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President: Mr. Manuel PÉREZ GUERRERO (Venezuela).

AGENDA ITEM 2

Multilateral food aid:
(a) Programme of studies called for in General Assembly resolution 2096 (XX) (continued) (E/4538 and Corr.1, E/4602)

1. Mr. GOLDSCHMIDT (United States of America) said that multilateral food aid was one of the key elements in the development process and the Council should in future ensure that such important items were given the time and attention they required. He agreed that the debate was a preliminary one and that, given the long-term nature of the problem, the Council must continue its consideration of multilateral food aid at future sessions. He noted the excellent work done by the World Food Programme, and although it still faced certain organizational problems, they could be solved by close co-operation with FAO and other bodies within the United Nations system. The progress made in helping the developing countries to meet their food requirements was also gratifying; the use of the new high-yield varieties of rice and wheat and of chemical fertilizers and pesticides had spread rapidly and many developing countries were laying greater emphasis in their development plans on the agricultural sector. Those factors, together with favourable climatic conditions, had enabled the developing countries to increase their food production in 1967 by some 6 per cent.

2. Nevertheless, it was not possible to become complacent as the food problem must be viewed within the context of over-all development; increased agricultural productivity was intimately linked with development in education, transport and industry, and with improvements in such areas as rural electrification, storage and distribution. But the process of development itself would inevitably increase food requirements. The rapidly growing populations of developing countries would mean more people had to be fed; thus in addition to providing more food family planning would also remain a key element in any discussion of the food problem. Other factors which led to heavier demand for food were rising income levels and migra-

tion from rural to urban areas. The adequacy of the food supply depended not only on its quantity but also on its quality, and it was therefore regrettable that the Council had to defer its discussion of the production and use of edible proteins.

3. His delegation welcomed the statement of the President of IBRD that the Bank intended to quadruple the value of its agricultural loans over the next five years. The United States had always been in the forefront of the campaign to ensure freedom from hunger and had donated or sold on concessional terms 147 million tons of agricultural produce, valued at over \$13,000 million, to developing countries in the period 1954-1966. As noted in paragraph 102 of the Secretary-General's report (E/4538 and Corr.1), United States food aid was now in part based on planned production rather than the availability of surpluses. The United States Government also encouraged all recipient countries to develop and advance their own agricultural sectors; that had been a key aspect of the United States food aid programme. The incorporation of the Food Aid Convention into the International Grains Arrangement 1967^{1/} showed that it was becoming generally recognized that food aid was the joint responsibility of producer countries and, as one way of sharing the burden of food aid, it was to be hoped that countries would increase their pledges to the World Food Programme so that it might reach its target of \$200 million.

4. Multilateral food aid should be more fully integrated into over-all development efforts, and whenever a request for food aid formed part of a general development plan, the scope and nature of such aid in the context of over-all development efforts should be evaluated by a consortium of other means. The Tunisian Consultative Group organized by IBRD would be one example of how to do that. Food aid, excluding disaster relief, was essentially a method of buying time in order to allow developing countries to improve their agricultural sectors and should promote rather than replace local productivity. The United States statement on disaster relief under another item (1562nd meeting) showed its concern with the general problem of which food aid was only one part. It was essential to encourage the developing countries to replace traditional by modern agricultural techniques. The adequacy of food supplies in developing countries would be a key factor in the second United Nations Development Decade and the Council should therefore keep the item on its agenda for some time to come.

5. Mr. BRADLEY (Argentina) said that the Secretary-General's report on multilateral food aid was really a study of the problems of co-ordination and an assessment of the adequacy of existing arrangements in the eventualities that food aid increased substantially. The

^{1/} See International Wheat Conference, 1967 (United Nations publication, Sales No.: E.68.II.D.5).

specific requests made in resolutions 2096 (XX) and 2300 (XXII) had not been carried out. The Secretary-General had had to prepare the report in that way because his terms of reference were limited and because the existing institutions could only handle resources up to a certain level. Unofficial figures indicated that the additional contributions to the World Food Programme would bring it close to that level and it was therefore regrettable that no specific contingency plan was provided for in the report.

6. It was logical that further steps should be taken to integrate food aid with other assistance given to the developing countries by the developed countries and international financial institutions. As the World Food Programme experts and officials engaged in the administration of United States bilateral programmes could undoubtedly confirm, improved efficiency was called for in the operation and administration of food aid projects.

7. In so far as the report was limited to resources that were available immediately or in the near future, it was a most praiseworthy document and its conclusions would be of immediate value not only for United Nations' multilateral programmes but also for bilateral arrangements.

8. Both the medium-term and long-term calculations on imports and the protein gap were very useful and it was to be hoped that, despite the many variables that had caused uncertainties in the past, they would in future be even more precise. That would enable political decisions to be made with proper knowledge of the facts and would be helpful in planning the triennial budget of the World Food Programme and the revision of the Food Aid Convention.

9. The weakest part of the report was probably the section on food transfers in past aid policies, which did not give a breakdown of the figures used for calculating how large-scale international assistance could be distributed fairly among the participating countries having regard to their stage of development and their international position in food production, consumption and marketing. Such figures would be a very useful guide; they were what the General Assembly had had in mind in requesting the Secretary-General to suggest various alternative types of action in paragraph 1 of its resolution 2096 (XX). Sooner or later that would have to be done since it was generally recognized as necessary. The mandate laid down in the resolution was incomplete. It was obviously unreasonable that developed countries which were net importers of food should participate on the same footing as those which were exporters, nor was it right that the entire burden should fall on the latter. There had to be a compromise. The Food Aid Convention was an important step towards improving the institutionalization of multilateral aid because it incorporated a formula for reconciling participants' contributions, but there was clearly more to be done, particularly when aid became more than the mere distribution of surpluses.

10. The next task of the United Nations was to establish the proper relationship between food aid and other types of aid. Food aid was simply one way of transferring resources, but other forms of aid, because of monetary and balance-of-payments problems, were often tied and, in the few cases where they were

not, the purpose was usually to enable debts to be serviced. There were many complicated factors that needed to be analysed, primarily by IBRD and IMF. Such an analysis was vital for the success of the second Development Decade because no large-scale food aid was possible unless each country paid its fair share.

11. There was no doubt that the World Food Programme would have to make major adjustments in its administrative and operational procedures, if it obtained additional aid equivalent to 200,000 tons of wheat per annum. That figure would probably be exceeded in the second year of operation, and it was amazing that the World Food Programme, when faced with the possibility of having to turn down contributions for lack of operational facilities for distributing them, should not have carried out a single pilot scheme.

12. Trade safeguards for food-exporting countries were a *sine qua non* and rules would have to be laid down along the lines of the FAO Principles of Surplus Disposal^{2/} or the even more strictly worded Food Aid Convention. If the recipient countries were hoping for multilateral action which was more than a mere distribution of surpluses and was specifically designed to be a general contribution to development, they should accept such rules without hesitation.

13. On the subject of the constitution and functions of the World Food Programme, somewhat more sophisticated consultations were needed to ensure co-ordination with IBRD, IMF, UNDP and other sources of aid. Since the matter was not the responsibility of any one Ministry, his Government would be considering it at cabinet level in the coming weeks.

14. One of the problems that would have to be studied when examining the institutional structure of the World Food Programme was that most participating donor countries were not able to pledge resources beyond the dates of their regular budgets. However, the formula equivalent to 4.5 million tons of wheat negotiated in connexion with the Food Aid Convention meant that more extensive assistance would be forthcoming.

15. There was no doubt that aid needed to be more efficiently co-ordinated. That should not necessarily be done at the Resident Representative level but at a much higher level and at an earlier stage, when firm decisions had not yet been made. Co-ordination was needed at the executive level and, more informally, for the exchange of information on preliminary intentions in the early stages. Donor Governments and secretariats or bodies responsible for approving projects should take part in such discussions.

16. The chapter of the report entitled "Towards a world food policy" was extremely good. Perhaps the implied advantages of population planning were somewhat exaggerated, but the chapter would be an ideal introduction to the study requested under General Assembly resolution 2096 (XX).

17. Mr. PARTHASARATHI (India) said that the report completed an important phase in international co-operation for combating hunger and provided a sound and comprehensive basis for the next phase of action.

^{2/} Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, Commodity Policy Studies No. 10: Functions of a World Food Reserve—Scope and Limitations (Rome, 1956), appendix III.

18. The formerly donor-centred food aid programme had become a programme based on needs. The concept, used in some parts of the report, of a recipient-based programme was not apt because it did not fully connote the need for world-wide co-operation created by the new features of the world food situation.

19. The dominant theme of the inter-agency study was the inevitability of introducing international planning into government policy and the role of international agencies in that connexion. With the new phase in the world grain economy, there was increasing recognition of the need for rational planning in the light of domestic requirements and international obligations. He welcomed the contribution made by the United States Government in the development of that concept.

20. The study had rightly taken into account the recent changes in the food situation, particularly the sharp increase in agricultural production in some developing countries, including India, made possible mainly by the introduction of new seed varieties, modern techniques and matching government policies. Encouraging results had so far been achieved and India hoped to become self-sufficient in food grains by 1971.

21. The recent breakthrough in agriculture had however posed new problems, including that of obtaining supplies of fertilizers, pesticides and agricultural equipment and the need to increase investment in the sectors associated with raising agricultural productivity, particularly the transport and processing industries. His delegation agreed that the recent agricultural breakthrough was more of a promise than an accomplishment. It was therefore more important than ever to provide the developing countries with the wherewithal to put that promise into practice.

22. The substantial easing of the world food situation by the good harvest of 1967-1968 was only one side of the picture. The rising demand for food consequent upon population growth and higher income levels, the sluggishness of exports as a means of helping to bridge the gap between domestic food production and requirements, the extremely low level of nutrition and the possible danger of crop failure were all factors that must be taken into account. Assuming a growth rate of 5.5 per cent—a lower rate than that suggested for the formulation of an international development strategy for the 1970's—the present food gap was \$7,800 million. As the report rightly emphasized, an integrated international policy was needed to perform a task of the magnitude required, involving not only a reorientation of national food policy but also the adoption of an appropriate policy for population control, trade expansion and increased output of protein and agricultural products as a whole. All those problems had to be tackled as part of general economic development.

23. A number of the suggestions in the report would have to be considered in other forums before the Council and the General Assembly could take a decision on them. The commitments that could be assumed in response to the proposals designed to influence government policy would necessarily be of a general nature, as embodied in the Declaration on the world food problem adopted at the second session of

UNCTAD,^{3/} but with the further intensification of international co-operation in that field, more specific commitments might be entered into shortly.

24. The analysis in the report on food aid in the context of total aid had been carried out in a static framework. The concept of food aid as part of the given quantum of total aid ignored the recommendation of the second session of UNCTAD with regard to the 1 per cent target,^{4/} which implied a considerable increase in total aid. His Government had always emphasized that, unless food aid was provided in addition to other aid, it would have an adverse effect on economic development.

25. The new world food policy did not justify any departure from the past practice of making food available on concessional terms. The argument in the report that in certain circumstances food aid could be provided on the same terms and conditions as other aid, did not hold good when the international community had recognized the need for soft terms and conditions for all forms of assistance. The extensive debt-servicing burdens borne by the developing countries could not be ignored in that context. It would be against all tenets of international goodwill to take advantage of the vulnerable position of the developing countries to impose new burdens on them.

26. His delegation agreed on the need for continuity in food aid, as in all aid. It would promote development all the more to the extent that it was provided on a long-term basis.

27. A number of the conclusions in the report, including those concerning the costs of food aid, would require a great deal of further study before any final position could be taken on them.

28. Mr. ALLEN (United Kingdom) said that his Government's view that the world food outlook was not necessarily alarming had been confirmed by the recent increase of 4 to 6 per cent in the developing countries' agricultural production, compared with a 3 per cent increase for the world as a whole. Even more encouraging were the startling advances in achieving higher yields from new varieties of rice and wheat, which had led the Director-General of FAO to state that there was now a real possibility of eliminating famine as a spectre haunting the world.

29. His delegation welcomed the recognition, in paragraphs 177 and 178 of the Secretary-General's report, of the vital importance of population policies in the world food problem, as well as the recognition, in chapter I, section C, of the fallibility of projections of food production. His delegation had already pointed out that such projections could be misleading, since they were based on certain postulates that might be quite arbitrary. Indeed, one purpose of the projections was to influence actions and policies by revealing the implications of the postulates. Food aid must be closely related to other forms of aid in the over-all context of development and could not by itself solve the underlying food problem in the developing countries. The purpose of food aid should not be to supplant agricul-

^{3/} See Proceedings of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, Second Session, vol. I and Corr.1 and Add.1, Report and Annexes (United Nations publication, Sales No.: E.68.II.D.14), p. 28.

^{4/} Ibid., p. 38.

tural and other development, but rather to give food-deficient countries the time they needed to build up their own food production or, in some cases, their capacity to import food so that they could utilize their capacity for the production of commercial goods.

30. The proposal, in paragraphs 120 and 123 of the report, for medium-term outlook reviews was acceptable to his delegation, provided that the reviews were not too elaborate. His delegation did not believe that the appraisals referred to in paragraph 132 of the report required the establishment of any new international body.

31. Mr. VARELA (Panama) said that the developing countries should not seek to rely permanently upon international assistance to relieve their food shortages but should rather apply such assistance to establishing the basic social infra-structure and encouraging domestic agricultural production. Although Panama had been unable to contribute to the World Food Programme, it had not found it necessary to apply to it for assistance, nor had it availed itself of the assistance offered by the United States Government.

32. Panama had in the past imported a wide range of agricultural products, but thanks to the Government's emphasis on developing the farm sector, the need for such imports had been substantially reduced. During the past three years, agricultural production had grown at an annual average rate of 8 per cent, thanks to various government measures, including such incentives as low-interest loans and guaranteed prices. Assistance in those efforts had been given by various United Nations agencies and by the United States Agency for International Development, which had granted soft loans.

33. Developing countries should give due importance to the agricultural sector as a means of increasing their food supplies and furthering economic and social development.

34. The Council should take note of the report and refer it to the Second Committee for more detailed analysis.

35. Mr. HOVEYDA (Iran), referring to paragraph 173 of the report, said that it was not a mere assumption but an established fact, that the food problem of developing countries fell into the two parts indicated.

36. His delegation shared the United Kingdom representative's doubts concerning the possible creation of the specific forum referred to in paragraph 133. Existing arrangements should prove sufficiently comprehensive. Consistent and long-term efforts were needed and all countries should participate fully in the execution of the programme.

37. The PRESIDENT suggested that discussion on the item should not be closed until the next meeting to enable draft resolutions to be submitted.

It was so agreed.

AGENDA ITEM 14

Report of the International Conference of Ministers Responsible for Social Welfare (E/4590, E/4595)

38. The PRESIDENT invited the Council's attention to the report of the International Conference of

Ministers Responsible for Social Welfare (E/4590)^{5/} convened in accordance with Council resolution 1140 (XLI). The Council might, at the conclusion of its discussion, wish to refer the report to the Commission for Social Development and take more specific action at its forty-sixth session on the basis of the Commission's comments.

39. A summary of the Council's discussion of the report would be available to the General Assembly at its current session in the Council's supplementary report.

40. Mr. VERCELES (Philippines) said that the Conference had been held at a time when there was a great need and desire for concerted action. The desire had grown into a determination to apply social welfare activities to the efficient fulfilment of the aims of the United Nations Charter.

41. In spite of the differing patterns of social welfare in their respective countries, the participants had shared a concern for development in the fullest sense and had agreed that social welfare could play a significant role in national development by raising levels of living, ensuring social justice and a more equitable distribution of national wealth, and providing opportunities for all to develop their capacities to the full.

42. His delegation agreed with the President's suggestion that the report should be referred to the Commission for Social Development together with the records of the discussion in the Council and the Third Committee. He also supported the request in the Conference resolution that the report should be transmitted to the General Assembly at its current session.

43. The PRESIDENT said that the representative of Chile had asked to make a statement under rule 75 of the rules of procedure. If there were no objections, he would grant the request.

It was so agreed.

44. Mr. PIÑERA (Chile) said that, although no vote had been taken on social integration at the Conference, it was a very important subject which had been raised on several occasions by his delegation. The problems of social welfare in the developed and developing countries were not the same. It was usually considered that social development was a three-pronged effort to improve education, health and housing. But the need to integrate the under-privileged into society was more urgent. Community development and land reform had to be promoted before social welfare proper.

45. It was most important that international and regional organizations, whether or not they were members of the United Nations family, should place the right emphasis on social investment. Chile had received assistance from IBRD for education but not for health, housing or community development.

46. Through the Commission for Social Development and other bodies, the Council should consider the interesting conclusions of the Conference and take specific action to give them effect. As had been done in the case of human rights, a modest start could be made in the form of a general statement, which when

^{5/} United Nations publication, Sales No.: E.69.IV.4, part one.

duly implemented would fulfil the Council's obligations under Chapter X of the Charter.

47. It would not be a simple task for the Council to act on the recommendations of the Conference (see E/4590, para. 66) but it should unquestionably be undertaken. The report of the Conference might also be submitted to the General Assembly.

48. Mr. GOLDSCHMIDT (United States of America) emphasized the importance which the United States attached to the Conference and noted the outstanding work of the President. The *ad hoc* working group which had prepared for the Conference had done an excellent job, enabling the Conference to proceed almost immediately to serious work. The important conclusions and recommendations of the Conference should be given thorough study by all the United Nations bodies concerned. In that connexion he agreed that the Commission for Social Development should study the report of the Conference and believed that the report would be useful to the General Assembly for discussion purposes.

49. Mr. ABE (Japan) said that the Conference had been convened at a time when social development was a matter of general concern and that it had taken the subject a good step forward. The friendship that had developed between Ministers and experts would have lasting value and would lead to an exchange of information on the objectives of welfare, which augured well for national and international co-operation.

50. In Japan, social welfare and social security schemes had begun in 1946 and were now meeting the needs of most of the people. But a number of improvements could still be made. Despite Japan's high economic growth rate, which had averaged 10 per cent per annum in recent years, appropriations for social welfare represented only 6 per cent of the national income. Economic development had been given the first priority and housing, roads and other social requirements had therefore lagged behind. But changes were on the way and the national development plan, begun in 1967, was now called the "Economic and social development plan" whereas previous plans had omitted the word "social". Its aims were to promote price stability, greater economic efficiency and social development and it was hoped to raise pensions, establish better geriatric homes, improve facilities for handicapped children and introduce family allowances.

51. His delegation favoured the idea of setting up an advisory committee on welfare and hoped that the appropriate United Nations bodies would take note of and act on the conclusions of the Conference.

52. Mr. HOVEYDA (Iran) supported the suggestion that the Commission for Social Development should

study the report of the Conference in the first instance. He assured the Council that the report was already known to the General Assembly; indeed, there had already been a substantial number of amendments to the draft Declaration on Social Progress and Development. Furthermore the recommendations of the report were reflected in the decisions of the Third Committee.

53. Mr. LOBANOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that the very fact that the Conference had been convened was indicative of the intensified efforts of the United Nations to defend social rights, particularly those of the workers. The Conference had done very useful work by discussing the development and improvement of social welfare systems which were urgently needed throughout the world, as demonstrated in the discussions of the Third Committee and the Conference. The Conference had cast more light on the problems of social development, had promoted a valuable exchange of views and would give impetus to United Nations efforts. In the Soviet Union, social welfare was not regarded as charity; it was provided for in the Constitution and considered a matter of great public importance. Greater appropriations were continually being made for the social security of workers, so that they were free from worry in their old age. Since social development was part of over-all economic development, the Soviet system could be usefully copied by others, particularly the developing countries.

54. His delegation believed that the most important recommendation of the Conference was that the supreme responsibility for social welfare lay with Governments. Although it was not yet clear precisely what the United Nations could do to ensure that that and other recommendations were implemented, the Conference had put forward a number of practical ideas concerning the work that needed to be done. They should be studied very thoroughly to establish the most effective methods of implementation. His delegation would support whatever had to be done to ensure that action was taken by the General Assembly, the Council, the Commission for Social Development and other bodies.

55. The PRESIDENT said that, without prejudice to the right of members of the Council to comment in the Third Committee on the report of the Conference, there appeared to be a consensus that he should transmit it to the Commission for Social Development with the request that the latter should study all its aspects and report back to the Council.

It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 6 p.m.