

84. In conclusion, he spoke of a whole people in the ECWA region – the Palestinian people – who had been deprived of the economic and social services provided by the United Nations and its agencies. Without prejudice to their political independence and their right to national

self-determination, he called upon the Council to respond to their economic and social needs.

The meeting rose at 6.15 p.m.

2025th meeting

Friday, 23 July 1976, at 11.05 a.m.

President: Mr. S. AKÉ (Ivory Coast)

E/SR.2025

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

AGENDA ITEM 5

United Nations University (A/31/31)

1. Mr. HESTER (Rector of the United Nations University) said that in the eleven months since the University had begun operations at its world headquarters at Tokyo, its activities had been focused on two primary objectives: planning and implementing its first research and training programmes; and seeking contributions from Member Governments to the endowment fund that provided the University's basic financing. His report to the Council would be largely concerned with those two objectives.

2. As the Council was aware, the General Assembly had chartered the University (A/9149/Add.2) to be different from traditional universities and to be instead an instrument for research, post-graduate training and dissemination of knowledge, functioning through a central programming and co-ordinating body and a network of research and post-graduate centres and programmes devoted to pressing global problems of human survival, development and welfare.

3. The charter defined the University only in general terms, however, and it was left to the University's Council, the Rector and his staff to give substance to the general concepts. That had been started in deliberations of the University Council prior to his appointment and had been continued in the work of the staff and in three biannual meetings of the Council held since his appointment in November 1974. By then, more than 100 offers of institutional and governmental co-operation with the University had been received and the University might have been brought into being simply by responding to such initiatives. That would not, however, have been a rational way to organize a coherent institution. Instead, at its January 1975 meeting, the University Council had reached the conclusion that the University should not accept outside offers until it had formulated its own priorities and operating principles. It had also decided against establishing a large staff of permanent University experts. Instead, it had decided to administer the University through a relatively small international, multi-disciplinary committee

composed of the Rector and several Vice-Rectors who would be responsible for maintaining frequent contact with experts around the world.

4. Following that meeting, Dr. Ichiro Kato, a former President of the University of Tokyo had been appointed Vice-Rector for Administration and General Council and had begun to organize the basic staff in April 1975. The second major appointment had been that of Dr. Alexander Kwapong of the University of Ghana as Vice-Rector for Planning and Development; he had started full-time service in January 1976. When Dr. Kato had resigned as Vice-Rector in April 1976, Dr. Kinhide Mushakoji, former Director of the Institute of International Relations of Sophia University at Tokyo, had become Vice-Rector for Programme in the Human and Social Development area. The University was now seeking a third Vice-Rector from another part of the world for programme work in the area of natural resources.

5. The January 1975 Council meeting had approved three priority areas for the University's initial work: world hunger; human and social development; and the use and management of natural resources. At the meeting in June 1975, the Council had decided to approach those three areas by assembling working committees of experts to advise the University on the strategies it should follow in order to avoid unnecessary duplication of work and to take full advantage of the University's unique mandate. It had also agreed that, in view of the University's financial limitations, its initial work would probably be undertaken in association with existing institutions rather than through incorporated institutions under its own management.

6. The University's operations had begun with three working meetings held at Tokyo in the autumn of 1975, attended by 69 experts from 39 countries. The meetings had been useful because they had elicited a variety of informed opinions from the participants on the activities which the University should or should not undertake. The reports and recommendations could not be definitive but they had provided a useful foundation for the beginning of the University's activities.

7. Many of the experts had originally been somewhat sceptical about the need for yet another international organization, but once they had examined the potentialities

of the University they had invariably become enthusiastic about what the University might accomplish. In general, their deliberations had laid stress on five needs that the University should serve: firstly, the need for a genuinely international intellectual organization to help to identify and clarify issues before they became crises; secondly, the need for a research and advanced training institution concerned with the application of knowledge to practical problems and willing to break the bonds of traditional disciplinary divisions and become an instrument for innovation in organizing subject-matter and methods of inquiry and training; thirdly, the need for a research and advanced training institution concerned with the transfer, transformation and development of technologies to meet basic human needs and with conserving the cultural and environmental inheritance of individual societies; fourthly, the need for an organization to create and sustain substantial opportunities for scholars to collaborate on major problems on an international basis through active linkages and networks among individuals and institutions; and fifthly, the need for an institution concerned with overcoming problems of providing scholars and policy makers with accurate, unbiased, easily understandable information on a wide variety of subjects about which research findings were not readily available.

8. On the basis of recommendations made at those meetings, the University Council, at its sessions in January and July 1976, had approved the University's first programmes and agreements with its first associated institutions. The first programmes were in the areas of world hunger and human and social development. Activation of the programme on the use and management of natural resources awaited the appointment of the Vice-Rector in that field.

9. The experts who had attended the world hunger meeting had urged the University not to undertake work in agricultural production, for which a well-funded syndicate of international research institutes already existed, or in the area of population, which was also served by a variety of international agencies. Instead, the University had been encouraged to sponsor research, training and dissemination of knowledge in postharvest food conservation, basic human nutritional requirements, the nutritional component of development planning and the interaction between specialists in agriculture and nutrition.

10. The major concern of the World Hunger Programme, which was being carried out under the direction of Dr. Scrimshaw of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, was, of course, the fact that starvation and malnutrition constituted a crisis of major proportions in the world today. Little had been done in combating the food waste that occurred in many countries. Thus far, there had been no international collaborative effort to solve the problem of preventable post-harvest food losses. The University had therefore made research and training to improve food conservation in developing countries a priority in its World Hunger Programme and had entered into association with an experienced organization in that field – the Central Food Technology Research Institute at Mysore, India. The Institute would soon be taking a number of United Nations University fellows from develop-

ing countries each year and training them in the practical aspects of conserving food supplies. Although established to help solve India's problem of feeding the more vulnerable sections of its population, the Institute was involved in research and training projects that were vitally relevant elsewhere in the world and would now become a core of the University's World Hunger Programme network.

11. The second area of concern in the World Hunger Programme was that of determining the nutritional needs of people in tropical countries plagued by intestinal parasites and other infections. The diets in such countries often had substances that interfered with the nutrients they contained. While little factual information was available on those problems, one institution – the Institute of Nutrition of Central America and Panama – was ideally suited to operate as a network centre to help in their solution. It had therefore become an associated institution of the University and would be conducting research and training University fellows in applied nutrition. It would also help in the area of food and nutrition policy in national development plans.

12. Nutritional standards were largely neglected in national planning by ministries of agriculture, health and education in the developing and the industrialized countries. Since decisions taken at the political level influenced the nutritional well-being of people, it was important that nutritional considerations should enter into national planning.

13. He had recently visited Manila to complete an agreement between the University and the Nutrition Centre of the Philippines. The Centre had one of the most comprehensive programmes of applied nutrition at the village level yet undertaken by any country and it appeared to have contributed actively to an improvement of nutrition and health in the Philippines. The Centre would be the third associated institute to join the World Hunger Programme network.

14. In order to promote contacts between specialists in nutrition and those concerned with agricultural planning and development, the University was arranging a series of workshops to be held at different international agricultural institutions throughout the world. The first was to take place at Ibadan, Nigeria, in December 1976 and the second at Los Banos, in the Philippines, early in 1977.

15. The Human and Social Development Programme was being carried out under the direction of Professor Mushakoji. Special emphasis was initially being given to two areas designated by the University Council: the transfer, transformation and development of technology; and development goals, processes and indicators, particularly in the social field. With regard to the first area, the University's aim was to help to identify problems and find solutions to problems requiring the use of technologies for self-reliant social and economic progress in developing countries. Institutions had been identified in Nigeria, Argentina, Sri Lanka and Japan for possible association with the University. In the second area, the University's objective was to help to evolve improved methods and increased knowledge for setting development goals, establishing development processes and building appropriate indicators for measuring

Studies which had been established in Mexico; it might be that the Centre should be associated with the University. Collaboration with other institutions in research programmes could well be a means of channelling funds to the University.

37. Mr. VARCHAVER (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) said that the report of the University Council had been considered by the UNESCO Executive Board at its ninety-ninth session. The Board had endorsed UNESCO's action in providing support to the University whilst fully respecting its autonomy embodied in the charter. The Director-General personally, or his representative, had participated in each session of the University Council and in other meetings.

38. UNESCO welcomed the University's efforts to establish institutional relationships such as those with the Institute of Nutrition of Central America and Panama, and with the Central Food Technology Research Institute at Mysore. Programmes carried out in collaboration with other institutions could bring the financial resources sought by the University. The regional meetings to be held later in the year should be helpful in making the University and its programme better known. The Executive Board felt that such meetings should be carefully prepared and should include participation by representatives of the academic community in the country or region where they were held.

39. While the University should continue to design its programmes for the solution of world problems, it should be borne in mind that a number of international organizations had been entrusted with that same function. The University's purpose was the promotion of co-operative research and training which would throw light on the problems and propose alternative solutions; it was what might be called the "forum dimension" of the University that should be stressed. In the decision adopted by the Executive Board on that item, encouragement had been given to the University to accelerate the initiation of precise activities of research and training within the framework of the programme priority areas identified by the University Council, to develop original and innovative approaches for the identification and implementation of activities, and to facilitate the growth of vigorous academic and scientific communities, particularly in the developing countries. The University should establish networks of relationships with a limited number of institutions for a limited number of areas in which an association offered the greatest promise. It could initiate such relationships even before there were specific project agreements, since there was a need to give institutions and leaders a sense of participation in the work of the University.

40. The Director-General of UNESCO had suggested that the University should institute programme budgeting as soon as possible so that its budget would be fully visible and comprehensible to all, and particularly to potential donors or other sources of finance. The Director-General thought that the University would gain from the advice offered by ACABQ.

41. Mr. GOMEZ SAENZ (Venezuela) said that his country, which had shown an interest in contributing financially

to the University's activities, fully supported its programme. Time would be required to carry out the planning phase and raise the necessary funds for establishing a proper infrastructure. The programme recommendations were sound and reflected clear objectives. Initiatives in seeking to anticipate, conceptualize and define major problems had rightly been included among its purposes. It had also rightly been observed that the University should help to arrest world problems before they reached the crisis stage. He hoped that, while turning its attention to scientific methods of solving problems at the international level, the University would bear in mind the need for using the resources and efforts of the international community to solve the problems of the developing world. His country would continue to co-operate with the University to the best of its ability, in any way required.

42. Mr. MCGILCHRIST (Jamaica) said that his country viewed the work being done for the effective establishment of the United Nations University with interest and satisfaction and particularly welcomed the stress being placed on problems of starvation and malnutrition through the World Hunger Programme. Due attention should be given to nutritional standards. He supported the establishment of workshops which were an appropriate complement to fellowships; practical tuition and example were needed to supplement theory, particularly for the developing world. His delegation welcomed the fact that the University would focus on the transfer of technology, which was essential for the development process. It was right that the University should assist third world institutions, since by doing so it would help developing countries to gain self-confidence, which in turn created greater self-sufficiency, and with greater self-sufficiency came greater freedom.

43. Mr. AHMAD KHAN (Pakistan) said that the United Nations University was one of the most important and visionary experiments in international co-operation in the realm of ideas, and for working out new approaches to the fundamental problems of survival, development and welfare. The University might not have the same capacity for attracting financial resources as certain practical programmes but it should be remembered that, in the final analysis, the world was guided by ideas and the most practical man generally followed some idea he had formed in his early youth. The University could provide a new and useful dimension to collaboration in an interdependent world. He supported the broad thrust of the programmes outlined but urged that the development indicators should be geared to the capacity of developing countries to make full use of them. They should not be over-sophisticated or over-complex; some of the information being requested from the developing countries was far too sophisticated and not germane to their needs.

44. In view of the financial constraints and the need for avoiding duplication with the programmes of other institutions, he would welcome information on the special features of the programme for the training of senior planners. With a possible reservation on that programme, he supported the programmes envisaged and entirely endorsed the Recor's comments.

45. Mr. HESTER (Rector of the United Nations University) said that the University was concerned to avoid duplication with the work of existing institutions. It was assembling information from people familiar with such institutions to discover what it could do that was not being done by others. If no unique role could be found for it in the direction mentioned, it would not proceed with that particular programme.

46. Mr. NARASIMHAN (Under-Secretary-General for Inter-Agency Affairs and Co-ordination) said that the University Council, which held two sessions a year, normally in January and June, had established a cycle of reporting whereby it adopted its report to the Executive Board of UNESCO, the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly at its January session. The General Assembly had not been happy with that arrangement, since the report was almost a year old by the time it reached the Assembly. The University Council had consequently decided to change its cycle of reporting and adopt its annual report at its June session. It would then be made available to the Executive Board of UNESCO, the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly for their consideration and comments. The Executive Board of UNESCO, as a co-sponsoring organization of the University, had rightly decided to have an item on the United Nations University on its agenda each year at the session following the adoption of the report by the Council of the University.

47. Since the supplementary report to the General Assembly was not available for consideration by the Council at its present session, the Council could, if it so desired, consider that report at its resumed session. Appropriate arrangements would be made in future to ensure that the report came before the Council for its consideration before going to the General Assembly.

48. The PRESIDENT suggested that the Council should take note of the report of the Council of the United Nations University (A/31/31) and forward it to the General Assembly for consideration at its thirty-first session.

It was so agreed.

AGENDA ITEM 4

Regional co-operation (*continued*) (E/5607 and Corr.1 and E/5607/Add.1-2, E/5727 and Add.1-2, E/5781, E/5873-5876, E/5801, E/5832 (chap. III, sect. E), E/5835 and Corr.1 and E/5835/Add.1, E/5858)

49. Mr. ALZAMORA (Peru) said that the question of regional co-operation should be approached from the point of view of co-operation among regions with similar development problems, and together with the subject of co-operation among developing countries. Both topics were of fundamental importance both for the establishment of the new international economic order and for determining the objectives to be pursued. He emphasized the significance of the statement made recently by the Prime Minister of Pakistan on the importance of convening a conference on co-operation among developing countries. The regional commissions should pursue regional co-operation and co-

operation among developing countries in co-ordination with the work of other bodies, particularly UNCTAD, which shared the main responsibility in that field. The regional commissions would benefit from the precise and clear objectives for the fulfilment of which the developing countries had displayed a spirit of unity and co-operation. They had given their support to new and broader spheres of action, having, for example, announced substantial contributions towards stabilization measures for world commodity markets.

50. The recent gesture by the President of the Philippines had spurred the determination of developing countries to bring about a restructuring of the world economic order. The fifth Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries to be held in the near future at Colombo would provide a new and timely opportunity for broadening interregional co-operation and co-operation among developing countries. Peru would participate to the full in that Conference and in the Conference on Economic Co-operation among Developing Countries in Mexico that was to follow.

51. Mr. TOTH (Observer for Hungary), speaking at the invitation of the President, said that the signature of the Final Act of the European Conference on Security and Co-operation had been a historic event in the consolidation of peace and security in Europe. The Government of his country and those of the other socialist countries were resolved to follow the principles set out in the Final Act, which had resulted from a series of political negotiations in which the question of economic co-operation among countries with different social and economic systems had inevitably been touched upon.

52. The essential prerequisite for economic co-operation among countries with different economic and social systems was international security, while at the same time economic relations strengthened political security among States. The development of economic co-operation in Europe strengthened the trend towards détente in the world as a whole.

53. His Government supported ECE and its activities. It had noted with satisfaction the Commission's contribution to the implementation of the provisions of the Final Act. At its last session the Commission had considered how to integrate the provisions of the Final Act of the Conference into its programme of work. A useful discussion had been held and the subsidiary bodies of the Commission had been given the necessary directives for the achievement of co-operation among member countries. The Hungarian Government was particularly interested in ECE decision B (XXXI) concerning the holding of all-European congresses on questions of co-operation in the field of protection of the environment, development of transport, and energy (see E/5781, part IV, sect. II). It considered that at those congresses questions such as the unification of the energy network, joint and co-ordinated development of transport and major questions relating to the environment could usefully be debated. The Hungarian Government had made its interest in the preparation for those congresses known in a letter to the Executive Secretary of ECE, which would be distributed to member countries. His Government

appreciated the experience acquired by ECE in the 30 years of its existence and was sure that the Commission could help in the preparation and organization of such conferences, which would provide an opportunity for high-level government representatives to discuss the prospects for European co-operation. That project might well be of interest to other regional commissions.

54. The Hungarian Government appreciated the work done by the Commission and by the Executive Secretary with respect to economic co-operation between countries with different social and economic systems. The Commission had achieved positive results in that work and now, with improved conditions, it could do even more, particularly in eliminating the remaining obstacles to co-operation between countries of the East and West.

55. Mr. OLZVOY (Observer for Mongolia), speaking at the invitation of the President, thanked the Executive Secretaries of the regional commissions, especially ESCAP, for their reports.

56. In the region of Asia and the Pacific, the political situation had improved since the people of Indo-China had attained independence and sovereignty over their natural resources. The struggle for national independence had to be taken into account in the activities of the regional commissions. The task of ESCAP was to assist the efforts of the developing countries to achieve rapid economic and social development. The Commission's annual report (E/5786) showed that it was helping to achieve greater social justice in the region, and it should continue to do so.

57. His Government was particularly interested in ESCAP's work in rural development, an essential part of which was agricultural reform. Agricultural reform radically improved the living conditions of the rural population. It was proper for ESCAP to devote attention to agricultural development, for 40 per cent of the population of Asia, apart from that of the socialist countries, lived in conditions of extreme poverty.

58. His delegation also attached great importance to far-reaching economic and social changes being made in the interests of the working masses. It was essential for everyone to receive equitable remuneration for his work and to have a say in the way in which public affairs were

conducted and in which the products of his labour were used. The regional commissions must take account of those factors if they truly wished to contribute to development.

59. The regional commissions were carrying out important work in promoting scientific and technical co-operation between countries of their regions. His delegation also supported the work being done in development planning and was in favour of extending and strengthening that work.

60. ESCAP had done good work in facilitating transit to and from land-locked countries, and on the transfer of resources to priority areas.

61. His Government was in favour of increasing the number of members of the region so that all countries could take advantage of regional and subregional co-operation within the framework of ESCAP. The members of the Commission, including Mongolia, felt it necessary to aid the Indo-Chinese people not only out of sympathy for those people, who had undergone the horrors of a neo-colonial war, but also because the re-establishment of their economy would have a significant effect on the development of the region as a whole.

62. The Commission could and should contribute to the exchange of experience between members of the region in the economic and social spheres. The public sector of the economy in developing countries should be one of the priority areas for ESCAP activity.

63. His country welcomed the news that ESCAP was co-operating with CMEA. That co-operation would be of great interest to the developing countries in the region. The developing countries wished for co-operation based on equality of rights, respect for sovereignty and non-interference in internal affairs. His delegation had therefore been surprised that at the last session of ESCAP one delegation had spoken out against such co-operation.

64. His delegation on the whole approved the activities of ESCAP and hoped that its suggestions for improving the Commission's work would be taken into account when future activities were planned.

The meeting rose at 1.05 p.m.