

51. The text of resolution XXII was ambiguous about the relationship between the World Food Council and the United Nations Secretariat, and it would be the responsibility of the General Assembly to lay down the nature of the relationship between the World Food Council and the Secretariat. Nevertheless, steps should be taken to obviate possible constitutional and institutional conflicts.

52. In reply to a question by the representative of Sweden, Mr. WEITZ (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations) explained that the FAO Council had given the Director-General a fairly wide mandate which would allow him, if necessary, to take action in pursuance of a decision of the United Nations General Assembly. Provision had also been made for convening a special session of the FAO Council in March 1975 with a view to taking any legal decisions which might be required as a result of a decision of the General Assembly. The Council had also given some latitude to the Director-General in financial matters and had authorized him to make decisions on certain questions, including negotiations with the World Bank and other agencies. He believed that the decisions of the FAO Council would reach the General Assembly by 2 December.

53. Mr. MUMEKA (Zambia) pointed out that the representative of Jamaica had asked the United States delegation a specific question about the interpretation of resolution XXII, paragraph 1.

54. In his delegation's view, although the text of paragraph 1 did not specifically say so, the intentions of the Conference with regard to the operation of the World Food Council were clear in two respects. First, the Council should operate at the highest political level possible, namely, at General Assembly level. Secondly,

in view of the fact that the Economic and Social Council was responsible for co-ordinating the activities of the United Nations system in the economic and social sphere, the World Food Council could not operate outside the Council.

55. Mr. CHATENAY (International Bank for Reconstruction and Development) said, in reply to the Swedish representative's question about whether the Bank had made arrangements to apply resolution XXII, paragraph 14, that the President of the World Bank and the Director-General of FAO had been in contact and that consultations had been held between members of the two secretariats to consider the terms of reference of the Consultative Group mentioned in paragraph 14 and the machinery through which the secretariats of the two bodies could help the Consultative Group in its work.

56. Mr. de MOURA (Brazil) asked the United States representative to explain how he understood the word "composition" in the context of resolution XXII, paragraph 4 (a). He was asking that question because he felt that the wording proposed by the United States representative might enable the Council to resolve the procedural issue.

57. Mr. KITCHEN (United States of America) said that he endorsed the interpretation of resolution XXII, paragraph 1, offered by the representative of Zambia. With regard to the question asked by the representative of Brazil, his delegation intended to propose that the General Assembly should replace the blanks in paragraph 4 (a) and paragraph 9 by figures. If the members of the Economic and Social Council so requested, he could submit a formal proposal.

*The meeting rose at 12.40 p.m.*

## 1930th meeting

Friday, 29 November 1974, at 4.05 p.m.

*President:* Mr. Aarno KARHILO (Finland).

E/SR.1930

### AGENDA ITEM 6

#### World Food Conference (*continued*):

- (a) Report of the World Food Conference (E/5586, E/5587 and Add.1-4);
- (b) Emergency measures in regard to the supply of fertilizers and pesticides (E/5596)

1. The PRESIDENT said that, after consultations between the members of the Council, the following draft decision on the report of the World Food Conference (E/5587 and Add.1-4) had emerged:

*"The Economic and Social Council*

"1. Takes note of the report of the World Food Conference;

"2. Expresses its gratitude to the Government of Italy for its generous hospitality in acting as host to the Conference;

"3. Expresses its appreciation to the Secretary-General of the Conference for the outstanding man-

ner in which the Conference was prepared and organized;

"4. Transmits the report of the World Food Conference to the General Assembly, together with the comments made thereon by the Council with the request that careful and priority consideration be given at its twenty-ninth session to the recommendations contained in Conference resolutions XIII and XXII, with a view to adopting provisions regarding those issues which would effectively enhance the capacity of the United Nations system to deal with world food problems;

"5. Requests further the General Assembly, in considering the institutional arrangements recommended by the Conference, to take into account the Charter responsibilities of the Economic and Social Council as a central organ for comprehensive policy formulation and co-ordination of the activities of the United Nations system in the economic, social and human rights fields."

2. Mr. WRIGHT (Canada) said that, although his delegation had no objection to paragraph 5 of the draft decision, he was not sure that it was really necessary. It was obvious that the General Assembly would take into account the Council's role under the Charter.

3. Mr. STIEPEL (Federal Republic of Germany) agreed with the representative of Canada about paragraph 5. In taking any decision, the General Assembly always had to take account of the Council's responsibilities under the Charter. Any emphasis on that fact might give the erroneous impression that the World Food Conference had taken decisions which questioned that role, whereas in fact its decisions had been in line with the Charter.

4. Mr. BREITENSTEIN (Finland) said that he understood the point which the representatives of Canada and the Federal Republic of Germany had made concerning paragraph 5. However, it could be interpreted differently, to mean that the Council had not had time to consider the report and recommendations of the World Food Conference in detail, and that it was transmitting the report to the General Assembly in the hope that the Assembly could do what the Council had been unable to do.

5. Mr. MACKENZIE (United Kingdom) said that his delegation would have some difficulty in accepting paragraph 5, which seemed to question the decisions taken by Governments in Rome. If it was necessary to stress the role of the Economic and Social Council, the concluding words of paragraph 4 could be amended to read "the United Nations system, including the Economic and Social Council, to deal with world food problems".

6. Mr. BARCELO (Mexico) suggested that the best course might be to delete all the words after "those issues". However, his delegation had no objection to the original text. It had become customary to stress in resolutions the role of organs in the United Nations, and his delegation could accept paragraph 5 or any wording which took into account the Council's role under the Charter.

7. Mr. QADRUD-DIN (Pakistan) said that the representative of Finland had put into words his delegation's views on paragraph 5. His Government had played a part in adopting the resolutions at the World Food Conference, and he did not wish the draft decision to question them or to imply that the Conference had questioned the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations. However, he felt that a reference to the central co-ordinating role of the Council was necessary, because some members of the Council did hold that Conference resolution XIII questioned the role of the Economic and Social Council, whereas others had said that the content of that resolution had nothing to do with the Council. Even though the role of the Council under the Charter was obvious, he endorsed paragraph 5 as it stood.

8. Mr. BRITO (Brazil) said that he, too, interpreted paragraph 5 to mean that the Council had not had time to consider the resolutions adopted at the World Food Conference. It was therefore a safeguard clause which in no way questioned the decisions of the Conference. Although his delegation had no difficulty with paragraph 5, he suggested that the substance of paragraph 5 might be incorporated in paragraph 4, in order to satisfy those delegations which did have difficulties; that could be done by amending the relevant part of paragraph 4 to read "... with the request, bearing in

mind the responsibilities of the Economic and Social Council under the Charter of the United Nations, that careful and priority consideration...".

9. Mr. MWANGAGUHUNGA (Uganda) said that his delegation would have no objection to supporting either paragraph 5 or the Brazilian amendment to paragraph 4.

10. Mr. MUMEKA (Zambia) said that paragraph 5 stated the obvious. Conference resolution XXII, paragraph 1, indicated that the World Food Council would report to the General Assembly through the Economic and Social Council, thus implying full recognition of the role of the Economic and Social Council. His delegation had no problem with paragraph 5, which it did not interpret as implying that the Conference had not taken cognizance of the role of the Economic and Social Council.

11. Mr. SHEMIRANI (Iran) said that, following further informal consultations, there seemed to be general agreement among members; as several representatives had said, there seemed to be no need to retain paragraph 5. The decision would be transmitted to the General Assembly, which might interpret it differently again and have lengthy discussions on it. If members felt strongly that paragraph 5 should be maintained, the Brazilian amendment might serve their purpose. Otherwise, in his delegation's view, the paragraph was superfluous, because it was well known that the Economic and Social Council had a central policy-making role under the provisions of the Charter.

12. Mr. CHANG Hsien-wu (China) said that his delegation could agree to the adoption of the decision under discussion. However, he pointed out that his delegation had not received the report of the World Food Conference in Chinese and was working from the English version; it was to be hoped that the Chinese version would be available shortly. He reserved his delegation's right to comment further on the report when it was available in Chinese. He had not opposed the adoption of a decision before receiving the Chinese version of the report so as to facilitate consideration of the report by the General Assembly.

13. Mr. MURIN (Czechoslovakia) said that his delegation had no difficulty with the text read out by the President. However, the Council had not had time to study the report and discuss it in detail. He therefore suggested that the Council should be given the opportunity to discuss the report of the World Food Conference further at its fifty-ninth session. If members of the Council felt otherwise, he would not press his suggestion, but he hoped it would be included in the draft decision. To some extent, it was covered in paragraph 5, and he therefore fully endorsed that paragraph. The Economic and Social Council should study in greater detail the issues dealt with by the World Food Conference.

14. He was concerned about the reference in the draft decision to comments by the Council on the report, comments which were to be forwarded to the General Assembly. The Council had not reached agreement on any specific comments on the report, and individual delegations would still have an opportunity to express their views in the Second Committee or the plenary meeting. He asked whether there was any need to attach the Council's comments to the report, particularly since some members had made no comments. In conclusion, he said that, if the Council was prepared to adopt the draft decision in the form in which it had

been read out by the President, his delegation would support it as a compromise reached by concerted efforts, but if any amendments were made to the text, his delegation would submit its own comments separately.

15. Mr. FONSECA (Colombia) said that, while his delegation had no difficulties with paragraph 5 of the draft decision, it would support the Brazilian amendment if its adoption eliminated the objections of other delegations.

16. Mr. MUMEKA (Zambia), referring to the suggestion of the representative of Czechoslovakia that the Council should undertake a full review of the report of the World Food Conference at its fifty-ninth session, said that he doubted whether the Council could review the decisions of the World Food Conference, at which the representation of almost all States had been at the ministerial level.

17. The Council had already reached agreement on recommending the endorsement of Conference resolutions XIII and XXII and, as he understood the matter, could not reconsider its own decision. His delegation had no difficulty with any of the Conference resolutions, since it had been involved in the work of the Conference from the very beginning. He could assure members of the Council that the report of the Conference had been drafted with great care and reflected positions which were the outcome of protracted negotiations.

18. Mr. BOOTHE (Jamaica) recalled that at the 1928th and 1929th meetings of the Council, his delegation had sought clarifications concerning the terms of reference of the World Food Council, its servicing and its relationship with the Economic and Social Council. To a great extent those clarifications were provided by paragraph 5 of the draft decision. While the decisions of the World Food Conference should be implemented as a matter of urgency, it was also imperative to avoid any complications which might arise from action taken in haste.

19. Mr. STIEPEL (Federal Republic of Germany), Mr. HOSNY (Egypt), Mr. RUGGIERO (Italy) and Mr. HJERTONSSON (Sweden) endorsed the Brazilian amendment.

20. Mr. MACKENZIE (United Kingdom) withdrew his delegation's amendment since it was accommodated by the Brazilian amendment.

21. Mr. KACIMAIWAI (Fiji) said that his country, because of insufficient financial resources, was among the eight Member States of the United Nations which had not attended the World Food Conference. His delegation had transmitted the report of the Conference to its Government for study and comment, and was therefore favourably disposed towards the suggestion that the Council should continue its consultations and transmit the report to the Second Committee, in which, in the interests of universality, those States which had not participated in the Conference should have the opportunity to place their views on record. Moreover, a number of aspects of the institutional arrangements needed further elucidation.

22. Mr. KITCHEN (United States of America) said that paragraph 4 of the draft decision gave the impression that the Economic and Social Council was recommending that the General Assembly should focus its attention almost exclusively on resolutions XIII and XXII. For greater precision, therefore, he proposed that in paragraph 4 of the draft decision the

words "of the Conference, and especially those" should be added after the word "recommendations".

23. The PRESIDENT invited the Council to adopt the draft decision incorporating the amendments proposed by the representatives of Brazil and the United States. If there were no objections, he would take it that the Council adopted the draft decision as amended.

*The decision was adopted [decision 59 (LVII)].*

24. Mr. FASLA (Algeria) said that a number of general conclusions had emerged with regard to the institutional arrangements called for under resolution XXII of the World Food Conference. The terms of reference envisaged in paragraph 1 for the World Food Council were similar to the arrangements governing the relationship between the United Nations Environment Programme and the Economic and Social Council, which had not undermined or detracted from the responsibilities and functions of the Council. The formula in paragraph 4 (b), which stipulated that the World Food Council was to be serviced "within the framework of" FAO was ambiguous. In the interests of the closest possible co-operation between FAO and the World Food Council, part of the staff in the new body's secretariat should be seconded from FAO, although, since some aspects of the Council's work fell within the scope of such bodies as the World Health Organization and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the secretariat should also have the necessary degree of independence and should come under the authority and jurisdiction of the Secretary-General of the United Nations. The Council of FAO had declared itself willing to meet its share of the financial implications of the World Food Council and to ensure budgetary co-operation between it and FAO. In that connexion, the efforts of the Director-General of FAO deserved commendation.

25. With regard to paragraph 4 (a), he said that if the Economic and Social Council could reach agreement, through informal consultations, on the number of members of the World Food Council and the essential aspect of geographical distribution, the General Assembly could proceed immediately to the election of the members. In that connexion, he observed that the use of the verb "désigner" in the French version had given rise to some confusion as to the role of the Economic and Social Council.

26. Mr. RUGGIERO (Italy), responding to the expression of gratitude to his Government in the Council's decision, said Italy had been very honoured to be host to an international event as important as the Conference.

27. Mr. DE SEYNES (Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs) said that the representative of Algeria had rightly argued that the Secretary-General of the United Nations should have full authority over the new secretariat unit to be established in pursuance of Conference resolution XXII, paragraph 4 (b), since it would have to serve a United Nations organ. He also agreed that the new secretariat unit should have access to FAO experience in agriculture. There would be little difficulty in establishing close co-operation between the United Nations and FAO, but, as already noted by the Secretary of the Council, it was important to clarify the institutional and constitutional arrangements for such co-operation. The Secretary-General was taking a personal interest in that problem and would study it before the relevant item was discussed by the Second Committee.

28. Mr. BRITO (Brazil) welcomed the Council's decision concerning the report and hoped that the Second Committee would devote adequate time to considering the resolutions of the Conference. While he agreed with the representative of Zambia that neither the Economic and Social Council nor the General Assembly should review decisions taken at the ministerial level, it might be prudent for the Council to consider the report of the Conference at a later session in the context of the mid-term review of the International Development Strategy for the Second United Nations Development Decade. He hoped that the report of the Conference would be available to the Preparatory Committee for the seventh special session of the General Assembly and to the Committee on Review and Appraisal, even if it was not the subject of a separate item on the Council's own agenda.

29. Mr. CHAVANAVIRAJ (Thailand), speaking in explanation of vote, said that his comments were prompted by the last-minute United States amendment to the draft decision.

30. Thailand had long held that a global policy and prompt action were needed to meet man's immediate and long-term food needs. His country also believed that in striving to ensure a fair balance of interests between food-exporting and food-importing countries, due account should be taken of the special needs of peoples beset by national disasters and economic crises and of the position of developing countries that were dependent on the production and export of agricultural commodities. In Rome, his delegation had expressed reservations concerning Conference resolutions XVII, particularly paragraph 4, and XVIII, particularly the first preambular paragraph. Thailand was not opposed to the main thrust of those resolutions and had given practical examples of its support for the concept of food aid on a grant basis. It could not, however, support concessional sales because they tended to inhibit the normal conduct of international commerce and to produce adverse effects on the trade of food-exporting developing countries. In that connexion, he pointed out that approximately 80 per cent of Thailand's export earnings came from agricultural products and that the country was suffering from a chronic and worsening balance-of-payments deficit.

31. His delegation agreed with the comment made at the World Food Conference by the representative of

a developed country to the effect that developing countries should trade rather than depend on aid. Thailand had long been making efforts to that end, but suffered constantly from commodity price fluctuations, the scarcity of essential inputs, and unfair and non-commercial competition by rich producers. In view of a number of unfortunate experiences with concessional sales in the past, it favoured the conduct of such trade on a triangular basis, a system under which a developed producer would buy agricultural products from a developing producer at the world market price and then sell them to another developing country on concessional terms.

32. Mr. MURIN (Czechoslovakia) said that his delegation's support of the decision to transmit the report of the World Food Conference to the Second Committee did not in any way change the position taken by his Government on certain points at the Conference itself. He agreed that it would be advisable for the Council to study the report of the Conference fully at a future session, but that did not imply that the Council should revise the report. Since the problem of providing adequate food supplies concerned not only the agricultural sector but also other branches of the economy and had social and socio-political aspects, advantage should be taken of the contribution towards a solution of the problem which could be made by relevant existing United Nations organs.

33. The PRESIDENT suggested that, as it had done in respect of the reports on the first and second sessions, the Council should take note of the report of the Preparatory Committee for the World Food Conference on its third session (E/5586).

*The decision was adopted.*

34. Mr. CORDOVEZ (Secretary of the Council), referring to the comment by the representative of China, expressed the Secretariat's regret that, owing to pressure of time, it had not been possible to provide copies of the report of the Conference in languages other than the working languages of the Council. The report would however, be available in all the working languages of the General Assembly in time for consideration of the item by the Second Committee.

*The meeting rose at 5.40 p.m.*

## 1931st meeting

Thursday, 5 December 1974, at 11.30 a.m.

President: Mr. Aarno KARHILO (Finland).

E/SR.1931

### AGENDA ITEM 9

**The impact of transnational corporations on the development process and on international relations (E/5592, E/5595 and Add.1-6, E/5599)**

1. The PRESIDENT invited the Chairman of the Special Intersessional Committee on the impact of transnational corporations on the development process and on international relations, which had been convened pursuant to Economic and Social Council resolu-

tion 1908 (LVII), to report orally on the draft resolution that it recommended to the Council.

2. Mr. AKHUND (Pakistan), Chairman of the Special Intersessional Committee, said that he had been charged by the Committee to introduce draft resolution E/AC.61/L.4 which the Committee recommended to the Council for adoption (E/5599, para. 11). The Committee had adopted the draft resolution without a vote after consensus had been reached through informal consultations, and therefore recommended it to