



ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

Forty-eighth Session

OFFICIAL RECORDS

Thursday, 2 April 1970,
at 3.30 p.m.

NEW YORK

President: Mr. J. B. P. MARAMIS (Indonesia).

AGENDA ITEM 2

Development of natural resources (*continued*):

(a) Report of the *Ad Hoc* Committee on the Survey Programme for the Development of Natural Resources (E/4797, E/4801 and Add.1; E/L.1306);

(b) Natural resources satellites (E/4779 and Corr.1-3)

1. Mr. GUZMAN (Peru) said that in the Spanish text of draft resolution E/L.1306 the English term "guidance" in paragraph 3(a) should be rendered by the word "aconsejar" and not by "orientar". His delegation would support the draft resolution.

2. Mr. FRANZI (Italy) said that he was not unaware of the importance of the development of natural resources to the developing countries. However, as a result of both the discussions of the *Ad Hoc* Committee on the Survey Programme for the Development of Natural Resources and part of the debate in the Council, his delegation had understood that it was considered premature to set up a functional committee for the development of natural resources, since neither the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination (CPC) nor the specialized agencies concerned with the development of natural resources had been consulted. The Director of the Resources and Transport Division had made it clear that the lack of funds and the absence of guidelines had handicapped the Secretariat in the execution of the programme entrusted to it. Was the functional committee to be set up for the purpose of providing such guidelines? Draft resolution E/L.1306, which, in view of its importance, should be adopted unanimously, would at most obtain a narrow majority. Would it not be preferable, therefore, if its sponsors allowed members of the Council time to consider the matter and form a judgement and contented themselves, pending the forty-ninth session, with a procedure whereby their draft resolution and the interest shown in it by all the delegations in the Council would be reflected in the Council's report? In any event, by adopting draft resolution E/L.1308 the Council had enabled the Secretariat and such United Nations bodies as the Governing Council of UNDP to continue and to intensify their activities in the field of natural resources, thus ensuring that there would be no slowing down or interruption of their efforts. For the sake of unanimity in the Council, he hoped that the decision on draft resolution E/L.1306 would be deferred.

3. Mr. NAITO (Japan) said he agreed with other delegations that it was premature to take a decision on the establishment of an intergovernmental committee for the development of natural resources. The reasons invoked for deferring the decision seemed to him to be sound, because a

careful study of the draft resolution would take time. Even if the draft were to obtain a majority on being put to the vote, a decision reached in the existing circumstances might not have the desired effect. It would therefore be preferable if the sponsors of draft resolution E/L.1306 did not press for a vote on it.

4. Mr. HALL (Jamaica) asked whether the representative of Italy had made a proposal or merely an appeal.

5. Mr. FRANZI (Italy) explained that what he had suggested was in the nature of an invitation. He had nothing against the substance of the draft but did not wish the spirit of co-operation prevailing in the Council to be destroyed.

6. Mr. BRADLEY (Argentina) expressed the hope that if the sponsors pressed for a vote on their draft resolution the Council would be able to hear the representatives of the specialized agencies concerned with the development of natural resources before the vote was taken.

7. Mr. VIAUD (France) said that the views of his delegation had already been expressed by the representatives of Argentina, Ghana and Italy. While the establishment of a functional committee might seem to be a desirable action, it was important, because of the complexity of the system of United Nations bodies responsible for economic and social matters to ascertain beforehand that its establishment would not lead to conflicts or duplication, but would enable the various bodies that were dealing with the same problem from different angles to continue to complement each other's activities in a spirit of harmony. As matters stood, not only had the question not yet been thoroughly examined but there had been no consultation either with the Council's co-ordinating bodies or with the specialized agencies concerned with the development of natural resources. Only at its summer session, therefore, would the Council be able to consider all the relevant factors. To request that a draft resolution should undergo the test of further consideration was not the same as to reject it. The effectiveness of the proposed committee would be dependent not so much on the Council taking an immediate decision as on its decision being unanimous, for if the majority was a small one that circumstance would impair co-operation between the developed and the developing countries, and such co-operation was the only guarantee of the success of any future programme of action. If draft resolution E/L.1306 was put to the vote, his delegation would vote against it.

8. Mr. NIKOLSKY (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) said that, like other specialized agencies concerned with natural resources, UNESCO was in favour of the establishment of an intergovernmental body. At the present stage, however, neither UNESCO nor specialized agencies, such as FAO and

WHO, had held consultations on certain questions that might affect their own fields. At the meetings of the *Ad Hoc* Committee on the Survey Programme for the Development of Natural Resources, most members had considered that the question of the establishment of the new body should be submitted to CPC, in order to prevent its terms of reference overlapping those of other bodies. The establishment of the new body would affect UNESCO's Advisory Committee on Natural Resources Research, which was drawing up long-term intergovernmental and inter-disciplinary plans. It would also affect the Co-ordination Council for the International Hydrological Decade, which was mainly concerned with water resources. A number of international organizations were concerned with water resources, and the establishment of a new committee with powers as broad as those set forth in operative paragraph 3 of draft resolution E/L.1306 might cause a number of additional difficulties and duplication, while complicating the task of CPC. The proposed measure would certainly have more favourable results if the customary consultations were held beforehand.

9. Mr. CARANICAS (Greece) said he thought that the sponsors of draft resolution E/L.1306 would be making a wise decision if they agreed to withdraw their draft. He recalled that, at the First United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, numerous resolutions had been adopted which had subsequently remained a dead letter for years. The resolution before the Council called for co-operation by all. If it was adopted by only a small majority, it would not be likely to produce significant results. Noting that, according to paragraph 5 of the report of the Secretary-General (E/4801/Add.1), Governments were giving thought to a possible restructuring of the inter-governmental machinery of the United Nations, he expressed the belief that if the proposed Committee was established its functions would have to be re-examined later. It would therefore be preferable for the draft resolution to be withdrawn.

10. Mr. BARNEA (Director, Resources and Transport Division) said he assumed that, in expressing the hope that the representatives of the specialized agencies would be given an opportunity to speak, the Argentine representative had had in mind rule 80, paragraph 1, of the rules of procedure of the Economic and Social Council. After reading out that paragraph, he observed that the draft resolution under consideration did not contain "a proposal for new activities to be undertaken by the United Nations relating to matters which are of direct concern to one or more specialized agencies". The activities in question would be undertaken not by the Secretariat but by Governments through the intermediary of the Council. Furthermore, the Secretary-General, having suggested in his report on the survey programme for the development of natural resources (E/4801) that a functional committee should be established, had not subsequently received any communications or proposals from the specialized agencies on the matter. That would appear to indicate that none of them felt the functional committee was likely to interfere with their own activities. Lastly, as the Secretary-General saw it, the purpose of the draft resolution in question was to establish a subsidiary body of the Economic and Social Council, in the work of which the specialized agencies would take part as they had in the work of the *Ad Hoc* Committee, on the

understanding that the functional committee would not take decisions but would simply make recommendations to the Council, which would retain decision-making powers.

11. Mrs. MEAGHER (World Health Organization) said that her organization's interest in natural resources focused primarily on water resources. Arrangements had been made through inter-agency bodies, such as ACC, to ensure the co-ordination of water resource development activities. WHO was quite satisfied with the existing co-ordination machinery and inter-agency arrangements and therefore hoped that they would not be disrupted. However, if any changes were contemplated the Director-General of WHO would like to have an opportunity to discuss them with his counterparts in the other agencies.

12. Mr. DUBEY (India) said that he did not accept the contention of the representative of Greece that the resolutions adopted at the First United Nations Conference on Trade and Development had remained a dead letter. Such a general statement did not take into account the distinctive significance of individual recommendations nor of the factors responsible for their implementation, or lack of it. The recommendations of the First UNCTAD, on the whole, had considerable impact on the economic and commercial policies of Governments of both developed and developing countries. Some of them had been implemented, others were in the process of being implemented while there was still difference of opinion on the remaining ones. However, the important fact was not whether they had been implemented or not but what were the factors responsible for lack of implementation. Here one of the main obstacles was some of the out-moded views that still prevailed in certain quarters on the problem of development. In this connexion he referred to the view expressed by the representative of Greece that the intensification of United Nations activities might result in a decline in the prices of certain commodities and that the United Nations was not required to do much since private firms would in any case carry out such activities. Even the classical theory of economics, through its belief that supply was equal to demand and consumption was equal to production, was more expansionist than was implied in such views. The decline in the prices of primary commodities could not be attributed only to expansion in supply in developing countries. Different factors operated for different commodities. He regretted that such views were not expressed when the developed countries had been investing huge amounts of capital for the development of natural resources whose supply was already in excess of demand and many of which were produced largely by developing countries. The logic seemed to be that since the developed countries had the capital and technology to do so, they were free to produce as much as they wanted, irrespective of the world supply. But different logic was applied when it came to developing countries developing their natural resources and seeking United Nations assistance for it.

13. Mr. ISSAEV (International Atomic Energy Agency) said that IAEA, which had been carrying out a nuclear raw materials programme ever since its establishment, had a keen interest in activities in the field of natural resources. That programme consisted of the collection and evaluation of data on reserves, resources, production and demand for nuclear raw materials, the organization of relevant meetings

and symposia, the operation of an international nuclear information system, the promotion of research contracts and technical assistance to developing countries in prospecting, the evaluation of uranium and thorium ore deposits, and ore analysis, as well as uranium concentrate processing. IAEA had provided such assistance to twenty-one countries. It had also played a role as executing agency for several UNDP Special Fund projects.

14. He stressed that IAEA considered that type of work its statutory obligation, and urged that any decision on the establishment of a proposed committee should take into account clear-cut responsibility of the agencies in the field of natural resources.

15. Referring to the fact that interested specialized agencies and IAEA had not been properly consulted on the establishment of the committee, he spoke in favour of postponement of the question until the next session of the Council.

16. Mr. ALLEN (United Kingdom) associated himself with those representatives who had urged the sponsors of draft resolution E/L.1306 not to insist that it should be put to the vote at the current session. The statements by representatives of the specialized agencies clearly showed how complex the question was. The Council should at all costs avoid encroaching on the sphere of competence of those agencies and of other bodies concerned, such as CPC or the Advisory Committee on the Application of Science and Technology to Development. Moreover, the draft resolution was not very clear, for it was not indicated until paragraph 3 (h) that the proposed committee would have to submit recommendations to the Council.

17. He did not feel that the Secretary-General and the specialized agencies had held sufficient consultations. Lastly, adoption of the draft resolution by a very small majority would be unfortunate and would obviously impair its effectiveness.

18. Mr. FENESAN (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations) said that most of FAO's activities focused on the development, utilization and conservation of natural resources. FAO co-operated actively with the other specialized agencies and the United Nations in the framework of the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination and was always prepared to consider proposals to enhance that co-operation. However, the committee proposed in the draft resolution was likely to encroach on the work of the specialized agencies. FAO therefore hoped that it would have sufficient time to consider the proposal, which would completely change the customary procedure.

19. Mr. BRECKENRIDGE (Ceylon) said that the arguments advanced in favour of postponing consideration of the draft resolution until the next session were not very convincing. The United Kingdom representative had said it was unfortunate that the reference to the relationship between the proposed committee and the Council was not mentioned until paragraph 3 (h) of the draft. He could not see how that constituted an argument in favour of postponing consideration of the text.

20. Mr. OSANYA-NYYNEQUE (Kenya) rejected the accusations of irresponsibility levelled against the sponsors of

the draft resolution. They had submitted the draft in all seriousness and sincerity. He proposed that the meeting should be suspended to enable the sponsors to consult on a suitable reply to the arguments advanced.

The meeting was suspended at 4.55 p.m. and resumed at 5.25 p.m.

21. Mr. OSANYA-NYYNEQUE (Kenya) said he was convinced that all members of the Council attached the greatest importance to the question of natural resources. He also felt certain that views did not differ substantially as to the need for a body such as the one whose establishment was proposed in the draft resolution. However, some delegations seemed to feel that the Council did not have sufficient information to be able to take action. His delegation doubted that enough additional information could be gathered by July to convince those delegations of the need to establish the committee.

22. The sponsors of the draft resolution could not accept the argument advanced at the Council's 1669th meeting that the need to establish the committee had not been demonstrated. They also rejected the argument that the proposed tasks of the new committee could be carried out by the Economic and Social Council or by a body such as UNIDO. In establishing the *Ad Hoc* Committee on the Survey Programme for the Development of Natural Resources, the Council had acknowledged that it could not deal with the matter itself. Moreover, UNIDO had been established to deal not with activities in the primary sector, such as the development of natural resources, but with activities in the secondary sector. There was thus no danger of any overlapping with its activities. With regard to the question of financial implications, the information provided by the Secretariat at the 1669th meeting showed that the establishment of the Committee would entail additional expenditures on the order of only \$9,000. Such a small amount should not be a serious reason for opposing the formation of the proposed committee.

23. It was regrettable that a representative of a great Power had actually ignored the question under consideration and had chosen instead to attack the draft resolution's sponsors by implying that they had not been thinking very clearly or that they had not proceeded systematically and had taken irrational decisions. The sponsors strongly objected to the terms used by the delegation in question. Those delegations which had felt it necessary to introduce extraneous arguments into the discussion, must have had good reason for doing so. None of them, however, had proposed a new solution. The suggestion that the matter should be referred back to CPC was untenable because it had never been the role of CPC to take decisions on behalf of the Council. Moreover, the proposal that the question should be deferred until the next session of the Economic and Social Council appeared to be directed in effect either to burying it in the mass of other questions which had already been deferred and not returning to it, or to considering it only in the context with another problem. The sponsors felt that that would be a breach of trust.

24. The question of the development of natural resources could no more be directly linked to the industrial activities for which UNIDO was responsible than to the question of

science and technology. The two questions could not be dealt with together, and any delegation which insisted that that be done must have ulterior motives.

25. It had also been emphasized that the specialized agencies were extremely jealous of their position and that no action should be taken which would offend them. In point of fact, it was ridiculous to suggest that the Economic and Social Council should allow the specialized agencies to dictate how it should behave. The Council should be able to establish whatever relationship it deemed fit with the agencies. The representatives of a number of specialized agencies had made statements during the meeting arising from a misinterpretation of rule 80 of the Council's rules of procedure, and one of them had gone so far as to say that he was opposed to the establishment of the new committee. The agencies had never had any other role than to give an opinion and to supply the Council with information on which it could base its decisions.

26. His delegation wished to emphasize that the sponsors of the draft resolution were afraid that the question would be buried definitively if it was deferred until a later date. In spite of the hostile attitude of a number of delegations, they were prepared, however, to seek the support and co-operation of all members of the Council and had decided not to press for a vote on the draft resolution, provided that it was taken up in its present form as a specific subject of discussion at the Council's forty-ninth session. They insisted particularly that when the draft resolution came up for discussion, it should not be linked to any other question whatsoever, such as science and technology.

27. Mr. DRISS (Tunisia) began by reminding the Council of his delegation's position on the question of the development of natural resources. The usefulness of an intergovernmental body in that field did not appear to be in dispute, but the problem was to determine when it would be appropriate to take a decision on the establishment of such a body. There seemed to be no disagreement on the substance of the question but the way in which a decision should be taken warranted more careful study. Fuller consultations and additional information seemed to be needed to reach a consensus. There was no question of yielding to threats or pressure. He was therefore pleased that the sponsors had demonstrated their understanding and wisdom by agreeing to defer consideration of the matter until the Council's forty-ninth session.

28. He introduced a draft resolution to that effect (E/L.1309) and appealed to all members of the Council to adopt it unanimously; it was merely a formal rephrasing of the suggestion made by the representative of Kenya on behalf of the sponsors of draft resolution E/L.1306.

29. Mr. BRADLEY (Argentina) thanked the sponsors of draft resolution E/L.1306 for the understanding they had shown and recalled that his country had nothing against the substance of that proposal but merely wanted more time to study it. He therefore supported the draft resolution submitted by Tunisia. He also wished to explain that, in requesting that the representatives of the specialized agencies should be allowed to speak, he had not invoked any rule of the Council's rules of procedure. He protested against the way in which the Director of the Resources and

Transport Division had interpreted his proposal and had endeavoured to ascribe certain intentions to him.

30. Mr. ZAKHAROV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that it was extremely difficult to grasp the full meaning of the draft resolution submitted by Tunisia by listening to the interpretation alone; he therefore associated himself with other delegations in requesting that it should be circulated in writing before the Council continued its discussion.

AGENDA ITEM 8

Elections (*continued*) (E/4777, E/4803; E/L.1299/Rev.1 and Add.1-4, E/L.1301 and Add.1-3)

31. Mr. SHAHI (Pakistan) proposed, on behalf of the Asian Group, that in view of the decision taken at the 1670th meeting to the effect that the elections to the Governing Council of the United Nations Development Programme should be postponed until the resumed forty-eighth session, all other elections should also be postponed.

32. Mr. DRISS (Tunisia) said that the African Group supported the proposal made by the representative of Pakistan.

33. Mr. CHARNOW (United Nations Children's Fund) said that the Executive Board of UNICEF was scheduled to meet on 1 May to hold its elections. It had selected that date to enable its more experienced delegates to participate. However, the representatives of Governments who would be elected to the Executive Board by the Economic and Social Council should take part in those elections. Accordingly, if the Council postponed the election of the new members of the Executive Board until May, UNICEF would have to postpone its own elections, thus making it difficult for most of the regular representatives of UNICEF, who came from abroad, to participate in the elections.

34. Mr. FRANZI (Italy) speaking on behalf of his own delegation and not of the Western Group, said he would be prepared to support the Pakistan proposal. However, the difficulties which had led groups of countries to postpone the elections did not apply to elections to the Executive Board of UNICEF. Those elections could therefore be held at the current session, and all other elections could be postponed until the resumed forty-eighth session.

35. Mr. SEN (India) said that, in view of the consensus reached by the Asian Group, it was difficult to accept the Italian proposal. There were two alternatives: either the elections could be postponed until the resumed session, or the Council could reverse the decision it had taken with regard to the elections to the Governing Council of UNDP, in which case it could hold all the elections at the current session.

36. Mr. TODOROV (Bulgaria) said that Bulgaria and the USSR supported the proposal of the Asian Group that all the elections should be postponed.

37. Mr. VIAUD (France) said that although he would have preferred all the elections to be held at the current session, he was prepared to support the proposal of the Asian Group, provided that the elections were held during the first week of the resumed session, and not at the end of the session when the Council was usually considering questions which required more lengthy discussion, namely the question of non-governmental organizations and the report of the Commission on Human Rights. He suggested that the entire matter should be postponed until the following day.

38. After an exchange of views in which Messrs. HAMBRO (Norway), SHAHI (Pakistan), DRISS (Tunisia), AKWEI (Ghana), CARANICAS (Greece) and OSANYA-NYYNEQUE (Kenya) took part, the PRESIDENT proposed that the Council should resume its discussion on the following day.

It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 6.45 p.m.