

59. The supply of energy played an essential role in economic and social development. The importance of non-conventional sources of energy for developing countries had been emphasized in a recent report by ECA. Indeed, half of the world's solar energy potential was to be found in Africa. Research should therefore be intensified with a view to mobilizing those new sources of energy. His delegation was convinced that the United Nations was specially qualified to promote international co-operation in that field and it proposed to submit specific proposals to the Council under agenda item 14 (Science and technology). Austria was ready to contribute to the common endeavour. It intended to direct its research and development activities with respect to solar energy in such a way as to collaborate with the developing countries, for instance on the basis of joint ventures. A project for constructing a small solar power plant was being studied. The results of that experiment would be made available to the developing countries.

60. Austria considered that any contribution to a better functioning of United Nations bodies, particularly in the economic and technological fields, could be beneficial to

economic and social development. It was in that spirit that Austria had offered to construct, at its own expense, namely without additional charge to the United Nations budget, the headquarters of a number of United Nations bodies at Vienna. The Austrian delegation hoped that at its forthcoming session the General Assembly would take that consideration into account when it decided on the Austrian Government's offer.

61. The improvement of world economic structures had been the subject of many sound proposals. What was really needed at the present stage was to create the political will to carry out the decisions and recommendations which had already been adopted and which were the basis for the establishment of the new international economic order.

62. As far as Austria was concerned, its delegation had come to Abidjan with the intention of proceeding in that direction and of contributing to the implementation of the plans and projects which had been drawn up in the last few years.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.

2017th meeting

Wednesday, 7 July 1976, at 3.35 p.m.

President: Mr. S. AKÉ (Ivory Coast)

E/SR.2017

AGENDA ITEM 3

General discussion of international economic and social policy, including regional and sectoral developments (continued) (E/5790 and Add.1, E/5806, E/5808, E/5823, E/5825/Rev.1, E/5827, E/5834)

1. Mr. SILVA SUCRE (Venezuela) said that the fact that the Council was holding the first part of its current session at Abidjan was of particular importance for its work.

2. Since the beginning of the First Development Decade in 1960, the international community had been paying increasing attention to international economic questions. In the second half of the Second Decade, the emphasis was on improvement of the living conditions of States Members of the United Nations in the third world.

3. Yet the minimum targets laid down by the international community over the last 15 years had not been attained, despite unprecedented efforts by the more disadvantaged countries that had not always been supported by the highly industrialized nations. Nevertheless, undeniable material and moral headway had been made. The very fact that the name of the target had changed, from Development Decade to International Development Strategy and later to the new international economic order showed that there had been progress in the conceptual formulation of the international community's objectives.

4. In recent months many international meetings had been devoted to the establishment of the new international economic order: the fact that their results had not always been satisfactory was to be attributed not to any lack of goodwill by participants but rather to the difficulty of replacing a state of affairs which had benefited one part of the world by another that would benefit all. None the less all those meetings had taken steps in the right direction.

5. Some of those steps, such as the adoption at the fourth session of UNCTAD of resolution 93 (IV) on the Integrated Programme for Commodities, had been decisive; others had been less so. And although the Paris Conference on International Economic Co-operation as yet showed no sign of finding a solution to the major economic problems of the international community and in particular of the third world, it was held in a friendly atmosphere and had made progress by analysing basic aspects of the problems of the developing countries, such as stabilization of commodity markets, the disequilibrium in balance of payments, access to markets, the transfer of technology and resources for development, and industrialization. The Conference had not yet reached the negotiation stage; the proposals put forward by the developing countries had so far fallen on deaf ears or had met with negative reactions from the most important industrialized countries, and no alternatives for further discussion had been put forward. However, at a meeting between the Latin American and European Community countries in June, the Chairman of the Committee of Permanent Representatives of the Community had stated

that the Nine were prepared to enter the negotiating phase at the Paris Conference. Latin American representatives had gained renewed hope from that statement, in view of EEC's influence in international economic affairs.

6. The Economic and Social Council had a great responsibility in defining the issues relating to the establishment of the new international economic order, and his delegation viewed its discussions as an attempt by the world community to lay down foundations for co-operation between the developed and developing countries.

7. His Government was seeking to contribute to the best of its ability to specific decisions and financial co-operation within the international community, since it believed that all countries, although in varying degrees, must be associated with efforts to achieve collective well-being.

8. In conclusion, he recalled that in October 1975 representatives of the 25 Latin American and Caribbean countries had signed the Panama Agreement on the Latin American Economic System, a new body for practical action to promote relations between member countries and others. The headquarters of its secretariat would be in Venezuela and the Venezuelan Government was the depositary of the instruments of ratification. The Panama Agreement had entered into force in June 1976, thus providing Latin America and hence the third world with yet another legal basis for the establishment of the new international economic order.

9. Mr. MORSE (Administrator, United Nations Development Programme) said that the additional contributions to the Programme for 1976 announced at the twenty-second session of UNDP's Governing Council had done much to relieve UNDP's financial circumstances, and thanked the Governments which had made special contributions to the Programme for the current year.

10. He was pleased to report that UNDP was very active, that most of its originally planned operational work with developing countries was going forward, and that it had received a heartwarming reaffirmation of support and confidence.

11. The Economic and Social Council was meeting in the direct aftermath of no less than three almost concurrent world conferences within the United Nations system and under the imperative need to establish a new international economic order. Although there was some uncertainty concerning their achievements, he felt that uncertainty and even disagreement were healthy if they reflected phases of a continuing dialogue and provided greater understanding of the issues that demanded joint attention and endeavour. It was not his intention to gloss over discord or to set aside fundamental areas in which agreement had not yet been achieved concerning the approach, the dynamics and the pace of movement towards a new international economic order. It would be doing an injustice to the hundreds of millions who lived marginal lives if the Council allowed itself to pause over what might or might not have been achieved in the pursuit of a global social compact. It should concentrate rather on the great amount of highly practical work on which there was agreement but which awaited

only the political will to find the material resources to accomplish it.

12. The fact that the specific resolutions adopted at the fourth session of UNCTAD prescribing UNDP action alone ran to several paragraphs was evidence that the global meetings had produced very definite, highly practical prescriptions of work on which the world community wished the United Nations development system to move forward. Indeed, the area of agreement was even larger if account were also taken of the positive achievements of the sixth and seventh special sessions of the General Assembly and those of the Stockholm, Bucharest, Rome, Mexico City, Lima and Vancouver Conferences, as well as the Tripartite World Conference on Employment, Income Distribution and Social Progress and the International Division of Labour.

13. The world community had been engaged in the critical process of pinpointing the needs of the developing countries in order to enable them to assume their rightful place in equity, justice and mutual respect among all nations in the search for a more harmonious ordering of life. According to the principles on which the Development Programme operated, it was for each sovereign Government to determine priorities with UNDP. But that vital principle could not be fully applied and its continuing extension into additional prescriptions of work for UNDP could not be given the urgent meaning that lay behind the resolutions of global conferences unless the Programme received additional resources.

14. Yet, while the Programme had an entirely new volume of work requests as compared with five years previously, the bitter truth was that the real value of its resources had been so eroded by inflation that during the current year the first United Nations development co-operation cycle would end with a delivery rate lower in real terms than at the beginning of the cycle in 1972.

15. He appealed to all Governments participating in the Programme – to traditional donors and to potential new donors – to provide it with the necessary resources. The dynamic enterprise which he was privileged to head and for which the Council had particular responsibility must not be left to rely on its present relatively narrow resource base.

16. He believed, however, that there was much more that all could do to counter the impact of inflation on development resources by seeking new paths towards greater cost effectiveness and towards result-designed impact. He had already taken decisions to reduce administrative costs within the Programme itself; by the end of 1977 a great number of professional posts would have been vacated and the administrative budget for the current year and for 1977 had been considerably reduced. Greater cost-effectiveness could also be achieved within operational projects themselves.

17. Every global meeting which may have initially appeared to be sectoral had reached the conclusion that in fact development planning was a comprehensive process – affected by and affecting all. It had been learned that the population factor must be integrated into the development

process, and that there was an organic and continuous relationship between the price of commodities on one side of the world and the economic foundations of rural development in a country on the other. It was known that plans made for food and agriculture must have a most direct relationship to plans made for employment and income distribution, that prescriptions for industrial growth could not be realistically made without planned integration with prescriptions for trade promotion, and that planning for human settlements affected and would be affected by all those factors. In short, the deliberations of the series of conferences and other meetings held in the 1970s - and particularly those of the United Nations General Assembly instituting a new international economic order - had revealed a number of dimensions and intricacies of organized and omni-sectoral planning whose existence had hardly been realized 10 years previously. UNDP, as one of the key sources of technical co-operation for the development of planning expertise, bore a major responsibility to help Governments, at their request, to refine and sharpen their development skills so that their efforts would have a maximum impact and ensure the most cost-beneficial use of national and international resources in such efforts.

18. However, there was a second theme that had emerged from the recent unprecedented dialogue on development, namely, the need for more creative development in terms of concepts, models, objectives and techniques of application, and it was in that context that he viewed technical co-operation among developing countries. It was of the utmost urgency that countries should make intensive efforts to associate their development thinking and all their planning disciplines with the search for models and techniques that reflected and were in harmony with the culture and society of each developing country. The developing countries should be able to look to UNDP for a creative dynamic contribution, through the exchange and dissemination of the intellectual and design experience of development and development programmes among themselves, as well as through the more technical process of exchanges of information on specific topics.

19. Much more could be done to achieve the truly integrated mobilization of often hidden resources. Local voluntary efforts, especially in rural development, should be built into projects at the design stage and not included, as had frequently happened, at some later stage when it was discovered that such efforts had faltered through lack of popular participation. The same was true of the mobilization of women. The energetic evolution of new models for para-technical personnel - departing from the imported hierarchical and occupational models of the industrialized countries - was another area that offered great potential in tapping all possible resources for development. Moreover, time and money would be lost unless a greater effort was made to anticipate the skills and learning requirements of young people in school while new development projects were being planned.

20. He was convinced of the need to determine more carefully, with Governments, what technology had to be imported, in the form of an international adviser or technician. For example, the external contribution might be provided by a United Nations volunteer or by a

volunteer backed up by short-term expertise on a more senior level.

21. With regard to equipment and applied technology, there was now a greater awareness that many so-called high-level technologies must be subject to question in industrialized as well as in developing countries because of their cost, their energy consumption, the ecological damage they caused or their social consequences. He considered it one of UNDP's special responsibilities in its partnership with developing countries to explore every possible avenue to ensure the use of local technology - whether traditional or modern - so that the developing countries could apply and evolve creative technology appropriate to their needs and circumstances.

22. Referring to the question of the coherence and cost efficiency of the United Nations development system itself, he recalled his statement to the recent meeting of the Governing Council that there was now a potential contradiction between the consensus endorsed by the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly in 1970 and the recent emergence of centrifugal forces favouring the proliferation of development funds and country-level programme-support arrangements. All decisions on such matters lay with Governments, but in view of the demands of the developing countries for co-ordinated, integrated and cost-effective development co-operation, he did not think that the present was the time to depart from the coherence of the United Nations development system that the Council as well as the General Assembly had ordained.

23. There were perhaps some who feared that too coherent a United Nations development system might inhibit the creative and dynamic interplay of the infinitely varied technical norm-setting and intellectual standard-raising role of the specialized agencies. For his part, he would do everything in his power to dispel that apprehension. It must not be forgotten that the Council had created and nurtured the partnership system, which was designed to produce the very best that all elements of the system had to offer. He wished to do everything possible to bring about a new era in co-operation between UNDP and the specialized agencies along those lines.

24. The Governing Council had now reached a decision on the subject as a whole (E/5846, para. 158), stressing the role of UNDP as the central funding and co-ordinating body in that field. The Governing Council's decision recognized that, where additional resources were available from the United Nations development system, their use at the country level should be within the framework of the development plans of the countries concerned and co-ordinated by the UNDP resident representatives. The decision also stated that there was a greater need for co-ordination, including a closer relationship between the field representatives of agencies and the resident representatives in the interest of the efficient use of scarce multilateral resources directed towards meeting the needs of developing countries.

25. Mr. de AGUILAR COLOMER (Observer for Spain), speaking at the invitation of the President, said that his Government considered it particularly significant that the

first part of the Council's present session was being held at Abidjan and, because of the importance it attached to the Council's role in economic and social co-operation, had decided to send an observer to follow its proceedings.

26. The fourth session of UNCTAD and the present session of the Council were important stages in the international community's efforts to seek a new economic and social order, and his Government was gratified that those efforts had been furthered by the consensus reached at the seventh special session of the General Assembly.

27. The many recent international meetings on important subjects had demonstrated the urgent need for the Council to assume the predominant co-ordinating role in economic and social affairs assigned to it under the United Nations Charter. In that connexion his Government attached particular importance to the restructuring of the economic and social sectors of the United Nations system which it hoped would give the Organization a greater role in international economic and social co-operation.

28. Mr. YOUSOUF (Observer for the Comoros), speaking at the invitation of the President, said the Council could not have chosen a better place for its present session than Abidjan, which was representative of Africa and the third world and had been the historical meeting-place of the great African and western civilizations. It provided an ideal context for reflection and discussion on the international economic and social situation, since it was the third world, and particularly the African continent, that had experienced the most flagrant violations of the United Nations Charter and the resolutions of the United Nations, and endured the most cruel human suffering. Indeed, in Southern Rhodesia and South Africa the overwhelming black majority was still fighting a determined and gruelling battle for freedom and human dignity against the despicable minority racist and *apartheid* régimes of Vorster and Ian Smith.

29. His country, which had gained independence on 6 July 1975 after a century and a half as part of France's overseas territories, was facing a serious situation. In a referendum held on 22 December 1974 by the former administering Power, 95.4 per cent of the people had voted in favour of independence and had looked forward to co-operation with France and other countries which believed in peace and justice. But the former administering Power had appropriated the Comorian island of Mayotte by legal manœuvres and thus carved up the country. The State of the Comoros had been admitted as a member of the United Nations and OAU on the basis of its colonial boundaries comprising the four islands of Mayotte, Anjouan, Moheli and Great Comoro; yet France persisted in its illegal occupation of Mayotte in defiance of the resolutions and Charter of the United Nations. It had installed a direct administration, as well as its armed forces and an arsenal, and had cynically balkanized a State whose unity it had always recognized during the colonial period. Relations between France and the Comoros had steadily deteriorated, ending in the withdrawal by France of all technical assistance – a repetition of its action against Guinea.

30. His country was now forced to wage a struggle on two fronts: for national liberation and territorial integrity; and for economic and social development on which the survival of its people depended. Colonization had in no way prepared it for independence and its only resources were the strength and determination of its people.

31. The international community should be supporting those who fought for the principles of the United Nations Charter, not those who deliberately flouted them; and yet certain States and Governments were supporting the activities of contemptible outmoded régimes.

32. The economic recession of 1975 had been particularly harsh on the economies of most developing countries and had cut their growth by one third. Moreover, inflation in the developed market-economy countries had seriously disrupted the developing countries' balance of payments, and the situation had been aggravated by the current difficulties of the international monetary system. True, unemployment had increased in both developed and developing countries, but in most of the latter it was endemic. In the third world countries, particularly on the African continent, food production had fallen by about 7 per cent between 1970 and 1973 and development aid from the international community had been disappointing, with the result that hunger, poverty, disease and ignorance persisted. The gap between developed and developing countries continued to widen; and while the majority of third world countries lacked the means to provide the bare necessities of life, the developed countries continued to spend vast and increasing sums on maintaining their prestige and pursuing the arms race. The holding of the Council session in the third world should bring home to the developed countries the need for speedy and effective international economic co-operation and should strengthen the developing countries' solidarity in defining and defending their legitimate aspirations.

33. The resolutions adopted at a number of important international meetings held in the past few years had not been implemented and the results had often been disappointing. Both developed and developing countries had acknowledged that there could be no lasting solution to the present international situation without reference to new principles, namely, that the developed countries should support and contribute to the common fund for financing buffer stocks of basic commodities, so that the developing countries would no longer have to bear the losses due to fluctuations on commodity markets without sharing in the profits; that the developed countries should demonstrate a spirit of co-operation by relieving the poorest countries of their external debt burden; that reform of the international monetary system should be recognized as an urgent necessity to put an end to the current economic disorders which were jeopardizing the economies of the developing countries and of certain developed countries; that the international community should provide the specialized agencies with the resources and means to deal with the problems of development in their respective fields of competence – the creation of IFAD was an encouraging step and might help to create employment; and that the attention of the international community should be drawn to the urgent need to provide the newly independent

African States with the assistance they required to tackle their serious economic and social problems and ensure the survival of their people.

34. On behalf of the Government and people of the Comoros he thanked the States and organizations which had come to his country's aid following France's withdrawal of technical assistance and its illegal occupation of Mayotte.

35. Mr. ROUGÉ (France), exercising his right of reply, said that his delegation felt that the Council's present session, devoted as it was to better understanding between nations, was not the right place to reopen what was an essentially bilateral question. His delegation had already explained its position in the appropriate United Nations forums and would not now relate the circumstances in which, in accordance with the principle of self-determination and with French constitutional law, the people of the island of Mayotte had made their choice by referendum.

36. He reminded the Council, however, that France was always prepared to co-operate with the Comoros, and had been happy to welcome a representative from that country to the third Franco-African Summit Conference held in Paris in May 1976.

37. Mr. MOKODOPO (Observer for the Central African Republic), speaking at the invitation of the President, endorsed the words of the President of the Republic of Ivory Coast (2006th meeting), who had stressed the importance of the General Assembly resolutions concerning the International Development Strategy, the Declaration

and Programme of Action on the Establishment of a New International Economic Order, the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States, and on development and international co-operation; and the resolutions of the World Food Conference.

38. Those resolutions, some of which called for direct action by the United Nations in the promotion of national development, had not been followed up as expected and, despite their importance, had not produced tangible results. His Government was still waiting for a response to the requests it had addressed to the specialized agencies for help in accordance with the UNDP indicative planning figure, in exploring the mineral resources that had been discovered in the country.

39. Several States, particularly in the third world, were beginning to wonder what the prospects of the new international economic order really were and what measures the United Nations intended taking to prevent a further deterioration in the world economy.

40. His country had suffered particularly from the economic situation, being land-locked and classified as among the least developed. It would like to co-operate more closely with ECA, and hoped that the Commission would fulfil its function of helping African States to prepare their development plans.

41. His delegation hoped that the present session would mark an important stage in the move towards a new economic and social order.

The meeting rose at 4.45 p.m.

2018th meeting

Thursday, 8 July 1976, at 10.35 a.m.

President: Mr. S. AKÉ (Ivory Coast)

E/SR.2018

In the absence of the President, Mr. R. Rivas (Colombia), Vice-President, took the Chair.

AGENDA ITEM 3

General discussion of international economic and social policy, including regional and sectoral developments (continued) (E/5790 and Add.1, E/5806, E/5808, E/5823, E/5825/Rev.1, E/5827, E/5834)

1. Mr. SOBHI (Director-General, International Bureau of the Universal Postal Union) expressed his pleasure at the fact that the current session of the Council was being held in the capital of a country with which UPU had for many years maintained relations of fruitful co-operation. Abidjan was the headquarters of the Multinational Postal Training Centre, the only French-speaking African school at the regional level in the postal field. The realization of that important project, financed partly by UNDP, had been

made possible by the support given by the authorities of Ivory Coast. It was interesting to note that the school had recently begun to train senior personnel, which was in keeping with the principles of action laid down by the last UPU Congress with regard to technical assistance.

2. UPU's role might appear to be unobtrusive compared with that of other specialized agencies; but in fact its activities fitted perfectly into the general programme of the Economic and Social Council. Postal services played an important role in the modern world, and served as a factor of economic, social and cultural development at the national and international levels.

3. In every country, regardless of its level of development, the postal services were constantly obliged to adapt themselves to new tasks; and that called for a continuing evolution of techniques and attitudes. The XVIIth Universal Postal Congress of 1974 – the UPU centenary year –