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SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 22nd MEETING

Chairman: Mr. GHEZAL (Tunisia)

later: Mr. DOLJINTSEREN (Mongolia)

CONTENTS

AGENDA ITEM 82: DEVELOPMENT AND INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC CO-OPERATION (continued)

(f) ENVIRONMENT (continued)

(g) DESERTIFICATION AND DROUGHT (continued)

(j) ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION OF EXTRATERRITORIAL SPACES FOR PRESENT AND
FUTURE GENERATIONS (continued)

AGENDA ITEM 85: PROTECTION OF GLOBAL CLIMATE FOR PRESENT AND FUTURE GENERATIONS OF
MANKIND (continued)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 82: DEVELOPMENT AND INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC CO-OPERATION (continued)

- (f) ENVIRONMENT (continued) (A/44/3, A/44/25, A/44/256 and Corr.1-E/1989/66 and Corr.1 and Add.1-2, A/44/264-E/1989/73, A/44/278-E/1989/92, A/44/295, A/44/332-E/1989/103, A/44/339-E/1989/119 and Add.1-11, A/44/340-E/1989/120, A/44/349-E/1989/102, A/44/350-E/1989/99, A/44/362 and Corr.1, A/44/386, A/44/479, A/44/480, A/44/578, A/44/632, A/44/659; A/C.2/44/L.2, L.6, L.7)
- (g) DESERTIFICATION AND DROUGHT (continued) (A/44/3, A/44/25, A/44/296-E/1989/81, A/44/351-E/1989/122; E/1989/DP/50)
- (j) ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION OF EXTRATERRITORIAL SPACES FOR PRESENT AND FUTURE GENERATIONS (continued) (A/44/193)

AGENDA ITEM 85: PROTECTION OF GLOBAL CLIMATE FOR PRESENT AND FUTURE GENERATIONS OF MANKIND (continued) (A/44/260, A/44/264-E/1989/73, A/44/340-E/1989/120, A/44/394, A/44/409 and Corr.1-S/20743 and Corr.1, A/44/463, A/44/477, A/44/484; A/C.2/44/2)

1. Mr. JOSSE (Nepal), speaking on agenda items 82 (f) and 85, welcomed the report of the Secretary-General on the question of the convening of a United Nations conference on environment and development (A/44/256 and Corr.1-E/1989/66 and Corr.1). The conference should focus principally on the integration of environmental and development concerns and the need for co-operative approaches. It should deal with the extent to which various factors were responsible for environmental degradation and should also address the question of financial and technical support for sustainable and environmentally sound development. The formulation of appropriate legal instruments and the global and regional dimensions of important environmental concerns should also be taken up.
2. His delegation agreed that responsibility for the organization of the conference should be assigned to the Director-General for Development and International Economic Co-operation and the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme. It also endorsed the ideas of a preparatory committee consisting of all Member States and the specialized agencies; of a separate secretariat; of associating international non-governmental organizations with acknowledged expertise in the preparatory process and in the conference itself; and of establishing national preparatory committees. It had noted, and supported, the generous offer of the Brazilian Government to host the conference.
3. Turning to agenda item 85, he said that the Himalayas were a climatic factor affecting the lives of hundreds of millions of people in Nepal, India and Bangladesh. Forest cover over the foothills of the Nepalese Himalayas was diminishing rapidly, owing to the impact of population pressures, combined with the difficulties experienced by a land-locked and largely mountainous country in importing adequate supplies of petroleum products to meet its basic household energy needs. Sharp shifts in climate and further deforestation could have a disastrous impact on the Himalaya-Ganges region. In view of the linkage

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(Mr. Josse, Nepal)

established between ozone depletion and a variety of radiation-induced diseases, his delegation called on the international scientific community to scrutinize the ozone layer not only in the Antarctic but also in other regions including the Himalayas region.

4. Equally urgent was the need for authoritative studies on the phenomenon of global warming. His delegation called for the complete phasing out of chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) and other ozone-depleting substances by the year 2000. Such action would call not only for stricter enforcement of the Montreal Protocol in the 1990s, but also for the participation of all developing countries. Guarantees of technology transfers and financial resources to developing countries would be a prerequisite for the participation of such countries. Bold, effective international actions must be taken to ensure the protection of global climate for present and future generations. His country thus pledged its full support for the 1992 conference.

5. Mr. FALL (Senegal), speaking on agenda items 82 (f) and (g), said that his delegation would shortly be submitting a draft decision to reinforce the resolution on the countries stricken by desertification and drought, which it had submitted to the Economic and Social Council in July 1989.

6. His delegation had carefully studied the three reports contained in documents A/44/296, E/1989/DP/50 and A/44/351. His main observation regarding the report by the Secretary-General on countries stricken by desertification and drought in Africa (A/44/296) was that it would have benefited from placing more emphasis on the specific problems confronting the countries of the subregion particularly those of the Permanent Inter-State Committee on Drought Control in the Sahel (CILSS). His delegation would also welcome detailed information on the assessment of the effectiveness of new measures to combat desertification and drought carried out by the Steering Committee of the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development to which the report referred. The three reports provided too much detail, and not enough indications of specific action, on the general orientation and frame of reference of the United Nations Sudano-Sahelian Office (UNSO), an organization that was already sufficiently well known. Furthermore, the phenomena of desertification and drought were dealt with at the planetary level, rather than concentrating on the real and potential problems of the African countries that were currently the main victims.

7. On completion of its consideration of the implementation of the Plan of Action to Combat Desertification, the Governing Council of UNEP had concluded that despite the extent of the problem and the number of countries affected, the fight against desertification was in danger of being considered a lesser priority. Desertification had contributed to other environmental problems such as climatic changes, and efforts to combat it should thus be given a high priority in the management of the environment.

8. In the developed countries, the degradation of the environment was a consequence of over-rapid industrialization, abundance and consumerism; for the developing countries, on the other hand, the question of ecological degradation was

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(Mr. Fall, Senegal)

closely linked to poverty, and must thus be treated globally in the context of the development process. In view of the calamities afflicting them, the medium- and long-term prospects for the protection of developing countries' productive resources looked bleak, and indeed, in many cases had deteriorated dangerously. The developed countries must thus assume the main financial and technical responsibility for the protection of the environment. Hence the insistence of the developing countries that their developed partners should provide them with additional resources and technology. Measures to combat desertification, for example, should no longer consist solely of repairing the damage, but should include protection and optimization of the productive base and management of natural resources.

9. In 1985, in concertation with several other affected countries, Senegal had initiated a debate on the environment which had led to the adoption by consensus of Assembly resolution 40/175, which had introduced for the first time to the United Nations the concept of "countries stricken by desertification and drought". Senegal was also a member of the group of intergovernmental experts responsible for the study of climatic changes.

10. His delegation was happy to learn that the OECD countries had recognized the problems of drought, desertification, deforestation, and water quality and supply as having a central place in aid policy, and that, furthermore, they had voiced their concern at the degradation of the environment and the resulting loss of production capacity. He welcomed their decision to strengthen facilities for observation, assessment, diagnosis and advance warning of those scourges. He wished particularly to highlight the commitment of the EEC countries to increasing their efforts to help the countries affected; and to express his gratitude to UNEP, UNSO and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (FIDA) for their support in the fight against drought in the CILSS countries, and to WMO for proposing concrete plans to optimize food production systems through the use of meteorological and climatic data.

11. In debates on the environment, the concept of sustainable development had been a controversial one. The dialogue between donors and beneficiaries of development aid was heading for a confrontation, for the developing countries rightly feared that the multilateral development aid agencies would seriously jeopardize the development process by making the granting of development aid or credit subject to conditionality.

12. The task of the United Nations conference on environment and development would be to take stock of the activities and strategies undertaken in the past 20 years and to give careful consideration to the most topical questions. UNEP Governing Council decision 15/3 constituted a basis for deciding on the objectives of the conference and arrangements for convening it.

13. Mr. TAHSIN (Afghanistan) said that if environmental protection was to be effective, it must be integrated into the efforts to eradicate poverty and to reactivate development, because there was a close relationship between poverty and environmental degradation. Since the developed countries bore the major

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(Mr. Tahsin, Afghanistan)

responsibility for environmental problems, they should assume proportionate responsibility in international co-operation to protect the environment and should facilitate the transfer of financial resources to the developing countries to help fight environmental degradation. Concern for the environment should not be translated into environmental conditionalities for development assistance. Instead, research should be conducted into new and environmentally safer technologies, which would be freely available to all.

14. The developed countries must also stop dumping hazardous wastes in developing countries. His delegation wished to see an international convention provide for appropriate penalties for the dumping of toxic wastes. It deplored the fact that the Basel Convention of 22 March 1989 on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal had failed to make provision for stopping such traffic from the industrialized world to developing countries desperate for hard currency. The entire range of economic issues must be discussed, with a view to finding common solutions.

15. While sound national environmental policies were essential, numerous environmental problems were global in nature and called for a multilateral response. It must, however, be recognized that there was a causal relationship between environmental degradation, poverty, low educational levels and lack of access to environmentally sound energy resources. It was unrealistic to believe that people whose sole source of energy for their domestic needs was firewood would refrain from cutting down trees. However, his delegation was concerned about the pollution of the forest environment and would support multilateral efforts to ensure that the forest environment was protected.

16. Deforestation, desertification and degradation of existing cultivated land were inevitable as long as there was great inequality in the distribution of productive resources. If the poor were denied access to means of production, they would have no alternative but to earn a living as best they could by extracting as much as possible from the natural resources available to them. Left unchecked, that tendency could threaten the very survival of the human race. Accordingly, ways must be found of achieving sustainable development while protecting the environment for future generations. The proposed conference on environment and development would provide an opportunity for doing so.

17. The United Nations system must play a central role in deliberations on the interlinked issues of environment and development. In that connection he looked forward to the forthcoming special session of the General Assembly devoted to international economic co-operation which would provide useful inputs for the elaboration of an international development strategy for the fourth United Nations development decade.

18. Mr. SEZAKI (Japan) said that people from all walks of life were increasingly aware of and concerned about the global environment. The political will was also emerging to address the issue from a global viewpoint. In an effort to contribute to international endeavours, the previous month the Government of Japan had hosted the Conference on the Global Environment and Human Response towards Sustainable

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(Mr. Sezaki, Japan)

Development in Tokyo. The Conference's recommendations on key issues were contained in document A/44/659.

19. They stressed the need for: (1) investigation of the feasibility of low-emission scenarios which sustained economic growth while limiting global warming; (2) innovative approaches to international funding, such as transformation of debt obligations to support environmental programmes through mechanisms such as debt-for-nature swaps; (3) sustainable management of tropical forests for timber production and increased utilization of, and financial support to, institutions such as the International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO), the Tropical Forestry Action Plan (TFAP), the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) and the International Union of Forestry Research Organizations (IUFRO); and (4) increased utilization of existing and indigenous technologies, as well as efforts to achieve technological breakthroughs. Those recommendations constituted an objective basis for concerted international action and his delegation hoped that they would assist the Committee in its discussions of preparations for the United Nations conference on environment and development.

20. Four principles should be maintained in the international community's collective endeavour to address environmental issues. First, measures should be taken to protect the global environment in order to ensure the stable development of the world economy. The concept of sustainable development had gained the support of both the developed and the developing countries, and his delegation believed that particular consideration should be given to balancing environmental protection and economic development. Second, measures taken to tackle environmental issues should be based on scientific knowledge and analysis. Third, issues should be addressed from a global point of view, since the world's environment could be preserved only with the co-operation of all nations. Fourth, the developed countries should assist the developing countries in their efforts to achieve sustainable development, and the environmental assessments carried out in programmes of official development assistance (ODA) should be reinforced.

21. In application of those four principles, Japan intended to enhance its efforts to monitor and observe the air, oceans and the ecological balance through the use of satellites, and would promote joint international research projects in various fields undertaken by experts both in Japan and abroad. It would intensify its efforts to develop technologies for the highly efficient production of energy and intended to increase its support for the activities of UNEP which, together with WMO, would help prepare for the adoption of an international framework convention on climate. Japan would extend both financial and technical assistance to countries with tropical forests which were making efforts to address the problem of deforestation, and would increase its assistance to the organizations concerned with deforestation. In order to protect the ozone layer, the use of chlorofluorocarbons should be phased out by the end of the century, and every possible effort should be made to develop and disseminate technology for the manufacture of commercially viable substitutes. With regard to environment-related financial contributions, Japan would endeavour to increase both bilateral and multilateral ODA to approximately \$2.25 billion over the next three years.

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(Mr. Sezaki, Japan)

22. While it had been argued that drift-net fishing was indiscriminate and destructive, Japan believed that, with the appropriate management of the drift-net, necessary but selective catches would ensure the conservation of resources. The by-catch issue should be dealt with in terms of its impact on stocks. The Government of Japan had already taken various regulatory measures in order to ensure the conservation of the resources concerned. In September 1989, Japan had decided to reduce the number of Japanese drift-net fishing vessels operating in the South Pacific to no more than 20. It had also decided to send a research vessel to conduct a study on albacore and other marine resources taken incidentally in drift-net fishing operations. A representative from the region would be accepted as a scientific observer on board the research vessel.

23. With regard to drift-net fishing for squid in the North Pacific, in 1981 Japan had introduced a limited-entry licensing system, as well as a number of other regulations. In addition, it had established co-operative programmes with the United States and Canada which included acceptance of observers from the United States and Canada aboard Japanese fishing vessels. Japan would continue to make efforts towards conservation and management of fishery resources in co-operation with the countries concerned, on the basis of scientific evidence. However, proposals calling for cessation of, or a moratorium on, drift-net fishing had no scientific justification, and Japan was not in a position to accept them.

24. There was a need for greater co-ordination in the preparations for the 1992 United Nations conference on environment and development. His delegation strongly believed that effective co-ordination should be promoted in three areas: among the secretariats of the United Nations and its related agencies, among intergovernmental committees, and in the field of financial arrangements.

25. Ms. MAUALA (Samoa), speaking also on behalf of Australia, Fiji, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu, said that the General Assembly's consensus adoption of resolution 43/53 had demonstrated the international community's awareness of the significance of changes in the global climate. That issue should be kept in the correct perspective. The immediate challenge was to gather and analyse scientific data on climate change and all other threats to the environment and to develop realistic and practical responses. That would be a difficult and complex task, since the international community would have to learn more about the scientific basis of climate change, and would have to develop response strategies.

26. The South Pacific islands, together with low-lying islands in other parts of the world, were particularly vulnerable to climatic changes which could result from the build-up of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere. Global warming could result in disastrous rises in sea level for low-lying island and atoll countries. Among the main physical effects of sea-level rise would be an increase in coastal erosion, which would reduce island size, shrinking ground-water supplies beneath the larger islands and possibly removing all ground-water supplies beneath smaller islands and atolls. The expected increase in the frequency of tropical storms would also exacerbate erosion.

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(Ms. Mauaia, Samoa)

27. The human consequences of sea-level rise would be severe. With life so closely linked to water supply, agriculture and fishing, island economies would become less self-reliant. The cost of new infrastructures to meet the threat of sea-level rise, such as dikes and pumping stations, would impose additional financial burdens. The greater frequency of tropical storms could negate years of patient development effort.

28. The South Pacific countries had already begun to take action on the issues of climate change and sea-level rise. The South Pacific Forum countries, meeting at Tarawa, Kiribati, in July 1989, had agreed to give the issue national prominence. Accordingly, Samoa was actively considering the submission of a draft resolution on the impact of sea-level rise, particularly on low-lying island countries. Australia had undertaken to fund a core project over the next five years to establish a network of monitoring stations in the region to research changing sea levels, atmospheric pressures and rainfall patterns.

29. Mr. Doljintseren (Mongolia) took the Chair.

30. Mr. MOUSTAPHA (Niger) said that, unless sustained and urgent measures were taken to tackle the structural causes of drought and its permanent effects, the long-term development of the Sudano-Sahelian region would be seriously jeopardized. Action to combat desertification should be considered an integral part of national development efforts. The Niger had established a ministry to deal with the problems of desertification and environmental protection. All development projects begun in the rural development sector had a reforestation and soil restoration component. However, national services to combat desertification faced a shortage of resources and means. In that regard, the Niger supported the efforts of UNEP to develop appropriate technologies to combat desertification.

31. In 1987, the Niger had organized a national seminar in order to develop a national strategy to combat desertification. Aware of the danger which threatened the ecosystem, the Niger decided, 10 years earlier, to declare the anniversary of the proclamation of its independence as a day for planting trees. In addition to campaigns to make the population aware of the importance of reforestation, the Niger had set up "anti-fire brigades" to combat brush fires. There was also a "contract" system between farmers and foresters, according to which all farmers who wished to let their fields lie fallow must not only pledge to protect the valuable flora and fauna existing on those sites but also to respect the number of plants recommended per hectare for soil protection.

32. At the regional level, the Niger co-ordinated its activities to combat desertification with the countries members of CILSS. That Committee urgently required assistance to ensure the success of its efforts to combat the adverse effects of desertification in the Sahel. The Niger also called upon the Consultative Group for Desertification Control to co-operate closely with all the regional and national agencies involved in such efforts. Action to combat desertification should be included in a regional land development plan and should also be an integral part of development priorities.

(Mr. Moustapha, Niger)

33. The Niger fully supported the recommendations which the Secretary-General had made in his report on the implementation of General Assembly resolutions 42/189 A, B and C. The countries stricken by drought and desertification recognized that damage to the environment should be avoided or reduced to an acceptable minimum, without decreasing the pace of their development. They wished to emphasize that, with adequate support at the international level, one of the important objectives of their efforts would be to achieve a balance between human needs for natural resources and the ability of the environment to meet such needs.

34. The Niger looked forward to the 1992 United Nations conference on environment and development, which would provide an excellent opportunity for developing a concerted plan of action at the international level to meet the challenge of desertification and drought.

35. Mr. QUALI (Burkina Faso) said that Burkina Faso, situated in the heart of West Africa, without access to the sea, was subject to a number of adverse environmental factors such as desertification, soil degradation and the depletion of its flora and fauna. It was estimated that, in Burkina Faso, the desert was advancing at the rate of 7 kilometres a year. The situation was particularly worrisome because the destruction of the forest cover would accelerate desertification in the fertile western, southern and eastern regions.

36. Aware of the regional and international dimensions of desertification and drought, Burkina Faso, together with the other countries of the sub-region, had established the Permanent Inter-State Committee on Drought Control in the Sahel (CILSS). In 1985, they had decided to observe 12 September as "CILSS day".

37. In Burkina Faso, the National Committee to Combat Desertification had developed a strategy to combat desertification and drought. In addition, Burkina Faso had taken steps to make its citizens more aware of the need for environmental protection. Aware that only a global approach would enable it to halt desertification, the Government had developed and tested a policy for managing village lands through the implementation of pilot projects. The purpose of such projects was to facilitate the effective implementation of the agrarian and land reform which involved the development and management of rural lands and their environmental resources.

38. In addition to Government action, the activities of non-governmental organizations and of the new Burkina Faso Environmental Protection Association were invaluable. The grass-roots approaches of non-governmental organizations had proved well-suited to rural populations. Burkina Faso had established an office to monitor the activities of non-governmental organizations and to channel their activities towards the priority sectors of development.

39. Co-operation between Burkina Faso and the United Nations Sudano-Sahelian Office (UNSO), whose regional headquarters were at Ouagadougou, was very good. Burkina Faso shared the more integrated approach to the problem of desertification adopted by UNSO and welcomed the Office's decision to give priority to assistance

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(Mr. Ouali, Burkina Faso)

to Governments in planning and formulating global strategies and co-ordinating activities to combat drought and desertification. The Government of Burkina Faso was also pleased with its co-operation with UNEP.

40. Mr. LIMON (Suriname) endorsed the remarks made with regard to agenda item 82 (f) by the representative of Malaysia on behalf of the Group of 77. The recent appearance of certain transboundary environmental problems called for global efforts to find a solution. Such problems should form an integral part of the global discussion on development. Global warming, the destruction of the ozone layer and acid rain were all consequences of modern technology and development. Many of those phenomena were caused by the industrialized countries, and his delegation welcomed the actions those countries had taken to halt those trends; their efforts should receive global support. His delegation also supported multilateral efforts to halt the depletion of the ozone layer by reducing substantially the production of chlorofluorocarbons.

41. The disposal of and illegal traffic in toxic and hazardous wastes posed a growing problem for many developing countries. His delegation welcomed all efforts to end those practices and supported the call for the designing of environmentally sound disposal facilities.

42. One of the major challenges facing mankind was how to integrate environmental protection and the rational use of natural resources in the development process. A global exchange of views on that subject was needed, and the United Nations conference on environment and development scheduled for 1992 would afford a welcome opportunity in that regard. Conference participants should be guided by the need to eliminate the unjust features of existing systems and promote the interests of the most disadvantaged. His delegation supported the issues proposed for consideration at the conference, which were listed in paragraph 4 of the annex to UNEP Governing Council decision 15/3, and endorsed the course of action recommended in paragraph 5 (c) of the same decision.

43. To his delegation, sustainable development meant meeting the basic needs of people in developing countries, maintaining growth levels that would allow those people to attain their social and economic objectives, and improving the quality of life in a healthy, safe and clean environment. That concept should not, however, be used as a pretext for imposing additional conditions on aid or development financing, but should generate support in the form of financial resources that would give developing countries access to environmentally sound technology. The United Nations system must take the lead in exploring all possible avenues to make that possible. Regional organizations should also co-operate in the search for solutions to environmental problems, taking into account the specific characteristics of their region. The Amazon Declaration, signed on 6 May 1989 by the States parties to the Treaty for Amazonian Co-operation, offered an example of such co-operation.

44. At the national level, Suriname sought to foster development while preserving its environmental heritage and using its natural resources in a rational manner and respecting the right of future generations to enjoy those assets. To that end, the

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(Mr. Limon, Suriname)

Government had enacted environmental legislation under which nearly 5 per cent of the national territory had been set aside as protected areas. Research was being conducted on Suriname's estuaries in co-operation with the Organization of American States. Wildlife protection projects had also been carried out in co-operation with the Canadian Wildlife Foundation, while measures to conserve the tropical forest had been taken with assistance from FAO.

45. Mr. LOOS (World Bank) said that the question of environmental degradation was of critical importance to growth and development. While environmental protection had not always been pursued with the same vigour as economic development in the developing world, attitudes had changed and the subject was being given new emphasis by the development community. The World Bank's own experience reinforced the view that environmental considerations had a bearing on all sectors of development.

46. Combating poverty lay at the core of the Bank's mission; however, the Bank also sought to ensure that that effort did not destroy the very resources on which progress depended. The fight against global poverty must be matched by a commitment to environmental protection, for economic progress and environmentally sound development were interdependent objectives. Moreover, poverty was a major cause of environmental degradation, and programmes that helped to reduce poverty also constituted effective means of environmental protection.

47. Economic policy incentives which promoted environmental abuse must be corrected; accordingly, the Bank placed emphasis on stimulating small-scale activities aimed at reducing human and environmental deprivation. The Bank was also strengthening its policy of assessing the environmental impact of development projects and withholding support for projects with inadequate safeguards. The need for natural resource management was urgent, particularly in Africa, and had led the President of the Bank to call for bold action and the testing of untried ideas.

48. One of the Bank's long-term objectives was the introduction of a standard approach to environmental assessment for all Bank activities. The recently designed environmental assessment guidelines were an important development in that regard and were intended to strengthen developing countries' capacity to deal with environmental problems and ensure that both those countries and the Bank took environmental concerns into account at the earliest stage of project design.

49. The question of global climate change was a complex and urgent one. Accordingly, the World Bank closely monitored research on greenhouse gas emissions and climate change and would continue to assess the economic and social impact of those phenomena. It intended to support national programmes to introduce the use of cleaner fuels, processes and systems in developing countries. The industrialized countries must also shoulder their responsibilities, as they contributed a great deal to the world's pollution and to the depletion of its resources.

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(Mr. Loos)

50. Environmental problems demanded greater institutional co-ordination and political resolve than had yet been mustered by the international community. For its part, the World Bank intended to work together with Governments, institutions, organizations and environmental activists throughout the world to achieve environmental successes in the future.

51. Mr. FOLLY (Togo) said that environmental activities were assuming increasing importance as a result of the intensification of economic activity and rapid population growth throughout the world. Industrial development, particularly in the developed countries, had led not only to an upsurge in pollution but to a growing accumulation of toxic, radioactive and hazardous substances and wastes. In view of the threats those wastes posed for the environment and for public health, rational ecological management was called for. The many attempts to dispose of industrial and toxic wastes in the developing countries indicated clearly how difficult it was to get rid of those substances. Such attempts were carried out by unscrupulous companies which, facing exorbitant costs for the processing of such wastes at home, sought to transform the developing countries into vast dumping grounds. He therefore welcomed the Secretary-General's report on illegal traffic in toxic and dangerous products and waste (A/44/362), which stated clearly that the dominant movement of such traffic was from the industrial to the developing world. The industrialized countries also increasingly sought to construct so-called waste-to-energy plants or provide supposedly non-hazardous landfill or incineration facilities in the developing world. The report emphasized the danger posed by those developments.

52. Acknowledging the seriousness of that issue, the Conference of Plenipotentiaries held in March 1989 at Basel, Switzerland, had adopted the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal. By participating actively in the Conference, the African countries had sought to protect their continent from all such dumping activities. Unfortunately, the Basel Convention did not explicitly prohibit the export of such wastes.

53. His Government believed that developing countries should not accept, process and eliminate hazardous wastes, but should prohibit all movements of such wastes towards Africa. Togo had developed a stringent environmental protection policy which it had been implementing for several years. On 1 June 1989, the Togolese people had marked the twelfth annual Arbor Day, which was a part of the country's policy to combat desertification. Over the years, that holiday had led to the replanting of some 5,300 hectares of Togolese soil with trees. The Togolese Government had also begun to conduct research into alternative sources of energy to fuelwood and a number of reforestation projects had been instituted throughout the country with the assistance of the French Government, the African Development Bank and the European Development Fund as well as other bilateral assistance. A special Government office had been created for the development of forestry in Togo, as had a ministerial department for the environment. An environment code had recently been adopted, setting out standards and penalties for violations. Togo had signed the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer and welcomed its entry into force on 1 January 1989.

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(Mr. Folly, Togo)

54. The solution of environmental problems was contingent upon a solution to the current economic crisis facing the developing world, for there were close links between environmental protection and the promotion of economic and social development. Both the World Commission on Environment and Development and the General Assembly had stressed the need for the elimination of poverty and for appropriate policies to protect the environment. In that connection, his delegation supported the idea of convening a United Nations conference on environment and development in 1992.

55. Mr. Ghezal (Tunisia) resumed the Chair.

56. Mr. LABERGE (Canada) said that the themes of "responsibility", "conditionality" and "additionality" loomed large in the discussion of environmental issues.

57. "Responsibility" referred to the fact that the industrialized countries had pursued their own development over the preceding century with little regard for the environment of their own or other countries. The industrialized countries consequently bore primary responsibility for restoring the environment to a more acceptable state. Canada had for years been promoting environmental policies and clean-up efforts through international co-operation as well as information and public education campaigns at home.

58. "Conditionality" referred to the conditions that were tied to official development assistance (ODA) to promote environmental protection. It must be recalled that all ODA was conditional in that it involved agreement between donors and recipients as to its use. It seemed inevitable that ODA should increasingly reflect environmental concerns, particularly as most such assistance went for training, infrastructure, food aid, technical assistance and other areas that were not environmentally harmful.

59. Additionality, on the other hand, continued to be determined primarily by donor countries' commitment to the 0.7 per cent target and by their own budgetary considerations. In many cases, there was no prima facie linkage between conditionality and additionality. Many traditional industrial activities, including iron and steel, power generation and petrochemicals, could be highly polluting and their negative impact on the environment would be costly to reverse. The real growth industries, however - agro-industries, communications, electronics, new technologies and materials, and service industries - were significantly less polluting by nature. Rather than copying what industrialized countries had done before them, developing countries could proceed directly to those dynamic, lighter, technologically-oriented growth industries which had the added advantage of being environmentally sound. A number of developing countries in Asia and Latin America were moving in that very direction. It should be noted that in most countries - developing and industrialized alike - a very small dynamic sector often gave impetus to the entire economy. The proposed United Nations conference on environment and development might shed light on whether such growth-oriented activities could be developed in an environmentally sound manner and the cost, if any, of incorporating environmental concerns.

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(Mr. Laberge, Canada)

60. Already, important trends for the future were discernible. For example, world trade was growing faster than world output and environmentally acceptable goods and services were growing at an even faster rate. Compatibility with strict environmental standards, for example, made motor vehicles more attractive on the market. The newly industrialized countries were already in a position to benefit from the rapid expansion in world trade, but more and more developing countries must be brought into the mainstream. It would be important, however, to guard against the development of a substandard network of trade in goods and services that were cheaper in the short term but environmentally unsafe in the longer term.

61. Capacity to change and receptivity to new ideas would be fundamental to economic growth and environmental protection. In that connection his delegation welcomed the important work of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, the draft resolution introduced by the Maltese delegation on protecting the air, and the recent meeting of the IPCC working group on response strategies. Along with many other delegations, his delegation hoped that a global framework convention on climate would be signed at the 1992 conference. Ongoing efforts to ensure co-operation in halting the illegal transport and storage of toxic and hazardous products and wastes were also a positive sign. Canada had acceded to the Basel Convention for the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal, and hoped that other States would do so too.

62. The consensus on the need to enhance the capacity of UNEP to predict long-term problems was encouraging. All recent proposals should be examined in depth during the preparations for the 1992 conference. Canada had been examining ways in which Governments, research institutions, non-governmental organizations and the private sector could collaborate, and was anxious for an opportunity to share its ideas and experiences with other countries. Canada, which had worked hard to curb overfishing, also welcomed recent efforts to address the problem of drift-net fishing.

63. His delegation had actively participated in the session of the UNEP Governing Council and noted with satisfaction the progress achieved in international co-operation for the protection of air, water and land resources. Committed to the theme of the World Commission on Environment and Development, his delegation endorsed the principles contained in General Assembly resolutions 42/186 and 42/187, welcomed the reports of the United Nations system on their implementation and looked forward to the establishment of an ad hoc task force of the Advisory Committee on Co-ordination (ACC) to discuss a system-wide response to the challenge of sustainable development.

64. Mr. PANOV (Bulgaria) said that East-West political dialogue could give impetus to preparations for the proposed United Nations conference on environment and development. His delegation agreed that the success of the conference would depend largely on how favourable the international political and economic situation was to the environmentally sound and sustainable development of all States.

65. His delegation supported the decisions adopted at the fifteenth session of the UNEP Governing Council and believed that the establishment of a UNEP standing

(Mr. Panov, Bulgaria)

committee would be of great importance. The functions and financial consequences of such a standing committee would have to be discussed. His delegation supported the proposals on strengthening UNEP and its co-ordinating role. For the second time in the past two years, the Bulgarian Government had decided to increase its voluntary contribution to the Environment Fund by 10,000 leva.

66. Regional co-operation in the field of ecology offered substantial and, as yet, unutilized opportunities. Discussions were being held at the International Meeting on Environment in Sofia within the framework of the Vienna Conference on Environmental Co-operation and Security. Representatives of UNEP, the Economic Commission for Europe and a number of non-governmental organizations had been invited to Sofia, where participants were addressing the issues of prevention and control of transboundary effects of industrial accidents, management of potentially hazardous chemicals and pollution of transboundary watercourses and international lakes.

67. At Bulgaria's initiative, preparations were under way for the conclusion of a treaty on the ecological protection of the Balkan Peninsula. A draft convention on the protection of the Black Sea was being elaborated and a number of resolutions on pollution control in the Danube River were under consideration. Convinced that successful international co-operation was rooted in national ecological policy, Bulgaria was elaborating a new ecological programme for the preservation of the environment to the year 2000 and beyond, based on ecological forecasts to the year 2010. The prevailing view in Bulgaria was that a comprehensive approach was necessary and, to that end, a Preservation and Reproduction of the Environment Bill had been proposed. In 1989, the Bulgarian Government had increased its environmental budget by 40 per cent, earmarking most of those resources for capital investment.

68. Anxious to see if it could benefit from foreign experience in introducing waste-free and other ecologically safe technologies, his delegation had welcomed the offer by the Federal Republic of Germany concerning the transfer of environmental technologies to the Member States of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance. That offer was consistent with Bulgaria's position on the free transfer of ecologically safe technologies, non-discrimination in the implementation of environmental protection projects, financial concessions to the developing countries in the trade of modern technologies and broader technical assistance by the developed countries, particularly in the area of industrial co-operation. In conclusion, his delegation supported the concept of international ecological security put forward by the socialist States, which was in the spirit of proposals made by other States.

69. Mr. BOECK (Austria) said that the United Nations Environment Programme was particularly valuable in stimulating action at the grass-roots level, encouraging the activities of non-governmental organizations and improving co-ordination within the United Nations system. The question of institutional development had become increasingly central to discussions of environmental issues. In that connection, strengthening UNEP was a necessary step.

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(Mr. Boeck, Austria)

70. Austria had actively participated in the preparations for the Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer and the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer. In accordance with its long-standing commitment to protecting the environment and its support for the work of UNEP, Austria had decided to stand for election to the UNEP Governing Council for the period 1990-1993. The Austrian authorities were also considering a substantial increase in their financial contribution to the programme.

71. Sustainable development, which provided a conceptual framework for both national and international environmental policies, should be one of the main pillars of the proposed United Nations conference on environment and development. The regional conference on environment, to be held in Bergen, Norway, in 1990, would also be important in that connection. Austria had a number of programmes to realize the concept of sustainable development, and draft legislation for the environmental impact assessment of projects was currently under review. An environmental penal law had entered into force at the beginning of 1989 and offences against the environment were now a recognized offence under the Austrian legal system. With regard to the effects of industrial production on the environment, an effort was being made to reduce the use of resources in order to reduce emissions into the air, and to protect resources through recycling and recovery processes. While Austria's current method of computing its gross national product did not include expenses incurred as a result of environmental damage, it did plan to carry out an interdisciplinary study on the question. "Environmental fees" were imposed on motor vehicles, mineral oil, fertilizers and domestic and hazardous waste disposal.

72. In compliance with the Brundtland report, Austria had taken measures to save energy and minimize the output of hazardous substances. Thermal insulation and long-distance heating systems had been installed in buildings, and emissions had been reduced from industrial and power plants, traffic and domestic heating. Stringent emission limits had been set on industrial emissions of sulphur dioxide, nitrogen oxide and carbon monoxide, and on the levels of noxious matter in home heating fuels. An energy-savings programme, drawn up by the Federal Government in 1988, included more than 70 different measures for dissociating energy consumption from economic growth. Austria had also introduced a Clean Air Act for large boiler installations, a new Smog Alarm Law for emergency situations, and had amended its Hazardous Waste Act to require licensing for the import, transit and export of waste.

73. In order to heighten public awareness, an Austrian task force had undertaken various local environmental educational initiatives. At the international level, education and the provision of technical assistance would be crucial to limiting deforestation, establishing and managing biological reserves and conserving land and water resources.

74. His delegation welcomed UNEP Governing Council decision 15/36 on, inter alia, preparations for negotiating a framework convention on climate. The issue of climate change required the broadest possible international co-operation and any

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(Mr. Boeck, Austria)

solution to the problem must be safeguarded through legally binding instruments. In September, an International Conference on the Protection of Tropical Forests had been held in Vienna. Both producer and consumer countries of tropical timber had been represented at the conference, which had explored measures which might be taken by industrialized countries to protect and manage tropical forests.

75. His delegation attached great importance to the work of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and, in particular, to the deliberations of the working group on response strategies. The Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer could serve as a useful model for a framework convention on climate. That convention must not conflict with the scope of the Vienna and Montreal Protocols on specific issues such as the reduction of chlorofluorocarbons. Such a convention must seek to establish a global political consensus for dealing with the problem and undertaking far-reaching measures, such as the reduction of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases. The establishment of national focal points to disseminate information, the organization of regional workshops and the involvement of non-governmental organizations must also be taken into account. A time-frame for the negotiating process might be set in order to stress the urgency of the issue, with the objective of concluding such a convention at the 1992 United Nations conference on environment and development.

The meeting rose at 1.05 p.m.