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Members: (continued) Mr. LEDWARD United Kingdom of Great Britain and  
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Mr. REY VERCESI Uruguay

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Mr. MENDEZ International Labour Organisation (ILO)  
Mr. McDUGALL Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)  
Mr. ARNALDO United Nations Educational, Scientific  
and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)  
Dr. KAUL World Health Organization (WHO)

Representatives of non-governmental organizations:

Mr. MOORE International Chamber of Commerce (ICC)  
Mrs. SALMON World Federation of United Nations  
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Secretariat: Mr. OWEN Assistant Secretary-General in charge of  
Economic Affairs  
Mr. DUMONTET Secretary of the Committee

ITEM 9. REPORT BY THE SECRETARY-GENERAL UNDER COUNCIL RESOLUTION 271 (X) ON THE  
CONSERVATION AND UTILIZATION OF RESOURCES (E/1906)

The CHAIRMAN invited the Committee to consider item 9 of the Council's agenda. He recalled that at its fourth session the Council had requested the Secretary-General to convene a United Nations Scientific Conference on the Conservation and Utilization of Resources. That Conference had been held at New York in August and September 1949. At its tenth session the Council had studied the Secretary-General's report on the work of the Conference and had adopted resolution 271 (X), in which it requested the Secretary-General "to study the proceedings of the Conference and to report to the Council such proposals for the consideration of the Council as he may deem appropriate; and in this connexion to consult with the specialized agencies concerned and with such of the Conference participants as he may deem useful."

The Secretary-General had submitted a report (E/1906), which contained two draft resolutions, the first relating to the establishment of a United Nations programme to promote the systematic survey and inventory of non-agricultural

/resources,

resources, and the second providing for the convening of international conferences on particular resource problems. That report was now before the Committee.

Mr. LEDWARD (United Kingdom) wished first of all to ask the Assistant Secretary-General a number of questions.

Paragraph 5 of the report, he felt, required explanation, particularly with regard to the type of studies which the Secretary-General proposed to have carried out, and to the order of priority which he intended to give them.

What part would the Statistical Commission play in carrying out the activities referred to in paragraph 2 (a)(i) of the resolution contained in Annex A?

With regard to paragraphs 16 and 17 of the report which dealt with financial implications, could the Assistant Secretary-General indicate what work the Department of Economic Affairs would hold up or postpone in 1952 so as to handle the extra workload provided for in the resolution?

Mr. KAYSER (France) also wished to ask the Assistant Secretary-General some questions before the general discussion. Since the Council intended to take action on the work of the Conference on Resources, he wished to know when the complete results of that Conference would be made available to Governments, to the experts and to the public. Which documents had been printed and circulated? Moreover, as his delegation had already observed at the previous session, the only documents distributed had been in English. Undertakings had been assumed with regard to the translation into French and the reproduction of documents, and he wished to know what the present position was.

Mr. OWEN (Assistant Secretary-General), in reply to the United Kingdom representative, said that the Department of Economic Affairs had been doing considerable research in the field of natural resources and their utilization; it had recently published a study on world iron ore resources and their utilization. It was also engaged at the present time in other studies such as that on fuel resources.

As regards the United Kingdom representative's second question concerning the role of the Statistical Commission, he said that all matters within the Commission's competence would as a matter of course be brought to its attention. It should, however, /be noted

be noted that certain questions, such as those relating to standard concepts terminology in the field of resources were not a matter of statistical definitions. The studies undertaken by the Department of Economic Affairs would naturally be carried out in close collaboration by the responsible Division and the Statistical Office of that Department.

With regard to the financial implications, he pointed out that his Department's 1951 budget was already established; in the light of the general budget situation he felt that the new task had to be carried out within the limits of the funds available, and he had not therefore requested any additional appropriation. The programme proposed by the Secretary-General was a modest one and it should be possible to carry it out in 1951 within the limits of the funds available, without discarding any other work or studies now in progress, although some slowing up of other work might take place. As regards 1952, the Secretariat felt that it would be premature to try to draw up a system of priorities at the present time, and that it would be better to do so later on. In drawing up such a system, the Secretariat would of course be guided by the suggestions made by the Council.

In reply to the French representative, he pointed out that the Secretariat had to perform an enormous task of translating and printing, in which priorities had to be observed (work of the General Assembly and other bodies). Nevertheless, considerable progress could be reported with regard to the documents relating to the Conference on Resources. The first volume in English had been printed and distributed; the manuscripts of volumes 2-7 were already in the printer's hands and would probably appear in from four to six months. The translation into French of volumes 1, 2, 4 and 7 had been completed; volume 1 would be in the printer's hands within five or six weeks and the remaining volumes would be printed in the course of 1951. The translation of volumes 2, 5 and 6 was already in hand, and those volumes would appear in 1952.

Mr. LEDWARD (United Kingdom) thanked the Assistant Secretary-General for the explanations he had given.

Mr. KAYSER (France) also thanked the Assistant Secretary-General and noted the fact that the first volume in French would soon appear. He hoped that in the near future the Council would be able to congratulate itself on the completion of a somewhat lengthy but worth-while task.

/Mr. KHOSROVANI

Mr. KHOSROVANI (Iran) after praising the Secretariat's work, said that the Secretary-General's proposal was apparently based on two conflicting considerations -- the desire to avoid duplication and overlapping and the desire to conform to the resolution adopted by the Council at its tenth session.

The extension of technical assistance to non-agricultural resources and a better utilization of those resources constituted a task of great importance.

His delegation welcomed the United States initiative in hydrology and water utilization. Conferences of the type recommended by the Secretary-General were fully justified only if they could contribute to the solution of the problem.

It was his understanding that the two draft resolutions would be studied separately and he would therefore submit observations on each of them at the appropriate time.

Mr. LABBE (Chile) recalled that at its tenth session the Council had stressed the importance of the question under consideration, the solution of which would have great social repercussions. The world could expect the projected study and the practical application of the results to lead to progress and prosperity which would make it possible to improve the standards of living and maintain the freedom of the peoples in their eternal struggle for peace.

After studying the records of the 1949 Conference on Resources, the Secretary-General had divided those proposals into two draft resolutions, the first relating to the implementation of a United Nations programme to promote the systematic survey and inventory of non-agricultural resources. The under-developed countries, and Latin America in particular, wished that proposal to be carefully studied. It was necessary for Chile to improve the mapping of its mineralogical and geological structure and to discover fresh sources of power and, in that field, international co-operation should enable considerable progress to be made.

The second draft resolution provided for international conferences on particular resource problems. His delegation appreciated in advance the value of the results which those conferences could be expected to achieve, and would therefore vote in favour of the two proposals.

/Mr. Van der SCHUEREN

Mr. Van der SCHUEREN (Belgium) recalled that the Secretary-General's report, drawn up after the Conference, had been discussed at the tenth session of the Council and resolution 271 (X), in which the Council had recognized the importance of deriving the fullest benefits from the Conference, had been adopted.

Although it was essential to plan along the lines indicated in the two draft resolutions, a distinction should be made between mineral resources which were essentially limited and organic resources which were inexhaustible. Even in the case of mineral resources, too much importance should not be attached to the danger of their exhaustion, since scientific progress would make possible a better exploitation of known resources and the discovery of new resources. The discovery of atomic energy, solar energy, and so forth, opened up new vistas. It was permissible, for example, on the basis of experiments conducted in France and Belgium on the underground gasification of coal, to anticipate that the maximum thermal output would be obtained from the utilization of that product. As the Secretary-General had said, however, to achieve a practical utilization of resources it was essential to promote the necessary scientific research and to establish a standardized inventory of resources.

His delegation would therefore vote in favour of the first draft resolution. An inventory of that kind would lead to the discovery of new resources and to a more rational utilization of natural resources.

His delegation also supported the second draft resolution on the convening of international conferences, since it was of the opinion that the problem of the distribution of natural resources could be solved by international collaboration.

Mr. LEDWARD (United Kingdom) noted with satisfaction the Secretary-General's report, which in his opinion, was a logical sequel to the work accomplished by the United Nations Scientific Conference on the Conservation and Utilization of Resources. His delegation thought it important that the results of that Conference, which represented in themselves a definite step in the direction of a wider dissemination of information and closer collaboration between experts, should not be left unutilized but should be put to a profitable use by the United Nations. In that connexion he welcomed the first proposal under  
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consideration, to the effect that the Secretary-General should immediately initiate a programme of action in connexion with concepts, terminology, methods and procedures, as well as the compilation of information. The Secretariat would naturally have to use existing statistics in the execution of its task. By using certain publications, produced in this field by his Government, a list of which he was prepared to furnish, the Secretariat would save a good deal of time and avoid the sending out of numerous questionnaires. Other Governments would doubtless also be prepared to furnish lists of similar publications produced in their own countries.

As regards the standardization of terminology and the improvement of methods and procedures, it was obvious that the work would have to be carried out in close co-operation with the Statistical Office of the United Nations. He was sorry, however, to see that the proposed studies were not to refer to regions but were to take the form of a world inventory of resources or specific products. That method was not a very good one, since many countries did not possess the necessary data. By adopting a more realistic method, such as that of regional studies, the United Nations would probably achieve more tangible results.

He pointed out, with regard to the recommendation in paragraph 2, (c), that the permanent delegation of the United Kingdom in New York was working in close collaboration with the Secretariat in procuring experts for countries desiring their services. It was strange that during the six months which had passed since the launching of the programme, there had been so few requests for assistance of that type. It was possible that the cost of the equipment required by such missions had caused certain Governments to draw back. The subsequent debates would perhaps throw further light on the subject.

His delegation would support the two resolutions, provided that as the Secretariat had suggested, no commitment was entered into regarding the financial implications for the 1952 budget, and also that the Council should be kept informed of any new enterprises, so that it would not be signing a blank cheque.

Mr. CHA (China) congratulated the Secretary-General on the wisdom and skill with which he had carried on with an increasing volume of work in 1950 and 1951 without asking for supplementary credits. He suggested that in order to save time the Committee should proceed to consider the two resolutions. That would avoid unnecessary repetition.

Mr. McDUGALL (FAO) recalled that the FAO had played an important part in preparing for the United Nations Scientific Conference on the Conservation and Utilization of Resources, and that questions relating to that subject were of the greatest interest to the Organization. He suggested that the Committee study paragraph 14 of the Secretary-General's report (E/1906) relating to the integrated development of river basins, at the same time as item 10 on the agenda.

Mr. ARNALDO (UNESCO) said that that part of the programme referred to in paragraph 2, (a) (1) of the first draft resolution was of particular interest to UNESCO. As the Secretary-General recognized on page 7 of his report, UNESCO had under way a basic programme to promote the standardization of scientific and technical terminology in the main languages of the world. In 1949 and 1950 arrangements were made for the publication of multilingual technical dictionaries in two special fields. This year work was in progress on the collection and circulation of internationally approved definitions of scientific terms. Further UNESCO had undertaken an inquiry on the existing state of interlingual scientific and technical dictionaries covering 1,100 dictionaries on 224 subjects in 45 languages. The work would continue and UNESCO had outlined a draft programme for 1952. It was therefore essential that the United Nations should bear in mind UNESCO's work in this field in connexion with paragraph 2 (a) (1) of the resolution referred to.

Mr. KAYSER (France) said that it was not his intention to repeat the arguments put forward by his delegation at the Council's tenth session in connexion with the role and the importance of the United Nations Scientific Conference. The value of that Conference had been duly stressed at the time of voting upon the resolution then adopted. All the members of the Council were in agreement as to the object to be attained, and, where there were disagreements, they related only to methods or details of procedure. There could only be unanimous agreement on the spirit which inspired Secretary-General's report, and in that  
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connexion it was enough to quote the last sentence but one of paragraph 10, which said that "in providing such a nucleus for inter-governmental activity in this relatively neglected field, the United Nations would be meeting a need which is almost universally recognized by those familiar with the current position." It was therefore a decision fraught with responsibility and capable of improving the world situation.

Nevertheless, as regards methods and details, his delegation would like a certain number of concrete examples to be cited. The report contained in document E/1906 appeared to refer chiefly to administrative procedure, and would gain if it were illustrated by examples. In that connexion, he noted Mr. Owen's statements to the effect that a study on iron had already been circulated and that another on the various sources of power was in preparation. The United Kingdom representative had also pointed out that it would be useful to have some concrete information before them. He was sure that when it came to the establishment of priorities, it would be necessary to study concrete cases. As the United Kingdom representative had also said, there might be some advantage in beginning with regional studies instead of dealing with specific products throughout the world. It was necessary to know the Secretary-General's intentions. If the text under consideration were adopted what would the first studies be and how would matters proceed on the practical plane? Finally, what were the financial implications? He had been happy to hear from Mr. Owen that no supplementary credits would be needed for 1951. But even if expenditure was not heavy in 1951 the work would gain impetus, and the financial burden would become heavier. It might be wondered whether the United Nations would be able to cope with it. One of the steps which would be taken was the preparation and publication of documents in the working languages at least. As had been seen, however, a bottleneck already existed in the translation and printing services, what would it be like when there were new documents to publish? The Assistant Secretary-General would agree that his work would be fruitless if it were not embodied in a complete documentation to be placed at the disposal of the experts.

He went on to express a wish that the FAO representative would give some details on the methods followed by his organization in co-ordinating work on agricultural resources. The methods employed for non-agricultural resources were not necessarily the same, but there might sometimes be some advantage in studying them. It would also be necessary to hold consultations with the  
/specialized

specialized agencies and with international organizations. The Secretary-General's report referred in that connexion to the World Power Conference and the International Geological Conference. It would be necessary to consult other organizations and thus to relieve the United Nations of a part of its task.

Wishing as he did to avoid duplication, he felt that it would be interesting to know how far this new activity would replace technical assistance, or on the other hand, how far technical assistance would be able to undertake certain of the tasks referred to in the resolutions.

In conclusion he repeated that his delegation supported the spirit of the two resolutions and hoped that the Council would continue to receive information and would be able to adopt decisions on those questions without waiting for its 15th session, as recommended in the resolutions.

Mr. ADARKAR (India) expressed his delegation's appreciation of the Secretary-General's work. He wished, however, to point out certain omissions. The United Kingdom and French representatives had already indicated several. For his part, he recalled that the central problem with which the United Nations Scientific Conference had dealt was the conservation and utilization of resources. The stage of collecting documentation had not yet been passed. It must not be forgotten, however, that the Scientific Conference had insisted on the need to avoid wastage of resources. That was an essential task and many examples of wastage had been quoted.

He went on to examine the four objectives listed on pages 2 and 3 of the Secretary-General's report (E/1906). Point (a), relating to an integrated approach and systematic analysis of the problems of resource conservation and use had unfortunately not been developed in the body of the report. That was a regrettable omission. Point (b) was the only one mentioned in the first resolution. With regard to the measures suggested in point (c), they should also apply to the utilization of resources. Finally, the research indicated under point (c) came under the heading of technical assistance.

/With regard

With regard to paragraph 6 of the report, he recognized that the methodical collection of documentation on current knowledge of the subject was an essential task; but he pointed out that the international situation was hardly favourable to the dissemination of information. He then went on to a brief review of the following paragraphs and mentioned the measures suggested in them. Those measures were admirable, but the collection of information was not enough. It was alarming to find that, in paragraph 10, the development of concepts, terminology, methods and procedures was said to be a lengthy task. If one or more decades were needed, it was to be feared that the countries concerned would be unable to wait so long. It was none the less true that the United Nations was the organ best qualified to collaborate with the specialized agencies.

In conclusion, he said that the report attached too much importance to documentation and paid insufficient attention to the international measures which must be taken to conserve and use natural resources. The Secretary-General should undertake a more thorough survey; otherwise, there was a risk that the Council would fail to achieve the purposes indicated by the Scientific Conference.

Mr. McDOUGALL (Food and Agriculture Organization), replying to the questions put by the French representative, said that conservation and utilization problems represented an important part of FAO's technical activity. Distinguished experts from numerous countries gave advice to the technical division in the sphere of agriculture, forestry and fisheries. Moreover, inter-governmental organs had been created, such as the Indo-Pacific Fisheries Council, and others would shortly be set up. There were also Forestry Commissions for Europe, Asia and America, which made recommendations to the Governments and to the Director-General of FAO. Certain experts were entrusted with the study of specific problems connected with the conservation and utilization of resources. FAO received requests from Governments in connexion with the utilization and control of water supplies..

Mr. GARCIA (Philippines) wished to define briefly his delegation's attitude.

/The Secretary-General's

The Secretary-General's report was in his opinion very complete and proved the urgent need for taking steps for the conservation and utilization of natural resources. The Philippine delegation warmly supported it.

It should, however, be pointed out that whereas the first resolution assumed that it would be necessary to start from scratch, there were nevertheless cases where arrangements already existed. In such cases it would be a matter of co-ordinating existing organs rather than of creating new ones.

As regards Asia and the Far East, the Economic Commission dealing with that area had already done useful work. The Secretary-General rightly provided in the first resolution for consultations with the regional economic organs.

Mr. Garcia reserved the right to add further remarks during the discussion proper.

Mr. MEN (Assistant Secretary-General) wished to reassure the French representative regarding the incidence of the Secretariat's plans on its work and budget. The Secretariat's task was certainly a heavy one but at the moment it was not behindhand; he thought it would be possible to make a start in 1951 with the partial application of the resolutions under consideration if they were adopted.

As regards co-operation with other agencies, he pointed out that document E/1906, prepared by the Department of Economic Affairs, had been the subject of extensive discussion between the Department and the specialized agencies, particularly FAO, UNESCO and the ILO. The Department of Economic Affairs was anxious to ensure the closest co-operation between the organs concerned and to avoid duplication. He mentioned also the names of numerous distinguished experts throughout the world who had been consulted; many of them associated with institutions of learning and research and with governmental organizations in the field of resources.

/The CHAIRMAN

The CHAIRMAN declared the general discussion closed and announced that the Committee would now proceed to discuss the first resolution appearing in Annex A of document E/1906, which he read out.

Mr. CABADA (Peru), while paying tribute to the work done by the Secretariat, said that his delegation wished to replace and supplement paragraph 2 (c) of the draft resolution by an amendment which appeared in document E/AC.6/L.25. Peru was a country whose mineral and other wealth had hardly been touched, and in the agricultural sphere the hydraulic works undertaken on the borders of the Amazon country would completely transform the country's economy. Such achievements would only be possible with the help of international co-operation, and for that reason the Peruvian delegation appealed in the draft amendment under consideration for technical assistance in the study of non-agricultural resources, including reserves of oil and coal. It was desirable not to neglect the important question of oil, although the Council had recently taken it off its agenda. Such was the aim of the first part of the amendment considered.

Like the French representative he wondered whether the Secretariat with the means at present at its disposal would find it possible to study methods of making an inventory of non-agricultural resources. He shared his apprehension that the task might prove too heavy for the budget of the United Nations. These questions, however, were closely linked with technical assistance, and he thought that it should be possible to draw in 1952 on the funds provided for the expanded programme of technical assistance if the Secretariat thought necessary. Such was the reason for the second part of the draft amendment.

Mr. LUBIN (United States of America) pointed out that the draft amendment submitted by Peru had the effect of radically modifying not only the resolution but the whole programme of technical assistance. The Peruvian representative did not seem to realize the cost of a programme such as his resolution proposed. In order to make an inventory of oil reserves, to quote but one example, the expense involved could run into many millions of dollars in a single country. Indeed, the cost might be many times greater than the total budgets of the United Nations and the specialized agencies. For that reason the United States delegation would vote against the amendment submitted by the Peruvian delegation.

/Mr. ADAPKAR

Mr. ADARKAR (India) did not share the fears of his colleague, the United States representative, regarding the incidence of the amendment proposed by Peru on the United Nations budget. He did not think, however, that the proposed amendment could actually replace paragraph 2 (c) of the resolution under consideration; perhaps this proposal might be put in the form of a separate resolution, for the Peruvian representative's suggestion appeared to him to be an excellent one.

The Indian delegation was also submitting a draft amendment (document E/AC.6/L.26) to the effect that the Secretary-General should be requested to give further detailed consideration to any international action that may be immediately undertaken, particularly in promoting an integrated approach and a systematic analysis of the problems raised by the conservation and utilization of natural resources. This amendment repeated the suggestions appearing on page 2 of document E/1906. He did not think that the amendment would involve any additional expenditure, and it would have excellent consequences in the long run.

Mr. KHOSROVANI (Iran) thought that priority should be given to the elaboration of terminology and methods enabling an inventory to be taken of certain categories of non-agricultural natural resources. As regards the amendment submitted by the Peruvian delegation (E/AC.6/L.25), that proposal seemed to him to be justified in itself but he would prefer it to be studied under the head of technical assistance.

In reply to a question by the CHAIRMAN, Mr. CABADA (Peru) said that the Spanish text of document E/AC.6/L.25 spoke of the study of non-agricultural resources and not, as the English version said, of the study of the exploitation of non-agricultural resources. He thought that far from weakening the draft resolution, the proposed amendment would make the text more precise. He was, however, prepared to withdraw his delegation's amendment if the Chairman thought that preferable.

/Mr. LUBIN

Mr. LUBIN (United States of America) regretted having criticized the substance of document E/AC.6/L.25, if what the representative from Peru had in mind was merely to be sure that oil would be considered as a non-agricultural resource and there had merely been a mistake in the translation into the English text. To meet the Peruvian delegation's wishes he proposed to add the words "including oil" after the words "inventories of non-agricultural resources" appearing in paragraph 2 (c) of the draft resolution.

Mr. PARKINSON (Canada) associated himself with the United States delegation in asking the Peruvian delegation to withdraw its draft amendment. The discovery of oil and iron ore in Canada had been the fruit of many years' research and very costly experiments; he therefore thought that the United Nations should not embark on heavy expenditure which it would be unable to meet. It would be preferable to confine oneself, as proposed in the resolution under consideration, to the training of the necessary staff.

Mr. KAYSER (France) wished the French text of the resolution appearing in Annex A of document E/1906 to be modified. As the modifications were purely formal ones, he did not think it necessary to submit an amendment but proposed to confer direct with the Language Services of the Secretariat.

He also asked that the Secretariat should take into account the observations made by the United Kingdom representative and himself regarding the concrete aspect of the studies to be undertaken, and he suggested that the Secretariat might submit at the next session or at the session of February 1952 an extremely brief report on the research in progress.

Mr. ADARKAR (India) thought that it would be well to provide the resolution with a general title, such as "Measures in relation to international action on conservation and utilization of resources". There would thus be no conflict between the text of paragraph 2 (c) of the draft resolution, and that of the amendment proposed by the Peruvian delegation (E/AC.6/L.25). It would also be possible to add to paragraph 2 (c) the additional text appearing in document E/AC.6/L.26 proposed by the Indian delegation.

/Mr. OWEN

Mr. OWEN (Assistant Secretary-General) in reply to the French representative, said that the Council would receive a progress report at its next session.

Mr. LEDWARD (United Kingdom) said that his delegation intended to propose an amendment aimed at asking the Secretariat to state specifically what analyses etc. it intended to undertake as a result of the first resolution, on the lines suggested by the representative of France.

Mr. LUBIN (United States of America) also submitted some amendments which his delegation wished to introduce (E/AC.6/L.24). He briefly commented on the various points involved and stressed the necessity of encouraging a systematic analysis of the problems raised by the conservation and utilization of natural resources, and the important part which the specialized agencies would play in the future success of the measures proposed.

Mr. GARCIA (Philippines) announced that his delegation would also submit amendments before the next meeting.

In reply to a question by the representative of India, the CHAIRMAN said that the heading of the resolution could be introduced after the resolution itself had been adopted. He stressed the need for submitting amendments in time for the text to be circulated in both working languages before the next meeting, which would be held on Thursday, 22 February, at 3 p.m.

The meeting rose at 5.45 p.m.

2 1/2 p.m.