



COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES

REPORT ON THE FIFTH SESSION

9-20 May 1977

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

OFFICIAL RECORDS: SIXTY-THIRD SESSION

SUPPLEMENT No. 2A

UNITED NATIONS



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NOTE

Symbols of United Nations documents are composed of capital letters combined with figures. Mention of such a symbol indicates a reference to a United Nations document.

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I. ISSUES REQUIRING ACTION BY THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL
COUNCIL OR BROUGHT TO ITS ATTENTION

A

1. The Committee on Natural Resources recommends the following draft resolutions for adoption by the Economic and Social Council.

DRAFT RESOLUTION I

Follow-up to the Plan of Action of Mar del Plata on integrated
water resources development and management adopted by the
United Nations Water Conference

The Economic and Social Council,

Bearing in mind resolution VIII of the United Nations Water Conference, 1/

Recognizing the imperative need for accelerated progress in the investigation and development of water resources, and the difficulties in the area of co-ordination which affect United Nations bodies in the execution of their tasks relative to water resources,

Further recognizing the central role which the Committee on Natural Resources and the regional commissions within their respective regions should play in the promotion of intergovernmental co-operation in follow-up to the Plan of Action on Integrated Water Resources development and management, as recommended by the United Nations Water Conference,

1. Calls upon the United Nations regional commissions to convene regional meetings to obtain the views of States Members of the United Nations on their responses to the United Nations Water Conference, and the opportunities, needs and problems with respect to carrying out the recommendations of the Conference at the regional level;

2. Calls upon the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination and the Environment Co-ordination Board to develop in greater detail the administrative and financial aspects of the proposals contained in their report; 2/

3. Decides to convene a special session of the Committee on Natural Resources in order to decide on further steps to secure the implementation of the Plan of Action on integrated water resources development. This special session, to be convened after the conclusion of the regional meetings,

1/ See E/CONF.70/29.

2/ E/CONF.70/CBP/4.

should consist of no more than eight working days and should take into account the observations of the regional meetings and the report requested in paragraph 2;

4. Calls upon the Committee on Natural Resources to provide for continued intergovernmental review and oversight of Water Conference follow-up by international organizations included in the field of water.

DRAFT RESOLUTION II

Co-ordination of programmes within the United Nations system in the field of natural resources development

The Economic and Social Council,

Reaffirming the important role of the Committee on Natural Resources pursuant to Economic and Social Council resolution 1535 (XLIX) of 27 July 1970, in proposing recommendations to the Council in the programming and co-ordination of the activities in the United Nations system in the field of natural resources,

Emphasizing the need for effective co-ordination of the activities of the United Nations and the specialized agencies in the field of natural resources, in order to avoid unnecessary constraints on the scarce human and financial resources of the United Nations system and its possibilities to support the developing countries in their development efforts,

1. Takes note of the reports entitled "Present and future activities of the United Nations system in water resources development" 3/ and "Comprehensive plan of action for and co-ordination of programmes within the United Nations system in the field of natural resources development" (E/C.7/74 and Add.1-3) and the comments made on these reports;

2. Reaffirms paragraph 2 of its resolution 1957 B (LIX) and in particular subparagraphs (c) and (d) thereof;

3. Requests the Secretary-General to include in the reports to be prepared pursuant to Economic and Social Council resolution 1957 B (LIX) a detailed analysis of the ongoing and planned programme activities in the field of natural resources in order to enable the Committee on Natural Resources to perform its task of co-ordination effectively.

DRAFT RESOLUTION III

Evaluation of prospects for the development of chromium ores

The Economic and Social Council,

Recognizing the importance of natural resources for world economic development,

3/ E/CONF.70/CBP/4 and Add.1-2.

Recalling those minerals identified in the Integrated Programme for Commodities currently being discussed by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development,

Taking into account the work of the International Geological Correlation Programme on ophiolites (i.e. rocks potentially containing chromium), and noting the greater availability of information on common base metals such as copper, lead, nickel and zinc,

Requests the Secretary-General to prepare for the sixth session of the Committee on Natural Resources a comprehensive report assessing the prospects for the development of chromium ores, and also the demand for chromium over the next 10 to 15 years. The report should pay special attention to measures that might be undertaken to evaluate prospective deposits in developing countries.

DRAFT RESOLUTION IV

Study, development and use of coal resources

The Economic and Social Council,

Recalling its resolution 1954 (LIX) on problems of availability and supply of natural resources, and particularly part A of that resolution,

Conscious of the world-wide significance which energy and fuels have acquired in recent years, and of their effect on economic development, particularly of the developing countries,

Commending the reports (E/C.7/67 and Add.1) of the Secretary-General on coal and taking note of their findings,

Recognizing the desirability of intensifying international co-operation in ensuring long-term supplies of energy in appropriate quantities and forms,

Noting the reports of the Secretary-General submitted to the Committee in pursuance of part C of the above-mentioned resolution,

Recalling General Assembly resolution 3508 (XXX),

1. Requests the Secretary-General, in his work on long-term economic trends to give special attention to long-term forecasts relating to energy and the main energy sources, and to countries' requirements and supplies, taking into account the possibility of using alternative energy sources;

2. Recommends to the Secretary-General that, in the joint efforts of all organizations of the United Nations system to develop energy sources alternative to oil and gas, high priority should be given to the evaluation of the prospects of using coal as a raw material both for producing liquid and gaseous fuel and for the chemical industry;

3. Requests the Secretary-General, taking into account the views of the executive secretariats of the regional commissions, the specialized agencies

and also the United Nations Environment Programme and the United Nations Development Programme, to submit an interim report to the Economic and Social Council at its sixty-fifth session:

(a) Presenting an assessment of the progress achieved in expanding the use of coal;

(b) Describing the present and anticipated scales of work on the evaluation of the prospects of using coal, as scheduled in their respective work programmes;

(c) Presenting action proposals on practical measures for increasing the utilization and processing of coal and assisting countries in overcoming their energy problems, and at the same time taking into account environmental protection requirements;

4. Requests the Secretary-General to ensure, as far as possible, that the above-mentioned problems are studied in detail at the planned international symposium on the evaluation and working of coal deposits, which is to be held no later than 1979.

DRAFT RESOLUTION V

New and renewable energy resources

The Economic and Social Council,

Recognizing that remaining decades of this century represent a period of transition from a world economy largely based on oil to one based on alternative, new and renewable sources of energy,

Bearing in mind the long lead times required to develop and harness alternative new sources of energy,

Recalling that the United Nations has pioneered the promotion and development of new sources of energy such as solar, geothermal and wind power and convened the first major international conference on these new sources of energy in Rome in 1961 - a conference which provided a benchmark against which previous and subsequent progress is measured,

Aware of recent technical developments and those anticipated in the next few years in these and other new sources of energy such as biogas, tidal and wave power, oil shale and tar sands, among others,

Considering the vital role renewable forms of energy could play in the improvement of the living conditions of all the peoples of the developing countries,

Deeply concerned by the prevailing world energy situation and by the possibility of the early depletion of the non-renewable sources of energy because of overreliance on and unplanned consumption of these resources,

Requests the Secretary-General, in co-operation with specialized agencies, regional commissions and other United Nations bodies concerned, to submit a report to the Economic and Social Council, at its sixty-fourth session, on the feasibility of holding an International Conference on New and Renewable Sources of Energy such as solar, geothermal, wind power, biogas and tidal wave power, bearing in mind the particular situation of developing countries.

DRAFT RESOLUTION VI

Permanent sovereignty over natural resources

The Economic and Social Council,

Recalling United Nations resolutions on permanent sovereignty over natural resources, and in particular General Assembly resolutions 3175 (XXVIII), 3336 (XXIX), 3516 (XXX) and 31/186,

1. Expresses its concern for the natural resources of territories under foreign domination, colonial administration, alien occupation, apartheid or racial discrimination;

2. Reaffirms the desire fully to safeguard the inalienable rights of peoples and permanent sovereignty of States over their natural resources within territories beyond their control and to ensure their right to restitution and full compensation for the exploitation of, and damage to, these natural resources;

3. Takes note with appreciation of the report of the Secretary-General on permanent sovereignty over natural resources (E/C.7/66);

4. Requests the Secretary-General:

(a) To prepare progress reports for the Committee on Natural Resources at its regular sessions on the work being done in the field of exercise of the inalienable rights of peoples and permanent sovereignty over natural resources in the territories under foreign domination, colonial administration, alien occupation, apartheid or racial discrimination; and

(b) To prepare reports providing detailed information on pertinent aspects of and relevant developments concerning exercise by developing countries and peoples of their inalienable rights and permanent sovereignty over their natural resources and to submit these reports to the Committee on Natural Resources at its regular sessions.

B

2. The Committee on Natural Resources brings to the attention of the Economic and Social Council the following resolutions and decisions adopted by the Committee. The Committee also decided to bring to the attention of the Council the contents of paragraph 28 of the present report, containing an interpretation by the Chairman.

RESOLUTION 1 (V)

The Committee on Natural Resources,

Bearing in mind resolution VII of the United Nations Water Conference, 4/

Recognizing that difficulties exist in the co-ordination of programmes for water resources which affect the United Nations bodies in the execution of their tasks,

Deeply aware of the fundamental importance of water resources for economic and social development,

Requests the Economic and Social Council, in considering the question of the co-ordination of programmes within the United Nations system in the field of water resources, to have particular regard to the following basic ideas:

(a) The responsibilities of the regional commissions in respect of water resources should be strengthened and intensified. To this end an intergovernmental committee in each regional commission could be given a specific mandate and secretariat resources of regional commissions could be established or increased, as appropriate, to provide the necessary services for the committee which is to deal with the question of water resources;

(b) The co-ordination of the programmes within the United Nations system in the field of water resources should be carried out basically within the framework of and through the regional commissions;

(c) The Committee on Natural Resources should play a principal part in the co-ordination of programmes of a general scope.

RESOLUTION 2 (V)

The Committee on Natural Resources,

Having regard to paragraph 4 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1535 (XLIX) of 27 July 1970, as well as Council resolution 1954 (LIX) of 25 July 1975 on problems of availability and supply of natural resources,

Bearing in mind that a number of developing countries are interested in an evaluation of the situation as regards the availability of and demand for nickel,

Requests the Economic and Social Council to invite the Secretary-General to prepare for the Committee on Natural Resources, at its sixth session, a report containing an evaluation of prospects for the development of the raw materials base for the nickel industry and of the demand for nickel over the next 10 to 15 years.

4/ See E/CONF.70/29.

RESOLUTION 3 (V)

The Committee on Natural Resources,

Having regard to paragraph 4 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1535 (XLIX) of 27 July 1970,

Noting the difficulties experienced by certain developing countries in connexion with the use and export of natural and associated gas,

Requests the Economic and Social Council:

(a) To invite the Secretary-General to prepare for the Committee on Natural Resources at its sixth session reports on the technical and economic aspects of the transport of liquefied natural gas, and on present possibilities and prospects for the use of gas associated with petroleum deposits;

(b) To recommend that the Secretary-General should pay special attention in reports to the assessment of measures designed to assist the developing countries in solving these problems.

DECISION 1 (V)

United Nations Water Conference

The Committee on Natural Resources requests the Secretary-General to submit to the Economic and Social Council at its sixty-third session detailed information on the subjects which should be discussed at the proposed regional meetings as well as at the proposed special session of the Committee on Natural Resources.

DECISION 2 (V)

United Nations Revolving Fund for Natural Resources
Exploration

The Committee on Natural Resources takes note of the report of the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme on the United Nations Revolving Fund for Natural Resources Exploration 5/ and requests a fuller, analytical report for the sixth session, including in particular a financial and technical annex for each project financed by the Fund, with an assessment of the Fund's operations as of that time, to facilitate a review of experience and of the basic principles of the Fund as called for in paragraph 1 (p) of Economic and Social Council resolution 1762 (LIV).

5/ DP/249.

DECISION 3 (V)

Co-ordination of programmes within the United Nations
system in the field of natural resources

The Committee on Natural Resources requests the Secretary-General to submit a further report on the administrative and financial implications of the proposal to establish an Inter-Agency Water Resources Board to the Economic and Social Council at its sixty-third session in order to enable the Council to consider the proposal in its entirety.

DECISION 4 (V)

Alternative measures for the administrative support of the
proposed Inter-Agency Water Resources Board

The Committee on Natural Resources requests the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination and the Environment Co-ordination Board of the United Nations Environment Programme to provide, for consideration by the Committee at its proposed special session, the implications of alternative measures necessary for the administrative support of the proposed Inter-Agency Resources Board.

II. UNITED NATIONS WATER CONFERENCE

3. The Committee considered agenda item 4 at its 105th, 106th and 108th meetings. It heard a statement by the Secretary-General of the United Nations Water Conference on the results of the Conference, which was held from 14 to 25 March 1977 6/ at Mar del Plata, Argentina. It was noted that the report of the Conference, which was not yet available, would be submitted to the Economic and Social Council at its sixty-third session.

4. In connexion with the consideration of the item the Committee discussed interagency co-ordination in the water resources field, as requested by the Water Conference in its resolution VIII, specifically referred to the fifth session of the Committee. 7/ That aspect is dealt with in chapter VI below on co-ordination (agenda item 8).

5. In his address to the Committee, the Secretary-General of the United Nations Water Conference made his over-all evaluation of the results of the Conference, which he judged to be highly positive. He referred to the main points of the Plan of Action of Mar del Plata and recalled the significance of the specific proposals in the fields of water for agriculture and community water supply, including one to designate 1980/1990 as an International Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation Decade.

6. In recalling the needed follow-up action at the national and international levels, he emphasized the desirability of formalizing preparatory institutional mechanisms set up for the Conference at the national level so as to give them a permanent character, while noting that the Economic and Social Council and the Committee on Natural Resources had been called upon to play a central role in follow-up action at the global level and the regional commissions at the regional level. A strengthening of activities in the water sector by the regional commissions had also been requested and recommendations by the Committee with respect to machinery for improved co-ordination among the organizations of the United Nations system were extremely important in view of the need to overcome existing constraints within the system and to enable it to deal effectively with the required follow-up activities at the international level.

7. The Secretary-General also touched on the significance of Conference resolutions relating to financing and shared water resources, and concluded with a proposal that the Committee should recommend to the Economic and Social Council that a special session of the Committee should be held as soon as possible, devoted to water, to consider in detail the recommendations of the United Nations Water Conference, including the specific action proposals formulated by the various United Nations organs and agencies, and make appropriate recommendations to the Council.

6/ E/CONF.70/29.

7/ The text of the resolution was before the Committee in document E/C.7(v)/CRP.1.

8. In the discussion which followed, most representatives commented on the Secretary-General's statement. A great majority of delegations expressed satisfaction at the results of the Conference and congratulated the Secretary-General of the Conference on the outcome. The importance of a speedy and effective follow-up to the Plan of Action of Mar del Plata was recognized. Many delegations agreed with that part of a Water Conference resolution which indicated the desirability of strengthening the activities of the Economic and Social Council and of the Committee in the field of water resources. In this connexion, numerous delegations indicated their support for the idea of holding a special session of the Committee next year devoted to water, to follow up on the recommendations of the Conference. A few delegations felt that an alternative to a special session might be to devote the next regular session of the Committee exclusively to water. Several delegations suggested that a series of regional meetings might be envisaged prior to the special session, so that the Committee might receive the views of all Governments on relevant questions. It was agreed that the timing for such a session could best be established by the Economic and Social Council at its sixty-third session. There was unanimous agreement on the need to strengthen regional commissions in the field of water and it was suggested that proposals in that regard could be presented to the Committee for its consideration.

Action by the Committee

9. The Committee concluded that regional activities in the field of water should be strengthened, with regional meetings as a first step, and that in the light of the desirability of strengthening the activities of the Economic and Social Council and of the Committee on Natural Resources in the field of water as requested by the United Nations Water Conference, a special session of the Committee devoted to water should be held in 1978 after the regional meetings.

10. Those conclusions were reflected, at least in part, in a draft resolution (E/C.7/L.63) submitted by the delegation of the United States of America. It was adopted, as orally amended, by the Committee at its 111th meeting. (For the text, see chap. I.A above, draft resolution I).

11. At the same meeting, the Committee also adopted a draft decision (E/C.7/L.64) submitted by the delegation of the Federal Republic of Germany. (For the text, see chap. I.B above, decision 1 (V).)

III. WORLD ENERGY AND MINERALS SITUATION - CRITICAL ISSUES AND PROSPECTS

12. The Committee considered agenda item 5 (a) at its 112th, 113th and 114th meetings. It had before it six reports of the Secretary-General (E/C.7/64, E/C.7/67 and Add.1, E/C.7/70, E/C.7/73, E/C.7/75) prepared pursuant to Economic and Social Council resolution 1954 A (LIX).
13. The item was introduced by the Director of the Centre for Natural Resources, Energy and Transport, who drew attention to the fact that the Committee had not seized the opportunity for action in response to the energy problem at its previous session and that, as relatively little had been achieved in formulating coherent energy policies in the two intervening years, action in that regard was more urgent than ever.
14. The period of transition from a world economy dependent on petroleum to one based upon alternative, more diversified sources of energy would not be easy and a key role in that transition would be played by coal. In that connexion the Director reviewed the important technical report (E/C.7/67) on coal submitted at the current session of the Committee on Natural Resources and expressed his appreciation to those Governments that had contributed to its preparation.
15. In introducing the report of the Secretary-General presenting an overview of the world energy situation (E/C.7/70), the Director stressed the particular difficulties experienced by those developing countries dependent upon imported petroleum and whose oil import bill had quadrupled between 1973 and 1977. Many of those countries had untapped energy resources, the development of which represented a challenge to the international community and the Director proposed that the Committee consider a modest first step towards international co-operation in exploration for energy resources in that group of most disadvantaged nations.
16. On the question of international co-operation, the Director commended to the Committee the tentative proposals contained in document E/C.7/75, particularly the possibility of establishing a consultative group on energy resources development which could: (a) provide assistance to national institutions in developing countries for energy exploration programmes; (b) encourage research and development of appropriate energy technologies for the needs of developing countries; (c) assist in training technical and managerial personnel in the energy field; and (d) improve access to information on energy technologies, which is of considerable interest to developing and industrialized countries alike.
17. The proposed consultative group would co-ordinate the energy activities of the United Nations system rather than involve any transfer of functions from existing organizations. The Director emphasized that the Secretary-General's proposals represented a framework for discussion and negotiation which could, it was hoped, lead to concerted action responding to the needs of an interdependent world.
18. The Director of the Centre suggested that urgent action was required and that, if necessary, the Committee might wish to consider setting up a study group of the Committee on Natural Resources to examine the proposals in greater depth.

19. In the course of the ensuing discussion there was widely expressed appreciation of the quality of the documentation prepared for the Committee on the subject. A few delegations were critical of the source of data used in some of the documents which appeared to them to be unduly based on limited and sometimes outdated information. Those delegations also felt that undue emphasis had been placed on oil and the price of oil rather than on other sources of energy, such as coal. One delegation said that it considered that the contents of paragraphs 30 and 37 of document E/C.7/70 violated the right of the developing countries to exercise sovereign control over their natural resources and therefore considered the contents of those paragraphs inadmissible.

20. Much discussion focused upon the question of institutional arrangements for co-operation in the field of energy and the relevant report of the Secretary-General (E/C.7/75) was described as imaginative and original. Certain representatives of countries participating in the Conference on International Economic Co-operation felt unable to endorse the Secretary-General's proposals at that stage as there was some expectation that the Ministerial Meeting of the Conference, which was to take place towards the end of May, might result in similar proposals, including the creation of an International Energy Institute under the aegis of the Conference. Consequently, a number of delegations felt obliged to reserve their position on that item until after the end of the Ministerial Meeting of the Conference. Certain delegations indicated a wish to discuss the matter further at the forthcoming session of the Economic and Social Council, however, inter alia, taking into account the outcome of the Conference. One delegation stated that it would also be desirable to have fuller information about the energy plans and programmes of UNCTAD, UNIDO and other organizations involved in the subject both within and outside the United Nations.

21. However, several delegations supported the proposal regarding the establishment of a study group of the Committee on Natural Resources to examine in depth the proposals presented by the Secretary-General.

22. Other delegations, not involved in the Conference on International Economic Co-operation, felt unable to support the Secretary-General's institutional proposals for energy co-operation on the grounds that they might further complicate the organizational structure of the United Nations and have undesirable financial implications. It was feared that fragmentation and duplication of the activities of both the Committee on Natural Resources and of the Centre for Natural Resources, Energy and Transport might result. They recommended that future developments in that field should be concentrated under the Committee on Natural Resources, and special working groups of the Committee where necessary.

23. One delegation proposed that the Centre for Natural Resources, Energy and Transport be strengthened to enable it to cope with an expanded energy programme. That delegation further proposed that the Committee recommend to the Economic and Social Council the creation of an energy fund to be financed by the OPEC and industrialized countries. The Committee was urged to appoint a committee of experts to examine and recommend ways and means of managing such an energy fund.

24. In reviewing the documents submitted by the Secretary-General under the item, many delegations gave brief accounts of the energy situation and problems encountered in their own countries. The reports of the Secretary-General on coal, geothermal energy and oil shale were commended as being valuable and comprehensive. Several delegations emphasized that against the background of

serious constraints to future economic and social growth arising from energy shortages, there would be urgent need for adoption of measures to prevent wasteful and non-productive uses of energy, and for the development of new and alternative sources of energy - especially those of a renewable nature. It was also urged by one delegation that within the time-lag before the non-conventional sources of energy could have an appreciable impact, there was need for the formulation of appropriate strategies which would meet the requirements of the developing countries. It was also suggested by one delegation that the initiatives taken by the regional commissions should be taken into account. It was hoped that the Secretary-General would continue to prepare studies on the various sources of energy for submission to the Committee and a number of specific proposals were made.

25. One delegation proposed that the United Nations should sponsor a geothermal centre for East Africa since the region, while poor in conventional sources of energy, had considerable geothermal potential. It was further suggested that other new sources of energy, such as solar, wind power and biogas, offered interesting possibilities for the region and should be exploited.

26. Another delegation, emphasizing the need to develop new and renewable sources of energy before the world's fossil fuels were exhausted, proposed that the Committee on Natural Resources recommend to the Economic and Social Council the establishment of an ad hoc group of experts on small-scale (2-5 MW) geothermal power generation for remote areas not connected to national power grids.

27. In summing up, the Chairman noted that with regard to the proposals of the Secretary-General for new approaches to international energy co-operation as well as the suggestion of the Director of the Centre for Natural Resources, Energy and Transport for a study group of the Committee to look into such proposals, a number of different views had been expressed. He limited himself to noting that while some representatives felt that the proposals were not acceptable as they stood, others were ready to support them even at that stage. A large number of delegations were of the opinion that activities in other international bodies made it premature to deal in substance with the proposals at that stage.

Action by the Committee

28. In conclusion, the Chairman said that it was his interpretation that the Committee would recommend that the Economic and Social Council consider a review on the intergovernmental level of international energy co-operation within the United Nations system, taking into account, inter alia, the work of other international bodies and giving special attention to the situation of developing countries, and that it include in its work programme for 1978 an item on the role of the United Nations system in international energy co-operation. He also recalled that one delegation, on behalf of the group he represented, wished to reserve its position until after the Ministerial Meeting of the Conference on International Economic Co-operation.

29. At its 115th meeting the Committee adopted, as orally amended, a draft resolution (E/C.7/L.60/Rev.1) submitted by the delegations of the German Democratic Republic, Poland, the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. (For the text, see chap. I.A above, draft resolution IV.)

30. At the same meeting another draft resolution (E/C.7/L.71) was introduced by the delegation of Kenya and orally revised by the sponsor at the 116th meeting (E/C.7/L.71/Rev.1). There was also a proposed amendment (E/C.7/L.73) submitted by the delegation of Venezuela on one of the paragraphs of the draft resolution proposed by Kenya. In view of the fact that a number of delegations were not in a position to express themselves on the proposed amendment, it was not pressed to decision. Some delegations suggested that the proposed report of the Secretary-General should be submitted at the sixth session of the Committee rather than at the sixty-fourth session of the Council. Several delegations stated that they were not at that stage in a position to comment on the substance of the draft resolution and had reservations on taking action on the draft resolution, as reflected in the summary record of the 117th meeting, particularly with regard to the timing of the action and with reference to discussion of relevant energy questions in other forums. On that understanding, and noting that final action would be taken by the Economic and Social Council, the Committee adopted the draft resolution. (For the text, see chap. I.A above, draft resolution V.)

31. At its 115th meeting, the Committee also adopted a draft resolution (E/C.7/L.69) submitted by the delegations of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. (For the text, see chapter I.B above, resolution 3 (V).)

32. The Committee considered agenda item 5 (b) at its 108th, 109th and 110th meetings. It had before it two reports of the Secretary-General: one dealing with salient issues in the field of minerals (E/C.7/68), the other with copper (E/C.7/65).

33. The item was introduced by the Director of the Centre for Natural Resources, Energy and Transport, who drew attention to the major findings and recommendations in the reports. He indicated that although the world minerals market had improved noticeably in 1976, the improvement was not sufficient to restore to the market the strength it had lost in 1975. He drew attention to the part of document E/C.7/68 which concluded that concern over continued supplies of raw materials, combined with renewed aspirations for self-sufficiency, on the one hand, and disappointment over insufficient and fluctuating revenues from mineral exports, on the other, were at the core of most issues. He emphasized particularly the apparent decline in exploration expenditures, at least in constant money terms, and noted that if that trend continued for an extended period, problems of supply could emerge in the long run. He further observed that increasing consumption of raw materials would be feasible only if technological progress remained strong.

34. The Director drew attention especially to the problem of financing mineral development and of channelling investment to the developing countries. Quoting from document E/C.7/68, he observed that the challenge was one of combining finance, know-how and physical mineral endowment in a manner acceptable to all parties. In summarizing the Secretary-General's recommendations, the Director noted that an important one, contained in paragraph 114 of that document, concerned the need to assess the actual and potential contribution of the minerals sector to the economy of individual countries and the desirability of including studies of the matter in the future work programme. He also noted the recommendation contained in paragraph 116 of that document, concerning the need for an advisory service to assist the developing countries in obtaining a better understanding of the various and complex elements that enter into mineral agreements. He stressed

that the international community had a common interest in assuring a steady flow of supply of mineral resources through an assured and continued flow of investment. He added that the problems of financing the necessary investment were complex, did not have a ready-made solution, and demanded the imagination of all concerned. He referred in that connexion, to preliminary ideas of the concept of an international minerals investment trust, as reflected in paragraph 101 and annex II to the report.

35. With regard to the report on copper (E/C.7/65), which had been specifically requested by the Economic and Social Council in its resolution 1954 A (LIX), the Director noted that the instability of prices had been a particularly adverse feature of the copper market for a long time and stated that copies of the Secretary-General's report had been made available to the secretariat of UNCTAD. He indicated that the report before the Committee constituted a summary of a much larger investigation, which would be published in full subsequently. He also drew attention to the caveats that must attach to long-term projections such as those included in the report.

36. The Committee's discussion focused largely on the analysis of the current situation and salient issues contained in document E/C.7/68. Several delegations indicated that they agreed with the assessment in the report and particularly with the conclusion that assuring an uninterrupted flow of investment was one of the major challenges. They affirmed that the problem of capacity expansion was closely linked to the problem of finance. Asserting the importance of that problem, some delegations stated that the subject had not been covered sufficiently in the report.

37. Several delegations expressed the view that the political and economic environment of potential producers and the respect of contractual agreements were important factors affecting the flow and distribution of investment. They pointed out the important role that the private sector had to continue to play in providing finance and know-how and the risks associated with mining and exploration in particular. One delegation observed that the trend towards producers' associations and the increased regulation of mining activities had discouraged foreign investment. Another delegation expressed the view that government take-over or regulation of mining enterprises had interfered with the traditional pattern whereby profits from successful operations moved across boundaries and that that was a major reason for the decline in and narrow geographic distribution of exploration.

38. Several delegations touched on the growing demand for and long-term availability of mineral resources. One delegation stated that the question of scarcity had been treated too lightly in document E/C.7/68 and stressed the importance of working towards the rational and non-wasteful utilization of exhaustible resources. Another delegation expressed the view that while the availability of mineral resources per se did not pose a problem in the foreseeable future, moving resources to the reserves category required vast expenditures. The same delegation underlined the very important role that technology at all levels could play in that area. Some delegations emphasized the importance of the United Nations Revolving Fund for Natural Resources Exploration and of providing training in all aspects of resource management to the developing countries.

39. The review of recent developments concerning the exploitation of ocean resources was found useful. Some delegations expressed the view that some of the estimates - for example, of capital requirements and the number of potential mining sites - and assessment were optimistic.

40. The Committee's discussions on the recommendations contained in document E/C.7/68 indicated a general agreement against the establishment of new institutions and in favour of using existing organizations and mechanisms. The Committee took that view especially with regard to the creation of new organizations or mechanisms to deal with the problem of mineral finance, including an International Minerals Investment Trust. While some delegations underlined the important role of the World Bank in mineral finance as well as in any re-examination of the problems and needs in that area, other delegations expressed the view that bilateral and multigovernmental aid and co-operation constituted a more desirable means to the same end.

41. Concurring in the importance of recycling and substitution, the Committee also agreed to include those items on the agenda for its sixth session and to re-examine the problems in greater detail than on the basis of an appropriate report or reports of the Secretary-General.

42. The Committee affirmed the need for a better evaluation and closer supervision of mineral projects with a view to maximizing their total net economic, environmental and social benefit to the host country and expressed satisfaction with the ongoing and planned co-operation between the Centre for Natural Resources, Energy and Transport and the United Nations Environment Programme for that purpose. Several delegations supported the undertaking of studies in that area.

43. Several delegations were of the view that the need for special services for advising developing countries on mining agreements or for monitoring current and planned investment in the mining sector was not evident. Some delegations drew attention to existing organizations or mechanisms for that purpose, such as the Centre on Transnational Corporations, the International Lead and Zinc Study Group, and the Association of Geoscientists for International Development, and they urged the Centre for Natural Resources, Energy and Transport to co-operate with them.

44. The Committee was of the view that the Secretary-General's report on copper was useful and that there was merit in carrying out other studies of that nature. One delegation stated that future studies should not cover any of the minerals included in the UNCTAD Integrated Programme for Commodities. Another delegation indicated that nickel may form the subject of the next study in that area.

45. Several delegations underscored the importance they attached to the intergovernmental discussions on copper taking place under the auspices of UNCTAD and expressed the hope that they would make progress.

46. Various delegations commented on specific aspects of document E/C.7/65. Some delegations expressed the view that a projected growth rate of 4.3 per cent annually for world copper consumption was much too high. Some delegations reported on recent developments in the mineral sectors of their countries.

Action by the Committee

47. The Committee concluded that the documents were valuable, though there had not been enough time for the authorities to study them; that some proposals met with interest but that it was not possible to take a final decision on some of them at the current session. The Committee expressed interest in further analytical reports on other minerals - nickel being one - not included in the

UNCTAD Integrated Programme for Commodities. Concerning advisory services on mining agreements, it indicated that the Centre for Natural Resources, Energy and Transport should be in close contact with the Centre on Transnational Corporations. General support was expressed for taking up at the next session, on the basis of appropriate reports, the questions of recycling and substitution, and for work by the Centre for Natural Resources, Energy and Transport on the economic, social and environmental aspects of mineral development. The Committee noted that the report on copper was a summary of a larger study and expressed the hope that comments made in the discussion would be reflected in the final study.

48. At its 111th meeting, the Committee began consideration of a draft resolution (E/C.7/L.62) submitted by the delegation of Canada. It was adopted, as orally amended, at the 114th meeting. (For the text, see chap. I.A above, draft resolution III.) At the latter meeting the Committee also considered and adopted a draft resolution (E/C.7/L.67) submitted by the delegations of the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. (For the text, see chap. I.B above, resolution 2 (V).)

49. Under agenda item 5 (c), which was dealt with at its 108th and 109th meetings, the Committee had before it document E/C.7/72 on information and projections of natural resources. The item was introduced by the Director of the Centre for Natural Resources, Energy and Transport who recalled the long-standing interest of the Committee in that subject, beginning with its action which led to Economic and Social Council resolution 1761 B (LIV) of 18 May 1973 and culminated in Council resolutions 1954 A, B, C and E (LIX) of 25 July 1975 on strengthening information services in the natural resources field. He further indicated that, pursuant to Council resolution 1954 E (LIX), the Secretary-General had submitted a report at the sixty-first session of the Council (E/5807 and Corr.1), including the financial implications of achieving the desired strengthening of United Nations services in that field. He informed the Committee that although in its resolution 2014 (LXI) of 4 August 1976 the Council had taken note of the Secretary-General's proposals and had recommended that the General Assembly give due consideration to the provision of the financial resources necessary for implementing the proposals, the General Assembly had not acted on the matter.

50. The Director reported that despite its repeated failure to obtain additional resources for strengthening its information activities, the Centre for Natural Resources, Energy and Transport had intensified its ongoing programmes, taken a number of new initiatives and was planning new activities in that field. He cited the two new serial publications - the Natural Resources Forum and the Natural Resources and Energy Newsletter - started in the preceding year; some of the new periodic reports planned; the Centre's programme of symposia on coal and State petroleum enterprises; and the ongoing work on definitions and terminology in the natural resources field. He stressed that the limitation of the resources at the Centre's disposal had constrained especially its work on projections in pursuance of resolutions 1761 B (LIV) and 1954 E (LIX).

51. The Committee expressed satisfaction with the Secretary-General's report and with the progress and plans described in it. It commended the new initiatives taken and found the new serial publications useful, although one delegation expressed reservations as to the effectiveness of the quarterly publication devoted to such a vast domain as that of natural resources, a domain in which there already existed a large number of publications. Reaffirming the importance of the function of the United Nations system in the collection of the latest data related to natural

resources on a global basis, their analysis, evaluation and dissemination, the Committee endorsed the continuation and, if possible, expansion of the activities of the Centre for Natural Resources, Energy and Transport in that field, using to the maximum extent the information sources and mechanisms available in various countries, and ensuring as far as possible that its publications were reaching those for whom they were intended.

52. The delegation of the USSR suggested that the publications available in Russian in the field of energy, mineral and water resources be translated and published in English, French and Spanish as well, using for that purpose the USSR rouble contribution into the United Nations regular programme of technical assistance.

53. Some delegations emphasized the importance of projections as a tool for policy making and expressed regret that not enough work had been done in that area and that that important subject had been merged with information in one document. In reply, the Director of the Centre for Natural Resources, Energy and Transport stated that the merging of the two subjects reflected indeed the limited attention that could be given to projections because of financial constraints. He drew attention, however, to the evaluation of future prospects contained in the documents on copper and coal and indicated that the Centre planned to initiate the construction of an integrated metals model.

54. A number of delegations stressed the importance of proper interpretation and aggregation of data on mineral reserves and resources through improved understanding and harmonization of definitions and terminology. They expressed satisfaction with the work being carried out in that area by the Centre for Natural Resources, Energy and Transport pursuant to Council resolution 1954 B (LIX) and urged its continuation.

55. One delegation stated that it would welcome the preparation of periodic reports on the latest developments in exploration techniques, including the important new tool of remote sensing. It indicated that such reports should take into account the programmes of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development and other intergovernmental as well as national agencies in that area and highlight the sources and range of assistance available to the developing countries. That interest was reiterated by other delegations who inquired into the plans of the United Nations Secretariat in that field. The Director of the Centre for Natural Resources, Energy and Transport drew attention to the recommendation of the Scientific and Technical Sub-Committee of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space 8/ for the establishment of a remote-sensing service facility in the Centre. He outlined the main functions of the planned facility and noted that it was expected to play a modest but useful role and that it would be accommodated within existing budgetary resources.

56. One delegation expressed the view that providing assistance in training was as important as the provision of information on technological and economic developments in natural resources. Some delegations expressed the need of the developing countries for information on studies of interest to them carried out in various parts of the world. One delegation stressed the reciprocal responsibility of the developing countries to provide information on their own mineral sectors.

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57. In reply to a question, the Director of the Centre for Natural Resources, Energy and Transport indicated that the Centre's programme in the field of information was specifically designed to avoid the preparation of voluminous, excessively technical reports and to transmit instead digested information of a kind and in a manner suitable to policy-makers.

Action by the Committee

58. The Committee endorsed the programme of the Centre for Natural Resources, Energy and Transport in the field of information and noted the assurance that the merging of "information" and "projections" at the current session did not signal decreasing projection activities. It stressed that the programme should take fully into account the work carried out elsewhere. It encouraged the preparation of other documents such as those on copper and coal and urged the strengthening of the work on projections. It welcomed the initiative to establish a remote-sensing service facility in the Centre for Natural Resources, Transport and Energy and it called for the preparation of a report on the work of the Centre in that field for the sixth session of the Committee.

IV. THE UNITED NATIONS REVOLVING FUND FOR NATURAL RESOURCES EXPLORATION

59. The Committee considered agenda item 6 at its 113th to 114th meetings. It had before it a report of the Administrator of UNDP, 9/ prepared in consultation with the Secretary-General, pursuant to Economic and Social Council resolution 1762 (LIV) calling for an annual report to the Council on the progress and operation of the Revolving Fund, together with the comments of its Committee on Natural Resources and of the Governing Council of UNDP, which is to act as the governing body of the Fund during the initial stage. The report covered activities of the Revolving Fund during 1976 and would be before the Governing Council of UNDP at its twenty-fourth session, to be held at Geneva in June 1977. The report provided a brief account of the progress and operation of the Fund in 1976, including the status of approved projects, pre-projects activities such as detailed evaluation missions to developing countries.

60. The item was introduced by the Director of the United Nations Revolving Fund for Natural Resources Exploration, who summarized the Fund's activities during 1976, the first full year of operation, progress in initiating project operations and cited some limitations which had hitherto inhibited the growth of the activities of the Fund. He pointed out that there were other ways of intensifying and expanding the operations of the Fund, to include feasibility studies, for example, as specifically called for by the Economic and Social Council in its resolution 1965 (LIX), or to expand Fund activities to include exploration for oil and gas. He felt, however, that the Fund would face two major difficulties in accommodating such expansion immediately, particularly owing to the basic repayment formula and even more important relating to the financial resources of the Fund. He observed that feasibility studies or undertaking exploration for oil and gas required substantial financial resources, of, for example, up to \$10 million per project, well beyond the current financial resources of the Fund, unless there were larger contributions to the Fund. He also drew the attention of the Committee to the requirement to report annually on the Fund whilst the Committee met only every other year.

61. A number of delegations expressed satisfaction with the progress in initiating project operations and the evaluation missions to developing countries. While the Committee appreciated the difficulty in launching the programme, some delegations felt that although some projects had been approved, few had begun and one delegation expressed the view that such a slow pace might not induce new contributions to the Fund.

62. The Committee stressed the role of the Fund as a mechanism that could stimulate development in developing countries, providing a potentially effective framework for the United Nations to play a more substantial role in developing countries. Some delegations emphasized the need to accelerate efforts to find natural resources and stressed that success of the Fund would depend on the participation of the developing countries, as well as the selection of well-conceived projects, and on

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the willingness of private industry and governmental organizations to take over the feasibility and developmental phases of projects as soon as the positive results of exploration were achieved. One delegation stressed the need also to utilize the expertise available in the developing countries.

63. Referring to the financial resources of the Fund, one delegation with considerable natural resources industries and currently a contributor to the Fund, pointed out that the current cost of mineral exploration leading to the development of a new mine in that country was estimated at \$30 million, and that a lead time of 6 to 10 years was typical.

64. Several delegations felt that reports of the Fund should contain more technical information related to the operations of the Fund.

65. Some delegations stressed the importance of publicizing results of successful exploration projects in order to attract investment and encourage the rapid follow-up of such projects.

66. Several delegations felt that at the next session of the Committee the experience gained in the initial years of the Fund's operation should be reviewed and recommendations made to the Economic and Social Council in order to determine the future course of action, including a review of the basic principles of the Fund.

67. Appreciation was expressed for the Fund's co-operative institutional arrangements utilizing technical and administrative services (Joint Operations Group) of the Revolving Fund, to ensure that resources were equitably allocated and projects selected on a sound technical and economic basis.

68. Several delegations expressed their support for the Fund, noting their contributions to it; one delegation appealed to Governments to make contributions to the Fund.

Action by the Committee

69. The Committee took note of the report of the Administrator of UNDP. It requested a fuller, analytical report for the sixth session, including in particular a financial and technical annex for each project financed by the Fund, with an assessment of the Fund's operations as of that time, to facilitate a review of experience and of the basic principles of the Fund as called for in paragraph 1 (p) of Economic and Social Council resolution 1762 (LIV). (For the text of the decision, see chap. I.B above, decision 2 (V).)

V. PERMANENT SOVEREIGNTY OVER NATURAL RESOURCES

70. The Committee considered agenda item 7 at its 110th and 111th meetings. It had before it a report of the Secretary-General (E/C.7/66), prepared pursuant to Economic and Social Council resolution 1956 (LIX).

71. The item was introduced by the Assistant Director of the Centre for Development Planning, Projections and Policies, in charge of the Financial Resources Development Branch. The Assistant Director said that the report presented an overview of developments relating to the exercise of permanent sovereignty over natural resources during the preceding 10 years and more particularly since the beginning of the 1970s. He observed that new types of arrangement between host countries and foreign investors had been devised in response to the developing countries' desire to acquire full or partial ownership of their natural resources. He pointed out that the report took up for the first time the examination of a complex but very important subject, namely the fiscal régime applicable to extractive industries in developing countries. He informed the Committee that the Secretariat intended to study that subject in much greater depth with a view to working out guidelines for tax formulas reflecting the legitimate desire of States to derive the greatest possible revenue from the exploitation of their mineral resources, their desire to see those resources exploited optimally in the context of prevailing circumstances and their desire to promote investment in the mining and industrial field.

72. In the course of the ensuing discussion, most of the representatives who spoke commended the report, which, they believed, constituted a very valuable and constructive document. They considered as informative and illuminating the review of action taken by developing countries to increase their involvement in natural resources ventures and the analysis of the contemporary types of arrangement for foreign investment in those ventures in conformity with national development priorities. Certain representatives pointed out that there were some aspects of the exercise of permanent sovereignty, particularly the legal and social aspects, that could have been further elaborated. Concerning the marketing of natural resources products, the view was expressed that while the motivation of or rationale for the establishment of producers' associations could be easily understood, in the longer term, however, it would be in the mutual interest of developing and developed countries to encourage consultations or negotiations within the framework of joint producers-consumers forums.

73. Several representatives recalled that the principle of permanent sovereignty over natural resources was one of the pillars of the new international economic order. The view was expressed that that principle should become the principal basis of relations among countries. Some representatives felt that what was essentially at issue was not the question of the exercise of permanent sovereignty over natural resources but rather the question of providing compensation where Governments chose to exercise their right to nationalize or expropriate. Those representatives observed that Governments taking over foreign investment had a duty to pay prompt and adequate compensation. It was also pointed out that countries wishing to attract foreign investment should formulate a comprehensive policy encompassing such aspects as fields of investment, industrial processing, trade policy, tax policy, reinvestment of profit, transfer of dividends, repatriation of

capital and compensation payments in case of nationalization or expropriation. In that connexion, emphasis was put on the need for investment protection agreements. It was noted that more and more industries in developing countries were being financed with funds originating from other developing countries.

74. Some representatives expressed the wish to see the Committee address itself to the question of permanent sovereignty over natural resources in the territories which were under alien occupation or where the indigenous populations were being subject to apartheid or racial discrimination and they raised the question of the rights of restitution and compensation in those cases. In the view of those representatives, the Committee should consider the exercise of permanent sovereignty over natural resources in a broad context and thus take whatever decisions it might deem appropriate. On the other hand, some representatives, while expressing their understanding of the issue, pointed out that it was already dealt with in the political forums and emphasized that it was too complex to be dealt with in a technical body. The view was expressed that it was unlikely that the Committee would be able to make any contribution to the solution of problems related to that issue in the Middle East and southern Africa. Following a reference to the situation of the Panama Canal, it was recalled that Panama and the United States were currently engaged in negotiations with a view to working out a solution acceptable to both countries. Some delegations expressed the view that the Committee should not restrict its activities to specific technical problems because there was a close link between the political and technical aspects of the problems involved.

75. Most delegations were of the view that, owing to its extreme importance, the item of permanent sovereignty over natural resources should remain as a standing item on the agenda of the Committee and that the Secretariat should submit to the Committee periodic reports providing information as detailed as possible on pertinent aspects of and relevant developments concerning the exercise by developing countries of permanent sovereignty over their natural resources.

Action by the Committee

76. At its 117th meeting, the Committee considered the revised draft resolution (E/C.7/L.68/Rev.1) submitted by the representative of Pakistan, also on behalf of Bangladesh, India, Kenya, Panama, the Sudan and Yugoslavia. The representative of Iraq proposed oral amendments to the revised draft. The representative of Greece requested some clarifications on the amendments proposed, and the representative of Iraq provided explanations. A request was made to put the draft resolution as orally amended to a roll-call vote. Before the vote, the Secretary of the Committee informed the members that if the draft resolution were adopted, it might entail financial implications which, if any, would be submitted to the Economic and Social Council. The draft resolution was adopted by a roll-call vote of 28 in favour, 1 against, with 11 abstentions. The voting was as follows:

In favour: Algeria, Argentina, Bangladesh, Brazil, Colombia, Egypt, German Democratic Republic, Greece, India, Indonesia, Iraq, Japan, Kenya, Kuwait, Malaysia, Mexico, Nigeria, Pakistan, Panama, Philippines, Poland, Romania, Sudan, Turkey, the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, Venezuela and Yugoslavia.

Against: United States of America.

Abstentions: Australia, Canada, France, Germany, Federal Republic of, Iceland, Italy, Netherlands, Norway, Paraguay, Sweden and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

(For the text of the draft resolution, see chap. I.A above, draft resolution VI.)
Following the roll-call vote, representatives of the following countries made statements explaining their votes: United States of America, United Kingdom (on behalf of the EEC countries), Japan, Canada, Norway, Sweden, Australia, Turkey, Panama and Greece. A statement was also made by the observer for Israel. The representative of Egypt made a statement in exercise of the right of reply.

VI. CO-ORDINATION OF PROGRAMMES WITHIN THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM
IN THE FIELD OF NATURAL RESOURCES

77. The Committee considered agenda item 8 at its 105th, 106th, 107th and 110th meetings.

78. In its resolution 1957 B (LIX), the Economic and Social Council requested the Secretary-General, in co-operation with the organizations and programmes concerned, to prepare reports to be submitted to the Committee on Natural Resources at each of its regular sessions which would constitute an expanded and joint plan of action for the development of natural resources. The reports were to reflect as fully as possible the ongoing and planned programme activities in natural resources, including information on their financial implications, with particular emphasis on activities related to the most urgent needs of the developing countries. The reports were also to identify possible gaps and overlappings of activities and to provide the Committee with the necessary analytical capability to carry out its functions of co-ordination and priority-setting.

79. The report prepared in response to the foregoing request was contained in three separate documents dealing with water, 10/ minerals (E/C.7/74/Add.1) and energy (E/C.7/74/Add.2), respectively. 11/ The first of those documents, entitled "Present and future activities of the United Nations system in water resources development", had been submitted to the United Nations Water Conference in Mar del Plata. The Conference recommended, in its resolution VIII 12/ "that the proposals for interagency co-ordination presented to the Conference in the report of the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination and the Environment Co-ordination Board be examined by the Committee on Natural Resources at its fifth session with a view to submitting its recommendations to the Economic and Social Council at its sixty-third session for consideration and implementation".

80. The representative of the Office for Inter-Agency Affairs and Co-ordination explained that that report had been prepared by the 18 organizations and bodies carrying out water-related activities of the United Nations system, with the assistance of two highly qualified consultants. While the organizations had reached the conclusion that no new organizational machinery seemed to be required, they had suggested that the machinery for co-ordination at the inter-secretariat level should be strengthened by the creation of an Inter-Agency Water Resources Board with broader terms of reference than the existing Sub-Committee on Water Resources Development, which would be thus replaced, and a small staff to help it to work effectively. It was also envisaged that ad hoc task forces might be organized in special sectors where not all of the organizations were involved. The administrative and financial details of that proposal had not been worked out pending the general reaction of the Committee to the idea as a whole. It was foreseen that the Board would work closely with the Committee on Natural Resources,

10/ E/CONF.70/CBP/4 and Add.1 and 2.

11/ Information regarding the World Bank's activities in minerals and energy is contained in document E/C.7/74/Add.3.

12/ See E/CONF.70/29.

particularly with regard to the implementation of the Plan of Action adopted at Mar del Plata.

81. The representative of the Office for Inter-Agency Affairs and Co-ordination also called attention to the second proposal in the report which suggested that the capabilities of the regional commissions should be strengthened in the area of water resources; not only should more resources be allocated to the units responsible for water-related activities in the commissions, but, in addition, their role as focal points for interagency co-operation at the regional level should be further developed. The Committee's action with respect to the strengthening of the regional commissions is described in chapter II above.

82. Many delegations expressed satisfaction with the report on the current and future water activities of the system. It was noted that the report contained a number of innovative features which responded to the Council's concerns: a number of subsections devoted to future programme directions, identification of areas of gaps and overlapping activities; efforts by organizations to reinforce one another's programmes; evaluation of the impact of the system's water-related activities; and the main constraints faced by organizations. Some speakers referred to suggestions aimed at improving the distribution of technical publications contained in paragraph 210 of the report. The suggestions received support, subject to clarification of the costs that would be involved and how they would be borne. Doubts were expressed, however, about the suggestion for closer relations between international officials and national officials working in each of the water-related sectors.

83. While most delegations confirmed their opposition to the creation of new United Nations institutional machinery, there was support for the idea of establishing a Water Resources Board, and assurances that the Board would not be an autonomous body but would report to and work under the general supervision of the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination were welcomed. It was noted that the Board would also work under the general guidance of the Committee on Natural Resources. On the other hand, many speakers expressed doubts on whether the creation of such a board was really necessary.

84. The representative of Argentina stated that his Government would be prepared to provide host facilities for an ECLA Water Committee and Water Centre in Buenos Aires. He added that since interagency co-operation would be best carried out within regional frameworks, his delegation considered that the proposal for an Inter-Agency Water Resources Board seemed superfluous. Other delegations supported the proposal. One delegation added that regardless of whatever co-ordination committees the regional commissions might establish, they should take into account other regional forums and pointed out in particular the case of ECLA.

85. A number of delegations supported the idea that a small staff should be available to serve the Board. It was pointed out, however, that before that idea could be discussed in detail there would need to be a clearer indication of its administrative and financial implications, and that a further report setting forth those implications in as much detail as possible should be made available to the Economic and Social Council. Many delegations expressed doubts about the idea of a separate staff unit. One delegation suggested that that secretariat function might be performed by the Water Resources Branch of the Centre for Natural Resources, Energy and Transport, with the assistance of the regional commissions.

86. Many delegations pointed out that the entire proposal would need to be reviewed in the light of the recommendations of the Ad Hoc Committee on the Restructuring of the Economic and Social Sectors of the United Nations System.

87. While a number of speakers considered that the information contained in the reports on the activities of the system in minerals and energy provided useful background information for the discussion of those subjects, there was widespread feeling that those reports did not fully conform to the format called for in Economic and Social Council resolution 1957 B (LIX). In particular, they did not contain information on any gaps and overlapping activities in those areas and in some cases the financial implications of activities were missing. A number of points of detail were mentioned by various speakers. The Committee noted that in the covering note to the Committee (see E/C.7/74, para. 4), the Secretary-General had indicated his readiness to prepare the next reports on minerals and energy along the same lines as the report for water, subject to any comments that might be made in that connexion by the Committee at its current session.

88. The Committee recalled that co-ordination was a standing item on its agenda and requested that reports be submitted at its next regular session on water, minerals and energy, taking the report on water submitted at the current session as a model.

Action by the Committee

89. The Committee agreed that co-ordination of the water-related activities of the United Nations system should be strengthened and requested the Secretary-General to submit a further report on the administrative and financial implications of the proposal to establish an Inter-Agency Water Resources Board to the Economic and Social Council at its sixty-third session in order to enable the Council to consider the proposal in its entirety. (For the text of the decision, see chap. I.B above, decision 3 (V).)

90. The Committee noted the interrelation between that item and item 4 (see chap. II above), especially with regard to paragraph 2 of the resolution adopted under item 4. (For the text see chap. I.A above, draft resolution I.)

91. The Committee also agreed that the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination and the Environment Co-ordination Board should be requested to provide, for consideration at the proposed special session of the Committee, the implications of alternative measures necessary for the administrative support of the proposed Inter-Agency Water Resources Board. (For the text of the decision, see chap. I.B above, decision 4 (V).)

92. At its 113th meeting, the Committee adopted a draft resolution (E/C.7/L.65) submitted by the delegation of the Federal Republic of Germany (for the text see chap. I.A above, draft resolution II) and another draft resolution (E/C.7/L.66) submitted by Argentina, as orally amended (for the text, see chap. I.B above, resolution 1 (V)).

VII. TECHNICAL CO-OPERATION AMONG DEVELOPING COUNTRIES IN THE
FIELD OF NATURAL RESOURCES

93. At its 107th, 108th and 110th meetings, the Committee considered agenda item 9, in connexion with which it had before it a report of the Secretary-General (E/C.7/69). The Director of the Centre for Natural Resources, Energy and Transport opened the discussion with a brief introductory statement. In his remarks, the Director drew the attention of the Committee to several initiatives in the natural resources field that had already been undertaken by the Secretariat, including the convening of the United Nations Meeting on Petroleum Co-operation among Developing Countries, held at Geneva in November 1975, an Ad Hoc Group of Experts on Technical Co-operation among Developing Countries in Water Resources, convened in co-operation with UNDP in December 1976, the report of which had been presented to the United Nations Water Conference, 13/ and an interregional Seminar on the Economics of Mineral Engineering, held in Ankara, in April 1976. The important work that was being undertaken in that area through operational projects carried out by the Centre for Natural Resources, Energy and Transport in co-operation with UNDP and Governments concerned was also highlighted. Activities of the Centre to further promote technical co-operation among developing countries in the energy, minerals and water fields planned for the 1978-1979 biennium were elaborated.

94. Most delegations who spoke cited the importance of technical co-operation among developing countries and suggested that the role of the United Nations in promoting such co-operation should be strengthened, particularly that of the respective regional commissions. While recognizing the importance of technical co-operation among developing countries, it was the view of one delegation that there was a need to define carefully the roles of regional organizations, the regional commissions and the Secretariat in the promotion of technical co-operation among developing countries in order to avoid duplication of effort.

95. A number of delegations noted the valuable contribution made by the Ad Hoc Expert Group on Technical Co-operation among Developing Countries in the water resources field and the resolutions subsequently adopted by the United Nations Water Conference concerning that subject. One delegation requested that resolution VII adopted by the Water Conference should be implemented by the convening of meetings of international river basin commissions which, in its view, would make a very useful contribution to furthering co-operation among developing countries in the use and development of international waterways and in the exchange of valuable experience.

96. Several delegations noted that one of the basic obstacles to technical co-operation among developing countries was a lack of sufficient information on existing research and training institutions in the developing countries and, accordingly, that appeared to be an area warranting greater attention. One delegation of a developing country indicated that it was the policy of its

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Government to open its research and training institutions to personnel from other developing countries to the greatest extent possible, and hoped that other developing countries possessing such facilities might do the same.

97. The representative of ESCAP cited several examples of valuable co-operation efforts undertaken in the region that had been initially launched with the assistance of UNDP financing and counterpart contributions which had proved to be very useful. He also suggested that technical co-operation among developing countries should be viewed as a means to an end and not as an end in itself, the end being the economic and social development of the developing countries. It was noted that a register of training facilities in the ESCAP region was being maintained to enhance the awareness of Governments of the region of existing facilities and to facilitate their making arrangements, as appropriate, for their utilization.

98. While recognizing the importance of promoting intensified co-operation among developing countries, one delegation indicated that technical co-operation among developing countries was not the only road available to those countries to achieve technological development. Thus, in its view, measures aimed at improving technical co-operation among developing countries should be implemented without prejudice to ongoing or future technical co-operation - bilateral or multilateral - for the transfer of technology from developed to developing countries.

99. As to the role of the United Nations in the promotion of technical co-operation among developing countries in the energy, minerals and water fields, there was a general consensus that the United Nations should assist in the establishment of direct links among developing countries and prepare and disseminate information on existing capabilities in the developing countries in the natural resources field. One delegation expressed a desire to see more concrete programmes formulated for the promotion of technical co-operation among developing countries.

100. Most delegations cited the importance of the United Nations Conference on Technical Co-operation among Developing Countries to be convened under the auspices of UNDP in Buenos Aires in March 1978 and noted the pivotal role of UNDP in that area.

Action by the Committee

101. The Committee took note of the report of the Secretary-General and expressed support for the work already undertaken by the Secretariat and the planned activities for the 1978-1979 biennium. It was generally agreed that technical co-operation among developing countries in the natural resources field should remain a concern of the Committee on Natural Resources, which should monitor the progress achieved in that activity and provide such inputs for other forums dealing with the broader question of technical co-operation among developing countries in general, as may be appropriate, in the natural resources sector, for which the Committee was responsible.

VIII. CONSIDERATION OF THE DRAFT PROVISIONAL AGENDA
FOR THE SIXTH SESSION OF THE COMMITTEE

102. At its 116th meeting, the Committee considered the draft provisional agenda for its sixth session (E/C.7/L.72). In introducing it, the Director of the Centre for Natural Resources, Energy and Transport noted that the draft before the Committee, prepared by the secretariat, sought to reflect the decisions taken by the Committee at its current session.

103. One delegation drew the Committee's attention to Economic and Social Council resolution 1955 (LIX) concerning international river basin development and recalled that in the resolution the Secretary-General was requested to utilize the experience, knowledge and capacity of the Centre for Natural Resources, Energy and Transport for assisting the International Law Commission in its study of legal aspects of the non-navigational uses of international water courses and for co-operating with UNEP in its implementation of General Assembly resolution 3129 (XXVIII). That delegation indicated that the work of the Intergovernmental Committee on Shared Resources of UNEP had not been very satisfactory to date and emphasized that the co-operation of the Centre for Natural Resources, Energy and Transport with UNEP was particularly important for the future work of the Committee. In view of the importance attached to shared resources, the delegation requested that a subitem encompassing a progress report on the implementation of Council resolution 1955 (LIX) be incorporated under item 6 of the draft provisional agenda for the sixth session of the Committee on Natural Resources. Another delegation endorsed the proposed addition. It was agreed by the Committee to amend the draft provisional agenda accordingly and a subitem 6 (c) was added.

104. Another delegation emphasized the importance of training and the transfer of applied research for developing countries in the development of their mining industries. Accordingly, it felt that the question of training and the transfer of know-how, as well as an integrated approach to it, should be included as an item on the draft provisional agenda.

105. The Director of the Centre for Natural Resources, Energy and Transport noted that in the preparations for the current session of the Committee the subject of training had been incorporated in the respective documents submitted under each item, where appropriate. The question was raised as to whether training should continue to be treated as it had been during the current session, as a separate item for the future, or perhaps under the item concerning co-ordination of programmes in the natural resources field.

106. The delegation proposing the amendment to the draft provisional agenda suggested that training and the transfer of applied research could be taken up under the subitems of the draft provisional agenda for the Committee's sixth session but reiterated the importance of that issue for developing countries.

107. The representative of Turkey took the floor to confirm and announce his Government's invitation to host the sixth session of the Committee on Natural

Resources; he indicated that any dates in 1979, preferably in the spring, but with the exception of the first 15 days of October, would be acceptable.

Action of the Committee

108. The Committee adopted the draft provisional agenda for its sixth session as amended (see annex II below) and took note with appreciation of the offer of the Government of Turkey to host the sixth session of the Committee in 1979.

IX. ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE

109. The Committee considered the draft report (E/C.7/L.61 and Add.1-10) at its 111th, 115th, 118th and 119th meetings. During the consideration of the draft report, various delegations made oral amendments to the draft. The Committee adopted the draft report as amended.

X. ORGANIZATION OF THE SESSION

Opening and duration of the session

110. The Committee on Natural Resources held its fifth session at Geneva from 9 to 19 May 1977. It held 16 meetings (104th to 119th). The summary records are contained in documents E/C.7/SR.105-117.

111. The session was opened by the Acting Chairman, Mr. Vladimir Baum, Director of the Centre for Natural Resources, Energy and Transport.

Membership and attendance

112. By Economic and Social Council resolution 1621 A (LI), the membership of the Committee was increased to 54 as from 1 January 1972. Three seats remain to be filled.

113. The following States members of the Committee were represented: Algeria, Argentina, Australia, Bangladesh, Brazil, Canada, Colombia, Egypt, France, German Democratic Republic, Germany, Federal Republic of, Greece, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iraq, Italy, Japan, Kenya, Malaysia, Mexico, Netherlands, Nigeria, Norway, Pakistan, Panama, Paraguay, Philippines, Poland, Romania, Sudan, Swaziland, Sweden, Trinidad and Tobago, Turkey, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Venezuela, Yugoslavia and Zambia.

114. The following States Members of the United Nations participated in the session as observers: Austria, Bolivia, Bulgaria, Chile, Finland and Israel.

115. The following United Nations organizations, specialized agencies and other international organizations were represented: Economic Commission for Europe, Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, Economic Commission for Latin America, Economic Commission for Africa, Economic Commission for Western Asia, United Nations Environment Programme, United Nations Revolving Fund for Natural Resources Exploration, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, World Health Organization, World Bank, World Meteorological Organization and the International Atomic Energy Agency.

116. The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development, an intergovernmental organization, was also represented.

117. The following non-governmental organizations were also represented: the International Chamber of Commerce and the International Humanist and Ethical Union.

Election of officers

118. At its 104th, 106th, 107th and 108th meetings the Committee elected the following officers by acclamation: Chairman, Mr. Per Jödahl (Sweden); Vice-Chairmen: Mr. Gerhard Zindler (German Democratic Republic), Mr. Hanumantha Rao (India), Mr. Jesús Fornerino (Venezuela); Rapporteur, Mr. Samir Mokhtar (Egypt).

Agenda and documentation

119. The text of the agenda for the session (E/C.7/63) was adopted by the Committee at its 104th meeting and is reproduced as annex I of the present report.

120. The documents before the Committee at its fifth session are listed in annex III.

Method of work

121. At its 109th meeting the Committee reiterated its wish to follow the practice it adopted at previous sessions - to take decisions by consensus. In the event that consensus was not possible but a majority readily discernible, the Committee would decide the matter accordingly. The fact that there was some disagreement with the decision would be recorded in the report, together with the reasons for the disagreement. However, in one instance a resolution was adopted by roll-call vote.

Summary records

122. At its 105th meeting on 9 May 1977, the Committee decided to have summary records for each substantive item of its agenda, with the exception of item 10.

Annex I

AGENDA OF THE FIFTH SESSION

1. Opening of the session
2. Election of officers
3. Adoption of the agenda and organization of work
4. United Nations Water Conference
5. World energy and minerals situation - critical issues and prospects
 - (a) Energy: overview of the world energy situation and requirements of developing countries
 - (b) Minerals: salient issues (including marine minerals)
 - (c) Information and projections
6. United Nations Revolving Fund for Natural Resources Exploration
7. Permanent sovereignty over natural resources
8. Co-ordination of programmes within the United Nations system in the field of natural resources development
9. Technical co-operation among developing countries in the field of natural resources
10. Consideration of the draft provisional agenda of the sixth session of the Committee
11. Adoption of the report of the Committee

Annex II

PROVISIONAL AGENDA OF THE SIXTH SESSION

1. Opening of the session
2. Election of officers
3. Adoption of the agenda and organization of work
4. Mineral resources:
 - (a) trends and salient issues
 - (b) economic, social and environmental impact of mining projects
 - (c) availability and supply of non-ferrous metals: (1) chromium, and (2) nickel
 - (d) recycling and substitution
5. Energy resources:
 - (a) trends and salient issues, including energy conservation
 - (b) particular problems of developing countries
 - (c) special technical questions (including coal and natural gas)
 - (d) energy actions in the light of intervening decisions
6. Water resources:
 - (a) assessment of implementation of United Nations Water Conference recommendations (including specifics following from special session of Committee in 1978, if any)
 - (b) operational activities: some technical aspects
 - (c) implementation of Economic and Social Council resolution 1955 (LIX)
7. Information and projections:
 - (a) information activities
 - (b) remote sensing
 - (c) projections, including standardization of definitions
8. United Nations Revolving Fund for Natural Resources Exploration

9. Permanent sovereignty over natural resources
10. Co-ordination of programmes within the United Nations system in the field of natural resources development
11. Technical co-operation among developing countries in the field of natural resources
12. Consideration of the draft provisional agenda of the seventh session of the Committee
13. Adoption of the report of the Committee

Annex III

LIST OF DOCUMENTS BEFORE THE COMMITTEE AT ITS FIFTH SESSION

<u>Document number</u>	<u>Agenda item</u>	<u>Title</u>
E/C.7/63	3	Provisional agenda of fifth session of Committee
E/C.7/64	5 (a)	Status of the use of geothermal energy and future prospects for developing countries: report of the Secretary-General
E/C.7/65	5 (b)	Future demand and the development of the raw materials base for the copper industry: report of the Secretary-General
E/C.7/66	7	Permanent sovereignty over natural resources: report of the Secretary-General
E/C.7/67	5 (a)	Status and prospects of coal production and utilization in developed and developing countries: report of the Secretary-General
E/C.7/67/Add.1	5 (a)	Some technological and economic aspects of coal conversion into liquid and gaseous fuel and the use of coal in the chemical industry: report of the Secretary-General
E/C.7/68	5 (b)	Minerals - salient issues: report of the Secretary-General
E/C.7/69	9	Technical co-operation among developing countries in natural resources: report of the Secretary-General
E/C.7/70	5 (a)	Recent energy trends and future prospects: report of the Secretary-General
E/C.7/71 and Corr.1		Register of international river basins: report of the Secretary-General
E/C.7/72	5 (c)	Information and projections on natural resources: report of the Secretary-General
E/C.7/73	5 (a)	Status and prospects of oil shale production and utilization in developed and developing countries: report of the Secretary-General

<u>Document number</u>	<u>Agenda item</u>	<u>Title</u>
E/C.7/74 and Add.1-3	8	A comprehensive plan of action for and co-ordination of programmes within the United Nations system in the field of natural resources development: report of the Secretary-General
E/C.7/75	5 (a)	Strengthening international co-operation in energy - possible approaches: report of the Secretary-General
E/C.7(V)/CRP.1	4	Resolution VIII of the United Nations Water Conference
E/C.7(V)/CRP.2	11	Table of contents of the report of the Committee on its fifth session
E/C.7/INF.1 and Add.1		List of participants at the fifth session
E/C.7/L.58	4	Extract of the report of the United Nations Water Conference
E/C.7/L.59	3	Note by the Secretariat
E/C.7/L.60 and Rev.1	5 (a)	German Democratic Republic, Poland, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic and Union of Soviet Socialist Republics: draft resolution
E/C.7/L.61 and Add.1-10	11	Draft report of the Committee
E/C.7/L.62	5 (b)	Canada: draft resolution
E/C.7/L.63	4	United States of America: draft resolution
E/C.7/L.64	4	Federal Republic of Germany: draft decision
E/C.7/L.65	8	Federal Republic of Germany: draft resolution
E/C.7/L.66 and Add.1	8	Argentina: draft resolution
E/C.7/L.67	5 (b)	Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic and Union of Soviet Socialist Republics: draft resolution
E/C.7/L.68/Rev.1	7	Bangladesh, India, Kenya, Pakistan, Panama, Sudan and Yugoslavia: draft resolution
E/C.7/L.69	5 (a)	Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic and Union of Soviet Socialist Republics: draft resolution
E/C.7/L.70	11	Canada: amendment to document E/C.7/L.61/Add.1
E/C.7/L.71 and Rev.1	5 (a)	Kenya: draft resolution

<u>Document number</u>	<u>Agenda item</u>	<u>Title</u>
E/C.7/L.72	10	Draft provisional agenda of the sixth session of the Committee
E/C.7/L.73	5 (a)	Venezuela: amendment to document E/C.7/L.71
E/CONF.70/CBP/4 and Add.1 and 2	8	Report of the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination and the Environment Co-ordination Board on present and future activities of the United Nations system in water resources development

Annex IV

THE CONVENING OF A SPECIAL SESSION OF THE
COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES

Programme budget implications of draft resolution I entitled
"Follow-up to the Plan of Action of Mar del Plata on
integrated water resources development and management
adopted by the United Nations Water Conference"

Statement by the Secretary-General submitted in accordance
with rule 31 of the rules of procedure of the Economic and
Social Council

1. The draft resolution submitted to the Committee (E/C.7/L.63), proposed, among other things, that the Committee seek authorization from the Economic and Social Council at its sixty-third session in July to convene a special session of the Committee to consider in detail the recommendations of the United Nations Water Conference at the earliest possible date.

2. The estimates for the proposed special session of the Committee on Natural Resources are based on the following factors:

(a) Travel costs of representatives attending the special session would be borne by participating Governments;

(b) The languages of the special session would be English, French, Russian and Spanish;

(c) Summary records would be provided in English, French and Spanish;

(d) The special session would be held in New York and would last for eight working days;

(e) Attendance by a representative from each of the five regional commissions would be required;

(f) There would be two meetings a day, none held simultaneously.

3. The financial implications submitted hereunder in respect of documentation and conference servicing are presented on a full-cost basis in accordance with the procedure followed at the thirty-first session of the General Assembly, a/ and the extent to which these costs can be absorbed from within existing resources will be determined at the end of the year in the light of the revised level of conferences and meetings scheduled at Headquarters.

a/ See A/C.5/31/94.

	<u>Work days</u>	<u>Unit costs at 1977 rates</u>	<u>Estimated cost for the special session</u>
		\$	\$
<u>Documentation</u>			
Pre-session (100 pages)			
Translators	60	108.65	6 519
Revisers	30	120.95	3 628
Typists	70	45.90 <u>a/</u>	3 213
Post-session (50 pages)			
Translators	30	108.65	3 260
Revisers	15	120.95	1 814
Typists	35	45.90 <u>a/</u>	1 606
Subtotal			<u>20 040</u>
<u>Conference servicing</u>			
In-session documentation (70 pages)			
Translators	42	108.65	4 563
Revisers	21	120.95	2 540
Typists	49	45.90	2 249
Other costs			
Précis-writers	168	108.65	18 253
Revisers (summary records)	36	120.95	4 354
Interpreters	144	106.40	15 322
Other conference staff <u>b/</u>	24	31.86	765
Travel of interpreters <u>c/</u>			
Air fare		1 400	5 600
Subsistence	48	48	2 304
Subtotal			<u>55 950</u>
<u>Reproduction/distribution of documentation</u>		0.0008 <u>d/</u>	<u>37 738</u>
<u>Travel and subsistence of substantive staff</u>			
Five staff members from the regional commissions			
Air fare			7 530
Subsistence			2 880
Subtotal			<u>10 410</u>
Grand total			<u><u>124 138</u></u>

a/ Assuming half recruited locally, half non-local recruits.

b/ One conference officer, one documents clerk.

c/ Assuming eight interpreters recruited locally and four recruited non-locally; for language staff other than interpreters, it is not possible to estimate what proportion will be non-local. To obtain an average, the non-local rate has been applied but no travel has been included.

d/ Per page impression.

4. The total cost at 1977 rates of holding a special session of the Committee of Natural Resources is thus estimated at \$124,138. Assuming an inflation factor of 5 per cent per annum, the full cost of the special session at 1978 rates would be \$130,345.

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