

2013th meeting

Monday, 5 July 1976, at 3.20 p.m.

President: Mr. S. AKÉ (Ivory Coast)

E/SR.2013

In the absence of the President, Mr. E. Longierstaey (Belgium), 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. GALVÃO TELES (Portugal) stressed the significance of the Council's meeting in Africa, a continent for centuries dominated by colonialism and one of the regions worst affected by under-development, poverty and hunger. Africa, with some of the world's least developed countries, traditionally engaged in commodity production, with no manufacturing industries, where lack of technology and deterioration in the terms of trade were felt with particular acuity, was destined to play an important part in the struggle for a new international economic order.

2. His delegation was especially grateful to the Government and people of Ivory Coast for their hospitality, for Portugal, long a colonialist Power, was particularly interested in Africa. The historical, cultural, human and economic links forged over many centuries made it very much aware of the problems of the African nations which, though politically independent, were still fighting for full economic independence and greater justice in their relations with the industrialized world.

3. The survival of mankind would depend largely on the evolution of the struggle for a new international economic order. Faster progress by the developing countries and reduction of the widening gap between them and the developed ones were essential to international peace and security.

4. Portugal attached great importance to the development of a new spirit of justice and equity in international economic relations, and considered that it should be reflected in practical, effective measures. Confrontation must yield to dialogue and inequality to co-operation, and the process must be swift enough to bridge the ever-widening gap between the rich and the poor countries, and to prevent subsistence levels from falling even further in the least developed of the developing countries.

5. Important progress had recently been made towards those objectives, the international community had gradually overcome its disagreements, and a spirit of compromise had been particularly evident at the seventh special session of the General Assembly, at the fourth session of UNCTAD and at the Paris Conference on International Economic Co-operation. Portugal had contributed to that spirit of

compromise and, by its approval of the relevant United Nations resolutions, had shown its awareness of its responsibilities.

6. Nevertheless, the Portuguese Government believed that any solutions adopted must take account of each country's level of development, both actual and potential, whatever the region in which it was situated. Those levels differed widely, and the fact that a country belonged to a given region was not in itself indicative of its degree of development. Account must also be taken of the position of countries at an intermediate stage of development, some of which, including Portugal itself, were developing countries with as yet fragile economies, net importers of raw materials, food and capital equipment. Equitable solutions must therefore give due weight to differences in economic development. The fact that an indicative planning figure had recently been assigned to Portugal by the UNDP Governing Council was of great significance, and gave hope that the international community would recognize the nature of the situation obtaining in countries such as Portugal.

7. One of the major objectives of multilateral trade negotiations was to increase the developing countries' capacity to participate in the expansion of international trade. His delegation realized the importance of negotiations and the need to conclude them before the end of 1977 in accordance with the Tokyo Declaration.¹

8. With respect to commodities, of which Portugal was a net importer, his Government considered that the resolution adopted at the fourth session of UNCTAD, held at Nairobi, on the Integrated Programme for Commodities was a further step towards stabilizing trade in commodities at a level remunerative to producers and fair to consumers. The Portuguese Government would take an active part in the negotiation process agreed upon at Nairobi.

9. Concerning industrialization, Portugal considered that the desire of the developing countries to increase their rate of development and their share of world industrial output was a perfectly legitimate one. Portugal had approved the targets fixed at the second General Conference of UNIDO held at Lima in March 1975, and believed that the Council should tackle the question at its present session.

10. There was a close connexion between industrialization and technology. One of the prerequisites for industrial development was a technological infrastructure capable of creating new techniques and adapting imported ones to

¹ Issued at the end of the GATT Ministerial Meeting in September 1973.

local conditions. Without such an infrastructure, the present situation of dependency would continue, and the basic factors of development would remain outside the control of the national authorities concerned.

11. The measures approved at the fourth session of UNCTAD for strengthening the technological capacity of the developing countries, regardless of region or subregion, and reforming the industrial property system were in keeping with the long-expressed wishes of the developing countries. Those measures, and particularly those concerning vocational training, information, the establishment of national technology transfer centres and their co-operation with regional and subregional centres, should certainly be put into effect.

12. The fourth session of UNCTAD had also taken a step forward with regard to the code of conduct for transfer of technology, by establishing guidelines for the work of the Intergovernmental Group of Experts. As far as the transfer of technology was concerned, Portugal was facing problems very similar to those of the Group of 77, and agreed that there was need for a set of rules to define and discipline the action of donor and recipient countries, taking particular account of the latter's unfavourable position.

13. The world economic recession had had a serious impact on the economically weaker countries, as discussions at Nairobi had shown and his country, unfortunately, was well placed to understand those difficulties. Portugal therefore supported all measures likely to relieve the burden of financing exceptional balance-of-payments difficulties, notably through the specialized agencies in that field. It was also in favour of measures designed to alleviate the developing countries' external debt problems as well as measures facilitating access for those countries and others in a similar position to international capital markets. Specifically, the appropriate international bodies should study the possibility of a moratorium and a flexible system for the repayment of the developing countries' external debt in order to encourage investment and the establishment of infrastructures in those countries.

14. He expressed his Government's satisfaction at the results obtained with a view to the reform of the international monetary system. Discipline would, in the medium term, help to avoid the wild fluctuations which had such serious effects on the steady development of world trade. A return to fixed parities would have a stabilizing influence on world monetary and financial affairs, as would the decision to adopt SDRs as the main unit of international finance. His delegation approved the decision adopted at the seventh special session of the General Assembly and at the fourth session of UNCTAD concerning the link to be established between the creation of international liquidity and the development process.

15. Finally, there was a pressing need to provide the Economic and Social Council with the organizational means and capacity for intervention to enable it to strengthen its authority and carry out its work of co-ordination. Economic and social progress, improvement in living standards, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms were still a long way off. It was for the United Nations, and

especially the Council, to play an important part in international co-operation and development.

16. Mr. SCHUPPUS (Togo) said that the third world was becoming aware of the need for economic as well as political independence, for the improvement of international economic relations and for the betterment of the conditions of the 70 per cent of the world's population at present subsisting on 30 per cent of the world's income. It was essential to end, or at any rate attenuate, the prevailing mass poverty and call a halt to the deterioration of the environment, for otherwise disaster would be imminent. It was more important than ever to take a fresh look at the state of affairs in the world, in view of the increasing threat to international peace and security. Therein lay the special importance of the Council's present session.

17. Previous development strategies, resolutions and recommendations had had little effect because of their unsuitability and because political will in the developed countries had been lacking. It was therefore essential to set up a new system of relations between the developed and the developing countries – a system that must reinforce the sovereignty of the third world countries and their capacity for self-reliance, based not on narrow economic nationalism or primitive autarky, but on a sincere desire for truly interdependent and economically just relations between developed and developing countries. The path would be a long one, which was why immediate action by the international community was needed to translate into reality the targets laid down by the General Assembly and the specialized agencies of the United Nations.

18. The developed countries could no longer smugly ignore the penury of the rest of the world. Reliable estimates showed that, between 1965 and 1975, the developing countries' external debt had risen from \$38 billion to \$150 billion and that, in 1974-1975, the debts of some countries had reached the point where the external aid they received no longer sufficed to cover their debt servicing requirements. The over-all deficit on current account of those countries had gone up from \$12.2 billion in 1973 to \$45 billion in 1975. Behind those figures lurked poverty, famine, malnutrition, disease and illiteracy – all evils from which most of Asia, Africa and Latin America were suffering. To cope with that tragic situation the international community must work out a global doctrine that would bring realism to international co-operation, ensuring prosperity for all. Special attention should be given to the needs of the most seriously affected, the least developed, the land-locked and island countries, those afflicted by drought and other natural disasters. Those countries urgently needed increased financial and technical assistance on more favourable and flexible conditions, and it was all the more urgent because so little had yet been achieved. The inequality between rich and poor countries continued to grow. Solemn declarations, sometimes with a note of exaggerated humanism, were not enough to redress the balance which had so long been weighted against the third world. Despite the pressing need for positive action, the results of the fourth session of UNCTAD and the Paris Conference on International Economic Co-operation gave little hope that the rich countries would ever be prepared to renounce their position of dominance.

19. The initial stages of the task of redressing world economic equilibrium necessarily entailed the strengthening of the developing countries' capacity to help themselves; in other words unfair economic relations must be replaced by true international co-operation. To that end it was essential that the developing countries should be able to exercise full and permanent sovereignty over their own natural resources and economic activities. In that connexion he recalled that the Togolese Government had recently reaffirmed Togo's inalienable rights to its own natural resources, which would be developed in the best interests of the Togolese people.

20. A concerted effort was needed to change the structure of the World commodity market, so as to ensure equitable and remunerative prices for the export commodities of the developing countries; new multidisciplinary methods were required in that regard. The recently adopted Integrated Programme for Commodities was an important step forward in that process of change, and he hoped that the forthcoming negotiations on the common fund for the financing of buffer stocks would come to a successful conclusion and that the developed countries would all make financial contributions to it.

21. However, the results of the fourth session of UNCTAD had not come up to the expectations of the third world. The forthcoming Conference of Non-Aligned Countries to be held at Colombo would have to work out a strategy for further negotiations, and in that connexion his delegation had taken note of the proposal made for a third world summit conference.

22. Industrialization was the key to the development of the third world. It was essential gradually to achieve the targets set forth in the Lima Declaration on Industrial Development and Co-operation, to promote industrial autonomy in the developing countries through the transfer and adaptation of technology, and to open up the markets of the developed countries to manufactures and semi-manufactures from the third world.

23. With respect to the reform of the international monetary system, he stressed the need to observe the guidelines laid down in General Assembly resolution 3084 (XXVIII).

24. Turning to the situation in southern Africa, he recalled the recent bloody repressions at Soweto by the abject racist régime of South Africa. Happily, the international community was becoming aware of the inhuman character of *apartheid* and was supporting the liberation struggle in Africa. None the less, some States Members of the United Nations, and indeed the only ones able to carry out the resolutions of the General Assembly and Security Council, were doing nothing to further that cause. Urgent international action was needed, for *apartheid* was a threat to international peace and security as well as to social development. The Government of South Africa must heed the recent appeal of the Security Council urging it to end its violence against the black majority and eliminate *apartheid* and racial discrimination.

25. The re-establishment of peace in South Africa and in Southern Rhodesia would further development and econ-

omic and social progress both in Africa and elsewhere in the world and, sooner or later, common sense and realism must triumph.

26. In addition to its political problems, Africa also had to face drought and natural disaster in some areas. The spontaneous interest and co-operation of the international community in that regard was extremely encouraging. The forthcoming United Nations Conference on Desertification should help to devise new technology to halt the advance of the desert. Any integrated world plan for the solution of desertification problems should, moreover, be extended to arid and semi-arid regions if it was to be comprehensive.

27. The first steps towards the new development strategy of the developing countries, based on social equity within each nation and closer co-operation in many ways, had been taken. The path would be a long one, with many obstacles to be overcome, and all must unite to overcome their differences if the new international economic order was to be attained.

28. Mr. KOTAITE (Secretary-General, International Civil Aviation Organization) said that the increasing interdependence of States in their efforts to attain fundamental economic and social aims underlined the importance of ensuring the adequacy of basic domestic and international infrastructures of communications and transport services – of which civil aviation was one – as important prerequisites for sustained economic development in all countries.

29. Over a relatively brief span of years, civil aviation had not only become a rapid and economical, but also an extremely safe, form of transport. He was happy to report that, in 1975, there had been a significant reduction in passenger fatalities and in the number of fatal aircraft accidents as compared with 1974 and that the accident rate in scheduled air transport had been the lowest since the foundation of ICAO 30 years previously. The number of passenger fatalities had been reduced to 0.07 per 100 million passenger kilometres; that remarkable safety level reflected the skill and devotion of all concerned as well as a high degree of successful international co-operation. States had been ready to recognize the advantages of civil aviation developing as a truly global network, and had accordingly provided supporting services and aeronautical training in accordance with internationally agreed patterns and standards.

30. However, complacency was always dangerous, particularly where safety was concerned, and that common achievement required continued attention by States and the provision by them of the necessary resources to enable aviation increasingly to serve all countries safely, efficiently and economically. Referring to the new routes and services developed during the past year, he mentioned the inauguration by Aeroflot in December 1975 of the first regular supersonic air service and the introduction in January 1976 of international Concorde passenger services by Air France and British Airways.

31. Although civil aviation activity had continued to increase during 1975, its annual rate of growth had declined, reflecting the world economic situation in that

period. A gradual improvement in over-all traffic activity had, however, been noted during the last six months of the year, and that might well lead to better global results in 1976.

32. However, civil aviation growth rates had varied considerably between different geographical regions and, with a few exceptions, air traffic had expanded in developing countries at rates well above the target set by the International Development Strategy for the Second United Nations Development Decade. The principal factors that seemed to have affected the 1975 results had been the broad decline in economic activity, continued high rates of inflation, the high level of private savings, and currency fluctuations, which had influenced relative price levels in different countries and, hence, their relative attractiveness to foreign visitors. The provisional estimate of the total number of international tourist arrivals reported by the World Tourism Organization for 1975 was 213 million, an increase of 2 per cent over 1974. Tourist arrivals in Africa were estimated to have increased most, followed by Asia and the Pacific, the Americas and Europe. The Middle East had been the only region for which the World Tourism Organization had estimated a decline in tourism.

33. With regard to the operating results of the world's scheduled airlines, he said that the preliminary estimate for 1975 was \$400 million, which was considerably less than the 1974 figure of \$782 million.

34. The next session of the ICAO Assembly, to be held in 1977, would consider the results of a special world-wide air transport conference which would be held during the first half of that year to propose remedial action to solve major economic problems faced by aviation and not already under examination by any other ICAO body. Considerable importance was attached to the work of that conference for which preparations were being made in consultation with intergovernmental and non-governmental bodies such as the African Civil Aviation Commission, the Latin American Civil Aviation Commission, the European Civil Aviation Conference and the International Air Transport Association.

35. The ICAO Council had followed with attention the work of the sixth and seventh special sessions of the General Assembly of the United Nations and had decided to include in the agenda of the ICAO Assembly's 1977 session a special item to permit full consideration of how ICAO's activities could help to attain the objectives of General Assembly resolution 3362 (S-VII).

36. ICAO was aware of the role that civil aviation had played and could continue to play in economic development, and in order to facilitate the detailed assessments that were required for that purpose in each country to complement the regional studies it had undertaken under its regular programme, it was executing a UNDP project to determine, on the basis of in-depth action-oriented country studies, how air transport could most effectively contribute to economic development in Africa. It was hoped that similar projects would be carried out elsewhere in the light of the experience and results achieved.

37. ICAO believed that aviation development must be pursued in full harmony with the concept of improving the human environment. For that reason, various studies relating to the development of operational procedures for aircraft noise abatement had been continued, as well as work aimed at developing new techniques for noise reduction at source. As for aircraft engine emissions, the results of a four-year research programme had become available and it was considered that future harmful effects for the environment could be avoided if proper measures were taken at an international level to develop low-emission engines and fuels in step with the development of supersonic aviation. One national programme had been initiated and would be co-ordinated with international agencies such as ICAO. Efforts were also continuing to develop advanced combustion technology for the control of engine exhaust emissions.

38. In conclusion, he reaffirmed ICAO's support of the principle and practice of fully co-ordinating its work with that of the United Nations family.

39. Mr. ÅLGÅRD (Norway) said that Norway welcomed the fact that, through the decolonization process, the United Nations had developed into a truly universal organization which had, in many ways, been revitalized by the young African nations that had emerged as independent States in the past two decades.

40. Norway had consistently advocated the right of all peoples to independence and self-determination and would continue to do so until all peoples were free. Indeed, it was with deep regret that it noted the existence in 1976 of vestiges of colonialism and racial discrimination on the African continent and the denial of the inalienable rights of the peoples of southern Africa. The world community had been increasingly concerned with the problems of southern Africa and must continue to be so until national independence, self-determination and majority rule had been achieved by the peoples of Namibia, Zimbabwe and South Africa. His Government had been providing and would continue to provide moral, financial and humanitarian support to the liberation movements in that area, and would join with all nations in exerting maximum pressure on its white minority rulers in the hope that the legitimate aspirations of the African majority could be attained with a minimum of bloodshed. It strongly denounced the brutal treatment by the Government of South Africa of those who had revolted the previous month against the oppressive and disgusting practices inherent in *apartheid*.

41. The convening of the Economic and Social Council in Africa should help once again to highlight the problems which African countries shared in common with all those of the third world – the problems of poverty and underdevelopment, which was to a great extent the result of a morally and socially unjust world economic order.

42. His Government welcomed the fact that the seventh special session of the General Assembly had been able to reach a consensus on resolution 3362 (S-VII) which had laid the foundation for attacking the problems of injustice and inequity through co-operation rather than confrontation. In that connexion, his delegation at the thirtieth

session of the General Assembly had stressed the importance of implementation – a process which was now under way and which had been given added momentum by the fourth session of UNCTAD. His Government viewed it as a test case, for at Nairobi the international community had faced the challenge of giving substance to the principal guidelines laid down by the sixth special session of the General Assembly and the political decisions taken at the seventh special session. It was therefore with regret that it concluded, on the basis of an over-all assessment, that the fourth session of UNCTAD had not represented a definite breakthrough reflecting the recognition by the world community as a whole of the urgency of the problems facing the developing countries and the need to act accordingly. However, his Government welcomed the compromise that had been reached, for it would enable the world community to continue the important dialogue of the past two years.

43. The only alternative to co-operation in solving the problems of development was confrontation, which would have disastrous effects for all countries. His delegation therefore hoped that the developed countries would adopt a more favourable attitude to the decisions taken at the fourth session of UNCTAD to continue work on the key issue of commodities, so that agreement could be reached on the Integrated Programme which had become a main demand of the developing countries. His Government endorsed that integrated approach and was prepared to contribute more than its share towards the creation of the proposed common fund. The Integrated Programme would also make UNCTAD the main negotiating forum for commodity agreements and for commodity questions in a wider sense.

44. He welcomed the fact that the compromise decisions taken at Nairobi laid down firm time-tables for the negotiations in which all were to be partners; his Government wished to stress the joint responsibility of all countries to abide by those time-tables and to make substantive progress in redressing an unbalanced world economic and social order.

45. Norway, which was strongly committed to change and to an egalitarian concept of society, attached great importance to firm commitments being made with a view to bridging the gap between the developed and developing countries. In that regard, it had had high hopes for the International Development Strategy which had set specific targets, the attainment of which was also the joint responsibility of the world community as a whole.

46. It noted with deep regret that, midway through the present Development Decade, the CDP was entirely justified in stating in the report on its twelfth session (E/5793 and Add.1) that in the over-all sense performance was disappointing. His delegation had studied that report with interest and supported some of the conclusions it contained, and in particular the one which stated that if, as the decade unfolded, performance began to fall short of the targets . . . the appropriate adjustment was not to revise the benchmarks; it was to revise the performance. That should be a major concern of the Economic and Social Council and of the Committee on Review and Appraisal when it met the

following year. His delegation was also in full agreement with the Committee's statement that the international community should begin forthwith to focus attention on making the 1980s a more successful development decade.

47. The series of important *ad hoc* conferences held during recent years on subjects such as environment, population, food, women and human settlements had made in-depth studies of high priority global problems, and the main conclusions reached should form an excellent basis for the elaboration of a comprehensive action-oriented programme, namely the International Development Strategy. The Council should waste no time in embarking upon the preparatory work necessary to transform the Strategy into a major instrument for the creation of the new international economic order.

48. His Government, which wished to see the United Nations play the primary role in global development efforts, hoped that it would be provided with the necessary resources and that it would be restructured with a view to increasing its efficiency. It was for that reason that it had taken an active role in the current restructuring process, and was gratified by the progress made so far by the *Ad Hoc* Committee on the Restructuring of the Economic and Social Sectors of the United Nations System.

49. Mr. NEAL (Liberia) noted that, at the time of the first session of UNCTAD at Geneva in 1964, no one could possibly have visualized the present state of the world economy with its severe recession and disastrous inflation. Following serious and protracted efforts by the third world countries at that time to create a genuine dialogue and an understanding of the degrading inequities they suffered in their trade and aid relationships with the developed countries, most of the developed countries had merely signed the *Final Act*² and returned to their business-as-usual policies, continuing the ruthless and irrational exploitation of the world's resources for selfish national gain and financial profit.

50. His Government wondered whether the real significance of the economic chaos resulting from the developed countries' greed, and the unfair economic gains reaped from their post-war mercantile policies, had been fully grasped. The developed countries and the developing countries were regrouping and, judging from the outcome of the fourth session of UNCTAD, he feared there might ultimately be an international economic confrontation. If it was to be avoided, a start must be made forthwith to give real meaning to the Council's work. Economic restructuring was urgent and could no longer be the subject of idle discussion, irresponsible delays and useless attempts at circumvention; a new economic order based on realistic horizontal relationships between all countries must be vigorously and relentlessly pursued. That implied serious change, and the international institutions should be in the vanguard of the new approach.

² *Proceedings of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development*, vol. I, *Final Act and Report* (United Nations publication, Sales No. 64.II.B.11).

51. It was ironic that certain developed countries had the political will to find funds and resources to help the developing countries in conflicts leading to death, destruction and pillaging, but lacked the will to support the developing countries in Africa in their quiet but determined struggle for self-reliance. The developing countries must now look carefully at their social and economic structures and set in motion the changes which would make them viable in the emerging new order. They would have to do a great deal for themselves, but they would also need help from the developed market-economy and centrally planned economy countries. The developed countries must also demonstrate the political will in all the international organizations to establish an equitable international economic system and, to that end, adequate practical measures must be adopted to overcome the developing countries' difficulties.

52. There was evidence that the industrialized countries were recovering from the world-wide recession, but the momentum of economic recovery had not yet reached the developing countries, particularly those which were importers of oil and food. Balance-of-payments deficits and lack of foreign exchange, resulting from the world recession, had forced many third world countries to curtail the import of capital goods vital to their development programmes. If that situation continued, many of them would find it increasingly difficult even to maintain their present economic level, and their economies might deteriorate to the point where it was impossible to provide the bare necessities of life.

53. Present problems were largely the result of the system of dependency which pervaded the international economic order. Developing countries had not succeeded in crossing the threshold that separated exporters of primary commodities commanding low export earnings and exporters – and consumers – of processed goods commanding high export earnings. They had to depend on outside demand – from the industrialized nations – and the growth of their economies was inextricably bound up with the growth of the developed economies.

54. The facts of the present economic order called for a new era of co-operation, not for confrontation. He hoped all members of the Council and the international community realized the need to improve the present system so as to create a genuine system of interdependence.

55. Although the fourth session of UNCTAD and the Paris Conference on International Economic Co-operation represented positive steps in the direction of a new dialogue between developed and developing countries, and despite the developed countries' commitment to the Declaration and Programme of Action on the Establishment of a New International Economic Order and the decisions of the sixth and seventh special sessions of the General Assembly, many of the crucial problems faced by third world economies had yet to be fully appreciated or resolved. For example, the majority of the developed countries had not yet accepted the Integrated Programme for Commodities including the means for financing buffer stocks; nor had they agreed to abolish tariff and non-tariff barriers against the export of primary products or to respect fully the

principle of standstill and to accept the annual target of 0.7 per cent of their GNP as official development assistance to the developing countries.

56. His Government was seriously concerned over the dwindling assistance to international financial institutions. Support for the World Bank and other regional institutions such as the African Development Bank were essential for the transfer of capital. Failure to contribute to IDA would result in an even greater burden on the already desperate developing countries, which looked to IDA for help in their efforts to achieve growth and development. If progress was to be made, international agencies, including UNDP, would have to design their aid programmes on a cost-benefit basis, to ensure a realistic accounting of expenditure in relation to productivity. There was a need for greater support for the international institutions dedicated to the developing countries' economic and social progress and a fuller understanding of their vital role.

57. There was also a pressing need for developing countries to speed up the development of their manpower resources, particularly in view of the mounting cost of technical assistance; those countries would never emerge from their dependency unless that problem were solved. The present yardsticks used to measure development did not truly reflect economic and social conditions in most of the developing countries. The GNP criterion, for example, in countries where foreign economic enclaves were the dominant poles of growth, tended to distort the calculation of *per capita* income, which was nevertheless often a major factor in determining aid to developing countries. Yardsticks needed careful review to ensure that they gave a more realistic picture of the state of a country's economy.

58. The world must become one economic unit pursuing the objective of survival for all groups of people – for every individual State and for every person: that was the basis of the notion of equality and the sure foundation of progress. It was not enough to deal with today's problems; plans must be made ahead so as to be ready for tomorrow's drought or other unforeseen events.

59. There was a vast difference between self-reliance and selfishness. Self-reliance implied recognition of individual responsibility in the social context and in life as a whole: the capacity to accept responsibility for one's own development. Social responsibility meant awareness that development must take place in the context of respect for the interests of others in the group. That was also true for nations.

60. The present session offered an opportunity for bold new initiatives in building a new international economic structure which would enable the third world countries to speed up the international process of growth, diversification and integration, and to improve the lot of their poor. Ways must be found of dealing with mass poverty, growing food shortages and mass unemployment through trade and aid and increased net inflows of real resources to third world countries; nations must take their social responsibilities seriously.

61. His delegation fully supported the resolutions of the sixth and seventh special sessions of the General Assembly and the third world countries' recommendations at the fourth session of UNCTAD. To avoid the mistakes of the past, developed and developing countries alike must actively support those resolutions and thus move towards the new international economic order.

62. Joint efforts in the Council for the betterment of mankind could not be divorced from the present happenings in South Africa, where people were prevented from making their own choice and pursuing the goals of free men. The Council could not ignore the relationship between economic and social development and political freedom, or escape its responsibility for eradicating a system which denied men their fundamental rights.

63. In order to ensure that productive discussions were pursued at Geneva and that the Council achieved its objectives, members must endeavour to agree on a set of policies, principles and guidelines that would give meaning to the new economic order and serve as a basis for positive action in the third development decade.

64. Mr. MARTÍNEZ (Argentina) said that although the major countries were beginning to recover from the recent economic crisis, developing countries were still having to grapple with its consequences; there was little sign of general expansion, and progress towards a more just organization of the world economy was very slow.

65. For his own country, the most important problems were primary commodities, international trade, regional and international co-operation, promotion of exports, planning of development and the introduction of technology, the proper use of natural resources, and everything to do with production.

66. The economic interdependence of States was a fundamental principle, and its consequences, whether positive or negative, must be borne in mind in discussions and proposals. He drew attention to a number of factors which, in the present situation, called for special attention: world inflation which affected the economies of all countries and in some cases – as in his own country – helped to create serious balance-of-payments problems; the decline in foreign exchange earnings for countries dependent on exports of primary commodities which were subject to acute price fluctuations; access for the developing countries' exports to the markets of developed countries, which often adopted unduly stringent measures to protect their own products; and the energy crisis which affected all countries including those, like his own, which were partially self-sufficient.

67. His country's external policy was designed to ensure the best possible use of its natural resources and to use export earnings for speeding up economic growth and acquiring the products and equipment essential for development and the sustained growth of economic activity. Since growth was directly related to external trade, he urged the abolition of unjust barriers to imports of Argentine

products, in the interests of all the parties concerned. Priority was being given to the production of export items – agricultural and livestock products as well as manufactures and semi-manufactures – and to diversification involving Government and private initiative. Complete realization of the production potential of countries such as his own would help to solve the international food problem and also speed up the development of their economies.

68. His Government considered that the fourth session of UNCTAD had made progress on some important aspects of agenda item 9 (Development and international economic co-operation...), but considered that controversial matters must be resolved if the international community as a whole was to be able to take action to solve the serious problems of under-development and inequitable economic relations. A sustained and concerted effort was still needed to achieve a consensus on measures concerning commodities, transfer of technology, transnational corporations, liberalization of trade and transfer of real resources for development.

69. His delegation fully supported the Lima Declaration and Plan of Action on Industrial Development and Co-operation, which called for greater industrial participation by developing countries in the world economy, and pledged its support for UNIDO as a specialized agency of the United Nations. It also hoped that the United Nations Special Fund would shortly be in a position to begin operations thanks to generous contributions from all countries in a position to make them.

70. His Government had already contributed to food aid but regarded it as a temporary measure. The real solution was bound up with the development of agriculture and livestock, particularly in developing countries with a potential for large-scale production.

71. His Government was giving all possible support to operational activities for development in which UNDP provided technical assistance. Argentina had always supported horizontal co-operation; it had complete confidence in the United Nations system as an irreplaceable instrument of international co-operation. His Government looked forward to acting as host to two conferences in 1977: a United Nations Conference on Technical Co-operation among Developing Countries, aimed at strengthening and speeding up international activities in that sphere – in addition to, but not as a substitute for, technical assistance through UNDP; and the United Nations Water Conference. He also mentioned the United Nations Conference on Desertification.

72. His delegation was confident that the general debate would produce agreement on a number of issues and pledged itself to co-operate in efforts to achieve mutual understanding and a consensus. It supported the principle of solidarity and co-operation with other countries, especially those with geographical, historical and cultural links. He hoped that Abidjan would be a landmark on the road to a new international economic order.

The meeting rose at 5.15 p.m.