

would require large amounts of long-term capital on favourable terms, mainly to cover local costs, and would therefore have an immediate impact on local living standards.

75. The question of the development of the Sudano-Sahelian countries should be reviewed in a broader geographical context than the countries themselves. Any action taken in the Sahel could not be dissociated from that of neighbouring countries in agriculture, transport and resources development. The solidarity which had inspired the emergency assistance was also one of the rules of development.

76. He commended the High Commissioner for Refugees on his excellent organization of the rehabilitation operations in southern Sudan. The efficient co-ordination of the efforts of the specialized agencies concerned had shown that they could effectively carry out urgent relief work and draw up longer-term assistance plans. Their efforts had

helped to strengthen the peace based on the Addis Ababa Agreement of 27 March 1972, and accompanying Protocols, had relieved neighbouring countries of the burden of supporting some 180,000 Sudanese, had enabled those Sudanese and about half a million other displaced Sudanese to find a home and start a new life, and, through the generous assistance of certain Governments, had helped to improve communications between southern Sudan and the rest of the country. The High Commissioner's successful operations in Sudan and in the Indian sub-continent had shown that his Office could be used to help displaced persons on a larger scale. Moreover, the High Commissioner had managed to meet additional expenditure in some sectors without having to obtain extra funds from the international community. France would support the draft resolution on assistance to southern Sudanese returnees and displaced persons (E/L.1604/Rev.1).

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.

1914th meeting

Monday, 15 July 1974, at 3.10 p.m.

President: Mr. A. KARHILO (Finland)

E/SR.1914

AGENDA ITEMS 10, 11, 12 AND 22

Consideration of the economic and social situation in the Sudano-Sahelian region stricken by drought and measures to be taken for the benefit of that region
(*continued*) (E/5554; E/L.1605)

Economic assistance to Zambia (*continued*) (E/L.1603)

Assistance to the drought-stricken areas of Ethiopia
(*continued*) (E/5560; E/L.1606)

Assistance to Southern Sudanese returnees and displaced persons (*continued*) (E/5483; E/L.1604/Rev.1)

1. Mr. DALE (United States of America) said that it was unfortunate that at each session for the past few years the Council should have been called upon to examine the situation of countries stricken by disasters, either natural or man-made, particularly since the countries affected were generally those least able to withstand them. The United States of America considered that relief work was primarily the responsibility of the Governments of the countries affected, but that the affluent countries should help, particularly when the disaster was of such magnitude that those Governments could not cope with the situation alone.

2. His country had provided bilateral assistance to the Sahel amounting to roughly \$129 million in the form of food and other aid, such as airlifts, lorries and medical supplies. Less than two weeks earlier his Government had given an additional amount of \$1 million to the FAO

Sahelian Zone Trust Fund. Those were untied funds which could be used by any United Nations agency operating with programmes in the Sahel, subject to the procedures and criteria laid down by FAO. That was the second million dollars supplied by the United States to the FAO Trust Fund, the first having been allocated to WHO and UNICEF operations in the Sahel.

3. Moreover, Mr. Kissinger, United States Secretary of State, had proposed at the sixth special session of the General Assembly (2214th plenary meeting) that ICSU and WMO should study the possible effects of long-term climatic changes in the drought-stricken areas of Africa. Mr. Davies, the Secretary-General of WMO, had reported the action taken on that proposal in his statement to the Council (1908th meeting). The United States Government was also prepared to give direct assistance to United Nations operations in the Sahel and his delegation would give further details in that regard during the coming week. He himself was going to the Sahel shortly to examine the conditions there.

4. Discussions were going on within his Government for the continuation of the high level of bilateral aid to the countries of the Sudano-Sahelian region; that assistance was expected to focus on projects which would mitigate the effects of the drought and on activities which would increase the food crop and livestock potential of the area.

5. His Government had also given considerable aid to the Ethiopian Government. The emergency relief supplied to Ethiopia was administered through the AID Mission at

Addis Abeba, in co-operation with UNDP, FAO and the Ethiopian National Relief Committee. That assistance was also provided in co-operation with the United Nations, which was helping the Ethiopian Government to co-ordinate the provision and distribution of relief supplies.

6. Bilateral emergency assistance supplied by the United States to Ethiopia up to June 1974 had amounted to roughly \$17.6 million, which had included, in addition to food aid, transport costs, medicaments, blankets, temporary storage facilities, airlifts and technical assistance. In addition, the United States had recently provided \$245,000 to the United Nations Disaster Relief Co-ordinator, \$145,000 to help pay for the transport of 25 lorries from Italy to Ethiopia by air, and \$100,000 towards the cost of air-freighting 20 lorries from the United Kingdom to Ethiopia.

7. As in the case of relief to the Sahel region, his Government was discussing the provision of additional emergency aid to improve the quality of life of the poorest Ethiopian people through improved agricultural practices and a more equitable sharing of development benefits.

8. The situation in Zambia and Sudan was somewhat different in nature and on a somewhat different scale. The United States had granted Zambia a loan of \$5 million by way of assistance. To Sudan, where the refugee situation seemed to have improved, it had granted roughly \$1.4 million during the fiscal year 1974 in the form of food supplies, through WFP, UNICEF and voluntary organizations for southern Sudanese returnees. In 1973, his Government had provided the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees with approximately \$10 million for assistance to Sudanese refugees, in the form of foodstuffs, tools, hospital clinics, temporary shelter and medicaments.

9. The figures he had given excluded much of the assistance which his Government had supplied through multilateral agencies as part of its annual contributions, which in part covered the disaster relief activities of those agencies. The volume of assistance given by the United States testified to his country's concern for the victims of disasters.

10. Lastly, his delegation, which was a sponsor of the draft resolution on assistance to southern Sudanese returnees and displaced persons (E/L.1604/Rev.1), also supported the draft resolutions concerning the Sudano-Sahelian region (E/L.1605) and the drought-stricken areas of Ethiopia (E/L.1606), as also the draft resolution relating to Zambia (E/L.1603).

11. Mr. PU Ming (China) paid a tribute to the courage and determination of the Zambian people, who had resisted the provocation of the Southern Rhodesian régime after the closing of their common frontier. The people of Zambia persevered in their opposition to imperialism, colonialism and racism and were supporting the African national liberation movements. Under the leadership of President Kaunda and with the support of friendly countries, particularly African countries, Zambia had succeeded in developing its economy and defeating the Southern Rho-

desian plot. The Chinese Government and people were united with Zambia in profound friendship and would continue to give it their firm support.

12. For successive years there had been droughts in the Sahelian region and in the north-east of Ethiopia, seriously affecting the livelihood of the inhabitants of those regions. Millions of people were threatened by famine and disease; many herdsmen had lost the bulk of their livestock and numerous villages had become desert. The Governments of some of the drought-stricken countries had set up national committees to supply foodstuffs, seeds, and water pumps, establish stock-breeding farms and assist the farmers and herdsmen in their struggle against the effects of the drought. Those countries had received aid from other African countries and developing countries, which had thus demonstrated the spirit of solidarity and mutual aid which prevailed among third world countries.

13. In response to the appeal by the Governments of the drought-stricken countries, United Nations agencies had participated in the relief work. China hoped that they would continue to play an effective role in the emergency relief operations and in the preparation of medium- and long-term programmes of action.

14. The assistance operations for southern Sudanese refugees had been completed the previous year; his delegation supported the draft resolution on that question appearing in document E/L.1604/Rev.1. It also fully supported draft resolutions E/L.1603, E/L.1605 and E/L.1606, and hoped that they would be unanimously adopted.

15. Mr. MAES (Observer for the European Economic Community), speaking at the invitation of the President and referring to the situation in the Sudano-Sahelian region, said that the accumulated rain deficit since 1965 and a permanent quasi-drought since 1969 had seriously affected the populations of the Sahel and EEC had immediately made a substantial contribution to the international aid effort being deployed at the instigation of the United Nations. In 1973 cereal supplies by the international community as a whole to the six Sahelian countries, excluding Ethiopia, had amounted to almost 500,000 tons, including 180,000 tons, to a value of 32 million units of account, from EEC, which in addition had supplied 13,000 tons of powdered milk to a value of 9 million units of account.

16. For 1974, FAO experts had estimated at roughly 650,000 tons of cereals and certain quantities of other foodstuffs the requirements for ensuring the survival of the populations threatened by famine in the six Sahelian countries and Ethiopia. The Council of Ministers of the Community had drawn up a programme of short-term aid both for the Sahelian countries associated with the Community and for Ethiopia, providing for the supply of 130,000 tons of cereals, 14,000 tons of powdered skimmed milk, and 6,000 tons of butter-oil, to an estimated total value of approximately 54 million units of account or \$65 million, including 14 million units of account for transport costs. Moreover, a special loan of 5 million units of account had been earmarked for financing non-recurrent transport

costs, storage charges and other expenditure relating to the distribution of food aid. In addition bilateral aid to be provided by member countries would amount to approximately 115,000 tons of cereals to a value of 25 million units of account.

17. Supplies scheduled under the Community programme were moving smoothly: by the end of June 85 per cent of the cereals, 82 per cent of the powdered milk and 91 per cent of the butter-oil for the six Sahelian countries had already been shipped, as had almost all the supplies for Ethiopia. Food aid was being distributed free of charge to drought victims, with the exception of a small quantity of cereals which could be sold and the receipts allocated to development projects.

18. Besides food aid, the Community had in 1973 provided emergency financial assistance to a total of 19 million units of account drawn from the European Development Fund and, in 1974, 35 million units of account drawn from the budget of the Commission of the European Communities by decision of the Council of Ministers.

19. The urgent nature of the action called for maximum flexibility in the implementation of programmes. The Commission which was responsible for it had therefore provided for a series of simplified pragmatic procedures which had enabled the EEC programme to be put into effect rapidly. Implementation contracts relating to emergency aid in 1974 concluded between the seven countries concerned and the Commission had shown, four months after their entry into effect, that 53 per cent of the credits granted, and 23 per cent of the expenditure, had been committed.

20. Some food grants would no doubt be necessary for several years to come, until herds of livestock were reconstituted. By October it would be possible to estimate the supplies required for 1975, in the light of the climatic conditions and local cereal production. Every care should be taken, however, not to jeopardize the re-establishment of local production; that explained the importance given to the development of storage facilities, particularly in the major distribution centres.

21. In order to avoid past errors, the Commission had organized in June 1974, at Brussels, a co-ordination and information meeting on stock-raising in the Sahelian countries, which, besides the Sahelian countries and the Community, had been attended by representatives of AfDB, IBRD, FAO, Canada and AID. The basic objective of any long-term action should be to secure for the populations of the Sahel a safe and normal life by maximizing agricultural food production, for example by developing the alluvial valleys of major water-courses such as the Senegal and Niger Rivers and their tributaries, and by rationalizing and intensifying animal production. With that in view, part of the Community's aid programme was designed to restore and improve the agricultural and animal production equipment of those countries through the supply of seeds and the payment of planting bonuses to the farmer victims of the drought, the creation of permanent storage facilities and the careful management of existing stocks of fodder.

22. Mr. CAVAGLIERI (Italy) said that his delegation had noted that the situation in the Sahelian region no longer required the presence in New York of the United Nations Special Sahelian Office, which could be transferred to Ouagadougou so that it could work in close co-operation with the Permanent Inter-State Committee on Drought Control in the Sahel, established by the six Sahel Governments.

23. His delegation supported the four draft resolutions before the Council. The case of Zambia differed slightly because of the political origin of its difficulties; the assistance it needed was a question not only of supply of resources but also of co-operation in East Africa. The situation seemed to be developing satisfactorily.

24. In the Sahel and in Ethiopia the drought had taken a particularly painful form. Italy had helped the Sahel Governments bilaterally as also as a member of EEC. Now, however, although further emergency relief was needed, the main problem was to adopt medium- and long-range measures to avoid more disasters in the future. His delegation had carefully considered the report of the Secretary-General on the situation in the drought-stricken region (E/5554), which gave a clear survey of the characteristics of the problem. Agriculture was the sector in which all the efforts needed to be concentrated and it was important to time the application of resources in accordance with the progress of initiatives in the various sectors such as dam building and energy supply.

25. Agricultural development in the Sahel had a strong ecological component, as had been shown by the magnitude of the disaster which the drought had caused. Soil restoration and conservation were therefore crucial problems with which the Governments concerned would have to deal. His delegation paid a tribute to the activity of the United Nations Special Sahelian Office and of UNDP, FAO, UNICEF and WHO in assisting the Sahel countries. Those institutions, together with UNEP and ECA, were going to work in association with the Governments of the six Sahel States in seeking long-term remedies and it would be the responsibility of the UNDP resident representatives to ensure co-ordination. The primary responsibility for the organization, management and allocation of resources belonged to the six Governments concerned and the regional co-operation that had so often been advocated seemed to be not only a need but also an incentive towards economic integration.

26. Ethiopia had given an example of the will of a people and its authorities to bring relief to hundreds of thousands of drought victims. International assistance, too, had been prompt. There again it was necessary to proceed to an in-depth assessment of the problem of drought; the supply and production of food must be organized on a permanent basis, drugs must be supplied, farmers needed to be financially helped and transport and communication difficulties had to be overcome. The efforts of individual countries, including Italy, and of the United Nations agencies gave reason to hope that the aid given to the Ethiopian Government would enable it to avoid the repetition of such sad occurrences. UNDP had just taken steps to provide further help, while IDA, FAO, UNICEF

and WFP were active. It was true that the drought which had stricken the Sahel and Ethiopia threatened adjoining countries such as Sudan and Somalia, which were trying to deal with local symptoms of drought. Sudan also had to cope with the problem of the return of former refugees, for whom it had received effective aid from the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

27. Mr. GEBRU (Ethiopia) said that the spectre of hunger was threatening a great number of Africans, but Ethiopia and the Sudano-Sahelian region had been the worst affected by the famine in recent years. It was estimated that in Ethiopia alone 100,000 people had died of starvation. The famine was unprecedented in Ethiopian history and the major cause was drought, a phenomenon beyond the control of man. Although Ethiopia had experienced drought conditions in the past owing to variations in rainfall, the drought just experienced seemed to be caused by profound changes in ecology. In those parts of the country where habitation, grazing and cultivation of the land dated from biblical times, there was a noticeable degree of deforestation followed by soil erosion. The erosion of soil, coupled with torrential rains, had reduced once cultivable lands to deep valleys separated by steep cliffs. The physical configuration of that part of Ethiopia therefore made road communications almost impossible.

28. Nevertheless, his Government had started public works projects such as re-forestation, feeder-road construction, small-scale irrigation, development of water supply systems, soil conservation, livestock management, etc. Unfortunately, despite all the effort made, many villages in the remote parts of the country were still inaccessible and drought victims were stranded helplessly. To exacerbate transport problems still further, there had been torrential rains in recent months, causing the destruction of temporary bridges and feeder roads constructed in the dry season for emergency relief purposes. Some relief operations were being carried out by air, but helicopters and other aircraft fell short of requirements.

29. A third element making the situation even worse was that the armyworm – the larva of a small insect that collected in vast armies – had spread over 11 of the 14 provinces of Ethiopia. FAO had supplied insecticides, but enormous quantities would be needed to protect the crops. Food reserves were already depleted and the prospect of devastation of the new harvest by the armyworm made the food situation look bleak. Widespread famine could yet threaten millions of Ethiopians and millions of cattle could perish.

30. In the circumstances the international community could assist the Ethiopian Government by increasing supplies of food and insecticides. The concept of collective economic security should find practical expression in a concerted endeavour to help a Member State.

31. The needs of the victims of drought varied according to the extent of the drought. Government experts had now determined the extent of the drought in Ethiopia, which covered eight of the 14 provinces and directly affected 3 million people and millions of heads of cattle. The latest estimates of food requirements amounted to 160,000 tons

per annum to feed victims of the drought. An agricultural expert had recently published an estimate of food requirements of 270,000 tons, a quantity that, even if available, would be almost impossible to deliver to the victims.

32. There was no doubt that relief was only a temporary palliative and could not be a substitute for rehabilitation and development. His Government had formulated a series of measures designed to rehabilitate the drought-stricken population by supplying seeds, work oxen, etc. The drought had further increased urban unemployment, since drought victims migrated in large numbers to urban centres in search of food and employment. Many were still living in temporary shelters along main highways; children and elderly persons comprised the most vulnerable group, for able-bodied men and women had abandoned their homes and travelled long distances in search of water, food and shelter, some dying on the way.

33. It was now a priority objective of his Government to combat the drought and its adverse effect on the social and economic situation of the country. Its resources, however, fell far short of the requirements, despite external financial and material assistance. The international community consisted of nations which were faced with a variety of difficulties. The economies of the industrialized countries were upset by inflation and balance-of-payments deficits. Other economies had excessive liquidity. The developing countries, however, were short of everything; in particular they were virtually incapacitated by steep increases in the prices of their essential imports, such as fertilizers, energy products, capital goods, services, etc.

34. Ethiopia, with a *per capita* income of \$76, had one of the least developed economies as identified by CDP. With its low productivity, low levels of technology and development, coupled with the sharp increase in the cost of its essential imports, Ethiopia was unprepared to withstand the international economic crisis. Soaring living costs, fed by imported inflation, had created social tensions. His Government had recently published a declaration of policy designed to alleviate the present difficulties and the carrying out of structural changes conducive to development. It was recognized that the existing land tenure system had retarded agricultural activity, and action to remedy that state of affairs would be taken; the drought problem was being tackled by the Government as a priority matter. He thanked Governments, the United Nations system and all intergovernmental, non-governmental, public and private organizations for their help and he hoped that the international community would continue to help Ethiopia, a disadvantaged country, within the framework of the measures adopted at the sixth special session of the General Assembly.

35. Mr. LONGERSTAEY (Belgium), referring to the Secretary-General's report on the drought situation in the Sudano-Sahelian region (E/5554) said that the situation in that region was still disquieting, since a succession of droughts was a serious blow to man's survival. Consequently, as the Secretary-General stated in his report, the first objective, after emergency measures had been taken, should be to ensure that a crisis such as that now facing the Sahel could not occur again. For that purpose, it was

essential to build up stocks but, above all, assistance must be given to the Sahelian countries to enable them to reach a level of self-sufficiency. It was with that object in mind that Egypt, Pakistan, Tunisia and Belgium had submitted to the Committee on Science and Technology for Development a draft resolution on a world programme of development research and application of science and technology to solve the special problems of the arid areas (E/5473, chap. I, draft resolution II). The draft resolution had been approved by the Economic Committee and would be submitted to the Council.

36. In view of the need to take immediate action to deal with the disaster, Belgium had continued in 1974 the action it had begun in 1973. That action had been concentrated mainly on Niger and had taken the form of air and surface transport operations that had made possible the rapid shipment of foodstuffs, viz. 180 tons of food, including powdered milk, provided by EEC and flown from Brussels, and several thousand tons of foodstuffs sent by land for the benefit of a population of over 100,000. At the same time Belgian doctors had treated the local population at the rate of 250 consultations per day. Thanks to the financial assistance supplied by EEC, the Belgian mission could continue its on-the-spot action until mid-August 1974 and aircraft could be made available to the Niger authorities for outward transport of foodstuffs and onward local transport. As far as food aid was concerned, Belgium had just sent 10,000 tons of maize to Niger and 1,150 tons of cereals to Senegal. In addition to such governmental assistance, private organizations had continued the action undertaken in 1973.

37. With regard to the action for the development of the countries of the Sudano-Sahelian region, the recovery strategy recommended by the Secretary-General in his report seemed realistic, particularly his proposal to give priority in the region to stable crops and livestock. His delegation considered that activities in other sectors should be related to agriculture and livestock, and it was glad to note that over 90 per cent of the funds allocated to the projects proposed by the Permanent Inter-State Committee were going to agriculture, stock-breeding and the management of water and soil resources, and that agriculture in the broadest sense was the top priority in the new development plans for the countries of that region.

38. The action undertaken by the various United Nations bodies should of necessity be integrated with the assistance supplied by the international community as a whole, since much of the action to assist the Sahel was taking place outside the United Nations. Indeed, the efforts of the international community would have to continue for many years and to be well co-ordinated. Moreover, co-ordination efforts should be carried out on the spot, and on the initiative of the developing countries concerned, in other words through the intermediary of the Permanent Inter-State Committee. In that connexion, he was glad to note that a proposal had been made to transfer the major part of the functions of the United Nations Special Sahelian Office to Ouagadougou, which would make it possible to strengthen the links between the Special Office and the Inter-State Committee.

39. Belgium would not fail to make a contribution to the medium- and long-term efforts of the Sahelian countries to rebuild their economies, both by supplying bilateral aid and by supporting the multilateral efforts undertaken by the United Nations itself or by EEC.

40. His Government and Belgian non-governmental organizations had also supplied food aid and drugs to the drought-stricken Ethiopian people. Belgium would not fail to play a part in the reconstruction measures for Ethiopia undertaken by the international community.

41. Mr. STURKEY (Australia) said that Australia had traditionally given public and private aid, either directly or through international agencies, to countries suffering from natural disasters or man-made misfortunes.

42. The events of 1971 in southern Asia had convinced his Government of the need to organize closer collaboration between the efforts of the public and private sectors if there was to be the most effective possible action. Consequently, it had supported the establishment in Australia of a Disaster Emergencies Committee. The first appeal launched by that Committee had been for the benefit of the victims of the Ethiopian and Sudano-Sahelian drought. In a relatively short period of time, US\$ 1.25 million had been raised, in addition to which his Government had made a contribution. Australia hoped to be able to respond to similar situations in the future as promptly and effectively.

43. His delegation was convinced that there should be a rapid response, both nationally and internationally, to appeals for assistance. That was why, in 1973, Australia had been the first country to participate in the financing of the airlift organized in the Indian sub-continent, with a contribution of US\$ 500,000 which it had subsequently increased. That operation, which had now been completed, has been a most successful example of international co-operation. His delegation would like to pay a tribute to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and his staff for their work.

44. Another essential element was the effective co-ordination of international relief efforts. His delegation was generally satisfied with what had been achieved but would revert to the point during the discussion on the activities of the Office of the Disaster Relief Co-ordinator.

45. Although the primary objective of emergency assistance was to alleviate the immediate situation, it was important not to lose sight of the medium- and long-term requirements of the recipient country.

46. It was in recognition of that last principle that his Government was continuing to give attention to the needs of the Sudano-Sahelian populations and to the possibility of providing further assistance in the financial year 1974-75. It was for the same reason that Australia was helping Zambia to develop alternative routes for its imports and exports to replace those that formerly passed through Southern Rhodesia. In so doing, Australia had responded to appeals by the Commonwealth Sanctions Committee and the Security Council, which had requested the imposition

of sanctions against Southern Rhodesia. The capital equipment for transport and goods handling which was being supplied to Zambia should contribute to the easing of its immediate and longer-term difficulties. His delegation had therefore been happy to respond to Zambia's invitation to co-sponsor the draft resolution before the Council on that subject (E/L.1603).

47. Mr. FADLALLA (Observer for the Sudan), speaking at the invitation of the President and referring to the report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees on assistance to southern Sudanese returnees and displaced persons (E/5483), said that the High Commissioner's programme had been implemented in full and with the maximum effectiveness and speed. He thanked the High Commissioner and all his staff both at headquarters and in the field.

48. His delegation also wished to thank all the Governments that had contributed either bilaterally or multilaterally to the financing and implementation of the programme. Furthermore, it wished to express its gratitude to OAU, EEC, the United Nations specialized agencies and all governmental and non-governmental organizations that had contributed to the success of the operation. Sudan's neighbouring countries, for their part, had facilitated the return and rehabilitation of the refugees.

49. The Sudanese people had currently undertaken an urgent development programme for the implementation of which it required the assistance of the international community. In that connexion, UNDP should be congratulated on the part it had played as the central body in the reconstruction phase of the southern region of the Sudan.

50. In conclusion, he thanked the representative of Egypt, whose delegation had submitted the draft resolution (E/L.1604/Rev.1) concerning the completed programme, as also the other sponsors of that text.

51. Mr. RYDBECK (Sweden), speaking on behalf of his own delegation and that of Finland, said that the items now under discussion provided the United Nations with an opportunity to promote the cause of international co-operation and development and at the same time to put the political will of its Member States to the test. The problems facing southern Sudan, Zambia, the Sudano-Sahelian region and Ethiopia would give the United Nations system an opportunity to demonstrate its ability to deal with the even more serious problems that might arise in the future.

52. The Swedish and Finnish Governments had always unreservedly supported the relief operations launched by the High Commissioner for the southern Sudanese refugees and displaced persons. The High Commissioner deserved to be congratulated on the way in which he had carried out the task entrusted to him. It now lay with UNDP to continue those operations. He was confident that UNDP would prove to be quite as efficient as the High Commissioner's Office.

53. In the case of Zambia, the United Nations was called upon to demonstrate its solidarity with a country which had by its own action contributed to the defence of the

ideals of justice and human dignity in southern Africa. The action taken to that end by Zambia had caused it a number of economic and social problems and it was only natural that the international community should help to solve them.

54. In their intervention in the Sudano-Sahelian region, the United Nations agencies had shown that they were able to supply concerted and integrated assistance. When the peoples of that region had been struck by disaster, the Nordic countries had responded to the appeal launched by the Secretary-General and had contributed to the relief operations. At present, those operations were about to enter a new phase. The report of the Secretary-General on the situation in that region made an important contribution to the formulation of an adequate international strategy for the development of the affected area. The reports before the Council showed, moreover, that the success of the undertaking depended on how the United Nations, its specialized agencies, bilateral donors and the Governments of the countries concerned could co-ordinate their action. In the face of a problem of such dimensions, some people had been inclined to think that the international community, and in particular the United Nations, was not capable of dealing with the situation. It was true that it was impossible to over-emphasize the need to launch coherent and co-ordinated action, and the decisions taken in various United Nations bodies imposed a heavy obligation on the world community and the United Nations, particularly the rich countries which had the means to make the greatest financial contributions. It was also right that the regional organizations and financial institutions should participate in the over-all effort. But in the last resort the greatest responsibility lay with the Sahelian countries themselves and their Permanent Inter-State Committee.

55. It was essential that the medium- and long-term efforts undertaken by the United Nations should be based on the order of priority drawn up by the Governments concerned, as set out in the Ouagadougou draft programme that had been submitted for adoption; but the new arrangements should be most carefully studied in view of the need to achieve maximum efficiency. The recovery programmes should be based on what was known of the situation in the region under consideration, but the available data were not adequate and research would be needed to avoid new catastrophes. Such research should be directed in particular towards ecological and meteorological problems.

56. It was also essential that the efforts undertaken should be carried out for the good of the people concerned and with their participation. Moreover, the recovery strategy to be adopted should take full account of the local social structure and the wishes of the populations, whose participation was an essential condition.

57. The drought that the Sudano-Sahelian region was experiencing was affecting East Africa, too, and more particularly eastern Ethiopia. Although the report published by the Secretary-General on the subject (E/5560) presented the Ethiopian situation in a reasonably encouraging light, the problem was none the less serious. It was true

that good results had been achieved, but those efforts must be pursued.

58. In all emergency situations, the Governments of Sweden and Finland and those of the other Nordic countries had traditionally given their support and they considered that attitude a natural expression of international solidarity on their part.

59. Mr. MACKENZIE (United Kingdom) said that his Government had provided substantial assistance to the countries that were the subject of the four draft resolutions before the Council. For instance, for the relief programme for the Sudano-Sahelian region, the United Kingdom had supplied either directly or through EEC the equivalent of £5.3 million in food aid, in special non-food aid and in means and costs of transport. Moreover, the United Kingdom intended to participate in the immediate and long-term recovery activities in the Sudano-Sahelian region. It would continue to implement its own bilateral project and at the same time would contribute to the relief activities of the multilateral institutions concerned with the problem.

60. In the case of Ethiopia, his Government had provided a total of £850,000 to finance the assistance and recovery measures necessary after the drought. Over and above that sum there were the contributions of voluntary organizations in the United Kingdom. The most recent assistance that his country had given to Ethiopia had been the supply, in consultation with the Ethiopian Vice-Minister responsible, of 20 additional vehicles, delivery of which could be promised in 10 days, thanks to the help of the Office of the United Nations Disaster Relief Co-ordinator, which had mobilized financial aid to be given by other Governments to cover the air freight costs. That was an example of what co-ordination among donors could achieve in cases of emergency.

61. With regard to Zambia, the regular assistance programme of the United Kingdom represented about £7 million a year. Moreover his country had assumed the liability of a loan of £12 million granted to Zambia by the World Bank. It was also granting Zambia an interest-free loan of £1 million to enable it to buy transport equipment for use in restoring its flow of trade. Furthermore, it had agreed to assign several million pounds to the payment of pensions to expatriate officials who had formerly served in Zambia.

62. Assistance to southern Sudanese returnees and displaced persons was an entirely new undertaking which the High Commissioner and his colleagues had discharged speedily and effectively. The High Commissioner was also to be commended for the way in which he had co-ordinated the assistance activities in the Indian sub-continent.

63. His delegation hoped that the problems facing the Sudano-Sahelian region, Zambia and Ethiopia would reach as satisfactory a conclusion as the operations in southern Sudan. To that end multilateral institutions and specialized agencies must participate not only in emergency aid but in the solution of the long-term problems arising from the situation.

64. His delegation wholeheartedly supported the four draft resolutions before the Council. Nevertheless, it seemed to him that draft resolution E/L.1606 concerning Ethiopia was an unfortunate mixture of particular and general considerations. Some paragraphs mentioned Ethiopia specifically, while others, such as operative paragraphs 3 and 7, could apply to 30 different countries which were Members of the United Nations. That was because of the reference made to section X (Special Programme) of the Programme of Action on the Establishment of a New International Economic Order adopted by the General Assembly at its sixth special session in its resolution 3202 (S-VI) of 1 May 1974. A study of the second preambular paragraph of draft resolution E/L.1606 and of section X of the Programme of Action would show that they referred in fact to the problems arising from the increase in prices of certain products and services, whereas the draft resolution as a whole was concerned with assistance to the drought-stricken areas of Ethiopia.

65. He called the Council's attention also to operative paragraphs 5 of draft resolutions E/L.1605 and E/L.1606. Operative paragraph 5 of draft resolution E/L.1605 in particular envisaged research activities in a field in which WMO was apparently already engaged. His delegation would like to know what was the connexion between the two operative paragraphs 5 in question and would ask the specialized agencies or the sponsors of the draft resolutions to throw some light on the matter.

66. Mr. KAUFMANN (Netherlands) said that the Council's decision to take up the four items at present before it together was a sign of progress, since it enabled the Council to deal simultaneously with situations which, while different, had certain features in common. It should be the constant concern of the Council to improve policies and guidelines for assistance and to strengthen relief operations undertaken by the United Nations system. Moreover, institutional machinery should be reinforced to ensure more effective and more speedy action. In the general debate (1901st meeting) the Netherlands representative had indeed said that the capacity of the United Nations system to solve the problems it faced should be strengthened.

67. He would not refer again to the contribution his Government had made to help to meet the needs of the countries whose situation was now being discussed by the Council but would simply recall that the Netherlands representative had stated during the general debate that his Government would make \$100 million available in its 1975 budget for the financing of programmes and projects for bilateral and multilateral emergency relief operations.

68. In Sudan the relief programme carried out with the help of the Sudanese Government and people had made it possible to restore normal conditions after 17 years of internal troubles. The High Commissioner and his colleagues were to be commended for the way in which they had helped to remedy the situation. The results achieved showed what the United Nations could do in such circumstances. He noted that UNDP would in future be the centralizing body for assistance activities in southern Sudan. The High Commissioner and his colleagues should

also be commended for the way in which they had conducted the air-lift operations in the Indian sub-continent.

69. In the case of Zambia, it was right that the international community should act in a spirit of co-operation, since that country's economy was suffering as a result of the action that it had taken to apply the sanctions imposed by the United Nations against Southern Rhodesia. In that connexion he was authorized to state that in 1975 his Government would make a special bilateral contribution to the Zambian Government, the amount of which would be fixed later.

70. With regard to the situation in the Sudano-Sahelian region and in Ethiopia, it was manifest that the effects of the drought would continue to be felt for a long time. The Netherlands therefore supported the proposals concerning the need to undertake long-term recovery action as well as programmes of economic and social development not to mention the problems of ecological management arising in the regions affected. The United Nations system would have to be strengthened to enable it to deal more easily with situations of that kind.

71. With regard to the draft resolutions before the Council, his delegation fully supported those relating to Sudan and Zambia and would like to join the sponsors.

72. As far as the draft resolutions concerning the Sudano-Sahelian region and Ethiopia were concerned, he thought it would be better to adopt a single text. The United Kingdom representative had pointed out that the proposed draft resolutions overlapped in some respects. His delegation would like the sponsors to merge the two draft resolutions into one, which could consist of three parts, the first dealing with the problem of the Sudano-Sahelian region, the second with the Ethiopian problem and the third with general problems arising from the ecological disturbances common to all the countries and regions concerned. In the third part the Secretary-General could be requested to continue to study the problems posed by the drought and to submit a progress report on the activities of the United Nations system in that field to the Council at its resumed fifty-seventh session. Such a decision would have the advantage of simplifying the documentation on the problems under consideration, which at present were the subject of rather scattered studies.

73. The reservations his delegation had just made in no way implied that the Netherlands would not continue to contribute to relief activities for the benefit of the Sudano-Sahelian region and Ethiopia. It simply wished to ensure that the activities undertaken would be more effectively carried out.

74. Mr. FLOREAN (Romania) said that the difficult economic situation of Zambia at the present time showed that the fascist régimes of southern Africa were determined to prevent the independent economic development of the free States in Africa guilty of taking a stand against them. Romania had approved the rightful decision of the Zambian Government to close its southern border to trade, thus

applying the decisions of the Security Council on sanctions against the illegal régime of Southern Rhodesia.

75. Romania had supplied material assistance to Zambia and appreciated the efforts made on that country's behalf by the peoples of the world and the organizations of the United Nations family, but it considered that more must be done and that all the necessary resources must be mobilized to provide increased financial, technical and material aid to the Zambian people. For that reason his delegation, which was one of the sponsors of draft resolution E/L.1603, would support any decision that might be taken with that end in view.

76. Romania had associated itself with the efforts of the international community by supplying, bilaterally and according to its resources, emergency aid to the African countries suffering from drought. As was stated in the Secretary-General's report on the Sudano-Sahelian region, the only way to remedy the situation in the countries concerned was to develop a viable and realistic long-term strategy, based on the harmonious co-operation of the organizations of the United Nations system, to set those countries on the way to general development. His delegation therefore supported draft resolution E/L.1605, which was a move in that direction and supplied a useful basis for the co-ordination of the efforts of the international community.

77. For the same reasons his delegation supported the measures envisaged in draft resolution E/L.1606 on assistance to the people of the drought-stricken areas of Ethiopia. His delegation had no difficulty in accepting draft resolution E/L.1604/Rev.1.

78. Mr. NEUHÖFF (Federal Republic of Germany), referring to the economic and social situation in the drought-stricken Sudano-Sahelian region, said that his country, which had been extending economic assistance to the countries of that region long before the catastrophic drought that had befallen them had engaged the attention of the international community, had considerably increased its aid since that disaster had occurred. In 1973, the bilateral aid programme of the Federal Republic for Chad, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Senegal and Upper Volta had amounted to DM 152 million, of which DM 76 million had been applied to emergency measures – commodities, transport, local purchase of foodstuffs, seeds, fertilizers and vaccines; its technical assistance and capital aid projects had been concentrated mainly in the area of agriculture and stock-breeding. In addition to that official bilateral aid, various voluntary agencies and private donors had provided DM 11.5 million for emergency measures in 1973. Moreover, the Federal Republic of Germany had contributed DM 47 million to the emergency programme of EEC for the drought-stricken countries, DM 1.8 million to the FAO Sahelian Zone Trust Fund and DM 1 million to the Permanent Inter-State Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel. Thus the total aid provided by the Federal Republic of Germany to those countries in 1973 had amounted to DM 213.3 million.

79. His country realized that immediate relief operations needed to be accompanied by specific measures to meet the

region's medium- and long-term requirements. It was therefore continuing its aid programme, which was largely based on the guidelines approved in September 1973 by the Heads of State of the six countries affected and which, according to preliminary estimates and subject to the approval of the competent authorities, was likely to reach a total of DM 220.4 million during 1974. In addition, the Federal Republic of Germany would be contributing approximately DM 40 million to the River Senegal project which provided for the construction of two dams.

80. The German Foundation for International Development had arranged a seminar on the programme of action of the Federal Republic of Germany for the Sahelian countries, which had been held at Niamey in May 1974 and had been attended by the competent authorities of the countries concerned.

81. His country also planned to make a contribution of \$50,000 towards meeting the administrative costs of the United Nations Special Sahelian Office, although it considered the Permanent Inter-State Committee to be the appropriate central co-ordinating point for aid operations in the medium and long run.

82. The relief measures undertaken by the FAO's Office for the Sahelian Relief Operation had proved highly effective, particularly the programmes for seed distribution and the information system for the co-ordination of food assistance transport. It would therefore be appropriate to strengthen that Office's role, particularly in the latter field. Donor countries might make pledges of food assistance to the Office, which, at the appropriate time, would request those countries to forward food supplies, providing detailed shipping instructions. His country intended to maintain and intensify the close and fruitful co-operation which it had enjoyed with the FAO Office since the latter's establishment.

83. With regard to economic assistance to Zambia, he observed that the Federal Republic had increased its aid to that country in 1973. The greater part of the capital aid provided DM 39 million had been applied to the purchase of lorries and essential imports of transport equipment, while technical assistance contributions DM 6.7 million had been channelled mainly into rural development. His Government intended to continue its aid to Zambia in 1974 and was currently considering requests submitted by the Zambian Government.

84. On the subject of assistance to the drought-stricken areas of Ethiopia, he said that his Government had immediately given DM 1 million for the purchase of infant food; DM 4 million for the purchase of cereals – a contribution channelled through WFP; DM 300,000 for the purchase of seeds; and DM 2.7 million as a contribution to the FAO Sahelian Zone Trust Fund to enable it to purchase foodstuffs and seeds. In addition, it had placed 17 trucks at the disposal of the Ethiopian Government. Altogether, official bilateral and multilateral aid from the Federal Republic of Germany in 1973 had amounted to DM 36.8 million, of which DM 17.6 million had been applied directly to humanitarian assistance. He mentioned also the appeal launched by a leading German magazine on behalf of

the drought-stricken Ethiopian people, to which the people of the Federal Republic had contributed DM 20 million; of that amount, DM 2 million had been utilized in 1973 for purposes of emergency aid.

85. In view of the importance of meeting medium-term and long-term requirements of the region, his Government was contemplating a series of measures in 1974 – including the improvement of infrastructure and the construction of wells, waterplaces and silos – which were designed to respond, *inter alia*, to the needs of the provinces of Wollo and Tigre, which had been particularly hard hit by the drought. Subject to budgetary possibilities for the current year and to the conclusion of agreements with the Ethiopian Government, his Government was planning, *inter alia*, to instruct a team of experts to prepare, in co-operation with the Ethiopian authorities, an integrated development programme for the agricultural zones of the plateau of Kobo and Alamata and to make available five of its experts to assist those authorities in planning and co-ordinating the aid projects of the Federal Republic of Germany; in addition, a further consignment of trucks, costing DM 1.8 million, had been delivered to the Ethiopian authorities for use in distributing foodstuffs.

86. With respect to assistance to southern Sudanese returnees and displaced persons, he said that his Government, realizing that 17 years of civil conflict in the southern provinces had considerably aggravated the already precarious economic and social situation of the population in that area, had begun to participate in southern Sudanese aid operations in 1972, concentrating on the rehabilitation and resettlement of returnees and displaced persons. His country's official humanitarian assistance had amounted to DM 12.8 million in 1973 and Christian Churches in the Federal Republic had contributed a further DM 2 million. Recent negotiations between Sudan and the Federal Republic of Germany had led to the conclusion of an agreement under which Sudan would be granted financial aid amounting to DM 65 million and technical assistance amounting to DM 10 million.

87. His delegation was willing to support draft resolutions E/L.1603, E/L.1604/Rev.1, E/L.1605 and E/L.1606; it also associated itself with the United Kingdom delegation's comments on some of the provisions of the last two draft resolutions.

88. Mr. BASSIOUNY (Observer for the Organization of African Unity), speaking at the invitation of the President, said that he too wished to thank the Secretary-General of the United Nations and his team of experts for having mobilized international assistance for the countries requiring it, as also the many governmental and non-governmental institutions which had responded to the Secretary-General's appeal. His organization was especially grateful to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, whose programme of action for Sudanese refugees and returnees was a model of its kind. It also wished to pay a tribute to Sudan for having helped to bring that sad episode in African history to a close.

89. The grave situation prevailing in Zambia as a result of the closure of its southern border by the illegal régime in

Southern Rhodesia was a reminder of the continued defiance by the racist minority régimes in southern Africa of the aspirations of the oppressed peoples and of United Nations decisions. That attitude was a continuing threat to the independence of the neighbouring African countries. The President of Zambia had stated that his Government would not slacken its efforts and had expressed his gratitude to the United Nations for meeting the responsibilities which had fallen on Zambia – responsibilities which were shared by Governments throughout the world.

90. With regard to the drought problem, he said that the new international economic order which the United Nations was proposing to establish should help the developing countries in solving their problems -- in particular, that of drought; in the present conditions they were not able to do so themselves. The combined and integrated programmes of assistance carried out by the specialized agencies of the United Nations were an important step in combating the drought problem, the magnitude of which was accurately reflected in the Secretary-General's report on the situation in the Sudano-Sahelian region.

91. His organization had tried from the start – and tried in vain – to draw the attention of the world to that problem, the gravity of which had not been grasped until it had assumed the dimensions of a catastrophe afflicting an entire area of the African continent. The root of the problem lay in the fact that the warnings regarding the climatic and ecological changes taking place north of the 12th parallel which had been sounded for a number of years had been heeded too late. Moreover, as was emphasized in the Secretary-General's report, the disastrous effects of the drought had proved so profound because of the ecological imbalance resulting from the slow and unbalanced economic and social development of the region relative to the rapid growth of its human and animal populations. He stressed that the imbalance in the economic and social development of the countries concerned was a reflection of the lack of balance and equity in the international economic system itself.

92. It was surprising to note that, while the total cost of the programme for the Sudano-Sahelian region would be in the order of \$150 million, only \$38 million was available. That observation applied also to the drought-stricken regions of Ethiopia, whose needs were still a long way from being satisfied. He hoped that the necessary funds would soon be forthcoming.

93. Despite the limited means at Africa's disposal, the Assembly of Heads of State or Government of OAU had adopted an integrated action programme at its eleventh ordinary session, held at Mogadiscio. A permanent representative of the OAU secretariat would be appointed to the Permanent Inter-State Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel to collect the information needed to draw up an over-all policy and to harmonize joint action better at the continental level. An emergency relief fund financed by obligatory subscriptions and voluntary contributions would be set up and used for immediate action to alleviate the sufferings of the peoples concerned; it would be distinct from the fund deposited with AfDB, which was designed to finance medium- and long-term operations. A committee

composed of representatives of Upper Volta, Morocco, Kenya, Zaire and Algeria would be set up to conduct detailed studies on the origin of the drought, its geographical extent and various ecological factors which might help to explain the phenomenon. The African States would be invited to set up, at the sub-regional level, a body similar to the Permanent Inter-State Committee, with a view to facilitating joint action against drought.

94. He hoped that ECA, which had been informed of that action programme and had adopted a resolution on the subject, would be able to play its appointed co-ordinating role and would give the programme of the OAU Heads of State all the necessary attention. He also hoped that the agencies concerned would contribute to the programme and that the OAU general secretariat would be closely associated with the preparation of immediate medium-term and long-term United Nations programmes of assistance to the affected regions.

95. Lastly, his organization urged that the efforts already undertaken should be continued. As many African delegations had pointed out, the problem remained serious, despite the progress achieved, and required a continuing effort and an increase in the resources allocated to it.

96. Mr. AKSOY (Turkey) expressed satisfaction with the assistance given by the world community not only to Zambia, whose courageous attitude towards Southern Rhodesia had caused it economic difficulties, but also to the countries of the Sudano-Sahelian region and to Ethiopia, which were stricken by drought.

97. In the case of the latter countries, however, it seemed that the emergency action to alleviate the immediate sufferings of the populations should be followed by medium- and long-term programmes to which not only the countries concerned but the international community as a whole should make a contribution. Since the present problems of the countries stricken by drought were not due solely to ecological and climatic factors but also to the economic features of the countries concerned, it would seem sound to make a study of those features so that the lessons to be learnt could be applied to countries in other regions with the same economic features.

98. He was glad to note from the Secretary-General's report that the plans for the recovery of the Sudano-Sahelian region would concentrate on the integrated expansion of the agricultural production system and the industrial system. He also welcomed the decision taken by the Permanent Inter-State Committee to act in constant liaison with the United Nations Special Sahelian Office.

99. In his statement at the previous meeting, the Under-Secretary-General for Political and General Assembly Affairs had rightly stressed the fact that the drought that had struck the Sudano-Sahelian region had to a certain extent been a catalyst, making people aware of the general development problems of the region. Besides giving an account of the progress achieved, the Under-Secretary-General had expressed concern about a number of aspects and had particularly stressed that the health position of the region had not improved since 1973 and that there was a

danger of epidemics. He had added that, even if there had been normal rainfall, assistance would have been necessary.

100. In Ethiopia, too, there were problems that were a long way from being resolved, and although several provinces had been able to resume their normal life the position had worsened, particularly in urban centres. Nevertheless, the action undertaken in Ethiopia by UNDP and the Office of the United Nations Disaster Relief Co-ordinator deserved praise.

101. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees was to be congratulated on his effective action on behalf of the southern Sudanese returnees and displaced persons, as was Sudan itself on its efforts in developing the southern region of the country.

102. Praise was due also to Zambia for having carried out its undertakings and for having stood up to Southern Rhodesia, to the detriment of its own economy. The Turkish delegation had already expressed its views on that question in other bodies and they remained unchanged.

103. Turkey was able to support the draft resolutions submitted to the Council on the agenda items under consideration.

104. Mr. KANNAWAT (Thailand) said that there had been some improvement in the Sudano-Sahelian region, but that another 15 years of progress would have to be made before it could be said that the situation had really improved. The report of the Secretary-General on the subject showed that United Nations agencies had been pursuing their activities on behalf of the Sudano-Sahelian region with increased momentum. His delegation was pleased to see the short- and long-term objectives clearly defined in paragraphs 6, 7 and 8 of the report. In particular, he noted that the objective was to ensure that by 1990 the countries of the region would have achieved a steady and satisfactory rate of economic and social development so as to prevent the recurrence of situations such as that which had existed since 1972.

105. Among the activities undertaken by United Nations agencies to achieve those objectives he laid particular stress on those of WMO. In addition to its current activities, that organization was considering a large-scale regional meteorological study to obtain a deeper understanding of climatic changes in the area. It was to be hoped that the study would begin as early as possible. He also hoped that UNEP might take the initiative in certain cases after it had considered various possible activities.

106. The Executive Director of WFP had informed the Policy and Programme Co-ordinating Committee (518th meeting) that WFP's annual allocation for emergency assistance had increased from \$10 million to \$15 million in 1973 and that most of that aid had gone to the Sahelian zone in the provision of 58,000 tons of grain to the seven countries affected. The fact that WFP had now changed its type of assistance from emergency aid to aid for reconstruction was an indication that the situation had improved.

107. His delegation had studied with interest the section of the Secretary-General's report dealing with arrangements for co-operation between the various elements of the United Nations system, on the one hand, and between the United Nations system and the countries concerned on the other. Such co-operation was essential if wastage was to be avoided. He noted with satisfaction that the United Nations Special Sahelian Office had succeeded in maintaining close co-ordination between the various elements of the United Nations system. He was also pleased to note that some functions of the Office had been transferred to Ouagadougou, for that would enable it to have direct and immediate contact with the Permanent Inter-State Committee.

108. Turning to the item concerning assistance to Zambia, he said that, although some progress had been made in freeing Zambia from its economic dependence on Southern Rhodesia, particularly with the coming opening of the Tanzania-Zambia railway, there had been some inadequacies in the assistance that had been provided to Zambia. It was to be hoped that the countries which had the capacity, as also the United Nations system, would do everything possible to provide assistance in that matter.

109. The United Nations Disaster Relief Co-ordinator and his staff deserved congratulations for the prompt and effective assistance that had been supplied to the drought-stricken areas of Ethiopia.

110. He also praised the activities of the High Commissioner for Refugees, particularly the repatriation operation in the South Asian sub-continent. He expressed gratitude to the countries that had supplied aircraft, ships and other contributions that had helped to make the repatriation operation possible.

111. In conclusion, he expressed the view that the Council had improved its efficiency by grouping together the four agenda items now under discussion.

112. Mr. SYLLA (Senegal) congratulated the Under-Secretary-General for Political and General Assembly Affairs on his understanding of the problems in the Sudano-Sahelian region, on the sense of urgency he had shown and on the harmonious working relations that he had established with the Permanent Inter-State Committee on Drought Control in the Sahel. He had taken good account of the positions of the Governments of that region. At the previous meeting, some speakers had expressed reservations on the subject of the United Nations action in that region and had almost deplored interference in the domestic affairs of the Sahelian States. His delegation's reply to that criticism was that the Secretary-General's report on the economic and social situation in the Sudano-Sahelian region reflected the decisions taken by Governments. The strategy proposed in that report was identical with that of the Permanent Inter-State Committee: it was a question of linking the industrial and agricultural systems and harmonizing them in such a way as to eliminate the constraints that impeded the agricultural sector, to promote employment and to increase investment. The effect of all that would be to improve the social services. As was pointed out in the report, the time had come to go beyond emergency assistance and to undertake

medium- and long-term action, particularly by making the national economic and social plans of the region more coherent.

113. The Under-Secretary-General and his staff had been, as it were, the witnesses for the international community in the unfortunate Sudano-Sahelian region. The difficult situation had engendered a sense of unity in the region. Saint-Exupéry had said that to unite men it was necessary to let them build a tower together. In the stricken areas, a degree of co-operation that had not existed before had been achieved and a new path to unity had opened up.

114. The international community should recognize its responsibilities towards Zambia and give that country the assistance it needed to meet the commitments that had resulted from international decisions.

115. With regard to the situation in the drought-stricken areas of Ethiopia, he pointed out to the representatives of the United Kingdom and the Netherlands that drought was a phenomenon that was not yet adequately understood. It was a mistake to assume that all droughts were the same: drought in East Africa was not the same as drought in West Africa. The request to the Secretary-General in draft resolution E/L.1605 to hasten the preparatory work for the establishment of a research institute for the arid Sahelian zone, in close collaboration with UNEP, FAO, UNDP, UNESCO, WMO and UNIDO, was not therefore a duplication of the request in draft resolution E/L.1606 for a preliminary study on the origin of the drought in Ethiopia. The United Kingdom and the Netherlands should drop their objections in that regard. Indeed, the most thorough-going studies possible were needed, because unfortunately the action currently being undertaken, praiseworthy though it was, was not based on adequate information. The drought-stricken countries were glad to receive assistance, but they wished to free themselves permanently from the perils of drought. The fact that such a problem should exist to-day did mankind no credit. It was absolutely essential that man should be able to overcome natural phenomena of that kind.

116. In conclusion, he congratulated the High Commissioner for Refugees on the action carried out by his organization in the Sudan to overcome the problems due, *inter alia*, to people being uprooted, problems that were often so complicated that it was difficult to achieve good results.

117. Mr. ASHFORD (World Meteorological Organization), replying to a question put by the United Kingdom representative and taken up by other delegations, on the relationship between operative paragraph 5 of draft resolution E/L.1605 and operative paragraph 5 of draft resolution E/L.1606, gave details of the activities of WMO in aid of the drought-stricken Sudano-Sahelian region. Those activities could be classified into two categories: drought and climatic variations. Activities to try to overcome drought had been undertaken to a large extent in response to the wishes expressed by the Permanent Inter-State Committee. He referred in particular to a study of the links between drought and the weather conditions preceding it,

the aim of which was to ascertain to what extent drought could be forecast.

118. At the request of the Permanent Inter-State Committee, WMO planned to set up a regional hydrological and meteorological institute for the Sudano-Sahelian region, which would study the climatic aspects of drought and would train national experts in that field. It was too soon to state whether that institute could be incorporated with the research institute for the arid Sahelian zone proposed in operative paragraph 5 of draft resolution E/1605; the activities of the latter institute would cover a wider area than WMO but close co-ordination could be arranged.

119. In a decision adopted at its seventeenth session, the Governing Council of UNDP had asked the Administrator for a report on the extent of the drought in Africa (E/5466, para. 279). WMO was preparing to draft the part of the report dealing with climatic conditions for the UNDP Administrator.

120. WMO was at present reviewing its activities concerning climatic changes, in response to the request made by Mr. Kissinger (2214th plenary meeting) at the sixth special session of the General Assembly. Its most important activities in that area dealt with the theory of climate. A conference on that subject was to be held at Stockholm in the near future under the auspices of ICSU and WMO, with the valuable support of UNEP. WMO was also making a preliminary study on the impact of climatic variations on food production and would convene a symposium in the United Kingdom in 1975 on climatic variations.

121. The fourth preambular paragraph of draft resolution E/L.1605 was open to question, for it stated: "... according to disturbing scientific evidence it is unlikely that the climatic and ecological conditions will return to normal", in the Sudano-Sahelian region. It was true that some scientists had come to the conclusion that rainfall would probably continue to be below average in that region, but that was not the opinion of the scientific community as a whole. For example, an eminent United States climatologist had noted that the figures supplied by a meteorological station in the Sahelian region did not show any general climatic change over the last hundred years. Recent rainfall had been lighter than during the 1950-1970 period, but it had rained more during that period than in the preceding 20 or 30 years. It would seem more likely that drought was a recurrent phenomenon in that area and in that connexion it might well be asked what meaning should be given to the word "normal" in the paragraph in question. The present drought had been more serious than usual, but that did not mean that conditions would not return to normal. He therefore considered that the wording of that paragraph should be amended.

122. Similarly, it was not appropriate to say in the last preambular paragraph of draft resolution E/L.1606 that the extent of the drought-stricken area in Ethiopia was "continually spreading"; it would be better merely to say that the affected area "now covers eight of the fourteen provinces of Ethiopia". It was not certain that develop-

ments would follow the course suggested by the present wording, and the future should not be prejudged.

123. He assured the Council that, if the draft resolutions to which he had referred were adopted, his organization would co-operate to the fullest extent possible in their implementation.

124. Mr. THATCHER (United Nations Environment Programme) said that the Governing Council of UNEP considered the situation in the drought-stricken Sudano-Sahelian region to be a matter of high priority. At its second session at Nairobi it had, in decision 8 (II) (E/5485, annex I), decided to treat "land, water and desertification" as an area for priority action; and had requested the Executive Director to devote special attention under UNEP programmes to the Sudano-Sahelian region, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 3054 (XXVIII). The Governing Council of UNEP had decided to give the Executive Director discretion to select the areas on which efforts should be concentrated in 1975, but it had suggested a short list of subjects, including management of arid and semi-arid lands and tropical forest ecosystems, and problems of desertification.

125. Not being an executing agency, UNEP acted in liaison with executing agencies within the system of

co-ordination set up by ACC. He confirmed that UNEP would support the work of WMO on climatic variations to which the representative of that organization had referred. He also drew attention to a report¹ prepared by UNEP as part of its co-ordinating functions, in which *inter alia* the activities of the organizations in the United Nations system relating to arid zones, especially the activities of UNESCO, FAO and WMO, were described in detail.

126. During the preceding week (689th meeting), the Economic Committee of the Council had taken a decision requesting the Secretary-General to set up an *ad hoc* inter-agency task force on the arid areas. That was an idea originally put forward by ACASTD. UNEP hoped that when it took part with other organizations in the meeting which the Secretary-General would convene for that purpose, it would be able, in the exercise of its co-ordinating functions, to contribute to an agreement on the distribution of work.

The meeting rose at 6.10 p.m.

¹ UNEP/GC/14/Add.1 and Add.1/Corr.1.

1915th meeting

Tuesday, 16 July 1974, at 10.20 a.m.

President: Mr. A. KARHILO (Finland)

E/SR.1915

AGENDA ITEMS 10, 11, 12 AND 22

Consideration of the economic and social situation in the Sudano-Sahelian region stricken by drought and measures to be taken for the benefit of that region (*concluded*) (E/5554; E/L.1605/Rev.1, E/L.1607)

Economic assistance to Zambia (*concluded*) (E/L.1603)

Assistance to the drought-stricken areas of Ethiopia (*concluded*) (E/5560; E/L.1606, E/L.1607)

Assistance to southern Sudanese returnees and displaced persons (*concluded*) (E/5483; E/L.1604/Rev.1)

1. Mr. CABRIĆ (Yugoslavia) said that it was important to continue assistance in all the cases under consideration, but that the two different reasons justifying its continuation should be borne in mind. In assisting Zambia, the international community was discharging its obligations under Security Council resolution 329 (1973), just as Zambia was discharging its obligations by closing its southern border. He hoped that all countries would reaffirm the need to continue assistance to Zambia, in accordance with the provisions of the Security Council resolution. As the

Co-ordinator of United Nations Assistance for Zambia had pointed out (1913th meeting), Zambia had so far received assistance worth about \$62.4 million, whereas the closure of its southern border had cost it \$154.6 million. It would also be dangerous to assume that the present high price of copper would be maintained and that the political situation in neighbouring countries would soon improve. The assistance should therefore be continued on an even greater scale, for that would help to speed up the elimination of the root causes of the present situation in southern Africa and would be in accordance with the principles underlying the Declaration on the Establishment of a New International Economic Order, adopted by the General Assembly at its sixth special session. Yugoslavia had recently allocated \$1 million for assistance to Zambia in cash and kind.

2. His Government supported the short-term and long-term programmes of assistance to countries in the drought-stricken Sudano-Sahelian region, whose economic difficulties were so graphically described in the relevant report of the Secretary-General (E/5554). The purpose of the assistance should be, not only to meet those countries' basic needs at a difficult time, but to enable them to play their part in the establishment of a new economic order.