

# 1995th meeting

Thursday, 6 May 1976, at 4 p.m.

President: Mr. Siméon AKE (Ivory Coast).

E/SR.1995

## AGENDA ITEM 10

**Review of the situation in Guatemala in consequence of the earthquake of 4 February 1976 (concluded) (E/5796 and Corr.1 and 2, E/L.1708, E/L.1711)**

## AGENDA ITEM 11

**Measures to be taken following the cyclones in Madagascar (concluded) (E/5788, E/L.1712)**

## AGENDA ITEM 2

**Assistance to the drought-stricken areas of Ethiopia (concluded) (E/5762 and Corr.1, E/L.1715)**

1. The PRESIDENT announced that Malaysia had become a sponsor of draft resolution E/L.1712 and that Brazil had become a sponsor of draft resolution E/L.1715.

2. Mr. ADUGNA (Ethiopia) said that the debates in the Council concerning his country's ordeal and the problem of natural disasters in general demonstrated the continued determination of Member States to save man from falling victim to such disasters. As indicated in the Secretary-General's report (E/5762 and Corr.1), the drought had occurred in two distinct phases. The first, which had reached its climax in June 1973, had claimed the lives of 200,000 people and 3 million head of cattle, sheep and goats. Many lives had been saved as a result not only of the Government's vigorous campaign and the generous help extended by the nation, but also through the kind and prompt help given by the international community, which his country would never forget.

3. With the establishment of a strong Relief and Rehabilitation Commission, which he himself headed, thousands of Ethiopian nationals had been drafted to work with the Commission, sizable funds had been earmarked, a fleet of transport vehicles had been acquired and a national surtax had been imposed for one year. Yet, as stated in the Secretary-General's report, the situation hung in a delicate balance.

4. The second drought had occurred in the southern part of the country, where the situation was still critical. The hardest hit had been the nomadic population, which had lost a large proportion of cattle, sheep, goats and camels, and had thereby been deprived of its means of livelihood.

5. Currently, nearly 1 million people required relief assistance. Although the situation might not seem as disastrous as it had been in 1973, the large relief requirements at the current stage far exceeded the Government's capability. Premature cessation of relief assistance would invite another human tragedy. A disaster of such magnitude was a serious burden to Ethiopia's economy, destroying whatever gains the country had made and arresting its development efforts. If, however, a smooth transition from relief to rehabilitation was worked out with the close collabo-

ration of UNDRO and UNDP, the desired goals could be achieved.

6. Ethiopia's relief needs would decrease in direct proportion to the effectiveness of its rehabilitation programme. The rehabilitation requirements in the Ogaden and two areas in Tigre in agricultural settlements amounted to \$18 million and for replacing livestock in the Ogaden to \$3,210,000. There were similar requirements for rehabilitation in drought-affected areas such as Bale, Sidamo and Gemu-Gofa. The Government was actively engaged in such activities as soil and water conservation, reafforestation, road construction and well-drilling, but the available resources had so far fallen far short of requirements.

7. If UNDP could act as a focal point to marshal information on rehabilitation needs and to discuss and explain the unmet needs to bilateral donors and work in close collaboration with the Government, the rehabilitation programmes could be effectively tackled. He emphasized the need for a clear definition of areas of jurisdiction within the United Nations system and for a smooth transition from relief to rehabilitation in order to ensure self-reliance and make further relief assistance unnecessary.

8. In conclusion, he paid a tribute to the United Nations Disaster Relief Co-ordinator and his staff and to Member States, UNDP, FAO, UNICEF, WFP, the World Bank and other international organizations and voluntary agencies for their continuing assistance.

9. Mr. WILSON (Liberia) introduced on behalf of the sponsors draft resolution E/L.1715, which dealt with assistance to the drought-stricken areas of Ethiopia. He announced that the words "and the United Nations Disaster Relief Co-ordinator", in paragraph 1, should be deleted and that Democratic Yemen, Kenya, Malaysia and Uganda had joined the sponsors. He felt that the draft resolution deserved the whole-hearted support of the Council.

10. Mr. MALIK (Pakistan) expressed his delegation's sympathy with the Government and people of Guatemala, and announced that the Government of Pakistan had provided emergency relief supplies to Guatemala to the value of \$90,000. He commended the Government of Guatemala for its efforts to overcome the effects of the disaster, and expressed the hope that the international community would continue its assistance. He paid a tribute to the work of UNDRO and other international agencies, and to the dynamism shown by the Disaster Relief Co-ordinator. He hoped that draft resolution E/L.1711 would be adopted unanimously.

11. His delegation was equally concerned about the consequences of the cyclones in Madagascar, and greatly appreciated the efforts of donor Governments and international organizations, particularly UNDRO and UNDP, to cope with the situation. In particular, his delegation welcomed UNDP assistance in establishing a hurricane forecasting and warning system in the island. His delegation was a sponsor of draft reso-

lution E/L.1712, and hoped that the Council would adopt it without a vote.

12. Pakistan, which had always lent its full support to the peoples of the Sudano-Sahelian region, was heartened to learn that a favourable rainy season was expected in Ethiopia. His delegation fully supported the efforts of the Relief and Rehabilitation Commission and of the UNDP Resident Representative. It had therefore joined in sponsoring draft resolution E/L.1715.

13. Mr. STURKEY (Australia) joined in expressing his delegation's deep sympathy with the Governments of Guatemala, Madagascar and Ethiopia in their efforts to cope with the recent natural disasters which their countries had suffered. He reaffirmed his delegation's support for the efforts of the Disaster Relief Coordinator to stimulate pre-disaster planning, which was likely to benefit all countries. It was particularly distressing that some of the poorest peoples of the world had to face the deprivations caused by such disasters.

14. The figures produced by UNDRO showed clearly that the peoples of the world had been moved to offer their help. In a number of countries, including his own, voluntary agencies and non-governmental organizations had joined in supplementing governmental contributions. It was to be hoped that their efforts, together with those of the United Nations system and other organizations, would help to improve the conditions of the people in the three countries concerned. His delegation would be pleased to support the three draft resolutions submitted to the Council.

15. Mr. PIERCE (Jamaica) reiterated his delegation's deep sympathy with the Government and people of Guatemala. Immediately following the earthquake, the Jamaican Government had provided a grant of 5,000 Jamaican dollars and several private organizations had sent money and supplies to Guatemala. As one of the sponsors, his delegation recommended that draft resolution E/L.1711 be adopted unanimously.

16. Mr. NATALE (Argentina) noted with satisfaction from the Secretary-General's report (E/5762 and Corr.1) that the Council's appeal for assistance to the drought-stricken areas of Ethiopia had met with an appreciable response. The invaluable assistance provided by the various organizations, Governments and voluntary agencies had helped to alleviate the immediate suffering, and constituted a worthy example of international solidarity. There was, however, no cause for excessive optimism regarding a final answer to the problem. The world community must be ready to provide rapid and effective assistance to Ethiopia if the spring rains failed. The Relief and Rehabilitation Commission must continue its efforts to co-ordinate the various programmes, including dry farming, soil and water conservation, and the establishment of grain reserves. His delegation welcomed the attempt by the UNDP Regional Representative at Addis Ababa to co-ordinate international assistance through mixed Government-donor meetings. In the light of the foregoing, his delegation had joined in sponsoring draft resolution E/L.1715.

17. His delegation's sponsorship of draft resolution E/L.1712 was also an indication of its concern at the devastation and suffering caused by the cyclones in Madagascar.

18. His country, faithful to its long humanitarian tradition and its principles of solidarity with all nations, especially the developing countries, was ready to sup-

port initiatives directed towards achieving a definitive solution to the difficulties faced by the peoples of Ethiopia and Madagascar.

19. Mr. HOSNY (Egypt) said that his delegation was a sponsor of draft resolution E/L.1711, relating to the situation in Guatemala. He wished to point out, however, that, in addition to medicaments valued at \$25,555, his Government had also contributed \$37,300 in cash as a modest symbol of the solidarity of the Government and people of Egypt with the Government and people of Guatemala. More could have been offered, were it not for Egypt's chronic financial problems.

20. His delegation was also sponsoring draft resolution E/L.1715, relating to assistance to the drought-stricken areas of Ethiopia. The Egyptian Government was studying the nature of the additional assistance to be provided directly by governmental agencies and through the Egyptian Red Crescent.

21. His delegation had also joined the sponsors of draft resolution E/L.1712 as an expression of the solidarity of the Government and people of Egypt with the Government and people of Madagascar.

22. Mr. AMIRDZHANOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) expressed his delegation's deep sympathy with the Government and people of Guatemala, and said that the Soviet Red Cross and Red Crescent had provided Guatemala with a large quantity of medicines, bandages and blankets.

23. His delegation also expressed its solidarity with the Government and people of Madagascar following the recent natural disaster there. The relations of friendship, equality and co-operation between the Soviet Union and Madagascar would promote the realization of Madagascar's national plans for social and economic progress. The Soviet Union was striving to give all possible assistance to that country, and was arranging to train personnel in programmes for the prevention of natural disasters.

24. His delegation expressed its deep regret over the situation caused by the drought in Ethiopia, a country with which the Soviet Union maintained a traditional relationship of equality and respect for national sovereignty. In 1975, the Soviet Red Cross and Red Crescent had provided Ethiopia with medicines, food and industrial goods totalling 16,000 roubles.

25. The Soviet Government always provided substantial assistance to countries suffering from natural disasters, and in 1974 had furnished assistance to 23 countries.

26. Miss COURSON (France) said that her Government was aware of the effects of the cyclones and drought in Madagascar and continued to co-operate with the committee on tropical cyclones for the southwestern part of the Indian Ocean established in 1973 with a view to adopting measures relating to programmes for disaster warnings and protection. France had always provided emergency assistance to Madagascar. Emergency measures, however, could not solve all the problems; it was essential that medium-term and long-term measures should be instituted for the recovery and reconstruction of the areas affected by the cyclones and drought. Her delegation fully supported draft resolution E/L.1712.

27. France had also provided emergency assistance to Ethiopia and Guatemala and fully supported draft resolutions E/L.1711 and E/L.1715.

28. Mrs. OGATA (Japan) expressed her Government's sympathy with the people and Government of Guatemala and commended UNDR0 and the Governments of the Central American countries, Mexico and the United States of America for taking the lead in relief operations. As a country which was itself prone to earthquakes, Japan appreciated the full value of international assistance and had responded promptly to the situation in Guatemala. It sincerely hoped that the life of the Guatemalan people would soon be restored to normal. Japan was also sympathetic to the peoples and Governments of Ethiopia and Madagascar and fully supported draft resolutions E/L.1711, E/L.1712 and E/L.1715.

29. Mr. KHAMIS (Algeria) said that his delegation was saddened by the disasters in Ethiopia, Guatemala and Madagascar. The emergency relief effort undertaken on behalf of Guatemala was extremely encouraging. It was to be hoped that the effort would be sustained with a view to helping the Government of Guatemala to carry out the process of national rehabilitation. His delegation supported draft resolution E/L.1711.

30. In Ethiopia, drought had become a permanent feature. It was therefore essential that the international community should lend its continuing support to the measures undertaken by the Government of Ethiopia for the rehabilitation and recovery of the drought-stricken areas.

31. Madagascar was afflicted not only by frequent cyclones but also by a prolonged drought in its southern region. The third world alone could not cope with the serious socio-economic problems resulting from such disasters. The entire world community should demonstrate its solidarity in the form of permanent and large-scale aid.

32. Recent experience had shown that natural disasters had become a permanent affliction of mankind. Consideration should therefore be given to the establishment of a permanent fund for emergency relief.

33. Mr. HSING Sung-yi (China) said that his delegation deeply sympathized with the losses and sufferings of the people in the disaster-stricken areas. It was glad to see that, under the leadership of their respective Governments, the peoples of Ethiopia, Guatemala and Madagascar had taken various measures for relief operations, and had fought courageously against the natural disasters, winning remarkable achievements. They had thus amply proved the truth of the saying that human will could overpower natural forces.

34. In order to help the disaster-stricken peoples to overcome their difficulties, the Chinese Red Cross had made separate donations to Guatemala and Madagascar. His Government had also sent food assistance to Ethiopia. Its assistance, although limited, was an expression of the friendship and solidarity existing among the developing countries.

35. Guatemala and Madagascar were faced with the difficult and urgent task of further overcoming the natural disasters and rebuilding the homeland. Ethiopia was carrying out a medium-term and long-term rehabilitation plan for the complete elimination of the consequences of the drought and a gradual increase in the capability to prevent and combat natural disasters. The organizations within the United Nations system should continue to provide those countries with the necessary assistance to help them to overcome the adverse effects

of the natural disasters and restore and develop production. In that connexion, the Council had an important role of co-ordination and promotion to play.

36. His delegation believed that, if they feared no hardships and worked hard, the peoples of Ethiopia, Guatemala and Madagascar, with international assistance, would certainly win complete victory in their fight against natural disasters.

37. His delegation supported draft resolutions E/L.1711, E/L.1712 and E/L.1715.

38. Mr. SCHUPPUS (Togo) expressed his Government's sympathy with the people and Governments of Ethiopia, Guatemala and Madagascar. Serious disruptions had occurred in those three countries and much remained to be done to alleviate the suffering of those afflicted. Because of the frequency and duration of natural disasters, emergency measures alone were inadequate. It was important also to be able to forecast such disasters and take preventive measures. He noted that programmes for disaster warnings and protection would require considerable resources and that the solidarity of the international community was indispensable. His Government commended UNDR0 and the Governments and specialized agencies which had come to the assistance of Ethiopia, Guatemala and Madagascar.

39. His delegation was one of the sponsors of draft resolution E/L.1712, and gave its full support to draft resolutions E/L.1711 and E/L.1715. It was to be hoped that all members would endorse the three draft resolutions and that all States would support the medium-term and long-term measures for the recovery and reconstruction of the afflicted countries.

40. Mr. YAO (Ivory Coast) said that his delegation was saddened and concerned over the disasters in Ethiopia, Guatemala and Madagascar and greatly appreciated the relief efforts undertaken by the international community. The three draft resolutions before the Council appealed to various bodies to give urgent consideration to requests for assistance by the three countries. His delegation hoped that the draft resolutions would be adopted unanimously and that the bodies referred to would act favourably on the requests.

41. Mr. KOCH (Federal Republic of Germany) said that his Government sympathized with the people and Governments of Ethiopia, Guatemala and Madagascar. Private organizations should be encouraged to continue their valuable relief operations. A major effort was needed to help the Governments of Ethiopia, Guatemala and Madagascar to carry out the process of national rehabilitation and reconstruction. His Government was prepared to provide further assistance to the afflicted countries and gave its entire support to the three draft resolutions under consideration.

42. Mr. MUTHAURA (Kenya) noted with satisfaction that UNDR0 had continued to monitor developments in Ethiopia, maintaining close collaboration principally with the Assistant Administrator and Regional Representative of UNDP at Addis Ababa, and with FAO, UNICEF and WHO. Co-ordination, speed and economy were essential to any disaster relief operation. The improved harvests in Ethiopia were encouraging, but the problems were still far from being solved. The Ethiopian authorities were continuing to provide food and medical services to over 70,000 nomadic people being sheltered in relief centres in the Ogaden alone. An additional 400,000 persons were benefiting from

food-for-work projects supported by WFP and bilateral donors. The continuing efforts of the United Nations and the international community would undoubtedly strengthen the recovery and reconstruction programmes. Despite its modest resources, Kenya had sent substantial amounts of maize and milk powder to Ethiopia.

43. The disasters in Guatemala and Madagascar were of a more complex character. United Nations organizations should help to install radar systems and other devices to forecast cyclones and earthquakes, and should give support to other long-term precautionary measures. At the same time, however, the emergency programmes should not be relaxed. Kenya had not been able to provide assistance to Guatemala and Madagascar, but deeply sympathized with those afflicted and commended all those who had sought to provide prompt relief. It was to be hoped that individuals, organizations and countries that were in a position to provide assistance would continue to do so.

44. Mr. COVACI (Romania) said that emergency relief was an important aspect of the work of the United Nations. In the developing countries, in particular, natural disasters caused substantial disruption of national development efforts. His Government deeply regretted the loss of life and property that had occurred in Ethiopia, Guatemala and Madagascar. Romania itself had had to cope with natural disasters in the past and was willing to support measures for the recovery and reconstruction of the afflicted countries. Consideration should be given to the establishment of an emergency food reserve to be managed by an agency such as FAO.

45. His delegation was convinced that the three draft resolutions would be adopted unanimously.

46. Mr. SIDDIQ (Afghanistan) expressed his Government's sympathy with the people and Governments of Ethiopia, Guatemala and Madagascar. The losses suffered by Guatemala were incalculable in human terms. He was happy to note, however, that the relief operations initiated by the Guatemalan Government with the assistance of the international community had enabled the people of Guatemala to begin the process of national reconstruction and rehabilitation.

47. Madagascar was afflicted by cyclones with regular frequency. The situation there had been further aggravated by a prolonged drought in the southern regions. Medium-term and long-term measures for the recovery and reconstruction of the areas affected by the cyclones and drought were urgently needed.

48. The situation in Ethiopia was no less distressing. There again, the emphasis should be on long-term measures for the rehabilitation and recovery of the drought-stricken areas. It was within the power of man to alleviate the suffering caused by natural disasters, but, to that end, the support of the United Nations, the international community and financial institutions was vital.

49. His delegation was one of the sponsors of draft resolution E/L.1711, and wished to join in sponsoring draft resolutions E/L.1712 and E/L.1715.

50. Mr. ORTIZ RODRIGUEZ (Cuba) said that natural disasters were a matter of concern to all the peoples of the world. Cuba had always given emergency assistance to the fullest extent possible and the Cuban Red Cross had been extremely active in disaster relief efforts. His delegation fully sympathized with the

peoples and Governments of Guatemala and Madagascar, but had been unable to sponsor draft resolutions E/L.1711 and E/L.1712 because of their references to certain financial institutions. It would, however, give its support to those draft resolutions and wished to join in sponsoring draft resolution E/L.1715. The situation in Ethiopia called for continuing support from the international community for the measures undertaken by the Government of Ethiopia for the rehabilitation and recovery of the drought-stricken areas.

51. Mr. AMIRDIVANI (Iran) said that, despite Ethiopia's successful efforts at reconstruction following the long drought, it was still not out of danger since continued improvement would depend on the weather during the rainy season. His delegation believed that without international assistance the country would find it difficult to overcome its problems and had sponsored a proposal that an honorary committee should be established to help to mobilize financial resources for disaster-related activities, which had been adopted in General Assembly resolution 3440 (XXX). He expressed sympathy with the problems being experienced in Madagascar. Iran had provided assistance to Guatemala through the Red Lion and Sun of Iran and his delegation hoped that the draft resolution on Guatemala would be adopted unanimously.

52. Mr. SEIFMAN (United States of America) said that, between the middle of 1973 and January 1976, his Government had provided almost \$31 million in drought assistance to Ethiopia, including 75,000 metric tons of food grain and \$11 million in non-food aid. Now that the emergency phase seemed to have passed, the focus was on longer-term recovery and rehabilitation efforts. Between June 1974 and June 1975, his Government had signed grant agreements worth \$8.1 million covering livestock, water development and other matters. Similar assistance, including a project for the establishment of a drought early warning system in southern Ethiopia, was envisaged in the current year up to a value of \$5 million.

53. With regard to Guatemala, he commended other countries and voluntary organizations for their contributions, and also noted that the performance of UNDRO reflected a growing capacity to respond to disasters. In addition to \$18.4 million in food assistance, his Government, in close co-operation with the Guatemalan authorities, had provided \$19.5 million to finance a wide range of reconstruction and rehabilitation activities, including medical facilities, water purification equipment, and support for municipal services. The Agency for International Development was considering the possibility of providing \$20 million in loans for housing and municipal services and was also considering extending guarantees under its housing investment guarantee programme in order to help to meet the housing shortage. Further assistance was planned and should go to reconstruction and rehabilitation activities.

54. In order to clarify draft resolution E/L.1711, he proposed that in the fifth line of operative paragraph 4, the word "satisfying" should be replaced by "responding to" and, in the fourth line of operative paragraph 5, the word "enable" should be replaced by "assist". His delegation would then be pleased to join the sponsors of draft resolution E/L.1711.

55. Mr. OLIVERI LOPEZ (Argentina) said that those amendments were perfectly acceptable. He proposed that an operative paragraph 7 should be added



to draft resolution E/L.1711 reading: "*Decides* to keep the matter under review".

56. Mr. LASCARRO (Colombia) said that, in order to demonstrate his country's solidarity with the three affected countries, his delegation wished to join the sponsors of draft resolution E/L.1715, thus becoming a sponsor of all three draft resolutions. His Government had provided considerable assistance to Guatemala.

57. The PRESIDENT informed the Council that Yugoslavia had also joined the sponsors of draft resolution E/L.1711.

58. If he heard no objection, he would take it that the Council adopted draft resolution E/L.1711, as amended by the representatives of the United States and Argentina, without a vote.

*The draft resolution, as orally amended, was adopted (resolution 1984 (LX)).*

59. Mr. ORANTES LUNA (Observer for Guatemala), speaking at the invitation of the President, thanked the Secretary-General and all those who had provided assistance to his country in its misfortune. The earthquake had heightened the problems already being felt by Guatemala as a result of the economic crisis and the Guatemalan people were deeply grateful for the prompt emergency assistance provided by the international community. Realizing, however, that the burden of national rehabilitation must fall primarily upon the people of Guatemala themselves, the Government had decreed a budget increase of \$200 million for the current year to supplement the foreign donations received so far and had issued bonds for reconstruction to the value of \$122 million which it was mandatory for all Guatemalans of a certain position to buy. As the people were buying bonds enthusiastically, the first issue would be followed by a further issue to the value of 500 million quetzals. Naturally, in view of the extent of the destruction, external assistance had had to be requested too. Since draft resolution E/L.1711 had been adopted unanimously, his Government was confident that it would receive substantial special assistance from the various international organizations concerned. It hoped that, in so far as it was possible, such aid would be non-reimbursable, in view of Guatemala's precarious situation following the earthquake. On behalf of his Government and people,

he expressed deep gratitude to all delegations and, in particular, to those which had sponsored the draft resolution and which had given assistance to his country.

60. The PRESIDENT declared that the Council had concluded its consideration of agenda item 10.

61. If he heard no objection, he would take it that the Council wished to adopt draft resolution E/L.1712 without a vote.

*The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 1985 (LX)).*

62. Mr. RASOLONDRAIBE (Observer for Madagascar), speaking at the invitation of the President, thanked all delegations for the understanding and concern they had shown and, in particular, the Tunisian delegation, for introducing the draft resolution. The resolution would be viewed in his country as a symbol of solidarity among nations. It was, of course, merely a stage in the efforts to provide the United Nations with an effective instrument for helping disaster-stricken countries. His delegation had been encouraged by the reaction to its proposal that there should be a permanent fund which would concentrate on reconstruction and rehabilitation efforts, and was sure that practical results would be achieved in the near future.

63. The PRESIDENT declared that the Council had concluded its consideration of agenda item 11.

*The draft resolution, as orally revised, was adopted (resolution 1986 (LX)).*

65. Mr. ADUGNA (Ethiopia) thanked the representative of Liberia for introducing the draft resolution and all members of the Council for voting in favour of it. If the resolution was translated into action it would enable his country to develop a viable way of life that would enable it to face similar disasters in the future. Ethiopia wished to become self-reliant and the draft resolution would do much to help it to do so.

66. The PRESIDENT declared that the Council had concluded its consideration of agenda item 2.

#### *Statement by the President*

67. The PRESIDENT informed members that, on behalf of the Council, he had sent a cable to the President of the fourth session of UNCTAD.

*The meeting rose at 6 p.m.*

## 1996th meeting

Friday, 7 May 1976, at 11.15 a.m.

*President:* Mr. Siméon AKE (Ivory Coast).

E/SR.1996

### *Expression of sympathy on the occasion of the earthquake in northern Italy*

1. The PRESIDENT, speaking on behalf of the Council, requested the representative of Italy to convey its most profound sympathy to his Government, the Italian people and the families which had experienced the earthquake which had struck northern Italy.

2. Mr. ROSSI (Italy) said that the Government and people of Italy sincerely appreciated the Council's ex-

pression of sympathy and the friendly feelings of the members towards the Italian nation.

### AGENDA ITEM 12

#### *Assistance to Mozambique (E/5812 and Corr.1 and Add.1)*

3. Mr. FARAH (Assistant Secretary-General for Special Political Questions), speaking on behalf of the