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SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 18th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. GHEZAL (Tunisia)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.30 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 82: DEVELOPMENT AND INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC CO-OPERATION (continued)
(A/44/3, 84, 139, 187-188, 235, 254, 260, 355, 409 and Corr.1, 467, 499, 598, 617)

- (f) ENVIRONMENT (A/44/25, 256 and Corr.1, 264, 278, 295, 332, 339 and Add.1-11, 340, 349-350, 362 and Corr.1, 386, 479-480, 578, 632; A/C.2/44/L.2, L.6, L.7)
- (g) DESERTIFICATION AND DROUGHT (A/44/25, 296, 351; DP/1989/50)
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AGENDA ITEM 85: PROTECTION OF GLOBAL CLIMATE FOR PRESENT AND FUTURE GENERATIONS OF MANKIND (A/44/260, 264, 340, 394, 409 and Corr.1, 463, 477, 484; A/C.2/44/2)

1. Mr. TOLBA (Executive Director, United Nations Environment Programme) said that at its fifteenth session the Governing Council of UNEP had adopted a forward-looking agenda, thereby demonstrating its responsiveness to public opinion.
2. There was no doubt that the surging public concern over the continuing deterioration of the environment had stimulated a new-found interest in environmental protection among Governments. People were rising up in defence of the environment and demanding radical action from their Governments. It was reasonable to expect that that revolution in public attitudes would be accompanied by equally dramatic action at the governmental and intergovernmental levels. However, so far had been very little in the way of action.
3. The environmental crisis demanded nothing less than a revolution in the conduct of international affairs, one that acknowledged the need for global partnership and new sources of finance that would help all, in particular the developing countries, to overcome the environmental destruction that threatened the peace and stability of the international community.
4. Recalling that he had been requested in Economic and Social Council decision 1988/69 to report on how additional resources to help developing countries were being met, he said that the response had been universally disappointing. With regard to the 1977 Plan of Action to Combat Desertification, donor and affected countries alike had turned virtually a blind eye to a problem that menaced 700 million people.
5. The Mediterranean Action Plan operated on \$6 million a year and the other regional sea accords on far less, while what was needed was tens of hundreds of millions.
6. The Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal could not enter into force until it had been ratified by 20 Governments. In that connection, he looked to the African Governments, which had pressed for such a convention, to lead the way.

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(Mr. Tolba)

7. The Governing Council had authorized him to convene an ad hoc working group to develop a global convention on the subject of conserving biological diversity. Note should be taken of the Council's resolve that the convention should address social and economic aspects. In so doing, the Council had demonstrated its understanding that nature protection was a hollow undertaking unless it embraced the basic issue of equity in sharing the benefits. The main benefactors of biological diversity had been industry and commerce and mechanisms must be established to enable local people - the real owners of biological resources - to share in the benefits.

8. The Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer still shone like a beacon of hope and light for international resolve, which was reflected in the report on progress on protection of the ozone layer submitted in response to General Assembly resolution 42/182. However, unless all nations were prepared to pull together, the momentum created at Montreal could be lost. All major industrial nations were now resolved to see the elimination of ozone-depleting chemicals. However, that must be a genuinely international effort and the participation in the Protocol of all developing countries was essential. That would not happen without guarantees of technology transfer. The next meeting of the parties to the Protocol would take place at London in June 1990. Only by working to reconcile positions and to understand one another's point of view could the momentum be maintained and a broader, stronger treaty achieved. Only thus could the international community address meaningfully the more daunting issue of climate change and global warming.

9. The WMO/UNEP Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) was well advanced in its preparations for a report to the next session of the General Assembly and the Second World Climate Conference to be held in 1990. The report would cover the state of science and impact of global warming and policy options and strategies to limit and cope with climate change. Those options would have to address the major economic activities of the human race, including energy, industry, transportation, agriculture and forestry.

10. The Council had no illusion about the daunting nature of the task at hand. Coping with global warming would require major adjustments in the course of development, a major shift in the approach to financing required actions, and innovative thinking on sources of finances.

11. As environment had moved to take its rightful place at the top of the international agenda, controversial and potentially divisive issues had emerged. Foremost was a suspicion that it could become a vehicle for conditionality. The Governing Council had dealt with the issue head-on and had agreed on a definition for environmentally sound and sustainable development. It had emphatically agreed that sustainable development did not in any way represent a new form of conditionality in aid or development financing. The Council's report (A/44/25) reflected its determination to ensure that the 1990s became the decade of action. UNEP would enter the 1990s with firm expectations that contributions would double to \$100 million a year by 1992 and with more business-like procedures for Council sessions.

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(Mr. Tolba)

12. The Council had selected the following six areas for priority attention by UNEP: climate change and ozone depletion; shared fresh water resources; regional seas and their coastal areas; combating land degradation, covering both desertification and deforestation; conservation of biological diversity; and management of hazardous waste and toxic chemicals.

13. The Council had felt that the priorities needed follow-up and further development and had decided to hold a three-day special session in 1990. In fact, recent developments in the environmental field had raised questions at the Council as to whether its biennial cycle should not be reconsidered.

14. Governments and United Nations agencies were unanimous about the need to convene a United Nations conference on environment and development, and felt that it should be held in 1992, the twentieth anniversary of the Stockholm Conference on the Human Environment. The issues proposed for consideration reflected the interdependence of environmental and developmental issues. Financial support for environmentally sound development, strengthening of international co-operation and the formulation of new legal instruments and plans of action were covered. Land-use, climate change, ozone, population and energy were among the specific issues suggested for the focus of the conference.

15. The prevailing view in the Council was that the conference should place the environment in the wider context of the development process. In that connection, he referred to the Council's decision 15/3, which contained a clear set of suggestions for items that should be considered, and stressed the need for the conference to result in commitments by Governments to achieve specific targets within specific periods of time with a clear indication of the resources needed and where they would come from.

16. The Governing Council had suggested that the conference should be convened for two weeks at the highest level to coincide with World Environment Day on 5 June, that it should itself be the intergovernmental preparatory committee, and that a secretariat should be set up immediately at Geneva with a Secretary-General at its head.

17. He urged the Committee to consider the resources that should be made available for the preparations of the conference, noting that the time available for preparations was very short and the issues to be dealt with were very complex and would require continuous rounds of intense negotiations if the necessary breakthrough was to be achieved. He also noted that the proposed secretariat must draw its main resources from the regular budget, yet must be set up and run in such a way that it could draw on the work not only of UNEP but of the other major organizations of the United Nations system. Locating the secretariat in Europe would help it immeasurably in its work.

18. A period of sustained and meaningful action on the environment could help redeem the promise of development, bringing benefits that would enable nations to gain confidence to tackle the inequity that compounded environmental impoverishment. As tensions between the two great economic and political power

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(Mr. Tolba)

blocc eased, the wasting of the planet's resources was coming to replace war as the greatest perceived threat to humanity. If it was possible to spend \$1.3 trillion annually on preparations for war, why could funds of a similar magnitude not be generated to protect people's environment, right to development, and right to live? There were no easy solutions to the environmental crisis. It was folly to expect that international resolutions and agreements, still less a single conference, would change the world. Yet such a conference could demonstrate that the present generation was prepared to embark on a course of action that would give the next the option of creating a safer, cleaner and fairer world; and to demonstrate that the United Nations was the last and best hope for the embattled human environment.

19. Mr. BRANNER (Director, United Nations Sudano-Sahelian Office), said that the trend which he had reported two years previously towards increasing rainfall and improvement in the climatic situation of Africa in general and of the Sudano-Sahelian region in particular had been confirmed, at least for the short term, by the provisional conclusions of a survey being carried out by the United Nations Sudano-Sahelian Office (UNSO) and a group of other United Nations organizations. The survey seemed to confirm an improvement in agricultural production, rainfall and hydrological trends. Information on biomass over the past three years was encouraging, and there was apparently a slackening in the process of environmental deterioration. It was difficult, however, to determine how much of that improvement was attributable simply to more favourable climatic conditions, rather than to actions undertaken to protect the region's productive resource base.

20. The survey also showed considerable differences in perceptions by the parties concerned of the problems and of the measures needed to address them. Those differences notwithstanding, consensus was emerging on the usefulness of establishing national strategic frameworks to address all aspects of the problems of drought and desertification, and of addressing them as an integral part of programmes aimed at sustainable economic development.

21. The return of a more benign climate and of improved harvests should not disguise the effects of continuing harmful land-use practices and other factors contributing to ecological degradation. Even if the currently favourable trends persisted, there must be no relaxation in the efforts of Governments to introduce and consolidate sustainable systems of production, and of the international community to support those efforts. The situation continued to be worrisome, with the traditional systems of agricultural production in most African countries no longer meeting the increased demands placed on them, nor guaranteeing the economic surpluses necessary for improvements in the quality of life. Even when those systems managed to meet demand they often did so at the price of an ecological stress that negated all efforts to achieve sustainable development.

22. Advantage must therefore be taken of the relatively favourable conditions currently prevailing, to accelerate and intensify efforts to prepare for more difficult times and establish the basis for longer-term development. Recent initiatives on the part of the countries affected, regional bodies, the donor community and international organizations demonstrated an increasing awareness that

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(Mr. Branner)

the limited and sectoral approach adopted thus far did not work. A recent French initiative called "L'Observatoire du Sahara et du Sahel" responded to the same concerns, singling out three key areas of desertification control: the need to improve the monitoring of the desertification process; the need to gear research efforts specifically towards sustainable methods of production; and the need for better practical application of successful experiences. UNSO continued to be closely involved with the French authorities in the development of the programme.

23. With specific regard to the Sudano-Sahelian region of Africa, UNSO's first concern was to provide Governments with the assistance they needed to elaborate and implement national plans and policies regarding drought and desertification and other related environmental factors. Such assistance took the form of elaboration and implementation of strategic frameworks for action, sometimes including the creation and strengthening of appropriate governmental structures, so as to ensure that the proper priority was accorded to the protection of productive natural resources and to the fight against desertification.

24. UNSO sought to promote ecological monitoring in countries lacking the necessary means and structures for such monitoring. At the same time, it had continued to pursue its more traditional activities in programming, financing and implementation of operational projects. There again, the fundamental idea was to establish minimal conditions for sustainable development. UNSO had also continued to provide the principal support for the Ministerial Conference for a joint policy to combat desertification (COMIDES), as an innovative forum bringing together countries of north Africa and the Sudano-Sahelian region at ministerial level, for the sharing of experiences and strategies in combating drought and desertification.

25. The past two years had been marked by significant increases in contributions from donor countries to UNSO's activities - a trend which not only reflected confidence in UNSO's current approach, but also reflected the increased awareness among donors of the gravity and complexity of the problems, and of the need for international solidarity and co-operation to solve them. Questions of the environment in general and desertification in particular could not be separated from the issue of development in that region of Africa, which had the highest concentration of countries classified as least developed. It was thus important that during the preparations for the 1992 conference on environment and development, particular attention should be accorded to the issue of drought and desertification. In accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1989/103, UNSO would provide assistance to the Sudano-Sahelian countries with regard to preparations for the conference and for follow-up actions.

26. The task facing his organization was to protect the productive base of hundreds of millions of people. Much larger financial resources were needed if that challenge was to be confronted fully. He concluded with an appeal to the international community to accord the proper priority to measures for dealing with drought and drylands environmental degradation and to extend adequate aid for the development of the countries that were the chief victims of those twin scourges.

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27. Mr. RAZALI (Malaysia), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77, said that all countries of the world must act together on the basis of shared responsibilities to overcome major environmental problems. Global warming, depletion of the ozone layer, transboundary air pollution, contamination of the oceans, seas and skies, drought, desertification and deforestation were global problems requiring global solutions.

28. Issues relating to the environment and development continued to preoccupy the leaders of the developing countries. The latter were ready to intensify and promote international environmental co-operation in order to prevent the disruption of global ecological balances. Development and environmental concerns were mutually reinforcing. Meeting the basic needs of all people on the planet as well as improving the quality of life through development would contribute to environmental protection.

29. Historically and in current terms, the developed countries had been chiefly responsible for environmental degradation. Consequently, they must bear the responsibility for global environmental protection. That statement of fact should not, however, be seen as an attempt by developing countries to wrest concessions from the developed countries.

30. The leaders of the developing countries had also underscored the need for international measures to control the use of environmentally damaging substances, while stressing the need to bear in mind and redress the existing asymmetry in world consumption and production levels. At the same time, regulatory régimes which sought to subject production and consumption of certain substances to international control limits must be accompanied by supportive measures to facilitate adjustment by developing countries to new standards. Those measures must include net additional financial resources, and access to and transfer of alternative clean technologies.

31. Another issue of major concern to developing countries had been the dumping of toxic and other hazardous wastes in the territories of other countries. Pending appropriate action with a view to the adoption of effective international measures, the developed countries should adopt rigorous administrative measures and legislation to ban the export of such wastes, especially to developing countries.

32. The developing countries were determined to play their role and discharge their responsibility in refraining from undertaking activities which would endanger the marine environment. They had also agreed on the need for action to deal with climatic changes and their global consequences. They had accordingly called for the preparation and adoption of an international convention for the protection and conservation of global climate, as a matter of urgency.

33. The Group of 77 wished to call on all countries, relevant United Nations bodies and agencies and non-governmental organizations to continue and intensify provision of assistance to all countries, especially in Africa, affected by drought and desertification, deforestation and soil erosion. The developed countries and international organizations should establish or upgrade mechanisms and funds to stimulate the transfer to the developing countries of clean technologies and

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(Mr. Razali, Malaysia)

technologies for environmental protection and improvement, and should earmark financial resources for environmental co-operation on concessional terms.

34. The Group of 77 welcomed Economic and Social Council resolution 1989/101 entitled "Strengthening international co-operation on the environment: provision of additional financial resources to developing countries", which had categorically stated that increasing attention needed to be paid to the provision of new and additional financial resources to developing countries for environmental programmes and projects so as to ensure that their development priorities were not adversely affected and that such provision should be kept under more effective and continuous review. The resolution augured well for mutually beneficial co-operative endeavours designed to prevent environmental degradation while ensuring development.

35. The Group of 77 welcomed the proposal for convening a United Nations conference on environment and development, which would constitute an important opportunity to discuss mutually reinforcing environmental and development issues, and supported Brazil's offer to host the proposed conference. Preparations for the conference should be an example of complete and balanced co-operation between the developed and developing countries. The Group of 77 was well aware of the critical importance of the outcome of the conference, and was thus undertaking the fullest consultations in preparation for it.

36. Mr. CLERE (Observer for Switzerland) said that the spate of resolutions adopted at various international meetings calling for concrete measures in the field of the environment was unfortunately a response to increased environmental degradation. It had now become clear that the security of humankind depended to a large extent on its capacity to reduce and control pollution. For the last two years the Brundtland Commission had mobilized world opinion regarding the consequences of economic choices that failed to take account of the principles of sustainable development. The United Nations Environment Programme and the system as a whole had a crucial role to play in that regard. Some progress had already been made, for example, with the Geneva Convention of 1979 on long-range transboundary air pollution, which should make it possible to reduce substantially emissions of atmospheric pollutants at regional level. At world level, he welcomed the recent agreement on the reduction of emissions of chlorofluorocarbons to protect the ozone layer. At the start of the year, it had at last been possible to lay the foundations of a global policy on transfrontier movements of dangerous wastes. The Basel Convention would prohibit their exportation without the prior consent of the country of transit or the importing country, or if it seemed that the waste would not be correctly managed. On entry into force, those provisions would ban virtually all North-South exports. Forty countries had already signed the Convention and a number of ratifications were expected, so that it could be expected to enter into force before the end of 1990. The secretariat of the Convention would be installed shortly in Geneva, and would be able to deal with all the requests for co-operation that countries, particularly developing countries, would no doubt submit to it.

37. Against that background, the 1992 conference seemed to assume crucial significance. Interestingly enough, public opinion had already been mobilized, and

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(Mr. Clere, Observer, Switzerland)

there was much speculation as to what would be the outcome of the conference. The conference must take vital decisions in a number of fields, including protection of the atmosphere; water protection; measures to combat drought; maintenance of biological diversity; intervention in the event of an ecological accident; training, information and environmental law; and global and regional institutional aspects of improved management of the environment. Switzerland thus accorded paramount importance to the conference, and welcomed the resolution adopted at Nairobi in that regard.

38. In preparing for the 1992 conference, efforts must be made to avoid over-politicizing the process, by striving instead to concentrate on the true challenges of the environment, and to avoid the temptation to put forward unrealistic demands, since the conference must lead to concrete results and tangible measures. To achieve such results, the conference secretariat to be established must work closely with the main organizations concerned. Aware of its responsibilities and resolved to work to ensure the success of the conference, the Swiss Government had decided to facilitate the establishment of the secretariat in Geneva by making premises available at no cost until the end of 1992. That illustrated Switzerland's desire to co-operate closely with the efforts made by the international community and the United Nations to foster greater international co-operation. This country hoped that the secretariat would soon be in a position to embark on its activities, since the task ahead of it was a daunting one and the time available very limited. The secretariat must be headed by a strong personality, with great experience of national and international environmental questions. The incoming secretary-general must not only ensure that the conference was properly prepared, but must subsequently translate into deeds the expectations that would undoubtedly arise out of the conference.

39. Mr. KOULIK (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic) said that the UNEP Governing Council decision 15/1 on strengthening the role and effectiveness of UNEP reaffirmed the Programme's essential catalytic and co-ordinating role in the field of environment within the United Nations system and stressed the need to make the Council a more effective mechanism for promoting international co-operation in the field of environment. With regard to the establishment of a UNEP standing committee, his delegation believed that serious consideration should be given to the function and financial implications of such a committee. It would be interesting to assess the results of the meetings of the Bureau of the Council's fifteenth session with the bureaux of the counterpart organs of the specialized agencies.

40. The UNEP programme of work dealt with almost all aspects of the current state of the environment. International co-operation efforts should be concentrated on pressing problems, bearing in mind the Programme's limited financial resources. His delegation agreed that UNEP should focus on the eight areas of concentration enumerated in decision 15/1. The target of \$100 million for contribution to the Environment Fund by the year 1992 would require Governments to increase their contributions by at least 35 per cent per annum until 1992. While recognizing the importance of that goal, his delegation wished to stress once again the exclusively voluntary nature of contributions.

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(Mr. Koulik, Ukrainian SSR)

41. Another highly important aspect of the Programme's activities involved the monitoring of ecological threats, as well as the adoption of measures to respond to emergency environmental situations, and the drafting of recommendations on the elimination of the after-effects of such situations. Environmental protection required preventive measures, and his delegation invited all interested countries to consider the draft resolution submitted by Czechoslovakia and the Ukrainian SSR, entitled "International co-operation in the monitoring, assessment and anticipation of environmental threats" (A/C.2/44/L.6). In that regard, the proposal made by the Soviet Union at the forty-third session of the General Assembly, on the establishment of a Centre for Emergency Environmental Assistance was particularly relevant.

42. The Ukrainian SSR supported the Governing Council's decision to hold a special session in 1990, on the understanding that the time and location of the special session would be closely co-ordinated with that of the first meeting of the preparatory committee for the 1992 United Nations conference on environment and development, and that the financial implications of Council decision 15/4 would receive serious consideration. His delegation attached great importance to the preparatory work for the 1992 conference, which should become a landmark in efforts to improve the global environment, and should set out the principal guidelines for activities in the field of environmental protection to the end of the twentieth century.

43. The international legal instruments in the field of environment made a real contribution to improving the environment, and the Programme should encourage their implementation. As a party to several agreements on the protection of the atmosphere, the Ukrainian SSR had taken measures to reduce dangerous emissions into the atmosphere.

44. The Ukrainian SSR commended the work of the WMO/UNEP Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and looked forward to its interim report with great interest; the report was to be completed by October 1990, just before the Second World Climate Conference. That Conference should review the implementation of the World Climate Programme, giving due attention to the social and economic aspects of climate. In the opinion of his delegation, any strategy in the area of climate change should take account of the characteristics and levels of development of the various regions of the world. A number of effective measures could be undertaken by all States; for example, States could adopt policies which promoted energy conservation in order to reduce or completely eliminate certain forms of human activity which had negative effects on climate. The interaction of man and nature required a degree of harmonization of economic development and environmental protection which would gradually reduce the negative processes taking place in the ecosystems at the regional and global levels. In addition, all States should, as far as possible, observe the principles and norms of environmental co-operation in order to ensure a safe global environment. The United Nations had a major role to play in that area.

45. Mr. DJOGHLAF (Algeria) said that desertification affected more than 40 African countries and each year claimed, irreversibly, more than 6 million hectares of African land and was responsible for the deterioration of nearly

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(Mr. Djoghlaïf, Algeria)

21 million hectares, reducing their net output to zero. During the past 50 years, more than 65 million hectares of formerly green African lands had been claimed by desert on the southern border of the Sahara alone.

46. Algeria had not been spared by the encroaching sands. Beginning in 1973, Algeria had taken steps to ensure the survival of its vegetation through the construction of a "green dam", a veritable screen of saplings of various species, more than 10 kilometres deep, along its border. Since 1985, Algeria had sought to anchor the dunes in certain dry regions through the use of screens made of dried palms as well as innovative and less costly procedures such as extruded plastic mesh wind-breaks or screens consisting of fibro-cement plates.

47. The Algerian forest, whose area had been estimated in 1962 at less than 3 million hectares, now covered 12 per cent of the country's territory. Since 1962, nearly 1 million hectares had been reforested. In the near future, Algeria planned to reforest between 20 and 25 per cent of its territory, or nearly 6 million hectares. Algeria had also adopted legislation to protect its forest.

48. Together with neighbouring countries and other countries stricken by desertification, Algeria had endeavoured to set up effective regional co-operation. Algeria had had the honour to act as host for meetings which had led to the adoption of the African Convention on the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources. Recently, in October 1989, the third session of the Ministerial Conference for a joint policy to combat desertification (COMIDES) had been held in Algeria. It had evaluated the progress, taken stock of decisions which had been adopted and agreed on a series of measures for guaranteeing improved co-operation. In reviewing the implementation of 29 major projects, the participants at the Algiers session had been forced to admit that lack of financial resources was a major constraint to smooth project implementation. In its resolution 1989/103, the Economic and Social Council appealed urgently to the international community, particularly donor countries, to support the African programmes to combat desertification. His delegation hoped that the Council's appeal would elicit an adequate response and that the 1992 United Nations conference on environment and development would provide the occasion for the international community to ensure that environmental degradation in the countries of the South would cease to be the exclusive concern of the poorest countries of the South and become the concern of the entire world.

49. Migs POIRET (France), speaking on behalf of the European Community, said that one of the major problems for the future of the planet was the depletion of the ozone layer. While the Helsinki Declaration recommended that the production and consumption of chlorofluorocarbons should be phased out by the year 2000, the members of the European Community had expressed the hope that production and consumption of chlorofluorocarbons would be reduced to at least 85 per cent as soon as possible, with a view to their elimination in the year 2000. The developing countries should be encouraged to accede to the Montreal Protocol. To that end it was necessary to consider, at the bilateral or multilateral level, ways of providing assistance which would enable them to meet their obligations under the Protocol. A group of experts had been appointed to develop interim funding mechanisms.

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(Miss Poiret, France)

50. General Assembly resolution 43/53 and UNEP Governing Council decision 15/36 had drawn the attention of Governments to the serious problem of global warming. It was essential to conclude a framework convention on climate, which would define the overall objectives as well as a mechanism for combating the problem. Specific protocols containing concrete commitments could be included in the framework. The first protocols could deal with observation and research and be negotiated at the same time as the framework convention or later, depending on the urgency of the problems. One of the first protocols should deal with carbon dioxide. The European Community commended the co-operation between UNEP and WMO, particularly with regard to the work of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. The Executive Director of UNEP and the Secretary-General of WMO should begin, as soon as possible, preparations for the negotiation of a framework convention.

51. The European Community favoured the reduction of emissions of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases which could cause climate change, and encouraged the industrialized countries to adopt appropriate strategies. The European Community supported the initiative of WMO on the creation of a world reference network for detecting climate change. The entire international community should take part in such action, and financial assistance should be provided to the developing countries through additional financial aid and transfers of technology.

52. On 22 March 1989, the European Community had adopted the Basel Convention which limited and strictly regulated exports of hazardous wastes, and it invited all States to accede to that Convention. States should implement genuine national policies, accompanied by international co-operation, for managing wastes. At the national level, the introduction of clean technologies should reduce the production of wastes, which should be disposed under safe conditions and as close as possible to the site of their production. In addition, greater use should be made of recycling, and specific national legislation on wastes should be adopted. The international community should, when requested, assist developing countries in managing their own wastes.

53. With regard to desertification and drought, the European Community underscored its interest in the 1977 plan of action and Economic and Social Council resolution 1989/103. Organizations involved in combating desertification and drought should be strengthened, and international support for such organizations should be increased. The European Community supported such projects as the establishment of a Sahel Observatory to follow the progress of deteriorating fragile arid environments in order to protect them more effectively. As the International Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation Decade drew to a close, the international community should continue to treat access to water resources as a priority.

54. The European Community was prepared to offer technical and financial co-operation to countries in tropical forest zones seeking to introduce sound forest management. Regional co-operation would be of great importance to managing the marine environment wisely and protecting the oceans and coasts against pollution caused, inter alia, by oil spills. Lastly, industry, particularly the energy sector, and agriculture were intricately bound up with the solution of environmental problems.

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(Miss Poiret, France)

55. Referring to agenda item 82 (j) on environmental protection of extraterritorial spaces for present and future generations, she said that economic development must be accompanied by environmental protection and yet must not engender additional costs for developing countries. The Twelve were opposed to any new form of "conditionality" in granting assistance to developing countries, but did hope that ecological data would be taken into consideration in all development plans. Lastly, the European Community fully supported UNEP decision 15/1 on strengthening the role and effectiveness of the United Nations Environment Programme and welcomed the target of an average increase of 35 per cent per annum in the Programme's funding over three years.

56. Mr. MENON (India) said that his delegation welcomed the UNEP Governing Council's recognition that sustained growth in all countries, particularly in developing countries, would also be of major importance for the environment. The cost of environmentally sound development must be addressed by the entire international community. In particular, it would be necessary to identify new and additional sources of financing for developing countries - a question which had not yet been sufficiently addressed (document A/44/332). In that connection, his delegation welcomed the adoption by consensus of Economic and Social Council resolution 1989/101 and trusted that during the preparations for the proposed United Nations conference on environment and development, careful consideration would be given to setting up an effective mechanism for the continuous monitoring of such additional resources.

57. His delegation had taken note of the contribution of the UNEP Governing Council to the preparations for the international development strategy for the fourth United Nations development decade and agreed that the strategy must take into account the common interests of all countries, with a view to attaining sustainable and environmentally sound development.

58. His delegation had read with interest the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of General Assembly resolutions 42/186 and 42/187 (A/44/350) and the views expressed by the UNEP Governing Council. The latter's observation that sustainable development implied progress towards national and international equity, including assistance to developing countries in accordance with their national development plans, priorities and objectives, was particularly encouraging.

59. Mr. BUKURU (Burundi) said that as a member of the UNEP Governing Council, his country looked to UNEP to mobilize efforts against pollution, deforestation and desertification. The Programme had already played a useful role in heightening public awareness of environmental issues and in implementing a number of concrete measures. His delegation fully supported the statement made at The Hague on 11 March 1989 on the environment, global warming and ozone depletion, and the conventions and protocols on environmental preservation already in existence.

60. For developing countries, environmental deterioration was an integral part of a vicious cycle of poverty. As stressed in the statement made at The Hague, most of the emissions harmful to the environment could be traced to the industrialized nations while the developing countries bore very little responsibility in the matter.

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(Mr. Bukuru, Burundi)

61. In Burundi, both the Ministry of Development, Tourism and the Environment and the National Institute for the Environment and Nature Conservation had taken measures to ensure a viable and balanced environment. The Institute, in particular, acted as a policeman against potential dangers to the environment. Burundi had begun to set up national parks and nature reserves to protect disappearing specimens of flora and fauna. It had also acceded to the Convention on International Trade and Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), banned the sale of ivory from elephants, and was co-operating with its neighbours in order to preserve the region's environmental heritage.

62. Burundi had launched an ambitious reforestation programme, which included a national tree planting day every year. As a result, once barren hillsides were covered with forests, helping to maintain the hydrogeological balance and to prevent erosion. The international community must join in the effort to overcome the environmental crisis. In that connection, the convening of a United Nations conference on environment and development in 1992 was a welcome prospect.

63. Mr. OULD CHEIKH EL GHAOUTH (Mauritania), speaking on behalf of Tunisia and Mauritania, said that those countries' views, presented at the summer session of the Economic and Social Council, were contained in a draft resolution which would be submitted to the Second Committee. The resolution included the measures proposed in the report of the Secretary-General on implementation of General Assembly resolutions 42/189 A, B and C (A/44/351). Some of the recommendations contained in the draft resolution were contrary to the provisions of a number of General Assembly resolutions. It referred to elements of UNEP Governing Council decision 15/23 on desertification, including setting up special accounts to finance the implementation of the Plan of Action to Combat Desertification, the Consultative Group for Desertification Control and Inter-Agency Working Group on Desertification. The Working Group, in particular, would have a decisive role to play in mobilizing resources to finance the Plan of Action.

64. In recent years, drought and desertification had acquired a great many forms and had touched every part of the world. In the Sudano-Sahelian region, for example, the consequences of overgrazing and deforestation had at times been as harmful as the slow process of desertification. Because of those two factors combined and the effects on the vegetable cover and forests, which created a micro-climate, the normal level of precipitation had not been restored.

65. Studies on the question had led to varying conclusions. A study by the National Aeronautics and Space Administration of the United States had pointed to a favourable change in the region's drought cycle, while other studies, focusing on the deterioration of the ozone layer and global warming, were less optimistic. All of those findings served to confirm that a major change in the drought cycle might be taking place.

66. However, there seemed to be less hope of controlling desertification, which remained an ongoing danger and threat to development. Although eliminating desertification called for increased efforts by the international community, implementation of the Plan of Action to Combat Desertification had been noticeably

(Mr. Ould Cheikh El Ghaouth, Mauritania)

slow. The United Nations Development Programme and UNEP must co-ordinate their efforts with those of the United Nations Sudano-Sahelian Office (UNSO) in order to assist affected countries in their medium- and long-term recovery plans. In that connection, the establishment of the Maghreb-Arab Union would be a great incentive to integrated development. The Inter-State Committee on Drought Control in the Sahel (CILSS) and the Inter-Governmental Authority on Drought and Development (IGADD) had made substantial contributions to environmental protection and had harmonized their strategies with national development plans. Their initiatives had focused, in particular, on deforestation control, soil recovery and conservation, the stabilization of moving sand dunes, brush fire control and the heightening of popular awareness,

67. The international community, based on its concern for the environment and the advances realized in science and technology, must redouble its efforts to eradicate desertification. It was encouraging that the UNEP Governing Council had included desertification in the agenda for the proposed 1992 United Nations conference on environment and development and it was to be hoped that financial support from Member States would also be forthcoming. In view of the ravages of drought and desertification, it was indeed baffling that only four States had decided to contribute to the United Nations Trust Fund for Sudano-Sahelian Activities. Despite the good intentions expressed on the adoption of the Plan of Action in 1977, no genuine efforts had been made to control desertification.

68. Mr. AXFORD (World Meteorological Organization) said that UNEP and WMO were collaborating with other agencies of the United Nations system on climate issues. The WMO/UNEP Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) had received vigorous support and would be publishing its first major assessment in summer 1990. The assessment would be discussed at the Second World Climate Conference, to be held in Geneva from 12-21 November 1990.

69. WMO and UNEP were also collaborating on the development of plans to open negotiations on a global climate convention once the IPCC report was issued.

70. WMO activities concerning the environment were described in document A/44/339/Add.7. However, he wished to emphasize in particular the questions of global measurement, global monitoring and research and the atmospheric environment and climate. Funding at the national level for international co-ordination and technical co-operation in monitoring and research had not kept pace with needs. Indeed, the global observing system had not increased in the past decade. Aware of the need for a sound scientific basis for activities designed to address climate change, WMO had established a short-term special fund of \$22 million for climate and atmospheric environment studies. The fund was primarily intended to assist developing countries to measure and assess their own climates over a two-year period, to measure the changes in greenhouse gases and enhance the global ozone observation system, especially over the tropics and in the southern hemisphere. All developed and developing countries were urged to participate actively in the monitoring and assessment programmes.

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(Mr. Axford, WMO)

71. Another purpose of the special fund was to help developing countries acquire expertise on climate and the atmospheric environment. Widespread understanding was a prerequisite to reducing the increase of greenhouse gases in the global atmosphere.

72. WMO was anxious to increase understanding of the scientific bases for concern over climate changes and to foster training and the transfer of technology in the field. In that connection, its Executive Council had accorded high priority to the climate change detection project mentioned by the representative of France on behalf of the European Community.

The meeting rose at 12.50 p.m.