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AGENDA ITEMS 2 AND 3

General discussion of international economic and social policy (E/4776 and Corr.1, E/4833, E/4839, E/4041 and Add.1-2, E/4855, E/4856, E/4866 and Corr.1, E/4872, E/4876) (*continued*)

Second United Nations Development Decade (E/4776 and Corr.1, E/4841 and Add.1-2, E/4876, E/CN.5/445 and Corr.1) (*continued*)

1. Mr. NARASIMHAN (Deputy Administrator, United Nations Development Programme) said that the Administrator of UNDP had asked him to convey to the Council his sincere regret that he was unable to attend the meeting and to make the following statement on his behalf.

2. Later in the session, the Council would consider reports on UNDP's activities during 1969 and on measures taken and being planned to strengthen the capacity of the United Nations development system. In his present statement, he wished to address himself to some even broader issues. Long-range forecasting had always been risky, but he believed that the 1970s could well turn out to be an era of unprecedented opportunity. That view might appear unduly optimistic, since it was not hard to find depressing themes. The world could very well end in nuclear holocaust or through a poisoned environment; but such a fate was not inevitable, and whatever happened would be the product of man's own decisions and actions. The problem was how to use the totally unprecedented power now at the disposal of the human race, power which was as adequate for building as for destroying.

3. Three questions deserved the most urgent attention: what was the ultimate goal of the whole development process; by what general means could progress toward that goal best be speeded; and to what extent, during the First United Nations Development Decade, had the right ap-

proach been adopted? While the first question might appear a little strange, it was easy to lose sight of the fact that development's ultimate goals were human: what was really at stake was the quality of everyday life. Individuals throughout the world should have a fair chance to obtain adequate incomes, worth-while jobs, enough nourishing food, good health care, decent housing and proper education.

4. One of the most important facts about development was that it had become essentially a global process. No country on earth could afford to see its economic growth significantly slowed or to pause for long in seeking to give all its people the chance of a better life. Nor was there a single country or group of countries that could "go it alone" in that quest. The industrialized countries and the low-income nations were dependent on each other in a great variety of ways, and most crucially of all in matters of mutual security. The frustration that stemmed from poverty and poverty of opportunity led to violence and conflict that could affect and even endanger the future of the entire planet. A kind of vicious circle existed in which slow development progress created political instability, which in turn cut off the resources and energies needed for development. That was why the idea of partnership must be a real one, in which all members stood to gain or lose in equal degree and, for that reason, were willing to help each other in every necessary way, completing the activation of such a global partnership for progress was one of today's top priorities.

5. Another top priority was the fuller, more productive and more rational use of the world's human and natural resources. There, of course, the low-income countries must be the major arena for action, since they not only had the greatest needs for improved resource utilization but also possessed the greatest unrealized potential. Improved resource utilization throughout the developing countries was an indispensable key to raising the living standards of most of the people in those countries, particularly since the global population was steadily growing not only in size but also in the complexity of its needs. But the low-income countries were seriously short of the prerequisites for effective resource utilization: they had only a fragmentary inventory of their potential and lacked adequate technology, skilled manpower, investment capital and infrastructure. That was why those countries, which accounted for two thirds of the world's population and land mass, still produced about only one sixth of the world's goods and services.

6. While the resource utilization problem could not be totally solved in the near future, low-income nations could move ahead in that sphere with very significant speed. That led him back to the last of the three questions to which he

had referred. There was a vast amount of valuable information available following the outstanding work of the Commission on International Development (Pearson Commission) and the Committee for Development Planning, several major investigations by national groups into development activities and the inquiries into the work of UNDP by three committees and the distinguished group headed by Sir Robert Jackson. His own conviction was that the record of the 1960s had been spectacular and unparalleled. Many millions of acres of land had been brought under far more fruitful cultivation than ever before; many millions of kilowatt hours of additional hydroelectric power had been produced; many millions of tons of valuable raw materials had been located and put to work; and above all, many millions of men and women had been educated and trained to make more of their own potential.

7. That progress had been sparked by the advent of new development-related technologies, including the discoveries which had ignited the "green revolution". Since 1965, new strains of rice, wheat and legumes had quadrupled production per acre in many areas and had raised the total output by some 40,000 million lb. Moreover, farmers using the high-yield varieties had substantially raised their incomes per acre. More exciting still were the present and prospective advances in enriching the nutritional value of cereal and vegetable food crops, advances which could save hundreds of millions of children from crippling and mental and physical damage.

8. There was now an abundance of new tools for development, and it was encouraging that technological discoveries now moved with speed from the laboratory to everyday life. But there was a force even greater than technological power: the power of human will, the will to co-operate for progress. Here, the record of the 1960s could be called "conditionally encouraging". During the past decade, the low-income countries had mounted a massive self-help effort, bearing between 80 and 85 per cent of all development costs. They had taken realism as their guide, had shown a willingness to make sacrifices and had increasingly accepted the need for team-work with their regional neighbours. For their part, the industrialized nations had provided sizable — though far from very adequate — amounts of development assistance. They had learned a great deal about what aid could and could not do and about the most effective methods of providing it, and had joined with the developing countries in establishing a variety of international development institutions. Nevertheless, the record of the 1960s could have been better. There had been, and still was, a failure to give development its true priority — a priority second only to the prevention of nuclear war. Rich and poor countries alike had failed to contribute as much as they could afford to development, as could be seen from the tragically large and ever-increasing sums both were spending on armaments. The fact that the common interests of all countries completely outweighed their national or bloc interests had not been fully recognized.

9. It was vital that the accomplishments of the past ten years should be evaluated realistically, for they had given

rise to the priority needs and opportunities of the Second United Nations Development Decade.

10. During the 1960s, great progress had been made towards creating the basic pre-conditions for moving rapidly ahead to the true goals of development. There was solid statistical evidence that the fuller utilization of human and natural resources, and the intensive application of technology, had begun to yield results. The developing countries had very nearly reached their target of a 5 per cent annual increase in real GNP, agricultural output had risen by an average of 2.6 per cent per annum, industrial production had grown by almost 7 per cent per annum and exports by some 6 per cent, while *per capita* income had risen by about 2.5 per cent annually. On the other hand, the task of translating those gains into a better life and greater opportunity for the average citizen of developing countries had hardly been started. In the low-income countries, over half the population remained chronically undernourished, one out of every two children still never set foot in a classroom, average life-expectancy was still about forty years, the mortality rate was 2.5 times higher than in the industrialized nations and gains in housing and employment were still not enough to offset population growth. But the final balance-sheet of the First United Nations Development Decade showed far more pluses than minuses, and the world could move with confidence to meet the priority challenges of the 1970s.

11. The first of those challenges was to continue and increase the progress achieved during the 1960s. One specific target was an annual average growth of 6 per cent or more in the GNP of the developing countries; that would require an estimated rise in agricultural output of about 4 per cent and in industrial output of more than 8 per cent, as well as an appreciable upsurge in the utilization of natural and human resources. It was entirely possible that the present rate of manpower and natural-resource use by the developing countries could be increased by at least 50 per cent by the end of the decade.

12. Improving the quality of life would be a harder challenge than simply spurring economic growth, but the methods required in both cases had very much in common. Policies and practices proven to be effective need not and should not be abandoned; instead, present basic approaches should be continued on a considerably larger scale and should be strengthened with some important creative innovations. The low-income countries should continue to increase their own contributions to their development. To do so, they would have to increase their earnings through such avenues as expanded and diversified trade among themselves and tourism. Increased earnings must be supplemented by increased savings, which meant the wise use of foreign exchange and better mobilization of domestic capital. That would require innovational thinking and action — for example, in the development of co-operatives — on the part of the Governments of the developing countries, which knew best what means should be applied to induce greater savings. The low-income countries must also act with urgency to achieve a better distribution of wealth; there again, Governments must determine the policies they wished to pursue.

13. For psychological as well as purely economic reasons, the developing countries must be able to count on increased and improved assistance from their wealthier neighbours. While recommended targets for increased development aid varied in detail, there was general agreement that developing countries could usefully absorb something like twice the net volume of external assistance they were currently receiving and that the pre-investment component of such aid should rise from 10 per cent to about 15 per cent of the total.

14. UNDP, for its part, aimed at more than increasing substantially the volume of its pre-investment services; it wished to ensure greater diversification and tighter co-ordination of those services. The UNDP secretariat had profited greatly by the clarifying directives given to it by the Governing Council at its tenth session; in the coming very active six months it would have to strengthen its headquarters and field organizations: set indicative planning figures for over one hundred countries, strengthen investment-promotion services, and process one of the largest programme of projects ever recommended for a single session of the Governing Council.

15. In considering the reports of the Governing Council, the Economic and Social Council was likely to find the description of UNDP's new country-programming approach particularly interesting and relevant. A major index of the Programme's capabilities was the fact that the heads of all participating agencies were in total agreement on the need for continually closer inter-agency co-operation at every level. That commitment to co-operation was a good omen for the Second United Nations Development Decade.

16. Mr. FTHENAKIS (Greece) said that it was the responsibility of the Economic and Social Council to seek the solution of perhaps the world's most urgent problem, that of bridging the gap between the rich and the poor nations.

17. At the close of the First, and on the eve of the Second, United Nations Development Decade, members of the Council should assess the expediency and question the wisdom of their actions. While they could not be sure that they were following the right path towards solving mankind's fundamental problems, one thing was certain: the world could no longer hope to live in peace without development for all nations. A second point which should be taken into account in any initial analysis was the unparalleled internationalization of the problems, needs and expectations of the common man throughout the world. That trend — a result of the spectacular advance of science and technology — would inevitably lead to a merging and unification of beliefs, ideas and social systems; but the present transitional situation, in a world of disparity and plurality, was strange and unique. In the struggle against time, the upheavals, conflicts and destructive forces counteracting common efforts for development led to a situation in which the same process that had become the driving force behind the development effort was also a source of negative forces impeding development.

18. It was against that background that existing economic and social conditions and policies had to be examined and

the basic problems to be taken into consideration in the development strategy to be identified. In assessing the problems and difficulties to be overcome in planning the Second Development Decade on a solid basis, one was immediately struck by the unfavourable circumstances, political and financial, prevailing in mid-1970. In the economic field, present trends in the major industrialized countries, and in particular in the United States, whose economic health was of the greatest importance for all other countries, was disquieting. There was an unmistakable trend away from trade liberalization and towards protectionism. If those trends continued, the Second Development Decade was likely to start in uncertainty and doubt.

19. Observing the international economic and monetary scene, it was difficult to avoid a feeling of uneasiness. In most industrial countries inflationary pressures were continuing, and there was concern that international inflation had begun to feed on itself. While it was easy to suggest solutions to the problem of inflation, it was much more difficult to persuade Governments to take unpopular measures to bring it under control. Inflationary trends had now led to fears of major recession and crisis. That situation was of great concern to the developing countries, which were dependent for their development effort on high imports, especially of capital goods, from the developed countries. They were thus exposed to pressures on their cost-level and on prices; and in addition the rate of their productive investments, and therefore of their planned development, was affected by high interest rates. All those critical problems required serious consideration; if they were not successfully overcome, future programmes and plans would be jeopardized.

20. The Council had before it, in the report of the Preparatory Committee for the Second United Nations Development Decade on its sixth session,¹ the blueprint for an international development strategy which had been drawn up by that Committee. Before the final decision on that strategy was taken, however, agreement would have to be reached on the main issues involved, namely, objectives, methods of achieving success, and programmes of action, both general and specific.

21. While the Preparatory Committee's conclusions regarding the goals of the Second Development Decade were in line with the terms of General Assembly resolution 2411 (XXIII), and while the Committee had agreed on a number of points, several important questions remained unanswered, such as the date by which the industrial nations would allocate 1 per cent of their GNP to the developing countries, the terms and conditions of aid, and the possibility of establishing a link between special drawing rights and the financing of economic development. Those shortcomings, however, were a reflection of political rather than economic factors, and his delegation, which endorsed the recommendations of the Preparatory Committee's report in principle, appealed to all representatives who still had reservations on the report to endeavour to find a

¹ A/7982, transmitted to the Council by a note by the Secretary-General (E/4876).

common ground of agreement so as to resolve any controversial points.

22. He noted that in the Preparatory Committee's report all references to target dates for the implementation of policy measures by developed countries were given between brackets. The developing countries, however, considered it absolutely essential to set such targets from the outset. To fail to do so could only diminish the impact of the development strategy.

23. Referring to the report of the Committee for Development Planning on its sixth session (E/4776), he said the Greek delegation wholeheartedly endorsed the contents of the report and, in particular, its underlying theme: that development meant not only an increase in production but also major changes in social and economic structures. An increase in output, or income, was only one indicator of development and had to be supplemented by others, such as social and administrative reforms. The importance of the human factor in national development planning had also been underlined in a study entitled "Review of the Social Situation in the ECAFE Region"² which questioned the current emphasis on economic targets and urged the need for a co-ordinated approach to economic and social planning. Greece's current five-year economic development plan had been based on recognition of the need for balanced economic, social and cultural development.

24. The report of the Committee for Development Planning also dealt, in paragraphs 32 and 33, with education as a means of achieving economic growth and suggested, in paragraph 64, that developing countries should recast their educational programmes, with the aid of the industrial countries and international agencies, to take account of their development needs. He endorsed the remarks made in that connexion by the Director-General of UNESCO at the 1697th meeting, and expressed support for the Secretary-General's suggestion for an international university (see E/4878).

25. Population growth and rapid urbanization were also matters of considerable concern, on which the Secretary-General had cited some alarming figures. While the family-planning programmes being initiated by individual countries with the aid of international organizations would undoubtedly contribute to the development strategy in the long run, they would not have any appreciable effect during the coming decade, and the gap between the developed and the developing countries might therefore continue to widen.

26. The Secretary-General had rightly stressed the need for adaptation and change in any social system or institution that was to survive, and had put forward a realistic and far-sighted proposal for a United Nations "committee on the future". Possibly, at the same time, some thought should be given on whether a revision of the Charter was not long overdue. The Council, for its part, should be instrumental in the changes needed both within the Secretariat and the specialized agencies, while the report *A*

Study of the Capacity of the United Nations Development System,³ would be a powerful stimulus in bringing about those changes.

27. In summary, there were four main prerequisites for the success of the United Nations development effort: first, a development strategy, which could be integrated subsequently in the wider perspective of planning for the future, must be agreed on by all Member States, the contribution of the larger developed countries being recognized as one of the main requirements; secondly, the major industrialized countries must take steps to check the present instability of their economies and half-inflationary tendencies; thirdly, the United Nations must make all necessary organizational arrangements to prepare for the development effort; and, fourthly, the developing countries must make a determined effort to meet the requirements of national planning and the general development strategy.

28. Mr. RUSSO (Italy) said that in the twenty-five years since its creation, the Economic and Social Council had made a most valuable contribution to international relations and the maintenance of peace, and had provided a forum where countries of differing ideologies and at different stages of development could discuss problems of common concern and find solutions to them.

29. The attainment of peace could not be dissociated from economic and social progress: it depended not only on the prevention of armed conflict and the factors conducive to conflict, but also on the control of all social, economic and technological imbalances. In a world that had changed so radically in the past quarter of a century, the magnitude of the task and the scope of the action required were tremendous. But the end in view was not just an economically and technologically advanced society; it was one in which human dignity and freedom were respected and moral and spiritual values accorded their right place.

30. For those reasons, Italy would support the Council fully in its task in the years ahead and, more particularly, in the Second United Nations Development Decade.

31. Italy which had been a member of the Preparatory Committee for the Second United Nations Development Decade, considered that the developing countries would not achieve the targets set for the Decade unless the industrialized countries stepped up their aid for development programmes. In that connexion, he confirmed that, as stated by the Italian representatives in the Preparatory Committee and in UNCTAD, his Government was examining ways and means of increasing aid to the developing countries within the framework of a global strategy.

32. On the question of the methods to be used for providing aid, he said the Italian delegation had long considered that bilateral aid agreements should be replaced by multilateral arrangements, that agreements should be concluded with the industrialized countries to free aid of any ties, and that measures should be taken to stabilize the prices of raw materials and to secure outlets on the world market for the developing countries' products.

² E/CN.11/L.250 and Corr.1.

³ United Nations publication, Sales No.: E.70.I.10.

33. Technical assistance was an important element in global strategy, and the Council should try to correct some shortcomings in the measures taken by the industrialized countries in that respect during the First United Nations Development Decade. Also, special attention should be paid to training, at both the advanced and the basic level. The former would provide for the training of highly qualified technicians – a need to which the International Centre for Advanced Technical and Vocational Training established at Turin by the ILO seemed to respond admirably – while the latter would provide training for young people in their country of origin.

34. Turning to the environmental problem, he said that the Italian Government which was taking an active part in the preparatory work for the conferences being organized on that subject, agreed that a solution had to be sought at the international level, on as broad a basis as possible. The developing countries should be helped, in building their modern society, to avoid making the serious mistakes that the industrialized countries had committed in that sphere.

35. The natural disasters – another aspect of the environmental problem – which had recently struck a number of countries, served to highlight the need for some form of international machinery to meet such situations more effectively, and for better co-ordinated aid. In his delegation's view, a complete inventory should be drawn up of all the human and material resources which Member States could place at the disposal of the United Nations. Then, when a country was struck by a natural disaster, a rapid appraisal should be made of the population's needs, the aid available according to the inventory co-ordinated, and the necessary data for preparing the longer-term rehabilitation plans communicated to the appropriate bodies. The problem, which was primarily one of co-ordination, should be studied carefully and a solution found as quickly as possible. His delegation therefore considered that the Council should draw up at its present session a proposal under which agreements could be concluded between the countries concerned, and the instruments and procedures he had indicated could be set up in the United Nations – without, however, creating costly and burdensome new structures. He assured the Council of his country's fullest collaboration in that regard.

36. The Italian delegation would comment on the other items of the agenda later in the session, but he wished before concluding to stress the need for the Council to consider urgently the re-organization of its methods of work. That was all the more important in view of the increasingly active role the Council was being called upon to play in social and economic planning – a role which the Italian delegation was confident it could fulfil.

37. He hoped that the Council's efforts would be crowned with success and assured members that his country would always be ready to support any action designed to promote greater understanding among the peoples of the world.

38. Mr. WOOD (United Kingdom) said he much regretted he had been unable to attend the celebrations for the twenty-fifth anniversary of the United Nations the previous

day, but was pleased to have the opportunity to associate his delegation with those who had spoken on their significance. He had also been deeply touched by the tributes paid to his fellow-countryman, the late Sir David Owen.

39. The United Nations had made a significant contribution to development over the past twenty-five years, but it was now less important to commemorate that achievement than to ensure that the resources made available through the United Nations would be used, as effectively as possible and with a real sense of urgency, for the benefit of the developing world.

40. As the new Government in the United Kingdom was engaged in an assessment of its policies in all spheres, he was not in a position to make a detailed policy statement, but he could confirm his Government's commitment to the task of assisting in the development process, which it regarded as an essential part of the United Kingdom's role in the world of the future.

41. Before concentrating on the two main themes of his statement, he wished to comment briefly on three matters: education, population activities and the future of the environment. In regard to education, the United Kingdom had decided it could render the greatest service by concentrating on a few key areas: in particular, teacher training, curriculum development, and the exploitation of modern media and integrated educational planning. To that end, it had established a Centre for Educational Development Overseas which, it was hoped, would ensure that the help given would be directly related to developing countries' needs.

42. With regard to population activities, he said it was up to each developing country to determine whether it needed a population policy and to decide whether it wished to have expert advice and other assistance. The United Kingdom Government would continue, under its official aid programme, to support family planning activities and population programmes, both through intergovernmental and voluntary agencies and, if so requested, bilaterally. The main scope for effectively increasing its contribution probably lay in supporting multilateral efforts, and his Government was to make a grant of £400,000 to the United Nations Fund for Population Activities, of which £150,000 might be spent in the current year and the balance in 1971/72.

43. The subject of the environment was of the greatest concern to everyone, and that concern must now be translated into action by the international community. Accordingly, his Government would give enthusiastic support to the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment to be held at Stockholm in 1972, which, he believed, could establish the direction of future work, identify gaps in existing work, and determine ways of strengthening international collaboration. The United Kingdom, which had been trying to combat the unwanted side-effects of economic growth for well over a century, would have much to contribute to the Conference and also much to learn from it.

44. The first of the two main themes he wished to deal with was the question of technical assistance and pre-investment. His Government firmly believed in UNDP as the principle vehicle for international activity in that field, and warmly welcomed the Capacity Study as a thorough, timely and much-needed reappraisal of the United Nations development system. It hoped that discussion of the Study would lead not only to reform of the development system but also to a more closely concerted approach to development assistance by the whole international community. His Government welcomed the consensus reached at recent meetings of the UNDP Governing Council, which would enable the Administrator in future to develop integrated programmes on a country basis over a sensible time-span. There had been general agreement also on the need for a reshaping of the management structure at the country and regional levels, which could lead to a much more fruitful use of the multilateral resources supplied through the United Nations. His Government hoped, furthermore, that problems which were common to developing countries or to groups of those countries — for example, in agricultural research — could then be more clearly identified and tackled on a concentrated international basis using the resources of UNDP. Finally, much remained to be done to re-organize and strengthen the management of the Programme.

45. Perhaps the most important subject for discussion in the Council was the Second United Nations Development Decade. The draft international strategy prepared by the Preparatory Committee and included in the Committee's report on its sixth session, was a highly significant achievement, although it contained important paragraphs on which there was no agreement, it also reflected the will of Governments to achieve objectives in almost every field of human activity, which could produce dramatic changes on the economic and social patterns of the world over the next ten years. The value of the document would lie in the extent to which it was a realistic expression not only of the will but also of the means to achieve those objectives. That was a profoundly important point. In order to be realistic, the document must be based on what Governments planned to do or expected to be able to do. It should not necessarily be geared to the pace of the slowest; equally, however, it must not risk causing disappointment and disillusionment by laying down objectives which Governments, with the best will in the world, could not achieve. If any Government doubted its ability to fulfil any policies, recommendations or objectives set forth in the final document, then in honesty and fairness that Government must say so and clearly explain its position. His own Government approached the new Decade with complete good will and with the firm intention to promote its success in every way possible; but it would not subscribe without reservation to any measure in the strategy unless it could honestly see its way to carrying it out. Furthermore, it believed that the credibility of the strategy document would be diminished, if not destroyed, by the inclusion of policy recommendations which were impracticable for the Governments called upon to implement them.

46. He would give two examples from the Preparatory Committee's report. First, he thought that very few developed countries could at present increase their aid programmes sufficiently, and appropriate and spend money fast enough, to produce net disbursements of 0.75 per cent of their GNP for official aid by 1972. Secondly, with reference to the suggested target for aid to science and technology, although his Government would make every effort to maintain its own good record, he did not believe that there was sufficient scientific manpower available, or that facilities could be created rapidly enough in developing countries, to enable the developed countries to spend 0.05 per cent of their GNP on scientific research there.

47. He stressed that the new British Government took the strategy document very seriously and was determined to see that Britain played its proper part in dealing with world poverty by working for the expansion of international trade, by providing capital aid and technical assistance, and by encouraging private investment overseas. It also intended to seek international agreements on tariff preferences for developing countries, following the initiative taken by the United Kingdom delegation at the first session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development in 1964. It had accepted the 1 per cent resource flow target set up under resolution 27 (II) adopted by the Conference in 1968 and had promised to increase its aid programme. His Government would work for an improvement in the conditions of aid and would try hard, in current discussions with other Governments, to reach an agreement to reduce aid tying. It had yet to decide how quickly it could carry out its policy intentions on financial resource flows and that decision would clearly effect its ability to accept the target dates for resource flows which many countries wished to see in the present draft strategy.

48. By setting out carefully considered aims, endorsed by the international community, the draft strategy would certainly act as a stimulus to all Governments to advance beyond their present performance. It showed a clear determination to press forward in many essential matters of trade and finance, where the main burden would lie on developed countries. Equally important, however, were the objectives and policies which developing countries envisaged for themselves in almost all fields of economic and social activity. It was the determination of the Governments and peoples of developing countries to achieve those objectives which gave the best hope for the future.

49. Mr. MILI (Secretary-General, International Telecommunication Union) said that he would describe the activities of ITU over the past twelve months and trace the broad outlines of the agency's future activities. The main problems with which ITU was concerned all revolved round its objective of developing telecommunications throughout the world. Since the satisfactory development of telecommunications was essential to the expansion of economic and social activities, telecommunication needs were constantly increasing, and there were at present few countries in which they were adequately met. It was therefore natural that great hopes should be placed in the

most advanced telecommunication media, such as the submarine telephone cable and, above all, the satellite. One outstanding advantage of space communications was that their spectacular aspects had made people aware of the real importance of telecommunications. ITU was taking an active interest in broadcasting via satellites, which opened up new prospects for mankind; it would also follow with close attention all developments in the use of satellites for radio-navigation services. A large proportion of ITU activities were naturally concerned with space; for example, the twelfth Plenary Assembly of the International Radio Consultative Committee of ITU, held early in 1970, had approved many very valuable technical texts on that subject. The Committee would meet again early in 1971 to consider the latest advances in space technology.

50. All the basic work he had mentioned was being done in preparation for the World Administrative Radio Conference for Space Telecommunications, which was to open in Geneva in June 1971 under the auspices of ITU. The main purpose of the Conference would be to prepare new regulations for space telecommunications to ensure the most efficient possible operation of space services.

51. He stressed the importance which ITU attached to the economic aspects of the problems raised by satellites. The competent organs of ITU had initiated studies on that subject which would play a part in the over-all evaluation of the economic and social development of any given region.

52. Since 1960, ITU had used a computer for data processing and corresponding regulatory duties. In accordance with a recent decision of the Administrative Council, the existing computer was to be replaced at the beginning of 1973 by a medium-capacity computer compatible with the common system to be installed by the international organizations within the United Nations system.

53. In the context of technical co-operation, ITU had set itself three objectives: first, the training of the necessary local telecommunication personnel; secondly, the strengthening of the technical and administrative telecommunication services of the administrations receiving assistance; and thirdly, the development of telecommunication networks on a national, regional and world-wide basis. With a view to attaining those objectives, ITU had co-operated actively with the other organizations of the United Nations system. In addition, to place itself in the strongest possible position at the outset of the Second United Nations Development Decade, ITU had adopted various measures designed to improve the scope and efficiency of its activities.

54. Whatever broad priorities might be fixed for economic and social development, planning studies in developing countries must take into account the obvious need for adequate telecommunication networks, without which the development planned in other sectors could never be achieved. All too often, telecommunications were placed at the bottom of the list of priorities. To ensure that their importance was made clear at the time when national

priorities were determined, it would be useful to ensure concerted action by the responsible authorities, the regional economic commissions and the United Nations resident representatives, with support from ITU headquarters.

55. As a result of the outstanding work of ITU, and especially of its two Consultative Committees, the developing countries could benefit directly from recent scientific and technological advances. The use of the most up-to-date techniques must, however, go hand in hand with the development of human resources, for the most advanced methods were useless if the country concerned did not have the necessary personnel to organize the purchase of equipment and to ensure that it was used efficiently. ITU therefore gave a high priority to the training of adequate numbers of national personnel; some two thirds of its technical co-operation activities were concerned with technical training. He outlined the policy which ITU had adopted for that purpose and referred to two parallel experiments currently being conducted in Africa, which promised to be successful. During the past two years ITU had also been organizing regional seminars to ensure that officials and workers were kept abreast of the most up-to-date techniques and their application.

56. ITU was also much concerned with keeping the public informed, and during the past year it had made special efforts to provide information both for the mass media and for the key sectors in member countries, which had a direct say in activities undertaken by ITU under UNDP. Two highly successful World Telecommunication Days had been celebrated; the theme for the second had been "Telecommunications and Education", and as the theme for the third the Administrative Council had recommended "Telecommunications and Space".

57. ITU continued to enjoy excellent relations with the United Nations and the various specialized agencies, particularly those with which it collaborated closely. He cited examples of studies and projects in which ITU was participating. ITU also worked in close collaboration with the regional economic commissions, especially ECA and ECAFE. As proof of the benefits arising from the present collaboration between ITU and ECAFE, he referred to the recent signing of a plan of operation for a pre-investment study of a fully integrated telecommunication network for all the countries of southern Asia and the Far East. ITU was also carrying out a pre-investment study in Africa, in co-operation with IBRD, ECA, OAU and the African Development Bank. It hoped that the study would lead quickly to the establishment of the fully integrated pan-African telecommunication network which was so vital for the balanced development of the continent. Lastly, ITU was closely associated with IDB in a project designed to help the countries of Latin America to set up an inter-American telecommunication network. Such networks were essential if the Second United Nations Development Decade was to achieve all its objectives under optimum conditions.

The meeting rose at 5.10 p.m.