

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE FOUR HUNDRED AND FORTY-THIRD MEETING

Held on Thursday, 16 May 1968, at 3.30 p.m.

Chairman:

Mr. BILLNER

Sweden

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DEVELOPMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES:

(b) NON-AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES (E/4478 and Corr.1 and Add.1-2; E/AC.6/L.379)
(continued)

Mr. BARNEA (Director, Resources and Transport Division), replying to the questions put by the Venezuelan representative at the previous meeting, said that the proposal concerning the data bank had not been submitted to the Ad Hoc Committee on the Survey Programme for the Development of Natural Resources because the data handled by the bank would relate not only to the survey programme but also to other activities of the Division, such as the UNDP projects for which it was the Executing Agency. The bank would thus be a multi-purpose tool and it had seemed appropriate to submit the proposal to the Council in the first instance rather than to the Ad Hoc Committee. Similarly, the four proposals had not been officially placed before the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination, which dealt with the work programmes in their final form, because the proposals could not be included in the Division's work programme until the Council had taken a decision on them. Document E/4478 had been available when the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination had met and he would gladly have provided information on the proposals if any of the members of that Committee had asked for it.

The USSR representative had said that the data bank proposal was not devoid of interest and that the present data-handling system was unsatisfactory. However, that representative, like many others, had felt that more background information was needed. The Secretariat had deliberately refrained from providing too many technical details, partly because it had believed that the Council would be more interested in policy statements and partly because it was under constant pressure to limit the volume of documentation. It had nevertheless carefully studied the proposals before submitting them and had prepared a number of detailed preliminary background papers.

The data bank was needed urgently, for the Division received approximately 2,000 reports a year from its experts alone, plus reports from sub-contracting firms, technical advisers and other sources. The resulting volume of documentation

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and Transport Division)

was much too large to be handled efficiently by a conventional filing system. The Council had already recognized the need to find better ways of handling the information derived from reports, for in resolution 1263 (XLIII) it had invited the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination to request the Inter-Agency Study Group on Evaluation to undertake a thorough study of measures taken or contemplated by United Nations organizations for the purpose of improving the methods applied for the use of the reports from experts, technical advisers and chiefs of technical assistance missions. FAO and WHO had already begun to use computers and the World Bank was studying the possibility of using computers to store various types of data, including project information. UNDP, too, was investigating that possibility, but had informed the United Nations Secretariat that each Executing Agency must find its own solution to the data handling problem.

The Resources and Transport Division felt that the data bank was an urgent and practical necessity and would make it easier to evaluate the available information as a basis for decision-making. He therefore appealed to the Committee to approve the proposed feasibility study; the Council would subsequently have an opportunity to take a final decision on the data bank on the basis of the results of the study. He hoped that some Governments would make experts available at their expense to help the Secretariat with the study.

The proposed Journal on Non-Agricultural Resources would help to provide practical guidelines for officials of governmental and non-governmental organizations, as well as for technical assistance experts, project managers and others actively involved in promoting the development of non-agricultural resources. It would promote the application of economic, scientific and technical knowledge to the solution of solution of technical problems relating to resource development. Each issue would contain several different types of information, including brief reports on pre-investment and technical assistance projects being carried out under the operational responsibility of the Resources and Transport Division and summaries of seminars, study groups, workshops and discussions organized under United Nations auspices for the discussion of resource development. There were at least eight to ten such meetings a year, covering policy, planning, technical and

(Mr. Barnea, Director, Resources
and Transport Division)

managerial questions. So far lack of funds had usually prevented the early publication of their proceedings which were eagerly awaited by those interested.

The idea of publishing a Journal had been put forward because many delegations had asked the Secretariat for information on Special Fund projects. As the Japanese representative had pointed out at the previous meeting, there was often a considerable delay in publishing the final reports of such projects, but there seemed to be no immediate possibility of remedying that situation. However, summaries of the results of the field work involved in those projects could be published in the Journal relatively quickly. The Journal would meet a real and serious need, for it would constitute a medium for disseminating information which only the United Nations could provide and which would be of use to Governments and to the academic, scientific and business communities in both developed and developing countries.

It would not duplicate the work of existing scientific publications, which were narrowly technical in scope and were not concerned primarily with the problems of the developing countries. The UNESCO newsletter dealt with roughly the same field as the proposed Journal, but it concentrated on the scientific as opposed to the development aspect of its material and there would thus be no overlapping.

The Secretariat had realized that the figure given for the financial implications of the Journal was very high and that, when the proposal was submitted to the Council, the question of cost would probably constitute a major problem. It had therefore approached a serious and experienced private publishing house in Western Europe, which had undertaken a commercial market survey and had stated that it was willing and able to publish and disseminate the Journal on behalf of the United Nations at its own risk and expense. There was no way of knowing whether the Journal, if published by the United Nations, would cover its costs or make a profit, but the publisher obviously believed that it would be profitable. In any case, there was a serious need for the Journal, and it was for the Committee to indicate what course should be taken in the future.

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and Transport Division)

He agreed that the financial implications for the proposed meetings of the ad hoc group of experts were surprisingly high, mainly because it was now necessary to include the cost of translation and other conference services. The meetings were, however, highly necessary, for they would enable competent specialists to formulate practical proposals for the development of non-agricultural resources as an integral part of national development.

Replying to the first question put by the Japanese representative at the previous meeting, he said that the Resources and Transport Division was already doing some work on the non-agricultural resources of the sea and would submit reports on that work to the Council at its forty-fifth session. The expansion of those activities would depend on the decisions taken by the Council and the Ad Hoc Committee on the Survey Programme for the Development of Natural Resources. The Division was also concerned with off-shore mineral exploration, but would not increase its activities in that field unless it was given priority in government requests to UNDP. As to the second question, the United Nations certainly did not intend to take over the role of private capital in mineral development. United Nations and UNDP funds were used only for pre-investment work for which private capital was not available; once minerals were discovered, their development was taken over by private interests or by the Government concerned.

Mr. SANCHIS MUÑOZ (Argentina) introduced draft resolution E/AC.6/L.379, which reflected the great interest which the developing countries attached to United Nations activities relating to the development of natural resources. The draft resolution should be judged on its own merits and not in the light of the comments made on the report (E/4478 and Add.1) and its financial implications (E/4478/Add.2). The sponsors were not sure whether the statement of financial implications could be applied exactly to the draft resolution, which had been prepared before the statement appeared. The sponsors understood that the feasibility study for the data bank and the proposed meetings of the ad hoc group of experts could be financed wholly or partially from existing resources, but even if more funds had to be made available, the value of the projects would justify the additional expenditure. The sponsors, like many other delegations, were somewhat concerned about the high cost of the proposed Journal - which could

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perhaps be reduced by publishing fewer issues - but felt that the publication would perform a useful and indeed necessary function.

Mr. MOUNIR (Morocco) said that his delegation had had some difficulty in reaching a decision on the subject under discussion, because of the paucity of the material provided, the late arrival of the French texts and the highly technical nature of the problem. It had been particularly hard to reach a decision on the Secretary-General's proposals, but the statements of previous speakers had been helpful in that respect.

His Government did not share all the criticisms which had been made. While its three main priorities for development were agriculture, the training of professional staff and tourism, it also attached importance to the development of non-agricultural resources as a way of mobilizing capital. In the light of the experience of FAO with its data bank, the Government of Morocco had set up its own data bank dealing with all aspects of economic development, and, with the assistance of the UNDP (Special Fund), was carrying out a potash exploration project.

The proposals in the Argentine draft resolution were worth while and deserving of support; the data bank was particularly necessary because most of the prospecting for non-agricultural resources was currently done by private enterprises, each concerned with its own particular field, with the result that no over-all picture of the total resources of a country was obtained.

Mr. JULEV (Bulgaria) said that the problem of the development of non-agricultural resources was not new. His Government attached great importance to it as the basis for industrialization and the development of a workable economic system. For that reason, it had always approached the question from the standpoint of inalienable sovereignty over natural resources, not only because infringement of that principle constituted an infringement of national sovereignty, but because it also led to what might be termed a predatory attitude towards the natural resources of sovereign States. In the past, Bulgaria had been in the position of many developing countries at the present time; its natural resources had been exploited with the "help" of foreign Powers, with the result that economic development was slow and backward and many important deposits had

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(Mr. Julev, Bulgaria)

been worked out. In the past twenty years, Bulgaria, working in close collaboration with the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries, had completely rebuilt its economy on the basis of development of its own natural resources. Bulgarian geologists were now making their experience available to a number of developing countries in the Middle East and in Africa on a bilateral basis, and his Government was also prepared to participate in the multilateral assistance provided through the United Nations system.

His delegation welcomed the work done by that system in the field of development of non-agricultural resources. However, it felt that the Secretary-General's report did not adequately reflect the whole range of activities. Data on the work of UNESCO, UNIDO and similar organizations were not presented. He agreed with a number of previous speakers that the proposals made in the report had not been studied in sufficient depth. On the question of the proposed data bank, his delegation sympathized with the opinion of the Swedish representative that the work would best be performed by UNIDO, the organization most closely concerned with the process of industrialization to which the development of non-agricultural resources must lead. The Committee was not in a position to take a decision on the other proposals at the present session. Discussion of them should be postponed until more comprehensive studies were available.

His delegation sympathized with the motives which had led to the submission of the Argentine draft resolution, and agreed with many of the attitudes expressed in it. However, since the questions involved had not been fully studied, he felt that it would be advisable not to adopt the resolution at the present stage.

Mr. POSNETT (United Kingdom) said that the interesting and valuable debate which had taken place had shown a widespread appreciation of the importance of the development of non-agricultural resources and of the work of the United Nations in that field. Many representatives felt that the Secretary-General's proposals had not been fully justified and had observed that they should have been studied first by the Ad Hoc Committee on the Survey Programme for the Development of Natural Resources and the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination. His delegation was in general agreement with those statements.

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(Mr. Posnett, United Kingdom)

The role of the United Nations in the development of non-agricultural resources should be considered in the light of the fact that both its human and its financial resources were limited and that efforts must therefore be concentrated where they could be of the most value; a further criterion should be the needs of the poorer developing countries, to which programmes must be tailored. The role of the United Nations would always remain marginal compared with that of Governments and academic and private institutions; it should not compete with existing organizations, but should attempt to fill the gaps in their programmes, for example, by means of UNDP projects.

He had been interested by the statement of the Director of the Resources and Transport Division that private enterprises often took over the exploitation of resources detected by United Nations prospecting surveys. During the debates in the UNDP Governing Council in January 1968 it had been stated that, although no country should be disqualified from receiving Special Fund aid, those which did receive assistance should bear more of the financial burden. Governments deriving royalties from the exploitation of their natural resources by private concerns should, wherever possible, make an effort to repay to the United Nations the benefits they had derived from its programme.

While his delegation agreed that the activities of the Resources and Transport Division were of great value, it also felt that the proposals contained in the Secretary-General's report needed more careful study. It was not yet apparent in what way the data bank would be of direct use to developing countries.

He welcomed the Director's statement on sales of the proposed Journal. Publication might well be entrusted to private enterprise, thereby saving United Nations resources for more practical projects. However, the question arose whether Governments would agree to the publication in that Journal of the result of surveys conducted in their territory.

The establishment of an expert group would divert valuable human resources from work which was of more direct advantage to developing countries; table 1 in annex 1 of document E/4478 clearly showed the increasing demand for the services of experts in the field.

The question of holding national seminars, the last proposal contained in the report, seemed more appropriate to action at the national than the international level.

(Mr. Posnett, United Kingdom)

He agreed with the representative of Bulgaria that it was too early to take a final decision on the operative paragraphs of the Argentine draft resolution in their present form; further study was needed. The resolution had been introduced before the Committee's debate on the subject had begun; valuable ideas had since been raised which he felt sure the co-sponsors would wish to take into account. It might be best for the draft to be taken no further at the present stage; the Secretariat could keep the matter under study and insert relevant proposals into its work programme for consideration by the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination. Meanwhile the Committee could take note of the report and await further developments.

Mr. LOPEZ URZUA (Guatemala) said that Guatemala, as a developing country with very serious problems and with no experience which would allow it to find solutions, was particularly eager to develop its natural resources. A great deal of material on that subject was published, but not all of it was readily accessible or of direct utility. The proposed data bank could make an important contribution in that respect; the Director of the Resources and Transport Division had mentioned the difficulties of making information readily available; and had stressed the importance of the productive results to be attained by a system such as that in operation at FAO. A further contribution could be made through the exchange of experience by means of the proposed Journal.

In general, his delegation found the explanations given by the Director of the Resources and Transport Division satisfactory, and did not share all the concern expressed by other delegations. The statement of the Director had dissipated the doubts which his delegation had felt because the functions of the data bank seemed vague. Although the reasons given by the Director for not including more detail in the report were well-founded, a document should be produced specifying the area from which data would be collected, the processes through which they would be put and the uses which would be made of them.

As a co-sponsor of the Argentine draft resolution, his delegation supported it fully. As a developing country Guatemala was obviously extremely concerned with problems of expenditure, since lack of capital was a fundamental problem of

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(Mr. Lopez Urzua, Guatemala)

development. Nevertheless, he believed, with the representative of Argentina, that in the present case the benefits to be derived from the proposals fully justified the costs. Sufficient information was available for a decision as to how often the Journal should be published, a factor which would obviously affect the final cost. That decision should be left to the Secretariat, while the Director of the Resources and Transport Division should decide what the contents of the Journal should be. It seemed likely to be of interest primarily to Governments and private bodies engaged in development work. The Director's explanation had convinced him that there would be no duplication of material with other publications, and, in view of the difficulties encountered in publishing the conclusions of seminars and similar meetings, the Journal would undoubtedly be of great benefit. The proposals in the draft resolution thus seemed well founded, and he remained firm in his support of it.

Mr. FIGUEREDO-PLANCHART (Venezuela) said that, although the development of natural resources was important for economic development, the Secretary-General's report rightly pointed out (E/4478, para. 113) that the development process had three essential dimensions - physical resources, technological factors and human elements. Like other countries, Venezuela was aware of the importance of natural resources and of the development of unexplored regions. It appreciated the continuing assistance of the United Nations in that field.

The report under consideration gave a useful description of the work on non-agricultural resources being done by the Resources and Transport Division but did not mention the activities of other United Nations organs or the way in which they were being co-ordinated. It was thus difficult to establish guidelines for international co-operation to assist the developing countries during the forthcoming decade. The Committee for Programme and Co-ordination could help the Council to establish priorities in the United Nations programmes concerned with natural resources; it was to consider those programmes during the second part of its second session.

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(Mr. Figueredo-Planchart, Venezuela)

In its operational activities concerning non-agricultural resources, the United Nations should bear in mind the ultimate purpose of the development of those resources. It appeared from the statements made by the Director that the Resources and Transport Division was aware of the need to orient the efforts of the developing countries towards the exploration of scarce minerals for which there would be a good market. If the minerals were sold on the international market, they would be an important source of foreign exchange earnings. If the market was a national one, it was important to consider not only the possible savings in foreign exchange but also the real impact on the entire economy of the country, bearing in mind the comparative advantages of the possible alternatives. In any case, before prospecting for a new mineral was started, the international market for the mineral and the prices prevailing on that market should be examined. There was a need for better co-ordination between the goals pursued by the developing countries through the Resources and Transport Division and those pursued through UNCTAD.

Paragraph 1 of document E/4478 stated that the survey programme for the development of natural resources for developing countries had been endorsed by the Council in resolution 1218 (XLII). Yet in that resolution the Council had simply approved the broad outlines of the survey programme and had established an Ad Hoc Committee to analyse the programme further. His delegation wondered why the report made no mention of the Ad Hoc Committee and why that Committee had not met to perform the tasks assigned to it by the Council.

Referring to paragraph 6 of document E/4478, his delegation would like to know what would be the implications, in terms of investment as well as pre-investment, of the projects in question becoming operational. It wondered how many of the 110 projects mentioned would shortly be launched, what the over-all financial implications would be and where it was planned to obtain the necessary capital.

Lastly, his delegation wished to know whether the Advisory Committee on the Application of Science and Technology to Development had requested the assistance of the Resources and Transport Division in the preparation of its report on natural resources.

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(Mr. Figueredo-Planchart, Venezuela)

It would be interesting to obtain the views of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Survey Programme for the Development of Natural Resources and of the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination on the proposals made in paragraph 116 of document E/4478.

The draft resolution in document E/AC.6/L.379 raised certain questions of co-ordination, on which the views of the other organs concerned should be obtained. His delegation had doubts about the advisability of establishing a data centre, since the administration of UNDP had instructed each executing agency to make its own arrangements for data handling. The Committee for Programme and Co-ordination should be given an opportunity to express an opinion on the proposal for a periodic publication on non-agricultural resources.

The Venezuelan Government had been seriously concerned to note from paragraph 81 of document E/4478/Add.1 that the United Nations was executing a project in Guyana. Some of the operations were being conducted in an area of Guyana to which Venezuela laid claim. His Government therefore could not be bound by any actions concerning that area. It was currently seeking a solution to the dispute with Guyana through a joint commission.

Mr. CUHRUK (Turkey) congratulated the Resources and Transport Division on its activities. His delegation welcomed the fact that they had acquired an operational character over the years and had resulted in many successes, the most recent being the discovery of geothermal energy sources in his own country. In view of the importance of the development of non-agricultural resources to the developing countries, the value of United Nations activities in that field could not be overestimated. Through training programmes, seminars, conferences and so on, the Organization was able to provide the developing countries with the modern technology they needed for the discovery and exploitation of underground resources. It was also able to provide invaluable assistance in the preparation of projects, plans of operations, feasibility studies and job descriptions for experts, in establishing new institutions and in helping to draft legislation.

Regarding the suggestions contained in the Secretary-General's report (E/4478 and Add.1 and 2), he sympathized with the motives which had led the Secretariat to propose the establishment of a data bank. If, however, the United Nations

(Mr. Cuhruk, Turkey)

Development Programme was studying a similar proposal, there was an obvious case of duplication. At the forty-third session of the Council, his delegation had stressed the need for the different specialized agencies in Geneva to share such facilities as computers and printing presses as far as possible and that need was just as evident in New York. After hearing the Director's explanations, however, his delegation felt it could support the proposal. It also viewed with sympathy the proposal regarding a journal on non-agricultural resources. Such a publication could provide a channel for disseminating information to developing countries about new developments, most of which took place in industrialized countries. As stated in paragraph 90 of the report, it could also provide information about new discoveries in developing countries so that foreign enterprises could consider participating in their exploitation. Finally, it could help to ensure that officials in the developing countries were made aware of the results of international study groups, seminars and workshops, which at present was not always the case. Although the proposal had aroused some criticism, particularly with regard to its cost, it was basically sound. He would suggest that the Secretariat might study it further, produce more concrete proposals regarding the contents of the periodical and look into the possibility of having a publishing house take over its publication. As regards the proposal for a study by an expert group of planning for the development of non-agricultural resources, he did not see what exactly it was meant to achieve. The formulation and implementation of a development plan was not an easy task and any assistance from the United Nations in that connexion was obviously welcome. But he doubted whether a study by a limited group of experts could really make a significant contribution, since by its nature it could only contain partial conclusions of marginal utility to developing countries. As regards the proposal for national seminars, since they would be held only at the request of the interested Governments and to the extent that funds were available under the technical assistance programme, his delegation could support it. His delegation would decide its position on the draft resolution (E/AC.6/L.379) in the light of those considerations.

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Mr. COX (Sierra Leone) thanked the Secretary-General and his staff for their report (E/4478 and Add.1 and 2). Activities by the United Nations concerning the development of non-agricultural resources should be organized in such a way as to get to the root of the matter and not be distracted by superficial aspects. He therefore welcomed the approach taken by the Secretariat as indicated in the report. The United Nations should not merely promote productivity for the sake of productivity. It should help establish the industries most suited for development within a particular territory. For example, in the case of mining, developing countries should be aided not only to become producers of raw materials, but also producers of manufactured goods; if foreign capital was unavailable, they could be helped to establish smelting and refining industries. Such assistance would be one way of reducing the current inequalities in international trade. The independence granted to most former colonies had automatically turned the Government into an entrepreneur in such countries, since private enterprise and capital formation were lacking. The developing countries varied in their levels of development and the less developed were surely entitled to more aid. It was to be hoped that the United Nations would act accordingly. Some of the less developed of the developing countries seemed especially favoured for United Nations assistance, for reasons his delegation found it hard to understand. It hoped that in future the resources would be spread around more evenly so as to do the greatest good to the greatest number.

Mr. RODRIGUEZ (Philippines) expressed appreciation for the important work being done by the Resources and Transport Division. The development of non-agricultural resources would give the developing countries an important source of foreign exchange earnings and an essential instrument for the strengthening of their agriculture, industries, transport, communications and construction activities. Since few developing countries had adequate cartography, geology and hydrology services, there was an urgent need to improve the quantity and the quality of national specialists. The United Nations should seek ways and means of promoting the training of competent national personnel in the developing countries. In the Philippines, an Institute of Applied Geology had been established to meet the need for trained geologists.

(Mr. Rodriguez, Philippines)

Before taking a decision on the various proposals which had been made, the Council should seek the opinion of the other United Nations bodies concerned. The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions and the Fifth Committee of the General Assembly might be able to shed further light on the financial implications. It would be useful also to obtain the view of Governments on the proposal for the publication of a Journal on Non-Agricultural Resources. The Council should consider whether the need for such a journal was great enough to justify the expense which would be incurred. The study on the feasibility of establishing a data bank would not be very costly and should be undertaken.

Since it was felt that a decision on the publication of a journal should be postponed, his delegation suggested that operative paragraph 5 of draft resolution E/AC.6/L.379 should be amended and should simply request the Secretary-General to prepare a report on the possible contents, nature and scope of a periodic publication on non-agricultural resources.

Mr. DUBEY (India) expressed great satisfaction with the work done by the United Nations concerning the development of non-agricultural resources, as described in the Secretary-General's report (E/4478 and Add.1 and 2). The results achieved had been impressive and due credit should be given to the Director of the Resources and Transport Division and his staff. The report showed, in paragraphs 14 and 15, why action by the United Nations in that field was so necessary. It also pointed out, in paragraph 13, that the Organization's programme was modest in relation to countries' needs. Some took the view that that situation must simply be accepted. But the developing countries were firm in their belief that the role of the United Nations in non-agricultural resources development must be expanded. In their view, therefore, it was necessary to consider the implications of such an expansion as regards finance, co-ordination and other matters. The Director's replies to questions in that connexion had allayed many apprehensions, but there were some points on which no answer had been given. It was therefore difficult for his delegation to take a position on the four suggestions put to the Council in paragraph 116 of the report. Even if the Council could not approve them outright at the present session, it should at least recognize their value and indicate the manner in which they should be processed further.

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Mr. ROUAMBA (Upper Volta) said that he was surprised at the way the Committee was dealing with the item under discussion, and particularly at the order in which the sub-items were being considered. In view of the highly technical nature of the subject, he would have thought it preferable to take the whole item as one.

As far as sub-item (b) on non-agricultural resources was concerned, he wished to pay a tribute to the work done by the United Nations. The report showed that the Resources and Transport Division understood the nature of the question and the aspects that should be stressed. He was rather puzzled, however, by the statements in paragraphs 113 and 114 implying that the need to develop natural resources was not properly recognized in the developing countries when the reverse was surely true; the Secretariat might wish to give an explanation. The report's conclusions contained various suggestions on which the Committee was invited to take some action, but he did not see why that action should take the form of a draft resolution. On the first suggestion, regarding the establishment of a data bank, he considered that the situation might have been different if the Committee had had the explanations subsequently given by the Director at the beginning. As it was, although the idea seemed good in principle, it had not been studied enough and any decision would be premature. On the proposal for a periodic publication concerning non-agricultural resources, he again had reservations. Those for whom it would be intended would presumably already have access to the material it would contain; more would be gained by promoting the dissemination of information at the national level. On the proposal for a study by an expert group on planning for non-agricultural resources development, which he assumed would be scheduled for 1969, he felt that the financial implications must be studied before any decision was taken. On the proposal for national seminars, he asked whether any proposals regarding such seminars had come from Governments and if not why the idea was put forward. Finally, with regard to all four suggestions, he wondered why it was proposed thus to add to the Secretariat's workload when in paragraph 18 of the report the staff was said to be already overloaded. At all events, all the proposals seemed to require further study. It would therefore be preferable not to take action on them at the present session and thus avoid imposing on the Secretariat a programme which had not been fully considered. Instead, the

(Mr. Rouamba, Upper Volta)

Committee might take note with appreciation of what had been done and ask the Secretariat to pursue the matter further. As far as the draft resolution before the Committee (E/AC.6/L.379) was concerned, his delegation had certain amendments, which it would circulate in writing.

It was not quite clear to him what future action was proposed apart from the four suggestions made in the report. For his part, he would suggest that the Secretariat might link operations by different divisions concerning the same branch of technology more closely. It should also ensure more rapid communications by sending more staff into the field and improving the facilities for consultation with Headquarters. Every effort should be made to enable UNDP to use its resources as effectively as possible in the service of the developing countries. Without going to the length of establishing a periodical, the latest information on the development of countries' resources which might be helpful to other countries should be systematically collected, analysed and disseminated. Finally, the execution of projects should be taken as an opportunity for spreading technological knowledge, particularly among intermediate levels of personnel.

Mr. VARELA (Panama) said that it was not enough simply to express the hope that the Resources and Transport Division would continue its good work; the Division should be given the means to make a greater and more positive contribution to the development of natural resources. That was the aim of the draft resolution of which his delegation was a sponsor (E/AC.6/L.379).

It had been argued that the request in paragraph 3 of the draft resolution should have been channelled through the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination. It was well known that questions of co-ordination in the United Nations were extremely involved and the matter would simply be complicated further if it were referred to the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination. Indeed, that Committee was not competent to decide on the merits of such a proposal; its membership was determined by political considerations of equitable geographical distribution and it was not an expert committee. The proposal made in paragraph 3 reflected the views expressed in paragraph 108 of document E/4478. The study to be made would complement the activities of the Research and Transport Division and help it to evolve a strategy for the best use of non-agricultural resources. It was true

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(Mr. Varela, Panama)

that there was already an Ad Hoc Committee dealing with natural resources but that Committee had not yet done any work. It was also true that the study would have financial implications. However, in an international co-operative venture such as the United Nations, the richer countries had to display political willingness to help their less fortunate neighbours.

The need for the data centre proposed in paragraph 4 of the draft resolution had been abundantly proved. A system had to be devised whereby the considerable data dispersed throughout various United Nations bodies could be collected and easily retrieved.

If the proposed journal could be published by an outside firm at its own expense and risk, there would be no financial implications for the Organization. However, the nature, content and periodicity of the journal should be decided by the United Nations. Too much emphasis had been placed on the cost/profit ratio and not enough on the cost/benefit ratio.

The proposed national seminars would have no financial implications. They would be held only at the request of Governments.

Mr. GROS (France) asked whether, in view of the comments made by the Director of the Research and Transport Division, a revised statement of financial implications would be issued.

The meeting rose at 7 p.m.

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