



Monday, 1 September 1975,
at 10.30 a.m.

NEW YORK

Official Records

CONTENTS

	<i>Page</i>
Agenda item 1: Opening of the session by the Chairman of the delegation of Algeria	1
Agenda item 2: Minute of silent prayer or meditation	1
Agenda item 3: Credentials of representatives to the seventh special session of the General Assembly: (a) Appointment of the Credentials Committee	1
Agenda item 4: Election of the President	1
Agenda item 5: Organization of the session	1
Agenda item 6: Adoption of the agenda	10
Agenda item 7: Development and international economic co-operation ...	10

President: Mr. Abdelaziz BOUTEFLIKA (Algeria).

AGENDA ITEM 1

**Opening of the Session by the Chairman
of the Delegation of Algeria**

1. The TEMPORARY PRESIDENT (*interpretation from French*): I declare open the seventh special session of the General Assembly.

AGENDA ITEM 2

Minute of silent prayer or meditation

2. The TEMPORARY PRESIDENT (*interpretation from French*): I invite representatives to stand and observe one minute of silent prayer or meditation.

The representatives stood in silence.

AGENDA ITEM 3

**Credentials of representatives to the seventh special session
of the General Assembly:**

(a) Appointment of the Credentials Committee

3. The TEMPORARY PRESIDENT (*interpretation from French*): We shall proceed to the appointment of the Credentials Committee. Rule 28 of the rules of procedure

provides that a Credentials Committee shall be appointed at the beginning of each session and that it shall consist of nine members to be appointed by the General Assembly on the proposal of the President.

4. With a view to expediting the work of the special session, and in accordance with precedents, it might be appropriate if the Credentials Committee were to consist of the same members as those appointed for the twenty-ninth regular session, namely: Belgium, China, Costa Rica, Philippines, Senegal, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Republic of Tanzania, United States of America and Venezuela.

5. If there is not objection, I shall consider the Credentials Committee constituted accordingly.

It was so decided.

6. The TEMPORARY PRESIDENT (*interpretation from French*): In this connexion, may I draw the attention of the members of the Assembly to a note verbale from the Secretary-General dated 15 August 1975 in which it was stated that credentials for those representatives who are not already authorized to represent their Governments at all sessions of the General Assembly should be issued in accordance with rule 27 of the rules of procedure.

AGENDA ITEM 4

Election of the President

AGENDA ITEM 5

Organization of the session

7. The TEMPORARY PRESIDENT (*interpretation from French*): The Assembly has before it part one of the addendum to the report of the Economic and Social Council [A/10003/Add.1].

8. Mr. GARCIA ROBLES (Mexico) (*interpretation from Spanish*): As paragraph 5 (a) of the document to which the President has just referred indicates, the Economic and Social Council, at its 1980th meeting, decided to recommend to the General Assembly:

The printed official records of the plenary meetings of the General Assembly are published in fascicle form, the record of each meeting being issued separately. A prefatory fascicle is issued for each session, containing a table of contents, the agenda and a check list of document.

“That the General Committee of the seventh special session should be the same as the General Committee of the twenty-ninth regular session”.

9. The implementation of that recommendation of the Economic and Social Council covers three points.

10. First, the General Assembly would request Mr. Abdelaziz Bouteflika, the Foreign Minister of the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria, to preside over the deliberations of the seventh special session of the General Assembly. And, for all of us who witnessed the outstandingly efficient manner in which Foreign Minister Bouteflika presided over the twenty-ninth regular session of the Assembly, it is quite clear that this recommendation of the Council will be approved by acclamation by the Assembly.

11. The other two aspects covered by the Council recommendation are, first, that the Chairmen of the Main Committees who were elected for the twenty-ninth regular session of the Assembly should also act as Chairmen for this special session; and, finally, that those representatives of Member States who were elected as Vice-Presidents of the twenty-ninth regular session should continue in the same posts for this special session.

12. In this connexion, there is only one aspect of the Council's recommendation which I consider calls for some addition, and it is for that reason that my delegation has asked to be allowed to speak at this juncture. It concerns the fact that a number of the Chairmen of the Main Committees of the twenty-ninth regular session will be absent from the present special session. My delegation would therefore take the liberty of suggesting that the Assembly should adopt the same decision as that taken in previous cases, namely that, in order to ensure the representative nature of the General Committee, each Chairman of a Main Committee of the twenty-ninth regular session who is absent from this special session should be replaced by another member of his delegation.

13. The TEMPORARY PRESIDENT (*interpretation from French*): The representative of Mexico has drawn our attention to a number of recommendations and, first and foremost, the recommendation (a) of the Economic and Social Council which is contained in paragraph 5 (a) of part one of document A/10003/Add.1. He has proposed that, in order to ensure the representative nature of the General Committee, any Chairman of a Main Committee who will not be present at this special session should be replaced by a member of his delegation.

14. If there is no objection, may I take it that the General Assembly decides to adopt that recommendation, and the proposal made by the representative of Mexico?

It was so decided.

15. The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from French*): In accordance with the decision just taken, the President of the twenty-ninth regular session will serve as President of the seventh special session.

16. Regarding the Chairmen of the Main Committees, it is my understanding that only the Chairman of the First

Committee of the twenty-ninth session, Mr. Carlos Ortiz de Rozas of Argentina, is present at the special session. I would therefore request the delegations of Sweden, Iraq, Mali, Mongolia, Greece and Yugoslavia to be kind enough to convey to the Secretariat the names of the representatives who will be replacing last year's Chairmen.

17. The Vice-Presidents of the twenty-ninth session who will serve in the same capacity at the special session are the following Member States: Austria, Central African Republic, China, France, Germany (Federal Republic of), Haiti, Ivory Coast, Lebanon, Mexico, Nepal, Nicaragua, Philippines, Romania, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America and Zambia.

18. It only remains for me to express my genuine pride at being able once again to preside over your work and all my gratitude for this new sign of confidence that you have been good enough to show in the members of the General Committee. It is our ambition to merit that confidence and for my own part I thank you from the bottom of my heart.

19. We are meeting again at a special session of the General Assembly to consider the problems of international co-operation and development.

20. While the great political problems that affect the peace and security of nations obviously cannot be solved without a revolution in the economic relations among peoples, the priority that we are giving here to the development of the third world and to the stability of the world economy is proof of the progress achieved by our Organization.

21. It was at their Fourth Conference in Algiers in September 1973 that the Heads of State and Government of the non-aligned countries proposed the convening of this special session.

22. That proposal, made upon the completion of a thorough study of the causes of under-development, when the premonitory signs of a serious crisis in the world economy were already appearing, showed the determination of those countries to free themselves from the unjust and oppressive relations imposed upon them and to work sincerely, through dialogue, for the establishment of genuine international co-operation.

23. The need to establish new relations between the developed and the developing countries was to be illustrated spectacularly a few short weeks after the Algiers Conference by the decision of the members of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries [OPEC] to put an end to several centuries of plunder by fixing themselves, as sovereign countries, the price of that resource so essential to their national development.

24. That decision, regarded by the champions of the established order as a threat to their economic hegemony, emerges in retrospect as an event of capital importance, the lessons and long-term repercussions of which may be salutary in more than one respect.

25. What had in fact been demonstrated was that, judiciously employed, the natural resources of the developing

countries could become the decisive instrument of their economic liberation, to the extent that those countries could combine their forces in order to secure control over those resources and apply them to serve their peoples.

26. It also became clear that the prosperity of the West is derived to a large extent from the draining of the wealth and exploitation of the labour of the peoples of the third world, and that its economic apparatus, imposing though it be, rests on fragile and vulnerable foundations.

27. At a time when the complexity of the world economy stresses the interdependence of States, it is no longer possible for anyone to impose solutions of his own choice. Whereas the development of one group presupposes co-operation and solidarity, the pursuit of growth by another demands structural changes which will make equitable provision for the interests of two thirds of mankind.

28. The Declaration and Programme of Action on the Establishment of a New International Economic Order [*resolutions 3201 (S-VI) and 3202 (S-VI)*] and the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States [*resolution 3281 (XXIX)*] are founded essentially on this political truth, and they therefore provide the best frame of reference for international economic negotiations.

29. While their results were disappointing in some respects, the World Food Conference,¹ the World Population Conference² and the Second General Conference of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization [*UNIDO*]³ all emphasized, in one way or another, the right paths to be followed and the appropriate means to be employed to establish the new international economic order.

30. Similarly, the Conference of Developing Countries on Raw Materials, held at Dakar in February, the Conference of the Sovereigns and Heads of State of the Member Countries of OPEC, held at Algiers in March, and the Conference of Ministers for Foreign Affairs of Non-Aligned Countries, held in Lima in August, were each clearly new efforts to strengthen dialogue between developing and developed countries on the problems of raw materials, energy and development.

31. It is the same need for change which is evoking, among the public at large, debates, press comment and publications, and colloquia and symposia organized by universities, trade-union organizations and young people.

32. An equally significant result of the sixth special session of the Assembly was the spirit of solidarity made manifest in the decision to come to the aid of the developing countries most affected by the economic crisis.

33. It is true that the implementation of the Special Programme adopted for that purpose [*resolution 3202 (S-VI), sect. X*] has been far from satisfactory, and the intentions expressed at the time have not all been

realized in practice, either because of delays, which must be eliminated, or because of reluctance, which must be overcome.

34. The member countries of OPEC, for their part, have made noteworthy efforts. For example, during 1974 alone they transferred to other developing countries almost 2.5 per cent of their gross national product, or the equivalent of five times the average annual contribution of the developed countries during the last decade.

35. Despite reservations and restrictions—which will, in any event, gradually become more blurred—the sixth special session of the General Assembly will therefore have constituted for the international community as a whole an occasion that marked its realization of the true nature and magnitude of the problems of development.

36. It is in this context that the work of this session of the Assembly must be approached.

37. The seventh special session confronts each one of us with historic responsibilities. What kind of world do we want to build? What kind of future are we to prepare for coming generations? These questions must be given an unequivocal answer, and a choice must be made between the two alternatives in the dilemma which confronts us.

38. The first alternative is to create, together, the conditions for real co-operation with a view to restructuring the world economy by defining new goals and assigning new purposes to world production and trade in order to satisfy, first of all, the fundamental economic, social and cultural needs of all mankind. Those goals demand more justice and more solidarity, particularly with regard to the poorest, and require that the exploitation of the developing countries be ended as speedily as possible and that the obstacles placed by the present system of international relations in the way of the development efforts of the third world be removed.

39. The second alternative is for the industrialized countries, imprisoned in their selfishness, to continue to defend their increasingly vulnerable privileges which will ensure for them for some little time to come an obsolete order, in the illusory hope of blocking changes, which are nevertheless as essential to the development of some of them as they are, in the long run, conducive to the maintenance of the prosperity of others. In that event, the developing countries, whose long experience of frustration and exploitation has taught them the virtues of solidarity, would have no alternative but to take up the stance of confrontation being forced on them, in order to safeguard their vital interests and the sacred right of their peoples to well-being and development.

40. The third world, for its part, has made its choice long ago. In fact, it reaffirmed that choice solemnly at the Fourth Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries and at the sixth special session, to the success of which it made an outstanding contribution.

41. While making the principle of reliance on one's self and on one's own forces the basis of its development strategy, the third world is unceasingly fighting and

1 Held at Rome from 5 to 16 November 1974.

2 Held at Bucharest from 19 to 30 August 1974.

3 Held at Lima from 12 to 26 March 1975.

working for true co-operation in a spirit of dialogue and on an equal and mutually advantageous basis. This philosophy is not derived solely from moral considerations; it is an expression of the legitimate desire of peoples who have endured centuries of political domination and economic backwardness and who are still subject to the exploitation of capitalist monopolies to promote their own economic development at last in a favourable international context.

42. It is the industrialized countries which must now make their choice by clearly demonstrating their political will to participate in a practical way in establishing a new international economic order, the framework and objectives of which were defined in the Declaration and Programme of Action adopted at the sixth special session of the United Nations General Assembly and in the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States.

43. Those documents proclaimed principles and pointed out the path to be followed after a full, democratic debate; they received the almost unanimous support of the international community. Their fundamental inspiration is the spirit of dialogue, and they require, if they are to be implemented, the sincere support of all Member States. Of course, it is no part of the intentions of the third world, regardless of what is said of us, to impose solutions on anyone. To do so would not be consistent with either the realism of the developing countries or the purposes of this Organization.

44. It is our wish and our hope to see Member States, particularly the industrialized countries, express here their sincere willingness, in the exercise of their sovereignty, to undertake obligations and to make commitments in order to implement the decisions adopted jointly.

45. At the same time, no one can believe that the conflicting interests and the selfishness cultivated by a materialistic civilization founded on excessive consumption and waste will disappear as if by magic. Accordingly, this enterprise will be long and difficult. But is not the stake the very survival of man on a planet which has become cramped and is threatened with drifting aimlessly?

46. This session must therefore blaze the trail for this long process of restructuring the world economy, first, by adopting practical measures to solve one series of priority problems and, secondly, by establishing the framework and objectives of subsequent negotiations.

47. A fundamental reform of the world trade system is one of these priority objectives. If it is to meet fully the requirements of development, this reform must, first, grant developing countries non-reciprocal facilities and promote the unrestricted access of their products to the industrialized countries' markets; secondly, increase their foreign-trade earnings; and, thirdly, preserve their resources from monetary upheavals and from the inflation exported by industrialized countries.

48. Specific and detailed proposals to that end have long since been made by the developing countries, and they will be submitted again in the course of our work. I shall confine myself to mentioning those which we consider to be of major importance.

49. The system as it now operates is itself the source of the present upheavals, since it leads to the irrational and unequal management and distribution of resources. It thus makes it impossible for the weakest—that is to say, the developing countries—to control the planning of their production or supplies or to anticipate normal and stable growth in their foreign-trade earnings.

50. Accordingly, in order to produce effective co-operation, consistent with the real interests of the third world and conducive, in the long run, to the stability of the industrialized countries' economies, the paternalistic and moralizing attitudes of the past, which led to the failure—the foreseeable failure—of the international strategies for the First and Second United Nations Development Decades, must be abandoned forever.

51. The new strategy which the third world is proposing to the international community is based on a pattern of co-operation which will guarantee to all countries the possibility of building their economies on the foundation of their own resources and make international trade the favoured instrument of an equitable world redistribution of income. It is not, therefore, just a matter of providing access to markets and correcting price mechanisms in order to reduce the size of fluctuations in the prices of the developing countries: exports, but, rather, of transforming all the workings of international trade.

52. Such an approach presupposes a new type of relationship in which concerted action and some degree of planning on the international scale replace the so-called laws of supply and demand, which, in reality, merely reflect an imposed relationship, based on the respective strengths of the seller and the buyer.

53. That is why, when the prices of primary commodities rise, the prices of finished products rise disproportionately; when the prices of primary commodities fall, the prices of manufactures, at best, stay at their former level. Thus, in the end, the movement of the prices of primary commodities is highly irregular, whereas that of the prices of manufactures continue to rise with remarkable regularity.

54. In fact, the only approach which will really bring about the most equitable situation will inevitably involve the redistribution of income. Otherwise, the laws of the market, dominated as it is by the strongest and most resilient, will continue to fuel the deterioration in the terms of trade of the developing countries in an implacable process which enriches the richest while impoverishing the poorest.

55. It is thus understandable that the developing countries should feel compelled to take the necessary protective measures and ban together in order to improve their collective bargaining power. That defensive attitude is not incompatible with the search for a dialogue. On the contrary, indeed, it is the pre-condition for a true dialogue between equal partners.

56. The producer-exporter associations offer the developing countries an adequate framework for the pooling of their experience in the fields of production and trade, with a view to increasing their collective capacity to resist the

forces of a raw-materials market dominated by the buyers. In the reformed and reorganized system of trade they will continue to play a beneficial role in the fixing of prices and the regulation of world supply and demand.

57. In the search for a just solution to the problems of raw materials, the draft integrated programme prepared by the secretariat of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development [UNCTAD]⁴, which is based on the establishment of a series of international buffer stocks, either individual or multiproduct, and on the indexing of the prices of the goods exported by the developing countries to the prices of the goods which they import from the developed countries, constitutes a novel proposal which warrants the closest attention.

58. The general revaluing of the prices of raw materials at a profitable level provided for in the integrated programme will have to be recognized as an act of justice and to be seen as the surest and simplest means of channelling to the developing countries the financial resources which they need, while protecting them, by means of a suitable indexing machinery, against the effects of the inflation exported by the industrialized countries and against constantly increasing prices of industrial products and food-stuffs.

59. At the same time, monetary reform, the urgent need for which must be emphasized once again, will be required to ensure the democratic management of international liquidity and the channelling of a just proportion of such resources to development purposes and the financing of the buffer stocks provided for in the integrated programme for primary commodities, in conformity with the apposite and detailed measures envisaged in the Programme of Action for the Establishment of a New International Economic Order.

60. It goes without saying that the basic reform of external trade, the restructuring of the monetary system and the revision of the goals and modalities of the transfer of resources by means of the international monetary system are the three aspects of one and the same policy. Moreover, only a global approach will bring about an external climate favourable to development and, at the level of the world economy, the stability which will enable every country to pursue its long-term goals, protected against the vicissitudes and shocks caused by external disturbances.

61. At present the developing countries can scarcely manage to meet two thirds of their needs for external financing from their own resources.

62. In general, capital imports, including official development aid and the assistance of development finance organizations, have not overcome this deficit. Moreover, external financial assistance is provided mainly by means of direct private investment, suppliers' credits, high-interest loans granted by the international financial institutions and bilateral official assistance which is often given on expensive and restrictive technological and commercial terms.

63. It is these limitations, dictated by commercial and sometimes political considerations, which divert international financial co-operation from its stated goals and instead cause the phenomenon of a return flow of resources to the industrialized countries.

64. Accordingly, it is necessary to take urgent measures to improve the present situation and to assign new goals to international and regional financial institutions.

65. These institutions will, first, have to mobilize massive financial resources, both in the developed countries and in other countries which have permanent surpluses, then adopt adequate policies with regard to grants, loans and technical assistance and, finally, simplify their procedures in order to fulfil their purpose as development banks.

66. In particular, they will have to increase considerably the proportion of loans granted on favourable terms to the most disadvantaged countries, the difference between the current rates and the preferential rates being met from the resources of a multilateral interest-equalization fund.

67. At the same time, the cumulative debt burden of the countries of the third world, which is largely the result of the unequal relationships to which they are subjected, must be the subject of serious renegotiation on the basis of the oft-repeated claims voiced in international bodies.

68. Taken together, these financial resources will enable the under-developed countries to institute a true process of development in which industrialization will be the decisive factor.

69. This process, which will also provide the means of acquiring technology, will be made possible by international action designed to bring about the redeployment of industrial activities throughout the world.

70. Then again, the food crisis affecting vast areas of the third world, together with the alarming prospects that can be glimpsed on the horizon, constitutes one of the greatest threats to peace and to the survival of the human race.

71. The international community is on notice, therefore, to carry out a fundamental rethinking of the rules governing the exploitation, management and distribution of the resources of the planet, which is threatened with destruction and sterility by an economic order that undermines the quality of life and functions by ignoring the most basic needs of the majority of mankind.

72. Access to food is indissolubly linked with the right to life. Any pressure designed to limit this right and any attempt to use the threat of famine as blackmail would constitute a serious violation of human rights.

73. In fact, one field in which efforts really must be mobilized is that of the production and the distribution of food-stuffs in order to satisfy man's primary biological need.

74. It would be perfectly possible to realize such a goal if the developed countries decided at last to work towards it, leaving aside any political considerations and using their

⁴ See *Official Records of the Trade and Development Board, Fourteenth Session, First Part, Annexes, agenda item 4 (b), document TD/B/498.*

technological capacity and their resources, including those which might be released by disarmament.

75. This goal entails the implementation of a coherent programme which would include both medium-term and long-term measures.

76. In the medium-term, the aim would be to increase the exportable surpluses of the developed countries by using all available means of production. This measure presupposes the reform of present trade patterns and the regulation of the prices of essential food-stuffs in order to bring them within the purchasing power of the poor countries.

77. It would also be necessary to set up world and regional stocks of a range of major consumer items and to provide international financing for them.

78. It would likewise be necessary to increase emergency bilateral and multilateral assistance in order to eliminate endemic famines and to make good the shortages caused by natural disasters.

79. In order to solve the long-term problems, it would be necessary to adopt, henceforth, a programme for the development of the agricultural potential of the developing countries.

80. This programme might be based on financial and technical resources provided by the existing specialized agencies and the International Fund for Agricultural Development, which would have to be put into operation as quickly as possible.

81. The implementation of the proposed programme would also entail the distribution of fertilizers on favourable terms.

82. This external assistance, linked to internal effort and judiciously adapted in each case to the specific local conditions obtaining, will make a valuable contribution to the modernization of the economic and social structures of production and to the establishment of conditions for self-sufficiency.

83. Mankind has another source of wealth which has so far remained almost untapped—the riches of the seas and oceans.

84. That sector of the world economy, in which vast prospects are opening up, must be managed in a rational and democratic manner for the benefit of all peoples, whether it is a question of fish or mineral resources or of scientific research.

85. In this connexion, the establishment of an international sea-bed authority having exclusive jurisdiction over the exploration and exploitation of the sea-bed and ocean floor beyond the limits of national jurisdiction and the power to manage those activities directly will provide an adequate framework for balanced international co-operation.

86. All the nations of the world will then pool their knowledge and experience with a view to the development

and equitable distribution of marine resources. The seas and oceans will thus become a factor in bringing peoples together and ensuring fruitful co-operation among them.

87. In this connexion, particular attention will have to be given to the land-locked countries and to the developing island countries.

88. Generally speaking, special attention will have to be given to the least advanced countries and special measures will have to be taken to guarantee them the same development opportunities as other countries of the third world. All the measures envisaged, especially those set out in the Programme of Action adopted by the General Assembly at its sixth special session, will have to be implemented without further delay.

89. The success of the effort to reorganize international co-operation depends to a large extent on the effectiveness of the economic structures of the United Nations system.

90. These structures were conceived 30 years ago in a political and economic context which is radically different from the one which prevails today.

91. Of course, they have been very useful and have accomplished a large part of the task for which they were designed: to provide a universal framework for joint action. But they must now be adapted to new requirements, in order to provide the international community with an effective framework for study and for negotiation.

92. The report prepared by a committee of eminent experts⁵ will be submitted for your consideration during this session.

93. Whatever further action Members are considering giving to this reform project, it is clear, as indeed the eminent experts stress in their report, that no structural reforms, however bold they may be, can replace the political will of States with regard to our Organization.

94. With a view to bringing about concerted international action, the President of the French Republic took the initiative of convening last April a meeting on the current economic crisis.⁶

95. That meeting did not achieve the desired results because of the profound differences of opinion which came to light concerning both the topics to be discussed and the goals to be attained.

96. In effect, the industrialized countries showed themselves to be concerned exclusively with the defence of their short-term interests and to be clinging to outmoded structures, while the developing countries proposed a joint global approach to the problems with a view to resolving the crisis in the world economy by establishing a new type of relationship.

⁵ *A New United Nations Structure for Global Economic Co-operation: report of the Group of Experts on the Structure of the United Nations System* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.75.II.A.7).

⁶ First session of the Preparatory Meeting for the Conference on International Economic Co-operation, held at Paris from 7 to 15 April 1975.

97. Despite these disagreements, we are convinced that the Preparatory Meeting for the Conference was not entirely fruitless since it did lead to the identification of the true problems.

98. It is encouraging to note that some evolution is discernible in the attitude of the Western countries, which now officially recognize the need to give equal attention to the problems of energy, raw materials and development.

99. The resumption of the dialogue on a constructive basis will be possible with good chances of success as soon as the industrialized countries agree to take up in earnest, and with a genuine desire for results, the search for solutions to all the questions which are of concern to each of the families of the international community.

100. The success of the future Conference will also depend on its representative nature. The consensus which seems to be emerging concerning the broadening of its membership is a further guarantee of success.

101. It will be necessary in due course to define the link to be established between the Conference, the aim of which is to contribute to the establishment of the new international economic order, and the United Nations, which remains the most appropriate framework for concerted international effort.

102. Clearly it serves no purpose to close our eyes to the difficulties presented by an enterprise of such scope.

103. The reservations or opposition evoked by the realistic and relevant proposals of the developing countries are the external manifestation of a deep conflict of interests which will persist as long as the industrialized countries continue to defend their short-term interests instead of seeing themselves in historical perspective and thereby safeguarding their long-term interests.

104. The discussions arising from certain questions regarded as essential by the developing countries and the tactical games familiar to us all, which are simply a means of evading specific obligations, often reveal ulterior motives or the secret hope of maintaining or re-establishing, if possible, the domination destroyed by the struggle for emancipation which the peoples of the third world now intend to carry into the field of economic liberation.

105. It is, however, clear that confrontation cannot but be harmful to everyone.

106. Recent political events have brought this out clearly yet again, demonstrating the futility of force and the limits of material power.

107. Thus the common interest demands that we search for effective solutions, solutions made necessary by the interdependence of peoples, which represents today a form of objective solidarity.

108. Therefore only a vision of one united world will enable us to reach a compromise acceptable to all and finally to save the world economy from chaos.

109. In this quest for a new balance based on new relationships, the first step will be for the more fortunate to make the necessary concessions and yield to the legitimate aspirations of those to whom history, and sometimes nature, has been ungenerous.

110. Is it unduly idealistic to invite the rich countries to put aside their egoism and change their usual practices in order to reconcile their true interests with the aspirations of all mankind for peace, freedom and well-being?

111. In short, what we must ascertain is whether man will end by turning his power against himself, thereby becoming the instrument of his own destruction, or whether he will be able to come to his senses in time and bring his imagination and his creative genius to bear on the building of a new civilization.

112. The SECRETARY-GENERAL (*interpretation from French*): Mr. President, may I address to you my sincere congratulations on your election to the high post of President of the seventh special session of the General Assembly. I am convinced that under your skilful guidance the Assembly will deal effectively with the important matters on its agenda. The stimulating statement that you have just made will undoubtedly be a valuable contribution to the work of the present session.

[The Secretary-General continued in English.]

113. The General Assembly is gathered today in special session to examine the state of world development and of international economic co-operation and to expand their dimensions. Within this context this Assembly has also been called upon to give the goal of development its proper place in the United Nations system and on the international stage. This session, therefore, represents an important landmark in what has been a long process towards the achievement of the Charter objective of making our world a better and more just place for all.

114. Since its inception the United Nations has been intimately involved in the development process. A mere glance across these 30 years of the Organization's history provides a clear picture of the great changes that have taken place, of the progress that has been made, of the tremendous and increasingly urgent task that still lies ahead, as well as of the role of the United Nations as a crucible for ideas and a catalyst for progress.

115. Indeed, the awareness and the acknowledgement of the need for reforming the international economic system are not new. Such a reform has been called for time and time again. The history of the United Nations contains numerous efforts the results of which, although disappointing when compared with their ultimate objectives, appear in retrospect as having provided the foundation upon which our current efforts can be more solidly built.

116. The designation of the 1960s as the First United Nations Development Decade, the first session of UNCTAD in 1964, the adoption of the International Development Strategy for the Second United Nations Development Decade [*resolution 2626 (XXV)*], 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 represent important stepping-stones from which we must proceed during this session. An analysis of these events reveals an ever-escalating evolution of the concept of international co-responsibility and interdependence from a rather abstract idea to one which today is universally acknowledged as a practical necessity.

117. The philosophical foundation has thus been laid. Changing attitudes are ushering in the moment for action. Our task is to translate aims into reality by reordering the world economic situation on the basis of more equity and justice. The reduction of the gulf between rich and poor represents the greatest challenge to international statesmanship and vision. It is the experience of history that no society in which the few have wealth and the majority live in poverty and without hope can remain stable. This is more than ever true of our world society today. In meeting this challenge we will not succeed without a decisive shift in attitudes reflected in concrete expressions of political will to accept change.

118. What we must do is reconcile conflicting interests among States. This is not an easy task, but we have no choice. However, with good will and mutual respect we shall be able to convert the crisis we have been facing into a great opportunity for long-term peace, harmony and mutual benefit.

119. While there is now general agreement on the need for change, and even though there is a growing convergence of opinion on many of the broad objectives of sharing resources and benefits more equitably, one should not minimize the complexity of the task that lies ahead.

120. We must therefore approach this special session of the General Assembly soberly and rationally, but with a renewed sense of urgency. As the President of the Economic and Social Council, Ambassador Akhund, stated in his closing remarks to the fifty-ninth session of the Council, "we should neither expect nor seek to achieve spectacular results . . . but we are entitled to expect agreement on principles and policies and a clear indication of the intention to negotiate concretely for the achievement of agreed ends."⁷

121. I am encouraged by the fact that many different forums have been or are seized of this issue. This is certainly a reflection of the seriousness of the situation, but I believe it is also an indication that we are dealing with an idea whose time has come.

122. At the governmental level, the just completed Conference of Ministers for Foreign Affairs of Non-Aligned Countries in Lima, the Dakar Conference of Developing Countries on Raw Materials in February, the Meeting of Commonwealth Heads of Government in Kingston last May, followed by the interim report by a group of experts appointed by them,⁸ the meeting of the Council of the

Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development, held at Paris in May, the negotiations leading to the Lomé Convention,⁹ as well as intensive discussions within Governments, are all part of a cast of events which should help us reach our goal.

123. This should also be the case for the proposed Paris Conference on International Economic Co-operation between developed and developing countries, which is intended to play an important role in the negotiating process following this special session. It will, however, be necessary to define the relationship between that conference and the United Nations, which is the most appropriate forum for international co-ordination and co-operation.

124. At the non-governmental level a number of valuable efforts have also brought added dimensions which are helpful to our task. However, there can be no substitute for the role of the world Organization. The United Nations is unique because it is universal in character, comprehensive in its scope of responsibility and enduring in its concern with international issues.

125. There are three functions, which I should like to single out, which the United Nations should perform in the mix of interacting events that are organized within and outside the United Nations system.

126. First, through this Assembly, the United Nations should provide the blue-print, framework and guidelines for the negotiating process which will ensue both within and outside the United Nations system.

127. Secondly, the results of those negotiations should be brought before the General Assembly in order to give such agreements the confirmation which only a universal organization can provide.

128. Finally, the United Nations is particularly suited to providing continuity by monitoring and following up agreements reached by the international community.

129. It is encouraging that the Economic and Social Council was able to agree unanimously on the issues to be considered by this Assembly,¹⁰ But more important still is that the intensive consultations carried out over the past months in the Economic and Social Council and in the Preparatory Committee for this session of the Assembly have revealed, even in the absence of a dramatic breakthrough, a genuine desire on all sides to find mutually acceptable solutions.

130. The six substantive issues being considered by this Assembly are indeed the areas in which the international community faces short-term crises and long-term problems, to which solutions must be found if we are to achieve the development goals and stability that we all seek.

⁹ ACP-EEC Convention of Lomé, signed on 28 February 1975 at Lomé. The text was subsequently circulated as document A/AC.176/7.

¹⁰ See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, Fifty-ninth Session, Supplement No. 1*, resolution 1980 (LIX), para. 2.

⁷ For a summary of this statement, see *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, Fifty-ninth Session*, 1979th meeting, para. 21.

⁸ See document A/AC.176/5, annex.

131. In the area of international trade, the basic problem faced by most developing countries is their undue dependence on the export of one or two commodities for their foreign-exchange earnings. The decline of the prices of a number of commodities in the recent past has brought out vividly how vulnerable these countries are to such fluctuations. Furthermore, the first half of this decade has seen little progress in the implementation of the recommendation in the International Development Strategy on the liberalization of trade in primary commodities.

132. The time is ripe for major efforts to overcome these basic obstacles. In this respect, attention should be focused on three areas: the recovery of world trade to buoyant levels, which would benefit all countries; the liberalization of import policies by industrialized countries in favour of developing nations; and the stabilization of the export earnings of developing countries so as to enable them to finance the imports needed to sustain their development efforts.

133. This issue, which has been before the United Nations since the Havana Conference,¹¹ has taken on new urgency and should be brought to a positive conclusion in the near future. The discussions and negotiations launched in UNCTAD on a number of issues related to commodities should prove valuable towards this end. In short, the economic and social development of developing countries is highly dependent on the improvement of their relative position in the expanding volume of world trade.

134. Following the disruptions in the world monetary situation, negotiations were launched within the International Monetary Fund to reform the existing system. While some progress has been made in these discussions, it is quite clear that the situation cannot continue as it is, because it is damaging to the interests of developed and developing countries alike. In this context, the need to revise the decision-making processes is particularly urgent, and I hope that the current efforts to that end will lead to the necessary changes without further delay.

135. The performance in transferring real resources to developing countries has remained disappointing. While the terms of transfer have improved during the first half of this decade, the official development assistance furnished by developed countries has failed to reach even half of the target set out in the International Development Strategy. At the same time it is gratifying to note that the oil-producing countries have become major contributors to international, regional and bilateral programmes of economic development and co-operation.

136. It is clear that if the pace of development is to be accelerated, the flow of resources to developing countries must be stepped up. In particular, the flow of resources to the most seriously affected and the least developed among the developing countries must be increased significantly if they are to emerge from the grave predicament in which they find themselves and raise their living standards in the course of this decade.

137. Governments have established within the United Nations a variety of mechanisms for channelling assistance to developing countries. I wish to urge Member States to make full use of these means. If properly utilized and—if necessary—adjusted and streamlined, they can play a significant role in promoting economic and social progress throughout the world.

138. In this connexion, I have also repeatedly expressed my concern about the vast global military expenditure, which has now reached nearly \$300,000 million annually. Given the enormous financial requirements for development, this can only be considered as a deplorable diversion of much-needed resources. The disarmament aspect should therefore also be seen in this perspective.

139. The importance of industrialization as a means of accelerating development is widely recognized. Therefore, the low level of industrialization in the majority of developing countries and the smallness of their share of the total world output of manufactures is another grave obstacle which must be tackled with vigour. With the rapid rise of the labour force and the grave unemployment problem faced by developing countries, every effort must be made to ensure that industry plays its full part in providing the necessary employment opportunities.

140. The subject of industrialization has been intensively discussed at the Second General Conference of UNIDO in Lima earlier this year. This special session of the General Assembly affords a further opportunity to confront the constraints and indicate the directions for action.

141. Closely related to this issue is, of course, that of science and technology. While some successes have been achieved, much remains to be done to ensure that the developing countries have at their disposal the suitable technology they require. It is important to improve the terms of access to appropriate technology and to adapt commercial practices governing the transfer of technology more closely to the requirements of developing countries.

142. The agricultural sector still accounts for the income of the bulk of the population of developing countries. It is the source of food supply and of raw materials for industries, as well as a major earner of foreign exchange. For these reasons the deceleration in agricultural growth is a matter of grave concern. While the world food situation shows some signs of improvement, the balance between supply and requirements remains precarious.

143. It is therefore of crucial importance to take effective action. The World Food Conference adopted a number of important resolutions¹² to meet both the immediate needs and the longer term goals in this area. While a beginning has been made since the Conference last November, much more progress is required. At this special session these agreements should be translated into concrete commitments.

144. In addition to dealing with these substantive issues, this Assembly has been entrusted with the question of

¹¹ United Nations Conference on Trade and Employment, held at Havana from 21 November 1947 to 24 March 1948.

¹² See *Report of the World Food Conference, Rome, 5-16 November 1974* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.75.II.A.3), chap. II.

restructuring the United Nations system in the economic and social fields. Given the dramatic changes over the past 30 years, to which our President made reference, it is obvious that some restructuring of the system is essential if the United Nations is to play its full part in meeting the new challenges facing the world. I am fully aware of the complexity and the difficulties of this matter, but I am confident that your deliberations will bring us nearer to this goal.

145. This Assembly has a most difficult and complex task, but it has also been offered an historic opportunity which we cannot afford to squander. The time has come to move from declarations of intent to a sustained effort to find practical and tangible solutions through concerted action. In this endeavour I wish you every success.

146. The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from French*): The Secretary-General has just made a masterly statement, for which I should like to thank him very warmly.

AGENDA ITEM 6

Adoption of the agenda

147. The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from French*): In order to expedite its work, the Assembly may wish to adopt the provisional agenda for this session [A/10190] in plenary meeting, without referring it to the General Committee. If there are no objections, I shall take it that the General Assembly agrees to this procedure.

It was so decided.

148. The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from French*): I now ask the Assembly whether there is any objection to the adoption of the provisional agenda as it appears in document A/10190. If there is no objection, I shall declare the agenda adopted.

The agenda was adopted.

AGENDA ITEM 7

Development and international economic cooperation

149. The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from French*): In connexion with agenda item 7, the Economic and Social Council, in its resolution 1980 (LIX) of 31 July 1975, decided that the issues to be considered would essentially be as follows: international trade, international monetary reform and the transfer of real resources for financing the development of developing countries, science and technology, industrialization, food and agriculture, and the restructuring of the economic and social sectors of the United Nations system.

150. May I take it that the General Assembly takes note of that decision of the Economic and Social Council concerning agenda item 7?

It was so decided.

151. The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from French*): In addition, the Council recommended that the General Assembly at its special session should adopt, on a priority basis, concrete and positive decisions on all issues mentioned in its resolution 1980 (LIX) "which would make a decisive impact on further negotiations within the United Nations, as well as in other international forums, for the establishment of a new international economic order". The Council also recommended that the General Assembly should "initiate the process for the restructuring of the United Nations system in the economic and social fields and establish an intergovernmental committee to deal with such issues".

152. May I consider that the General Assembly takes note of those recommendations of the Economic and Social Council?

It was so decided.

153. The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from French*): In connexion with the allocation of agenda item 7, the Economic and Social Council has, in paragraph 5 of part one of document A/10003/Add.1, recommended:

"(b) That the General Assembly should establish an *Ad Hoc* Committee of the Seventh Special Session with a chairman, three vice-chairmen and a rapporteur and accord to its chairman, for the duration of the session and without in any way constituting a precedent, full rights of membership in the General Committee, including the right to vote;

"(c) That item 7 of the provisional agenda of the seventh special session, entitled 'Development and international economic co-operation', should be allocated to the *Ad Hoc* Committee for consideration and report, except that the general debate on the item should take place in the plenary;

"(d) That it should be for the *Ad Hoc* Committee to set up working groups as necessary;

"(e) That, notwithstanding the provisions of rule 51 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, Arabic should also be an official and a working language of the *Ad Hoc* Committee."

154. May I take it that the General Assembly approves those recommendations?

It was so decided.

155. The PRESIDENT (*interpretation from French*): I take it that it is also the wish of the General Assembly to approve the recommendations of the Economic and Social Council concerning the general debate and the schedule of meetings and to take note of the Council's report as a whole as contained in part one of document A/10005/Add.1.

It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 12.40 p.m.