



UNITED NATIONS
GENERAL
ASSEMBLY



Distr.
GENERAL

A/7693
15 October 1969
ENGLISH
ORIGINAL: ENGLISH/FRENCH/
RUSSIAN/SPANISH

Twenty-fourth session
Agenda item 38

UNITED NATIONS INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION

Report by the Executive Director on a special
meeting of UNIDO

1. The Industrial Development Board at its third session adopted resolution 22 (III) entitled "Special meeting of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization". In operative paragraph 1 of that resolution the Executive Director is requested "to consult Governments participating in the work of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization within ninety days of the closure of the third session of the Industrial Development Board, in order to study the possibility of convening a special meeting of all member States of the Organization, within the framework of the twenty-fifth regular session of the General Assembly of the United Nations in 1970 - the year in which the twenty-fifth anniversary of the United Nations will be celebrated - at the highest possible level of governmental representation, to consider the long-term participation of the organization in industrial development in the developing countries and, in particular, its participation in achieving the objectives of the Second United Nations Development Decade in regard to industrial development, taking into account the work of the Preparatory Committee for the Second United Nations Development Decade". In operative paragraph 2, the Executive Director is requested "to submit a report on the results of his consultations, together with the report of the Industrial Development Board on the work of its third session to the General Assembly at its twenty-fourth session".

2. A circular letter was sent by the secretariat of UNIDO on 21 May 1969 to all Governments participating in the work of UNIDO, transmitting the text of the aforesaid resolution and the summary records relating to it, and inviting them to communicate their views on the matter to the secretariat before 15 August 1969. Another circular was sent on 15 August 1969 to those Governments which had not yet answered by the deadline set out above.

3. The answers received so far from the Governments may be classified as follows: (1) Governments fully supporting the holding of a special meeting; (2) Governments prepared to support the holding of a special meeting under certain conditions; (3) Governments not in favour of the convening of a meeting but prepared to participate if it is held; (4) Governments not in favour of the convening of a meeting but proposing an alternative solution; (5) Governments not supporting the convening of a meeting; (6) Governments not wishing to offer any views in the matter; and, (7) Governments whose views will be communicated at a later stage.

(1) Governments fully supporting the holding of a special meeting

Barbados, Bolivia, Cambodia, Cameroon, Ceylon, Chile, China, Congo (Democratic Republic of), Costa Rica, Cuba, Cyprus, Ethiopia, Finland, Gabon, India, Italy, Ivory Coast, Kuwait, Madagascar, Malawi, Mexico, Pakistan, Panama, Peru, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Singapore, Spain, Sudan, Thailand, Trinidad and Tobago, United Arab Republic, Uganda and Yugoslavia.

(2) Governments prepared to support the holding of a special meeting under certain conditions

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

The United States of America would be prepared to participate in the meeting if agreement could be reached on three points at the twenty-fourth session of the General Assembly in connexion with the Assembly's consideration of the report of the third session of the Industrial Development Board. First, the discussion of any such special meeting should be concerned with the problem of the longer-term role of UNIDO in the industrial development of developing countries. Second, a definite time frame should be established for the meeting in the calendar of the Second Committee of the twenty-fifth

/...

session of the General Assembly. A time frame on the order of two or three days would be reasonable. The dates should be established at the twenty-fourth session of the General Assembly in order to permit Governments to make plans in advance. Third, each member country of UNIDO should be able to participate in the special meeting, whether or not it is a Member of the United Nations.

- (3) Governments not in favour of the convening of a meeting but prepared to participate if it is held

AUSTRALIA

The Australian Government considers that the question of UNIDO's long-term participation in industrial development in developing countries and of its sharing in achieving the objectives of the Second Development Decade in regard to industrial development, can be dealt with appropriately by the Industrial Development Board. Accordingly, it does not consider that there is a need for a special meeting of States members of UNIDO to discuss this.

However, should there be general agreement in favour of discussion by all member States of the long-term objectives of the organization, it would not object to this taking place within the framework of the twenty-fifth session of the General Assembly of the United Nations, with a definite provision made within the time-table of the Second Committee for this purpose.

FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY

The Government of the Federal Republic of Germany has taken great interest in the constantly progressing constructive activities of UNIDO and observed with satisfaction the progress that could be achieved in the short period since the establishment of the organization. Therefore, it takes a vital interest in co-operating in any considerations and discussions concerning the future role of UNIDO and its long-term programme of work, especially as far as UNIDO's contributions to the Second United Nations Development Decade are concerned.

However, certain doubts exist as to whether the difficult task the organization is facing, which it is suggested may be solved by the proposed special meeting of UNIDO, should not rather be tackled by the Industrial Development Board, as was already the case at the third session of the Board.

/...

The fact that it was not possible, at the third session of the Board, to reach a generally satisfactory solution should not dishearten members but should rather encourage them to renew their efforts to solve this task in a spirit of compromise at the next Board meeting. Dealing with the complex problems in question at such a large conference, which, by experience, works very slowly, does not offer any greater likelihood of success than a discussion at the next session of the constitutional organ of UNIDO, i.e. the Industrial Development Board. The Government of the Federal Republic of Germany would in any case prefer the latter solution.

However, should there be a convincing majority in favour of convening such a special meeting of UNIDO within the framework of the twenty-fifth regular session of the General Assembly of the United Nations in New York, the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany would put aside its concerns and take part in such a conference in the spirit of co-operation.

NETHERLANDS

The Government of the Netherlands is not in favour of holding a special meeting. This, however, does not mean that the Netherlands would not participate in this meeting if the General Assembly at its forthcoming session were to decide that this should take place. The following considerations have led to the above point of view:

It is felt that no substantial results are to be expected from a discussion on industrialization problems between some 120 governmental representatives, together with their experts.

The long-term role of UNIDO could better be analysed by a small study group of experts as suggested by the United States of America and Sweden during the third session of the Industrial Development Board than by convening a special meeting.

The indication of the objectives of the Second Development Decade with regard to industrial development, and the ways to attain these objectives, could, in the opinion of the Government of the Netherlands, better be laid in the hands of the Preparatory Committee and the Committee for Development Planning in co-operation with the UNIDO secretariat.

Finally, it is considered that the expenses of a special meeting would be fairly high.

/...

NEW ZEALAND

The Industrial Development Board at its third session devoted considerable attention to the question of UNIDO's long-term participation in industrial development in developing countries and it is the view of the New Zealand Government that the Board's regular session continues to be the most appropriate forum for competent discussion of the question. The close co-operation between UNIDO and the Preparatory Committee will continue to have an important bearing on the work of clarifying the role of UNIDO in the Decade. It is for these reasons that the New Zealand Government, mindful of the limited resources available to UNIDO, considers that the convening of a special meeting of all member countries of UNIDO at the twenty-fifth session of the General Assembly would not be an effective way of furthering discussion on UNIDO's role in industrial development in the developing countries and its participation in achieving the objectives of the Second Development Decade in regard to industrial development. Should, however, a majority of member States believe that there should be an opportunity for all the States members of UNIDO to discuss these questions, the New Zealand Government would be prepared to consider the possibility that provision be made for their discussion within the framework of the Second Committee at the General Assembly in 1970.

SWEDEN

The Swedish Government considers it important that all States members of UNIDO shall be given the opportunity to consider the question of the long-term direction of UNIDO's activities - taking into account the preparations for the Second United Nations Development Decade. It may thus be justified to devote special attention to this matter in connexion with the United Nations General Assembly. In the view of the Swedish Government, however, it seems doubtful if substantial results could be obtained at a special meeting of the kind suggested. Also it appears that the mandate of the meeting is too vaguely defined. Careful preparations would be required in order to enable such a meeting to produce constructive ideas and strengthen the role of UNIDO. As concerns particularly the participation of UNIDO in the Second Development Decade it seems difficult at this stage to take a more definite attitude to

/...

the role of the special meeting, as this role is dependent on the outcome of the discussions in the Preparatory Committee for the Second Development Decade and at the fourth meeting of the Industrial Development Board. It is also expected that a special report on the role of UNIDO in the Second Development Decade will be presented to the fourth session of the Industrial Development Board. Furthermore, it seems as if the special UNIDO meeting would take place at too late a date to enable it to influence decisively the planning for the Decade.

However, if a majority of Member States request such a discussion the Swedish Government will not object to a meeting of the proposed kind provided that cost and the time allowed for the meeting are limited and the intention not to have the meeting repeated clearly established. Certainly, it is also important that duplication of the work of other committees is avoided.

SWITZERLAND

The Swiss Government considers in principle that the contribution of UNIDO to the efforts connected with the Second Development Decade should be worked out by the Secretariat on the basis of directives from the Industrial Development Board. Moreover, according to the time-table of work adopted by the Preparatory Committee for the Second United Nations Development Decade at its second session (New York, 14 April to 1 May 1969), the Committee in question will give final form to the draft on international development strategy for the 1970s at its sixth session, in April/May 1970, and will submit it for adoption at the twenty-fifth session of the General Assembly. This would limit the significance of the special meeting envisaged.

However, if the majority of the States members of UNIDO consulted were to express the wish that, within an appropriate framework and at the same time as the General Assembly session, a special meeting should be held which would be open to all the countries participating in the activities of UNIDO, the Swiss Government would not oppose this and would be ready to take part. In such circumstances, the Swiss authorities are of the opinion that the main value of a special meeting would be that of enabling member States to determine the consequences for UNIDO's activities of the decisions taken by the General Assembly on the strategy for the Second Development Decade.

/...

(4) Governments not in favour of the convening of a meeting but proposing an alternative solution

BELGIUM

The Belgian Government is convinced that, as is indicated in the second preambular paragraph of the resolution, the process of industrialization in the developing countries is a highly complex matter and an over-all view at the world level is required.

The Government is not, however, convinced of the utility of convening a special meeting of UNIDO at the present time.

It considers rather that the policy decisions to be taken in the field of the industrial development of the younger countries are a matter within the competence of the Industrial Development Board. And it considers in this regard that industrialization policies should be concentrated on certain very clear guidelines which would form the framework for specific projects and determine the priorities to be given to them.

UNIDO's contribution to the Second Development Decade, for which plans are being made at the present time, must also be debated and given its final form in the Board.

The organization of a special meeting would, in addition, have financial implications which the Belgian Government would find it hard to accept.

If, however, it should seem necessary next year to give particular solemnity to the debates on UNIDO's industrialization policies and on the important contribution which it must make to the Second Development Decade, Belgium would be ready to agree to an interruption in the work of the Second Committee in order to permit a special meeting of the Member States of UNIDO at a high level, provided it is not at the ministerial level. The delegations participating in the work of the Second Committee together with those of the member countries of UNIDO would take part in this meeting.

At the same time, the Belgian Government considers that discussions at that juncture on the participation of UNIDO in the Second Development Decade would come too late to be really useful.

/...

CANADA

The Canadian Government, after very careful consideration of the matter, bearing in mind the scarcity of resources, indicated that it was not in a position to support the meeting for the following reasons: first, at the time of the twenty-fifth session of the General Assembly, preparatory work for the Second Development Decade will be well under way; undoubtedly the Preparatory Committee will be making recommendations regarding the participation of UNIDO, together with other United Nations bodies, in the Second Development Decade, and UNIDO itself, in accordance with the resolution adopted by the Industrial Development Board at its third session amplifying the role of UNIDO in the Second Development Decade, will be co-operating closely in the work of the Preparatory Committee.

Second, on the question of long-term participation of UNIDO in industrial development in the developing countries, the Government of Canada believes this to be a matter within the competence of the Industrial Development Board. The consideration of a long-term programme of activities is a problem which received particular attention at the third session of the Industrial Development Board and it is the hope and expectation of the Canadian Government that this process will be continued at the fourth and subsequent sessions of the Board.

Third, while making the above comments, the Canadian Government nevertheless appreciates the desire of the sponsors of resolution 22 (III) to focus attention on the issues covered in that resolution. Consequently, if a majority of member Governments are of the view that some special action should be taken on this subject, the Canadian Government is prepared, as an alternative measure, to study the possibility that an appropriate length of time of the work of the Second Committee of the twenty-fifth session of the General Assembly, be devoted to the consideration of these specific problems; such a meeting to be held at an appropriately senior level of representation.

(5) Governments not supporting the convening of a meeting

Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, France, Hungary, Japan, Norway, Turkey, United Kingdom, Ukrainian SSR and Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

/...

The views expressed by the above-mentioned Governments may be summarized as follows:

(a) The most appropriate forum to review the long-term participation of UNIDO in the industrial development of the developing countries and its part in achieving the objectives of the Second Development Decade in regard to industrial development seems to be (i) the General Assembly of the United Nations, especially its Second Committee; (ii) the Preparatory Committee of the Second Development Decade; and (iii) the Industrial Development Board.

(b) The convening of a separate conference on the matter would create additional difficulties regarding the time-table of meetings and conferences and would have financial implications on the United Nations budget.

(c) At this early stage of the existence of UNIDO, it does not seem expedient to take any definite decisions on its long-term participation in the industrialization of the developing countries. In this respect, the Industrial Development Board should continue to assure the direction and the planning of the activities of UNIDO in order to gain useful further experience. The Board should at its fourth session in April 1970 consider the above-mentioned matter and submit its conclusions to the Preparatory Committee for the Second United Nations Development Decade.

(d) The convening of a special meeting of UNIDO would be an isolated initiative since all other United Nations organizations have entrusted their governing bodies with the preparation of the Second Development Decade.

(6) Governments not wishing to offer any views in the matter

Ireland and Luxembourg.

(7) Governments whose views will be communicated at a later stage.

Argentina, Ecuador and Libya.

The Argentine Government indicated that it wished "to reserve its position on the convening of the meeting in question until the conclusions of the Pearson Committee, the report of Sir Robert Jackson and the conclusions of the Preparatory Committee for the Second United Nations Development Decade are available".