive or financial decisions which they supported in the various forums of the United Nations and its specialized agencies.

23. Turning to other organizational aspects of UNDP's relationship with the rest of the United Nations development system, he said that the regional level was of significant importance as a vital link between the country level and the wider concerns of the various organization headquarters. In that connexion, he hoped that the reports on regional structures commissioned by the Economic and Social Council would give needed guidance for the future. While closer relationships had

(Mr. Morse)

been achieved between UNDP and the regional economic commissions, strengthening relationships with the regional offices of most specialized agencies was more difficult mainly because of structural problems; the location, geographical coverage, functions and degree of delegated authority varied greatly from agency to agency. Regular intersecretariat meetings of the kind proposed by the Council would do much to ensure a multidisciplinary approach at the regional level. As to the headquarters level, until such time as Governments took a decision on the proposals for strengthening the Council and merging various governing bodies, he intended to consult with the heads of the participating agencies to see how the role of the Inter-Agency Consultative Board in development matters might be heightened. Concerning the proliferation of funds, while the creation of new funds in selected instances could attract resources that otherwise might not be accessible, it might be wise, in view of the additional cost which new bureaucratic structures involved, to entrust the administration of new funds to appropriate existing international institutions and the overseeing of them to existing governing bodies.

24. Finally, he drew attention to the need for a more comprehensive information system responding to the requirements of the whole United Nations development system and covering scientific and technical information and economic and social information as well as operational and administrative information. Such improvement would also lead to considerable economies and would greatly facilitate proper financial control and programme monitoring by UNDP.

25. Mr. CZARKOWSKI (Poland) asked the Administrator whether he agreed that there should be a certain degree of consolidation of existing funds and whether, in view of the fact that UNDP already administered several funds, it would be possible for it to take over the administration of additional funds.

26. Mr. MORSE (Administrator, United Nations Development Programme) replied that it was for the Governments to decide whether to consolidate the funds or not. The advantages and disadvantages of UNDP administration of various funds should be considered. However, the Programme did have staff competent in the matter and was prepared to serve the will of Member States under whatever mandate they might assign to it.

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27. Mr. KJELGAARD (Denmark) asked whether UNDP had achieved a very efficient working relationship with the United Nations. He was thinking particularly of co-operation with the Office of Technical Co-operation and with the Transportation Service.

28. Mr. MORSE (Administrator, United Nations Development Programme) said there were very effective relations between UNDP and the central Organization. He himself met several times a week with senior staff with a view to consulting the Secretary-General on development issues relating to UNDP. With regard to specific relationships within the Organization, he said he had already met three times during the current week with the Commissioner for Technical Co-operation on issues of concern to them both, and he hoped that such relationships would be strengthened to their mutual advantage.

29. Mr. AL-ATTAR (Executive Secretary, Economic Commissioner for Western Asia) emphasized the importance of the Ad Hoc Committee's work for the future of the United Nations system. The report of the Group of Experts (E/AC.62/9) was a useful study of the problems involved in restructuring; the measures proposed in the report deserved consideration, and some of them, particularly those relating to the subsidiary bodies of the Economic and Social Council, operational activities and regional structures, required prompt decisions.

30. The need to ensure co-ordination and decentralization of the United Nations system was widely endorsed by member countries and by the respective secretariats of the system. While some of the recommendations of the Group of Experts would require additional resources, and in certain cases legislative and constitutional decisions, others could easily be implemented with existing resources and under current terms of reference. Accordingly, efforts should be made to implement those which could be carried out first.

31. Conscious of the regional implications of many General Assembly and Economic and Social Council resolutions on the restructuring of the United Nations system and decentralization of its activities, ECWA had opted for an integrated, multidisciplinary and action-oriented approach. Accordingly, it had developed an organizational structure in line with the realities, aspirations and needs of its member States. In order to respond to the objectives of the International Development Strategy and the new international economic order, ECWA had worked out

(Mr. Al-Attar)

co-operative arrangements with several specialized agencies and regional organizations. To avoid overlapping and duplication and better to serve the interests of the region, co-operation was a priority; ECWA therefore endorsed one important recommendation of the Group of Experts, concerning co-ordination. A co-ordination unit had been established to co-ordinate ECWA's efforts with those of the economic, social and technical institutions associated with the League of Arab States. ECWA had taken a keen interest in measures to rationalize the structures of the United Nations system. The Commission had adopted a number of resolutions in that connexion, and its secretariat had communicated its views on the relevant Joint Inspection Unit reports (JIU/REP/74/5 and JIU/REP/45/2) and on the UNDP Administrator's Note on the Programme and Policies of UNDP, Decentralization of its Activities and its Relation to the Regional Economic Commissions. The proposals made by ECWA might be summarized as follows.

32. In the light of measures taken to rationalize the activities and structures of the Economic and Social Council and the United Nations Secretariat, all substantive activities which had a regional character and could be dealt with by the regional economic commissions should be effectively decentralized to those commissions, with the authority and resources needed for their implementation. Since they were most familiar with their regions, the commissions were best suited to be entrusted with that authority and with the requisite resources. Such decentralization would enhance the effectiveness of the United Nations system.

33. With regard to relations with the specialized agencies and the system as a whole, much remained to be done to strengthen co-operation. More joint units should be established and strengthened. ECWA had such arrangements with FAO and UNIDO and hoped to establish similar ones with other agencies. It was desirable that the regional economic commissions should have arrangements for co-operation with such agencies as the World Bank Group and the International Monetary Fund, because the countries served by the commissions must have an effective voice in the formulation of policies governing the transfer of resources and the reform and stability of the international monetary system.

34. Turning to the most crucial issue, namely, the relations between the regional economic commissions and UNDP and the executing agencies, he stressed the increasing need for the delegation to the commissions of the functions of

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(Mr. Al-Attar)

executing agency for regional projects, as recommended by the Economic and Social Council and the commissions themselves. Moreover, close co-operation between the regional commissions and UNDP should be sought in the formulation of effective country programmes, the co-ordination of which was essential for effective regional projects. The "joint executing agency" concept should be introduced and the regional economic commissions should, in appropriate cases, be made "co-ordinating executing agencies".

35. At the operational level, ECWA proposed the establishment of regional advisory services in connexion with each substantive programme. The services would establish and strengthen the direct link between the substantive programmes of the regional commissions and the corresponding government agencies and policy-making organs, would help in the preparation of UNDP-assisted national and multinational programmes and would enable the regional economic commissions to provide, in collaboration with the specialized agencies, the collective services of a team of experts composed of regional advisers and substantive officers.

36. Regarding co-ordination at the regional level, ECWA believed that the regional economic commissions should be recognized as having team leadership and responsibility for co-ordination, with the support of the United Nations family of organizations and UNDP. Naturally, that responsibility would require additional resources, particularly staff, so that the commissions would be able to discharge that task along with their basic activities.

37. Periodic co-ordination meetings should be convened by the Executive Secretary of each regional commission and the Director of the UNDP regional office concerned, with the participation of regional representatives of the specialized agencies engaged in technical co-operation.

38. When co-operation among the regional commissions themselves was concerned, more co-ordination of efforts at all levels was needed. In addition to the meetings of the Executive Secretaries, occasional meetings among persons concerned with substantive programmes could usefully be considered.

39. Mr. Czarkowski (Poland) took the Chair.

40. Mr. MORENO (Cuba) said that the establishment of a new international economic order for the benefit of the entire international community would not be translated into reality solely by the adoption of well-intentioned instruments

(Mr. Moreno, Cuba)

governing international economic activities. What was needed above all was the political will of all members of that community to implement those instruments fully, avoiding dilatory manoeuvres to distract the attention of the developing world from the problems it faced. The recommendations to be made by the Ad Hoc Committee on the restructuring of the economic and social sectors of the system should, first and foremost, respond to the policy objectives contained in the Declaration and the Programme of Action on the Establishment of a New International Economic Order and to the measures for co-operation proposed by the General Assembly at its seventh special session. Policy objectives must not be subordinated to a restructuring exercise which would attempt administratively, from within the United Nations system, to lay down the policy measures which it was necessary to adopt outside the system. The sole result of that would be to jeopardize improved international economic relations and the prestige of the United Nations as a multilateral negotiating forum. Restructuring must produce a United Nations whose institutional structures and arrangements fully met the requirements of the new international economic order. The Organization must have multilateral negotiating organs which operated efficiently and ensured that the interests of the developing countries were adequately represented. A flexible, efficient and high-calibre ~~Secretariat~~ was essential; however, the latter's interests must not take precedence over those of the Member States, and truly equitable geographical distribution must be ensured.

41. Restructuring of the economic and social sectors of the United Nations must be viewed not as an end in itself, but as a means to bring about a radical alteration in the structure of international economic relations. In order to ensure that the United Nations properly met the requirements of the developing countries and carried out policy measures adopted outside the system, a three-phase restructuring process should be envisaged. First, a sectoral analysis should be made of questions of greatest interest to the developing countries, and an assessment should be made of the proper role of the various policy-making, co-ordinating and executing bodies within each sector, bearing closely in mind the need for an integral approach. Once conclusions had been reached and agreements adopted on the basis of that analysis, a study should be made of the co-ordinating machinery of the system, with particular reference to evaluation, programming and

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(Mr. Moreno, Cuba)

planning, and relations among the constituent organizations. It was only after those processes had been completed that it would be appropriate to consider the changes which should be made in the Secretariat. To proceed in reverse order would prove time-consuming and fruitless.

42. The intersessional working group should be instructed to adopt the approach he had outlined, which would permit a proper balance between centralization and decentralization; policy and co-ordinating decisions would be centralized in the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council, while operational activities would be decentralized to the agencies and related bodies.

43. General Assembly resolution 3343 (XXIX) had called for a comprehensive report on the state of international economic activities, focusing on constraints of a general policy nature which faced the implementation of the Programme of Action on the Establishment of a New International Economic Order and other international instruments of interest to the developing countries. That report had not yet been prepared and, as a result, the Committee's work had taken on the administrative focus which his delegation deemed misguided. Although his delegation did not summarily reject or disapprove of the report of the Group of Experts (E/AC.6219), it felt that a study of the feasibility of the Group's recommendations was only one aspect of the Ad Hoc Committee's work and was subordinate to a study of how to tackle institutionally the principal general policy issues affecting developing countries, as clearly set out in the resolutions adopted at the sixth and seventh special sessions of the General Assembly.

44. For the time being, his delegation could arrive at only a few conclusions concerning the recommendations contained in the report of the Group of Experts. The role of the General Assembly as the principal policy-making organ of the United Nations should be strengthened. He had doubts as to the advisability of transforming the Second Committee into a Development Committee; that would complicate the decision-making process and might set economic matters apart from other issues discussed in the United Nations. The same was true of the establishment of a post of Director-General for Development and International Economic Co-operation. It would also be undesirable to replace special conferences by special sessions of the General Assembly. Most conferences of that kind had had a positive impact on United Nations development activities,

(Mr. Moreno, Cuba)

notwithstanding the lack of the political will to find a genuine solution to the problems of the developing countries which had been apparent at some of them.

45. With regard to the Economic and Social Council, although he agreed that it should be revitalized and enabled to discharge the functions entrusted to it by the Charter, that revitalization should not jeopardize the development of other bodies, such as UNCTAD, which had been helpful to the developing countries. He also questioned the usefulness of eliminating the subsidiary bodies of the Economic and Social Council and the feasibility of the Council's remaining in permanent session throughout the year, which would place the developing countries at a relative disadvantage, since they could not always have high-level experts present at Headquarters on a full-time basis. His delegation was strongly opposed to the establishment of small negotiating groups, which would fragment the debates on development carried out in the Council or other bodies. Negotiations within the United Nations affecting the interests of the developing countries must proceed in a forum with broad representation and in keeping with the principle of the integrated treatment of economic and social development problems.

46. Some United Nations administrative bodies, particularly the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination and the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination, should strengthen their planning and co-ordinating role. The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions should be strengthened, and more equitable geographical distribution of its membership should be ensured.

47. Before any decision was taken regarding the consolidation of funds, it was essential to ascertain whether that would be politically viable, or even politically desirable, and to spell out the procedures proposed for consolidation. He questioned the political feasibility of establishing a small Operations Board which would in no way be representative of all the interests involved in operational activities. His delegation also opposed the institutionalization of the consensus method in connexion with activities and debates in the economic and social sectors of the system. Where feasible, decisions could be adopted by consensus, but institutionalizing the practice would not only complicate decision-making and the initiation of development activities but would be contrary to the most legitimate interests of the third world countries.

The meeting rose at 5.55 p.m.

27th MEETING

Monday, 1 March 1976, 10.30 a.m.

RESTRUCTURING OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL SECTORS OF THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM
(A/AC.179/3 and Add.1) (continued)

1. Mr. JHA (Chairman of the Joint Inspection Unit) said that it was undesirable to conceive of the United Nations system as a single organization responsible for all aspects of international co-operation in all sectors. The system must continue to work on the basis of distribution of powers and functional decentralization, which was a source of strength and vitality and enable the system to make valuable contributions in many specialized fields. However, there should be some streamlining of the structures and some changes in the interrelationship among United Nations organizations, so that the system could adapt itself to the rapidly developing world economic and social situation without the creation of new institutions. The basic structures, despite some evident deficiencies, were still sound, and no drastic change in them would appear to be necessary.
2. As the Secretary-General had stated at the fifty-fifth session of the Economic and Social Council, any restructuring must take into account the basic need for an over-all cohesion and direction of the system, the components of which should in future pull together as a team for a total and integrated approach to economic and social development problems.
3. At the intergovernmental level, the United Nations, whose General Assembly might be likened to a supreme parliament, could effectively act as a co-ordinator and catalyst, but its capacity to perform such functions should be strengthened and the constituent elements of the system should fully co-operate in that process. The problem really was to find the right balance, having regard to the autonomy of the constituent organizations. Taking into account the current challenges, the pattern of interrelationship needed to be reoriented so that the United Nations could assume a much more active and effective leadership in the system.
4. In practical terms, that meant, in accordance with the Charter, an increased role for the Council in the surveillance, direction and harmonization of the economic and social activities of the specialized agencies.
5. It was an undeniable fact that the Council could not, in two relatively short

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(Mr. Jha)

sessions, give continuous and detailed consideration to the whole range of economic and social questions which came before it. To enable it to do so, the Economic Committee and the Social Committee should become intersessional committees, with States which were not members of the Council perhaps being allowed to participate in their work without the right to vote. Decisions of the intersessional committees should, as far as possible, be by consensus.

6. Alternatively, the Council could be in a permanent session; high policy decisions relating to international economic co-operation would, of course, continue to be taken by the General Assembly, at special as well as regular sessions. As a corollary, the Council secretariat would need to be considerably strengthened and would need more effective backing by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs.

7. On the question of the functional commissions, he felt that it might not be easy for the Council to absorb the functions of some of them, but in any case the number and frequency of their sessions should be reviewed and consideration should be given to whether there was a need in the United Nations system for more than one body dealing with practically the same questions.

8. The Economic and Social Council should be equipped to exercise a greater measure of control over programmes through a strengthened Committee for Programme and Co-ordination composed of experts nominated by Governments, which should be given the task of detailed examination and screening of the programmes and activities of the United Nations in the economic and social fields. CPC should take over from the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions the task of determining whether those programmes conformed to the intentions and priorities of Member States. The duration and timing of CPC sessions could also be planned in the light of the proposals made by the Working Group on United Nations Programme and Budget Machinery.

9. With regard to intersecretariat co-ordination and co-operation, the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination could be given the task of identifying and submitting to the Council and the General Assembly the policies and issues which required attention as a matter of priority. The Secretary-General and the Office for Inter-Agency Affairs and Co-ordination would have a prime role to play

(Mr. Jha)

in that connexion. Intersecretariat co-ordination was particularly important in the planning and implementation of programmes, that being the only way of avoiding duplication. The committees and sub-committees of ACC should be mainly concerned with the harmonization of programmes.

10. While efforts were being made by ACC to improve the co-ordination of programmes at the secretariat level, efforts should also be made for greater harmonization of the programmes of the United Nations system at the country level. That could be done by bringing nearly all inputs into a common pool for the purposes of programme planning and formulation and by strengthening the position of the resident representative, who should become the representative of the United Nations system in economic and social fields. That would be without prejudice to individual organizations' having their own representatives, whose activities would be co-ordinated with those of the resident representative. The information activities of the agencies should also be unified at the system-wide level.

11. At the regional and subregional level, the situation was somewhat chaotic. In one of its recent reports, JIU had recommended that some anomalies in the regional structures of the various organizations should be rectified. It had also recommended that regional economic commissions, with the collaboration of UNDP, should become the focus of planning and harmonization of programmes at the regional and subregional levels, and that mutually advantageous links should be established between the regional economic commissions and the resident representatives as well as between the latter and ACC.

12. A more balanced distribution of functions between headquarters and the field was also necessary in each organization. That would involve a decentralization of functions and the devolution of increased responsibility to the regional, subregional and country offices. However, despite the many pronouncements in favour of it, the pace of decentralization had been very slow. The JIU report on regional structures had recommended extensive decentralization, both technical and administrative, in the field of programme planning, formulation and execution. In the case of the United Nations itself, JIU had suggested that the regional economic commissions should be given responsibility for operational activities at the regional and subregional levels.

13. In the area of inspection and investigation of secretariat activities, JIU

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(Mr. Jha)

considered that the responsibilities exercised at the two levels of administrative and budgetary control, by the executive heads and by legislative bodies, were essential and complementary. The creation of the Joint Inspection Unit in addition to the internal audit mechanisms of the various organizations was a manifestation of the need for external control.

14. Where the evaluation of United Nations programmes was concerned, the monitoring of the various stages of a programme must essentially be the responsibility of the executive head of each organization, which must have internal machinery for evaluation and feedback. At the same time, internal evaluation should be supplemented by external evaluation, and JIU, as an independent body, could appropriately play such an external role. Indeed, evaluation by JIU could be based on the information and data obtained for its inspection purposes and would thus command maximum credibility.

15. Evaluation by JIU could also contribute to the co-ordination and rationalization of the methodology of internal evaluation in different organizations through the carrying out on a selective basis of ad hoc system-wide evaluation, the provision of an overview of evaluation activities in each organization, and the making of interorganization comparisons of the results of evaluation of programmes.

16. To sum up, the Joint Inspection Unit would be prepared to undertake the task of evaluation, without prejudice to its other powers of inspection and investigation. It would, in that case, need some increase in its membership and supporting staff.

17. Mr. Dadzie (Ghana) took the Chair.

18. Replying to Mr. BERTELING (Netherlands), who asked whether CORE (Common Register of Development Activities) could serve as the mechanism for reviewing comparable information activities carried out in the field by the various specialized agencies, Mr. JHA (Chairman of the Joint Inspection Unit) said that that role could be given to CORE, which already performed it to some extent and would be capable of taking it over completely.

19. Mr. SAM (Ghana) said that the task entrusted to the Ad Hoc Committee - namely, the restructuring of the United Nations system so as to make it more

(Mr. Sam, Ghana)

capable of dealing effectively with problems of international economic co-operation and fulfilling the obligations flowing from the Declaration and the Programme of Action on the Establishment of a New International Economic Order as well as those flowing from the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States - was truly crucial. However, that restructuring was essential because, first, the international community had recognized that a reordering of economic relationships and of the international system supporting those relationships was necessary to eliminate the grave imbalances between developed and developing countries and, secondly, because after 30 years of experience it was only fitting that existing structures should be re-examined and then reformed in the light of the aspirations and priorities of the large majority of Member States.

20. The objective of the Committee's task was therefore to make the United Nations system both the institutional embodiment and a better instrument for the implementation of the new economic order. The process of reform upon which the Ad Hoc Committee had embarked was therefore not a purely technical or administrative exercise. It was an essentially political exercise and it would be meaningless unless it was placed in the context of the establishment of the new international economic order. Furthermore the Committee should not lose sight of the fact that the many short-comings of the present system were due primarily to the lack of a firm political will on the part of Member States to utilize and adapt the system to achieve effective solutions to problems of international economic co-operation. The complex task of the Committee therefore called for a high sense of political responsibility and for careful reflection before any solutions to the existing problems were proposed. Thus it would certainly be premature to expect detailed proposals to be immediately forthcoming. The general statements made thus far provided an adequate basis for identifying for the benefit of the Intersessional Working Group the main problem areas to which it should address itself. The statements made by the executive heads of the various United Nations agencies and organizations had not been uniformly helpful or responsive to the concerns of the Committee. His delegation hoped that the less formal context of the Working Group would provide opportunities for frank dialogue and fruitful interaction with those executive heads.

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(Mr. Sam, Ghana)

21. His delegation shared the view that the Ad Hoc Committee should attempt to diagnose how effective the present system was in meeting the requirements of international economic co-operation. Subsequently, it could consider means of introducing effective improvements in the structure of the institutions and of the way they operated. The report of the Group of Experts on the Structure of the United Nations System provided a useful starting point for such a review. That report should not, however, be treated as the centrepiece of the Committee's work, but it had the merit of offering the most recent analysis of the situation and of indicating the major directions in which reforms might usefully be sought. His delegation, like other delegations, thought that it would be advisable to draw up a list of the problem areas for priority attention which would constitute the points of reference for the deliberations of the Working Group.

22. In doing so, however, the Ad Hoc Committee should avoid the tendency - advocated in some quarters - to divest the problems of international economic co-operation of their political implications. That would be tantamount to failing to recognize the essentially political character of those problems. It should also be careful to avoid being side-tracked by a sterile debate for or against centralization; in that connexion, he observed that it was already generally recognized that central organs should be made better able to establish global policies and interdisciplinary guidelines based on an integrated approach and to ensure the coherence of the system, and that, moreover, the sectoral organizations should be better equipped to implement such policies in their respective fields of competence.

23. With reference to the identification of the main problems necessitating reforms, he said that one possible approach would be to direct attention first to the methodology for the translation of the broad goals into policy guidelines and priorities and then to the definition of objectives in terms of programmes and major areas of activity. That approach could also focus on mechanisms for planning, programming and budgeting on a system-wide basis and on an analysis of the roles and negotiating processes of the intergovernmental bodies concerned, including, of course, the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council and, also, the various programme and budget review bodies. Attention would also be focused, on

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(Mr. Sam, Ghana)

the one hand, on the place of research, planning and analysis and, on the other hand, on the formulation and execution of programmes at all levels. Evaluation procedures and linkage between research and operational activities would be given emphasis in all cases. Finally, that approach would encompass the development of information systems, structures for regional co-operation, the organization of United Nations system activities at the local level and problems of personnel policy.

24. An alternative approach could, of course, be taken, which would be institution-oriented. In that case the logical point of reference would be the role of the General Assembly, the supreme organ for over-all policy making, as defined, inter alia, in Articles 13 (1 b) and 17 and in Chapters IX and X of the Charter. Next the co-ordinating role of the Economic and Social Council should be examined, the scope of its responsibilities under the Charter and its relationship with the General Assembly and other organs of the system, including the specialized agencies, should be analysed. As part of that same approach, attention should be directed to the role of the legislative and governing bodies having competence in sectoral areas and in the field of technical assistance and pre-investment activities with a view to enhancing the effectiveness of their contribution to and the implementation of policy guidelines formulated by the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council. Machinery for regional co-operation with respect to research, planning and analysis as well as operational activities should then receive attention. Finally, the mechanisms for interorganization co-operation and the secretariats would be scrutinized.

25. The Ad Hoc Committee could take a third approach, basing itself on certain general objectives on which the international community had agreed, particularly those set forth in the Declaration and the Programme of Action on the Establishment of a New International Economic Order, the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States and resolution 3362 adopted by the General Assembly at its seventh special session. In that case, it would identify the shortfalls between those objectives and the capacity of existing institutional arrangements in the light of past experience to meet them. Upon concluding its review, it could present alternative blueprints for whatever appeared to it to be the most desirable institutional structure.

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26. He stated that his delegation favoured a combination of elements from all three approaches, but that whatever approach was adopted, it would clearly have to be the outcome of negotiation and consensus. That consensus should be the result of careful consideration and a thorough examination of all aspects of the problem considered; at the same time it was essential that the Ad Hoc Committee should - in carrying out its complex task - maintain the momentum generated by the seventh special session.

27. Mr. OLIVERI-LOPEZ (Argentina) observed that the purpose of the restructuring of the United Nations system was to make it more fully capable of dealing with problems of international economic co-operation and development in a comprehensive and effective manner and to make it more responsive to the requirements of the provisions concerning the establishment of a new international economic order. Jordan had had those two complementary objectives in mind when it had proposed that the Committee should adopt an approach to its work which would be either administrative, political or a combination of both. Considerations of the same sort had perhaps led the Mexican delegation to suggest that the Committee should view the system from without and take account of the political limitations standing in the way of the application of the decisions calling for the establishment of a new international economic order if it was to be better able to determine what adjustments should be made in the various structures, in other words, within the system.

28. His delegation felt that that line of argument was entirely logical considering the developments which had taken place over the past 30 years in two different spheres which the Committee should take into account. Firstly, it was apparent from the studies made in recent years that the United Nations had developed in a somewhat disorganized fashion as new problems requiring global solutions arose. Thus important sectoral structures had been established which, while they had made it possible to have a better understanding of existing realities on the basis of an interdisciplinary and intersectoral approach, should be interrelated in a more coherent and homogeneous whole. However, that concern would not in itself have sufficed to justify the establishment of the Committee, for it had to be acknowledged that the system was functioning in a sufficiently

(Mr. Oliveri-Lopez, Argentina)

satisfactory way and that, from that standpoint, the necessary readjustments could have been made within the framework of a rationalization of the work of the Economic and Social Council. If the developing countries had taken the initiative with respect to the restructuring of the United Nations system, it was because, in addition, the past 30 years had witnessed an undeniable process of change in the sphere of international economic relations and in the relative positions of States. That development the major manifestation of which in the United Nations was, the process directed to the establishment of the new international economic order, had been accompanied by tensions originating in economic questions that were an increasing threat to the maintenance of international peace and security, which constituted the main purpose of the United Nations Charter.

29. However, the Argentine delegation realized that the Committee had to face a single reality and that it would be unfortunate if it adopted two sets of proposals based on two conceptions supposedly different but in fact the same. The process of restructuring was a political exercise, a fact which should be borne in mind when the time came to determine the priorities and the modalities for carrying out the specific proposals that the Committee would be able to put forward. A graphic presentation of the elements to be taken into account for the restructuring of the system would involve three dimensions. On the one hand, there were the functions (policy-making, co-ordination, planning and programming, negotiation, evaluation, operational activities) and on the other hand there were the structures (central, sectoral, regional and Secretariat structures). However, those two dimensions were linked with a third dimension made up of the specific objectives which the system itself and the States belonging to it were trying to achieve.

30. That three-dimensional approach was apparent in Conference room paper No. 2 which combined the list of the institutional structures and their functions with the list of the objectives suggested by the Group of 77. It would have been more appropriate to give the co-ordinates of the basis of that functional approach, as suggested by the Group of 77 (Conference room paper No. 2, paras. 3 and 4) and the nine delegations of the European Economic Community (Conference room paper No. 3, paras. 2 and 5). That would have enabled the Committee to identify more easily any cases of duplication or any gaps to be filled.

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(Mr. Oliveri-Lopez, Argentina)

31. In the matter of co-ordination, consideration should be given not only to the central role of the Economic and Social Council but also to that of the organs exercising the co-ordinating function at the sectoral level. Measures should also be taken to strengthen interagency co-ordination at the Secretariat level and also the negotiating function which should be exercised throughout the United Nations system as a whole. Such a strengthening was all the more necessary if the problems facing the world community were to be resolved.

32. While he was ready to consider the function of negotiation without any preconceived ideas, he was opposed to the institutionalization of consensus, for he did not think that the best practical results could be obtained by imparting a more rigid form to procedures which were already working satisfactorily. Whenever countries had shown the political will to negotiate, the United Nations system had provided the means of doing so. On the other hand, in the matter of negotiation, the time perhaps had come to strengthen the capacity of bodies which had proved their efficiency so that they could play a vital role in the transformation of international economic relations. That was particularly true of UNCTAD which must be a negotiating centre in the field of trade and questions connected with development.

33. The examples he had just given showed how difficult he would find it to accept a list of problem areas from which sectoral structures would be excluded. Any strengthening of the central structures that appeared desirable should not be carried out to the detriment of organizations like UNCTAD, which played an important role in the sectoral fields. In its working hypothesis, the Committee should not exclude sectoral structures on the pretext that they were already in the process of adaptation, for such an approach would be incompatible with an over-all view of the functions to be fulfilled by the system and with a comprehensive study of the objectives to be attained.

34. Rather than see the Committee bogged down in prolonged negotiations in an attempt to reach a consensus on an excessive list of problem areas, the Argentine delegation believed that it would be convenient to draw up a list which was not too detailed and which took account not only of the difficulties resulting from sometimes diverging approaches but also of the creative efforts of Member States.

(Mr. Oliveri-Lopez, Argentina)

In any case, if the Committee favoured a more detailed list, his delegation could only accept it if it had a merely enumerative character, so that nobody could be blamed for having made suggestions or proposals which did not correspond with the priorities established by the Committee.

35. Thus, with regard to the strengthening of the role of the Economic and Social Council, he felt that the Working Group could consider proposals not included in the report of the Group of Experts or in other documents concerned with restructuring but which, in the opinion of many Member States, were part of the Council's responsibility and were based on the Charter. He was thinking in particular of the function of anticipating situations likely to produce world crises and making provision for information and consultation machinery which would then be necessary. If fairly wide agreement was achieved on that point, that function would correspond to placing the Council in a privileged position among the central structures of the economic and social sector.

36. In conclusion, he wished to state his firm conviction that the role of the central structures must be strengthened in two important ways: firstly, co-ordination between planning, programming and budgeting machinery must be improved so as to ensure that the resources of the system were used to meet the priorities fixed by Governments; secondly, machinery and methods of evaluation must be institutionalized so as to reduce the gap between the adoption of decisions and their implementation.

37. The Argentine delegation was ready to consider any other proposal from the Group of Experts or from participating delegations and to play an active part in the work of the Intersessional Working Group so that the Committee could fully discharge the responsibilities entrusted to it by the General Assembly.

38. Mr. COREA (Secretary-General, United Nations Conference on Trade and Development) pointed out that the Group of 77 had met at Manila and had adopted a resolution on the future role of UNCTAD. It had been framed in general terms and a working group set up by the Group of 77 was preparing to give it more precise and more concrete shape for submission to the Trade and Development Board which was to hold its seventh special session in March. The Trade and Development Board, like the fourth session of UNCTAD which was to meet in Nairobi in May, would study the future role of UNCTAD in the light of the discussions of the Ad Hoc Committee.

(Mr. Corea)

39. Since its establishment 11 years ago, UNCTAD had played a crucial role in international trade. Among other things, it had helped to work out a system of preferences, to negotiate the Cocoa Agreement and to renegotiate the Tin Agreement, and also to elaborate the Code of Conduct of Liner Conferences.

Furthermore, it had played a role in drawing up inter alia the Declaration and Programme of Action on the Establishment of a New International Economic Order.

40. However, UNCTAD had not yet attained the objectives it had set for itself. It must now go beyond its role as a body for working out new ideas capable of influencing international development policies and it must become an organ which could be used effectively for the elaboration of concrete measures and for the adoption of decisions.

41. The possibilities of UNCTAD had not yet been fully utilized mainly because, at the time of its establishment, the international community had not yet realized the importance of economic development in international relations. An important change had taken place since then: UNCTAD was serving no longer as an exclusive meeting place for the Group of 77 but had become an international forum.

42. For its part, the General Assembly had become more and more interested in economic questions, as could be seen from the discussions and decisions of the sixth and seventh special sessions. As a result of that new approach, UNCTAD would be able to act as the instrument of the General Assembly and to follow up the Assembly's decisions by initiating with a view to their implementation, a process of negotiations within its own field of competence.

43. While justly appreciating the report of the Group of Experts (E/AC.62/9), he felt that it contained certain ambiguities which should be cleared up. For example, the Group of Experts proposed the merger of certain elements in the United Nations system, that so far had been fragmented, with a view to setting up a centralized organ responsible inter alia for general policy making. However, it also proposed the strengthening of certain organs in various fields, including that of trade development, where a new organization might be established. Those proposals were contradictory and obviously UNCTAD could not be merged within a new system and at the same time form the basis of a new organization.

44. In their report the experts also suggested that in order to give the new

(Mr. Corea)

central structure time to prove its worth, UNCTAD would continue to operate in its present form for two years. He found it difficult to understand how the new structure could act effectively if it could not handle the major questions, with which UNCTAD would continue to deal; on the other hand, if that structure had to take up questions formerly entrusted to UNCTAD, the role of UNCTAD would be modified.

45. He was not opposed to the centralization of certain organs. However, in any process of decentralization, a distinction should be drawn between the two types of contributions which the United Nations made to development. On the one hand, the United Nations provided financial and technical aid at the national level in many different fields which ranged from population questions to food production; on the other hand, the United Nations provided a framework for consultations and negotiations between States with a view to the adoption of decisions and the taking of international action.

46. In his view, the restructuring of the United Nations system should be carried out in terms of the following three main fields of activity: operational activities, technical assistance and financial aid; functional support designed to back up national efforts; and negotiations with a view to establishing an international framework for development.

47. He pointed out that the role of UNCTAD, since its creation, had been to provide a framework for negotiations relating to development; in his view, that function should be reinforced in order to enable UNCTAD to serve the United Nations system more effectively. It should be given an opportunity to pursue, within the United Nations, the dialogue which had been begun at the Paris Conference. In any event, it would be important to strengthen more than ever before UNCTAD's links with the General Assembly in order to enable it, by promoting negotiations towards that end, to give the desired impetus to the policy guidelines drawn up by the General Assembly. If UNCTAD were to assume fully the role of a negotiating instrument, as he hoped, that would not prevent the Economic and Social Council from acting as the principal co-ordinator of the United Nations system in the economic and social fields.

48. For some time the question of the establishment of an international trade organization had been on UNCTAD's agenda. Since the creation of UNCTAD and of

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GATT, which dealt with contractual aspects of the development of trade, far-reaching changes had taken place on the international scene. The socialist countries had at that time been on the periphery of international relations and the problems of the developing countries had not occupied the preponderant place which they had since come to assume. Although those new developments had been recognized by GATT in the form of modifications to the instruments originally adopted, the time had nevertheless come perhaps for a complete review of the "rules of the game" laid down at the outset.

49. The new international trade organization which would be created could not actually be set up as long as the current multilateral trade negotiations were continuing; a decision could, however, be taken at the present stage as to whether it would be an organization capable of dealing with all aspects of international trade, within the framework of international co-operation and the problem of development in general.

50. He expressed the hope that the proposals he had just outlined regarding the restructuring of UNCTAD would take a more specific and more definite form at the end of the fourth session of UNCTAD and that the Committee, for its part, would have constructive proposals to make in that area.

51. Mr. GONZALEZ DE COSSIO (Mexico) said that he had listened very carefully to the statement made by the Secretary-General of UNCTAD which he felt was of such importance as to justify the distribution of the full text to the members of the Committee. He had noted with interest that the Trade and Development Board at its seventh special session would study the question of the future role of UNCTAD, a question which was also on the agenda of the fourth session of UNCTAD. The Group of 77 attached particular importance to the role which UNCTAD should play in the United Nations system when it was restructured; that role should enable it to discharge fully the mandate entrusted to it 11 years earlier by the General Assembly in resolution 1995 (XIX). The Secretary-General of UNCTAD had also indicated in his statement that the Trade and Development Board would be influenced in its deliberations by the work of the Ad Hoc Committee. He would like to know by what means it was felt that that influence could be exerted in both directions so that both the Working Group which would meet before the Trade and Development Board

(Mr. Gonzalez de Cossio, Mexico)

and the Board itself, in their preparatory work for the fourth session of UNCTAD, and the Ad Hoc Committee could benefit from each other's deliberations regarding trade and development. The common denominator in the work undertaken by both sides was co-ordination and it would be regrettable if the Ad Hoc Committee was to work in isolation when other organs were also concerned with certain aspects of the questions with which it was dealing. He endorsed the view expressed by the Secretary-General of UNCTAD that UNCTAD had a dual function in that it must, on the one hand, serve as a source of inspiration and of ideas susceptible of producing changes in trade relations between countries and, on the other, also be a forum for specific negotiations.

52. Mr. COREA (Secretary-General of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development) explained that the group of which he had spoken and which was about to be formed in Geneva was an offshoot of the Group of 77 and did not form part of UNCTAD's intergovernmental machinery. The group, whose establishment had been decided on following the Manila meeting, had been entrusted with the task of developing the main ideas which had emerged on that occasion so that the Trade and Development Board, which would meet shortly, could have detailed and more specific proposals before it when it considered questions relating to institutional arrangements. Those proposals would give a preliminary idea of the way in which different States members of UNCTAD saw the future of the organization. The co-ordination of that work as well as of the work of the Trade and Development Board with that of the Ad Hoc Committee was a very important question and the Trade and Development Board would probably deal with it at its next meeting. The Board was fully aware of the recommendations set out in the resolution adopted at the seventh special session of the General Assembly concerning the need for co-ordination between the deliberations of UNCTAD at Nairobi and the general task of restructuring with which the Ad Hoc Committee was concerned.

53. Mr. MARSHALL (United Kingdom) fully shared the opinion of the Secretary-General of UNCTAD regarding the close links which existed between the review and appraisal activities on which UNCTAD was about to embark with a view to defining its future role and the task of restructuring which had been undertaken by the

(Mr. Marshall, United Kingdom)

Ad Hoc Committee. The presence of the Secretary-General of UNCTAD in the Committee was sufficient to testify to the importance of those links, and it was to be hoped that he would subsequently be able to comment to the Committee on the progress of UNCTAD's deliberations and on the results achieved.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.

28th MEETING

Monday, 1 March 1976, 3 p.m.

RESTRUCTURING OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL SECTORS OF THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM
(A/AC.179/3 and Add.1; Conference room papers 1-3)

1. Mr. AKHUND (Pakistan) said that the broad consensus reached at the seventh special session, the agreement reached in Jamaica on monetary questions and the hopeful start made at the Paris Conference on International Economic Co-operation all indicated that States were becoming aware of the crucial importance of economic and social questions in contemporary politics and that the policies of Governments were evolving. The changes in international economic, trading and monetary systems were likely to continue until a generally acceptable and stable equilibrium was established. The United Nations, which spent 80 per cent of its budget on economic and social programmes, had a unique role and responsibility in shaping a new world order, since its decisions reflected the political will of the majority of mankind and, not infrequently, the unanimous opinion of Governments; the Ad Hoc Committee's task therefore had a special urgency.
2. The United Nations system had worked well within the limits set by the political desires and decisions of its members; there were of course deficiencies and short-comings, but that was to some extent unavoidable in an organization of its size and complexity. It was necessary above all to find a balance between undue centralization and the capacity of agencies to function and innovate with a reasonable degree of freedom. That would not be brought about by administrative reform alone, although reforms were necessary. To the extent that the member States agreed on ends and means, the system as a whole would become imbued with a sense of common purpose and its various components would acquire a sense of direction. Thus, the task of reform and restructuring must be tackled at two levels. First, the various legislative and other organs of the United Nations must turn from debate over generalities towards more purposeful dialogue aimed at specific objectives; that could only be achieved with the co-operation of all. Secondly, the functioning of the system must be improved. The two factors were not altogether unrelated; for example, if the legislative organs were provided with more imaginative research and analysis they would be helped towards better

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(Mr. Akhund, Pakistan)

decision-making; in the same way, purposeful and unanimously supported decisions should be more efficiently implemented. His delegation therefore agreed with the proposal that the Committee should concentrate on the role of the Economic and Social Council, the role of the Secretariat, the working of operational funds, and interagency co-ordination.

3. With regard to the proposal that the work of at least some of the subsidiary bodies of the Economic and Social Council should be undertaken by the Council itself, his delegation agreed that there was not much point in having a particular question discussed at three levels, often by the same group of individuals, and noted that small delegations would undoubtedly welcome the proposal for its practical utility. On the other hand, the existing system provided for the participation in economic and social policy formulation of a larger group of countries than were members of the Council at any given time; secondly, in principle, fresh insights could be revealed if a question was discussed at more than one level. His delegation suggested that the Committee, or its working group, might examine the mandate and actual working of each of the subsidiary bodies of the Council and decide, case by case, whether or not the subjects with which it was concerned could just as well be taken over by the Council; it should also consider the issue of the representation of States on subsidiary bodies. It would then be able to take a decision on how frequently the Council should meet and at what level.

4. With regard to the question of consensus, his delegation noted that the consultative procedures proposed by the Group of Experts were similar to those provided for in General Assembly resolution 1995 (XIX), which had established UNCTAD as an organ of the General Assembly; it was well known that UNCTAD had used those consultative procedures only very rarely. However, an informal system of consultations had been in effect in UNCTAD, in the Economic and Social Council and at the sixth and seventh special sessions of the General Assembly. His delegation agreed that the very nature of the subjects that were dealt with in the economic sector made the search for consensus a most important element of procedures, but did not believe that it would necessarily be advantageous to change the existing informal practice, which was gradually taking hold and seemed

(Mr. Akhund, Pakistan)

likely to evolve into the formal and institutionalized system proposed by the Group of Experts. With regard to the suggestion that the results of the Paris Conference on International Economic Co-operation might provide the Committee with some conclusion as to the merits of formal consultations, his delegation believed that the success of the Paris Conference should be judged by the extent to which its results met with general approval; furthermore, it was not possible to bring all action in the United Nations to a halt while waiting for the results of that Conference.

5. There was no question but that the Secretariat of the United Nations had a particular responsibility in helping the legislative organs to formulate appropriate, timely and viable policies. It must play that role of leadership above all in the intellectual realm, and boldness and imagination, as well as research and analysis, were to be expected from it. The role of the Secretariat in the whole process of policy formulation and co-ordination and implementation needed to be strengthened, especially as its responsibilities were constantly increasing. With regard to the proposal that a new post of Director-General should be created, his delegation did not share the fear that the appointment of a Director-General would have the effect of splitting the United Nations into two autonomous halves. The Secretary-General would retain the ultimate responsibility for performing a multitude of functions, and those functions could be delegated on the basis of practical considerations without derogating from his responsibility; he could not in any case devote the necessary time and attention to all aspects of economic and social activities, and the proposal would therefore increase his effectiveness. Furthermore, raising the level of leadership in the economic and social sectors would not only be in keeping with the increasing importance that those sectors had assumed in international affairs but would also establish a focal point for the sort of dynamic co-ordination based on agreed and well-defined goals which could bring about a balance between the demands of centralization and autonomy in the United Nations system.

6. The enhancement of the role of the Secretariat in the economic and social fields should not take place at the expense of UNCTAD's very important role in the whole process of the development. Because of the interdependence between trade,

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monetary and financial issues, UNCTAD had a continuing role and there need be no incompatibility of aims between a strengthened Department of Economic and Social Affairs and UNCTAD.

7. His delegation would be in favour of the Group of Experts' proposal for the consolidation of all the existing United Nations funds except UNICEF, provided that the new body would in fact be simpler and more streamlined, and more capable of implementing its programmes. A new consolidated fund must lead to greater efficiency and economy in operations, and should also be capable of attracting larger contributions from donor countries. The difficulties that UNDP was currently encountering and the way they were resolved might provide the Ad Hoc Committee with lessons on which to base its final conclusion regarding the proposal.

8. His delegation was conscious of the absence at Headquarters of a system and mechanism for the proper evaluation and review of programmes. It noted the Group of Experts' suggestion that ultimately a single programme and budget body might be formed combining the functions of ACABQ and CPC, and felt that a start should be made by strengthening CPC itself through more expert representation and more detailed examination of programmes by the holding of longer sessions. It therefore supported the idea that CPC should be strengthened so as to make it more effective, and also the proposal that ACABQ should be enlarged.

9. His delegation agreed with the suggestion made by the Chairman in his opening statement that the Committee should identify problem areas on which it could concentrate. It believed that the Committee could over a period of time propose a series of recommendations that would enhance and strengthen the role of the United Nations system in the development of developing countries and make that task the truly international responsibility it ought to be.

10. Mr. NARASIMHAN (Under-Secretary-General for Inter-Agency Affairs and Co-ordination) said that he understood restructuring to mean changing the present structure in order to improve the cohesion and effectiveness of the system, and co-ordination to mean doing the utmost within the existing structure to make the system as cohesive and effective as possible. The executive heads had always recognized that the cohesion and effectiveness of the system could be improved and had, on more than one occasion, declared their willingness to assist the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council to that end.

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(Mr. Narasimhan)

11. To a large extent, the complexity of the system brought about by the proliferation of agencies and organs was a reflection of the complexity of the present world, of the need for international co-operation in many fields and of the new tasks incessantly entrusted to the United Nations. While some of the technical agencies had been established about a century before, many of the others had been established at about the same time as the United Nations to serve clear purposes in such major fields as food and agriculture, health and education. The establishment of those agencies had not been the result of any grand design, and over a period of time they had developed their own rationales. The result was that, while there were areas of competence which were clearly marked out, there were several fields in which several agencies were interested, one example being rural development. Decisions to establish programmes and autonomous organs of the General Assembly had been taken by Governments in response to clearly felt needs. That was particularly true of organs like UNCTAD and UNIDO and programmes like UNDP, UNICEF and UNEP. While in the case of some funds - for example, UNFPA - the total resources available to the international community had increased, the response to several others established by the General Assembly had been ... extremely poor. The question arose how that vast complex of agencies and organs, funds and programmes could be pulled together, better managed and rendered more effective in a restructuring of the United Nations. Considerable firmness and political will would be required of the Ad Hoc Committee and the General Assembly in order to overcome the vested interests of the Governments which were responsible for guiding the policies of the various programmes and funds.

12. A great deal could be done within the existing system to improve cohesion and effectiveness. The Group of Experts had recommended the establishment of an Advisory Committee on Economic Co-operation and Development, to be composed of the heads of the United Nations agencies and programmes primarily concerned with the problems of development. Although at present, as stated by the Group of Experts, there was wide realization of the need for an integrated and multidisciplinary approach to development, there were no joint mechanisms in the United Nations system for effectively pooling the results of the work done in that field. In the

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(Mr. Narasimhan)

Secretariat co-ordination mechanisms, there had been a tendency to deal more with administrative and procedural problems than with substantive issues, and adequate consideration had seldom been given to the over-all approach to development. In the light of the comments made in the Committee thus far, it seemed that a beginning could be made with that idea even under the present structure, without awaiting a decision on the proposal to establish a post of Director-General for Development and International Economic Co-operation. Such a body could serve to overcome some of the present short-comings of ACC and assist the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council in consideration of the over-all approach to development policy questions and in a better mobilization of the total resources of the system.

13. The problem of co-ordination had acquired new dimensions in recent years with the progressive recognition of the interplay of the various economic and social factors affecting development, particularly in the light of the successive crises with which the international community had recently been confronted with respect to world food, energy, trade, financing of economic development and monetary issues. It appeared that the main reason why the Economic and Social Council had failed to perform its functions properly was the lack of adequate substantive backstopping for the Council in the field of co-ordination. The Council and its subsidiary bodies were becoming increasingly aware that the programme of any single organization could not provide an adequate basis for international policy-making in interdisciplinary fields such as science and technology, natural resources and population. They correctly felt that an over-view of the system as a whole was essential. The same requirements applied to the various global conferences dealing with broad topics and, to some extent, to the activities falling under the governing bodies of a number of agencies. With growing frequency, they required system-wide inputs which had to be pulled together, each time on an ad hoc basis. It was in that context that the Group of Experts had proposed the establishment of a unit within the United Nations for joint programming and planning, research and analysis. Neither the issues nor the proposed solution was new. What was new, however, was the greatly enhanced awareness of the problem among the organizations and their secretariats.

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(Mr. Narasimhan)

14. With respect to programme co-ordination, the adoption of programme budgeting by the United Nations itself had provided the possibility for real improvement in co-ordination. The initiatives already taken in that connexion by ACC had been most useful, and heartening progress had been made with respect to harmonization of programme budget presentation. The proposed unit for joint programming and planning, research and analysis could, if properly supported by the major agencies, greatly assist the Economic and Social Council in that entire area.

15. Co-ordination should be viewed not only in its negative aspects of avoiding duplication and overlapping, but in a positive way. If co-ordinated decision-making at the national level were to be improved, the cohesion and effectiveness of the entire system would be greatly strengthened. However, improved co-ordination at the international level was not dependent on better co-ordination at the national level. In fact, it appeared likely that unco-ordinated decisions would continue to be taken on related subjects by intergovernmental organs, despite the best efforts of national Governments to co-ordinate decisions affecting the United Nations system, and it was the task of the system, working through ACC, to implement such decisions in a co-ordinated way, within the over-all policy frameworks and objectives established by the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council.

16. In October 1975, ACC had decided to establish a task force in order to ensure the co-ordinated implementation of the decisions of the seventh special session of the General Assembly. Much was already being done by the agencies working individually, and in some cases jointly, to implement those decisions. Another example of positive co-ordination was the study on rural development which had been undertaken by the World Bank as the "lead agency"; the Bank had convened an interagency meeting in the next few days to discuss the matter, and he was sure that the results would be extremely useful.

17. In addition to ACC, there were two co-ordinating bodies established by the General Assembly, which had practically the same membership but different Chairmen, namely, the Inter-Agency Consultative Board of UNDP and the Environment Co-ordination Board of UNEP. The Group of Experts had questioned the need for three separate co-ordinating committees at the level of the executive heads, chaired by three different persons. Despite that situation, reasonable success had been achieved in organizing their meetings so that they could be grouped together

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(Mr. Narasimhan)

in the same time-period and steps had been taken to avoid discussion of the same issues at the level, for example, of the Programme Working Group of IACB on the one hand and the Preparatory Committee of ACC on the other hand.

18. It had been of great advantage that the Ad Hoc Committee had found the time for a general debate in which the executive heads could present their views. It appeared, however, that the clear willingness of the executive heads to accept adaptation and structural reform had perhaps not come through in their statements to the Committee. It was for that reason that he wished to draw attention to the willingness of the executive heads, clearly expressed in the annual report of ACC for 1974-1975, "to adapt their methods of work and structure in any way that may be required by Governments to achieve optimum results" (E/5675 (Part I), para. 3).

19. The statements made by the executive heads showed that there was a tremendous amount of information, experience and expertise available in the system. Too often in the past, perhaps, intergovernmental organs had thought in terms of establishing a new institution rather than of using the existing knowledge and expertise and adapting it for the solution of specific problems. The United Nations system was the only focal point with universality of membership and cross-sectoral competence available to member States, and it was therefore in a unique position to assist the world community in establishing a new international economic and social order.

20. The CHAIRMAN announced that the Committee had concluded the general debate on agenda item 4.

ORGANIZATION OF WORK

21. Mr. CORDOVEZ (Secretary of the Committee) said that the Secretariat was faced with difficulties in arranging meetings and it was therefore particularly important, for planning purposes, that it should be advised in good time so that it could make the necessary arrangements. At its first session, the Committee had decided that at its second or third session it would decide on the convening of a fourth session in September 1976. It would be greatly appreciated if the Secretariat could have some guidance, or a decision in principle, before the end of the present session as to whether a fourth session would in fact be held, so that preparations could be made.

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(Mr. Cordovez)

22. The Third United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea would be meeting later in March - in other words, between the end of the present session of the Committee and the start of the third session. The Secretariat had a tight schedule with respect to meeting facilities and would appreciate being given some guidance regarding the pattern of meetings of the Committee's intersessional working group so that it could make the necessary preparations. It was no longer a question of financial implications, because even if funds were available it was difficult to recruit the staff needed to service more than a certain number of meetings, for which the capacity was already overloaded.

23. It had been suggested that the deadline for the submission of corrections to the draft summary records should be advanced from 13 March to 5 March so that the consolidated volume of summary records could be issued at an early date.

24. The CHAIRMAN said that two of the matters referred to by the Secretary, namely, the question of a fourth session and the pattern of meetings of the intersessional working group, could be pursued at the informal meeting later in the afternoon.

25. He was surprised that the Secretariat was experiencing difficulties in arranging meeting schedules, because the Committee had been assured that at least three meetings per week of the intersessional working group could be held. The Secretariat was aware of that understanding, and the matter could be further pursued at the meeting of the working group that afternoon.

26. If there was no objection, he would take it that the Committee agreed that the deadline for the submission of corrections to the draft summary records should be Friday, 5 March.

27. It was so decided.

28. The CHAIRMAN recalled that the Committee had decided at its first session that representatives of the specialized agencies could attend meetings of the working group when matters of concern to them were being discussed. If there was no objection, he would take it that the Committee agreed that representatives of the specialized agencies would be invited to attend that afternoon's meeting of the working group.

29. It was so decided.

29th MEETING

Thursday, 4 March 1976, 3 p.m.

RESTRUCTURING OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL SECTORS OF THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM
(A/AC.179/3 and Add.1; A/AC.179/L.5) (concluded)

1. The CHAIRMAN drew attention to the note by the Rapporteur (A/AC.179/L.5) containing a record of decisions of the Committee at its second session.
2. Mr. STURKEY (Australia), Rapporteur, said that on 1 March the Committee had agreed to establish an open-ended contact group to decide on the method of work of the intersessional working group. The contact group had met on 2 and 3 March and had considered a number of suggestions. Conference room paper No. 2/Rev.1, containing the suggestions of the Group of 77, had been used as a point of departure, and on the basis of discussions in the contact group document A/AC.179/L.5 had been drafted. He was sure that the Committee would adopt it without objection.
3. Mr. WILDER (Canada) said that, while his delegation would support the consensus to adopt document A/AC.179/L.5, it could not but recall its efforts in the contact group to give due emphasis to the social as well as the economic aspects of restructuring and the lack of support it had received. Decision I in the document under consideration reflected that imbalance, and his delegation would draw the necessary conclusions.
4. Mr. MYERSON (United States of America) said that his delegation was pleased to join in the consensus on the document establishing guidelines for the intersessional working group. That decision was important both because of its content and because of the frank and constructive manner in which the contact group had drafted it.
5. The intersessional working group had an ambitious programme before it, but, while his delegation had never underestimated the difficulties, it much preferred to see the Committee set its sights too high rather than too low. The restructuring activities were an important part of the follow-up to the seventh special session, and his delegation attached major importance to the efforts to implement General Assembly resolution 3362 (S-VII). Of course, nothing done in the Committee should be construed as modifying the basic understandings reached - and the

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(Mr. Myerson, United States)

positions taken - at the seventh special session. With respect to decision I, his delegation had previously made it clear that it maintained its position on the resolutions of the sixth special session and on the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States. At the same time, differences and reservations on those issues need not prevent or interfere with co-operative and effective work in reviewing the United Nations economic and social structures to make them responsive to modern requirements.

6. The decisions contained in document A/AC.179/L.5 were adopted without a vote.

7. The CHAIRMAN said that, if there was no objection, he would take it that the Committee agreed that the intersessional working group should be open-ended; in other words, there would be no need for a quorum.

8. It was so decided.

9. The CHAIRMAN suggested that the time-frame in which the working group would carry out its task should be between the end of March and 1 June. The period before 12 April would be used primarily for consultations and, if necessary, organizational meetings; the period from 12 to 23 April would be used for meetings of the working group; and the period after 23 April would be utilized as required and as services were available.

10. It was so decided.

11. Mr. RAJAONARIVELO (Madagascar), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77, said the Group firmly believed that the paramount goal of restructuring was to achieve progress in the implementation of the provisions of the Declaration and the Programme of Action on the Establishment of a New International Economic Order and of the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States. No restructuring was needed unless its precise goal was to promote the development of the countries of the third world. That was how the spirit and the provisions of the second preambular paragraph of decision I in document A/AC.179/L.5 should be interpreted.

12. The Group of 77 wished to pay tribute to the European Economic Community, Japan, the socialist States of Eastern Europe and all the industrialized countries - including, of course, the United States, which had demonstrated an exceptionally laudable spirit of co-operation despite certain reservations which the Group of 77 fully understood. The Group of 77 hoped that that spirit of

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(Mr. Rajaonarivelo, Madagascar)

co-operation would, in the very near future, become the rule rather than the exception, particularly in such a field as the one under consideration, which required patience and joint efforts over the long term.

13. Other countries might reasonably wonder why the developing countries had listened passively to the pertinent statements made by the industrialized countries and by the representatives of the organizations and agencies of the United Nations system. That had been only an appearance, as could be seen from the original text submitted by the Group of 77. All were aware of the caution with which the Committee should proceed in the difficult exercise of restructuring; on the other hand, no one denied that it was time to begin thinking seriously about it and to establish priorities. Guided by the desire to reconcile those two apparently contradictory approaches, the Group of 77 had submitted Conference room paper No. 2/Rev.1, which reflected its major concerns.

14. Operating somewhat like a large permanent mission to the United Nations, each member of the Group of 77 had specific tasks; however, the dominant theme in its decisions had always been harmony and solidarity. It was therefore easy to understand why the Group preferred that the meetings of the intersessional working group should be scheduled for April; that would allow the members of the Group of 77 to harmonize their ideas and to establish the Group's position before the working group started on its task.

CONSIDERATION OF THE PROVISIONAL AGENDA FOR THE THIRD SESSION (A/AC.179/L.4)

15. The CHAIRMAN drew attention to the provisional agenda for the third session (A/AC.179/L.4), and said that the inclusion of item 4 would depend on whether it was decided to hold a fourth session in September. He did not believe that the Committee was as yet prepared to decide on that point; the decision could be taken in June in light of the results of the work of the intersessional working group. He therefore suggested that item 4 should be deleted.

16. It was so decided.

17. The provisional agenda for the third session, as revised, was adopted.

CLOSURE OF THE SESSION

18. Mr. PIRSON (Belgium), speaking on behalf of the States members of the European Economic Community, paid a tribute to the Chairman for the manner in which he had directed the Committee's work.

19. The CHAIRMAN thanked the members of the Committee for the spirit of co-operation and mutual accommodation in which they had worked, and declared the second session closed.

The meeting rose at 4.35 p.m.

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