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Chairman: Mr. Richard M. AKWEI (Ghana).

GENERAL STATEMENTS (concluded)

and

AGENDA ITEM 37

United Nations Development Decade: report of the Secretary-General (continued) (A/7203, chap. III; A/7251 and Corr.1, E/4496, E/AC.54/L.25, E/AC.54/L.28, E/AC.54/L.29/Rev.1, E/AC.54/L.30, E/AC.54/L.31, TD/B/186/Rev.1)

1. Mr. KAMBA (United Republic of Tanzania) said that many previous speakers had cited discouraging statistics regarding the plight of the developing world. It had also been stated that the annual growth of per capita income in Africa was less than 1 per cent. The facts were indisputable and his delegation was gravely concerned at the widening gulf between industrialized and developing countries. The reasons why the Development Decade had failed to achieve the quantitative targets ranged from the absence of a realistic global strategy to the inefficiency of the international machinery. The underlying reason, however, had perhaps been the lack of political will on the part of the developed countries, many of which took an unrealistic view of the contemporary world. In their efforts to further their own economic expansion, they tended increasingly to view the problems of the developing countries as residual. Unless the necessary will was shown, a meaningful strategy of development could not emerge and there was a danger that conflict would engulf the human race. It was unthinkable that three quarters of mankind should continue to live indefinitely under the present oppressive and degrading social and economic conditions, the outcome of exploitation and banditry. The prosperous fourth of mankind had a moral responsibility and abiding obligation to join in a more serious and responsible dialogue on the causes hindering international co-operation.

2. The limited achievements of the second session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) were a great disappointment and the primary producing countries harboured deep resentment regarding what they considered to be the unjust operation of the world markets. Their endeavours to increase their foreign exchange earnings continued to be hampered by unstable primary commodity prices, tariffs and other constraints on exports. The falling price of sisal from 1965 to 1968 had cost his country an amount greater than the total net inflow of public and private capital during the same period.

3. His delegation shared the grave disappointment expressed by previous speakers at the failure of the developed countries to honour the commitment to transfer to the developing countries financial resources equivalent to 1 per cent of their gross national product. The volume of aid was steadily decreasing in both quantity and quality, although some industrialized countries and some financial institutions were beginning to show understanding of the problems facing the developing countries. His delegation particularly welcomed the intention of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) to double the volume of its lending in the forthcoming five years and to expand its field of operation, as well as its recognition of the needs of the less-favoured areas of the world. It also welcomed recent announcements by certain countries including Sweden, Australia and the Federal Republic of Germany, that they intended to increase their financial aid by 20 per cent.

4. Since gaining independence, the United Republic of Tanzania had tried to foster its economic development by a programme of self-reliance, reflecting its recognition of the fact that the main development drive must come from its own efforts. By the end of the first five-year economic and social development plan it would have mobilized almost double the volume of domestic resources originally considered possible, and those resources would have financed well over half of all development spending. There was increased emphasis on rural development, and the involvement of the entire population in the development process through community and self-help schemes was beginning to pay high dividends. As a result of its pragmatic approach, his country's economy was moving in the right direction and an annual economic growth rate of almost 6 per cent had been achieved in 1967. Nevertheless, if domestic efforts were not to be frustrated, a large and steady inflow of foreign capital was essential and his Government had taken measures to ensure that the overall climate for investment remained attractive to

the foreign investor. Realizing that to achieve its economic targets the United Republic of Tanzania needed the help of others, it had joined the Economic Community of Eastern Africa which was the nucleus of an expanding area of economic integration.

5. The United Republic of Tanzania had always resolutely discharged its responsibilities to the international community. The problems facing the world were so grave that the Committee must be the forum for finding solutions to the difficulties to be overcome in preparing for the second Development Decade.

6. Mr. DE SEYNES (Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs) said that the conclusion of the general debate provided him with an opportunity to clarify some points which had been raised by a number of delegations, many of them in connexion with matters covered in his opening statement at the 1180th meeting (A/C.2/L.1002).

7. A great deal of interest had been aroused during the current session by the prospect of a combined United Nations plan to increase the production and use of edible protein, probably because, in that area at least, there seemed to be no great obstacles to a major undertaking. It was perhaps not fully realized, however, that such a programme would require a co-ordinated effort by Governments, research centres and international institutions, covering such varied activities as training, research, publicity, marketing and management techniques. It was questionable whether the rules governing the machinery of the United Nations were sufficiently flexible to allow it to organize a programme of that type. One question which delegations would therefore have to consider when the item was taken up by the Committee (item 46) was whether the responsibility for such a programme should be undertaken through some new arrangements or whether the existing machinery should be made more flexible.

8. In recent years the subject of population had cropped up with increasing frequency whenever economic development was discussed. The reason was a simple one: only recently had it become possible to consider the demographic factor as one susceptible to appropriate policy action. Population growth was no longer treated as a fixed datum, a function of income as in the past. It would now be considered as a policy parameter. It was accordingly necessary for the United Nations in its development activities to consider the demographic factor as one of the determinants of the development process which could be influenced by policy action; the fact that it had now become urgent to study the historical, social and economic aspects of population growth did not mean that the spiritual and moral factors were overlooked.

9. A recurring theme in all the general statements had been the proposed global strategy for the second Development Decade and the machinery for international surveillance which he had mentioned in his opening statement. He was anxious to clear up some misunderstanding which had arisen from a somewhat misleading reference in the press release to "super-

visory machinery"—he preferred the word "surveillance". That was of some importance as it might have raised questions relating to national sovereignty or the autonomy of certain institutions. Actually, the question was whether the strategy, as part of an internationally accepted plan of action for the second Decade, was to be only an inspiration to Governments or a factor whose influence on them would grow in proportion to the success of the surveillance machinery in systematically evaluating and recording the progress achieved at each stage. The formulation and acceptance of a global strategy of development would, of course, not only influence the individual judgements and decisions of Governments but would govern all development activities of the United Nations system and enable it to include certain planning disciplines which had not been utilized to the full in the past.

10. There was no reason why the technique of indicative planning, which had proved helpful in many countries, should not be equally useful at the international level. In France, for instance, the basic effect of the national plan in recent years could well be considered to have been that of raising the level of economic thinking and the rationality of the decision-making process of the State itself and of public and private institutions and enterprises. Accordingly, although the national plan did include sectoral economic targets, no sector was obliged to conform to them; each sector merely used them as a frame of reference for rational decision-making. The advantage of the system was that it enabled the planning authority to identify situations which were, in effect, warning signals. Moreover, the planning authority was able to check the accuracy of its forecasts and the amount of progress being made towards its targets, and to draw conclusions from that information. The potential usefulness of such a system at the international level was real, particularly if it was borne in mind that part of the reason for the disappointments of the first Development Decade was that the proposals of the United Nations had not, in fact, been acted upon.

11. The existence of machinery capable of systematically comparing targets with performance could enhance the prospects for compliance with United Nations recommendations. It would, moreover, assist those concerned to engage in diagnosis and suggest remedies. The proposed surveillance machinery must obviously have such functions if the collective aspirations of Member States were to be fulfilled. A number of delegations had asked for details covering the operation of the proposed surveillance machinery. Decisions on the matter were, of course, a prerogative of Governments, but his personal impression was that the United Nations institutional system was capable of undertaking that type of function without major changes: it was a pluralist system, which included sectoral, regional and central mechanisms. It should be possible to work out a system of organizing its work—that of its governmental, expert and administrative organs—in such a way that it could perform the task satisfactorily. There was, admittedly, a possibility of tension between the claims of autonomy of various agencies and those of interdependence, but that

was not a serious matter, at least at the inter-governmental level. Differences concerning the proper balance between autonomy and interdependence should easily be overcome once it was acknowledged that central planning machinery was essential.

12. A number of delegations had made highly interesting suggestions concerning the detailed structure of the central machinery; the relevance of a rolling plan in that connexion was clear, since provision would have to be made for constant revision in the light of feed-back information on the success of the strategy. Other delegations had emphasized the need for the Governments of developing countries to set their own growth targets. His department was fully conscious of that need and had issued a questionnaire to all Governments seeking information on their intentions and aspirations in connexion with the preparations for the second Development Decade. The replies received did not, however, seem to provide sufficient information to allow the suggested procedure of establishing first, national targets, and thereafter regional global targets to be followed. Further contacts were being pursued with the Governments on that subject through the regional economic commissions and through joint survey missions in Africa.

13. It was necessary to distinguish between evaluation of the global performance, for the purpose of collective judgement and decision, and action to be taken at the country level in policy and assistance matters. That distinction applied particularly to the question of commitments. The second session of UNCTAD had shown that a number of countries were prepared to accept the 1 per cent target for the transfer of resources, and the preparatory work for the second Development Decade should include an effort to induce all industrialized countries to do likewise. In other areas, however, commitments could not be stated so precisely and would probably have to take the form of general undertakings to follow specific policies. On the other hand, at the country level, in arrangements for aid, much more precise and reciprocal commitments could be entered into, as was already beginning to be the case.

14. In conclusion, he said that it would be gratifying if the general debate had served to induce Governments and institutions to prepare themselves for stating their position on the proposed surveillance machinery in the forthcoming deliberations on the global strategy of development; the subject obviously required as much reflection and discussion as the drawing up of a plan of action. In respect of such machinery, he believed that the United Nations was in a stronger position than at any time in the past. A recent statement by the Director-General of FAO had expressed the reasons for that belief very clearly:

"I would like to see . . . a strong central mechanism for the United Nations family as a whole, through which the various organizations would work out long-term development objectives that were consistent with each other. Once these objectives had been set centrally, it would be the responsibility of the different agencies to establish the policies required to attain them in their respective sectors."

AGENDA ITEM 40

Conversion to peaceful needs of the resources released by disarmament: report of the Secretary-General (A/7203, chap. XIII, sect. D; A/7247, E/4494 and Add.1)

15. Mr. STELLINI (Malta) considered it unfortunate that General Assembly resolution 1837 (XVII), from which the item before the Committee derived, had never been implemented and that the world had since witnessed an escalating arms race whose effects were not confined to the major Powers. His delegation supported that resolution but realized that studies of the effects of disarmament, even those of partial disarmament, were unlikely to have any practical results. He therefore felt that the Committee should simply take note of the not very illuminating comments from Governments submitted to the Secretary-General. Recent unfortunate events had convinced his delegation that there was little prospect of significant resources being released by disarmament. Nothing was to be gained by simply taking note of the agenda item in question every two years and he therefore suggested that it should be put into "cold storage" until a more favourable international climate prevailed. On the other hand, the Assembly might usefully request the Secretary-General to study and report on the economic and social consequences of the continuing armaments race for the poor countries.

16. Mr. ASTROM (Sweden) said that his delegation continued to regard the item as important because a fuller understanding of the complex issues involved could be a real contribution to disarmament and could thus encourage the industrialized countries to make more resources available to developing areas.

17. The study on the economic and social consequences of disarmament prepared by a consultative group of international experts and transmitted to the Council, by the Secretary-General¹ had broken new ground at the time and had been a stimulus to international action. The experts, recruited from countries with differing economic systems, had agreed that large-scale disarmament would not be detrimental to any national economy if the resources so released were properly applied in other sectors.

18. Regarding the question of national studies, Governments of many Member States had either not replied to the Secretary-General's questionnaire or had indicated that they had no further comments to make. It was thus clear that the present procedure was now leading to diminishing returns and the Committee could profitably consider a new approach to the subject, beginning with a re-examination of the questionnaires sent to Governments. The replies to the questionnaires appeared to be based on an assumption that there would be a general international decision on disarmament. His delegation thought that the replies could be usefully directed rather to the consequences of partial disarmament measures. All States agreed that the ultimate goal was general and complete disarmament. While that would be difficult, there had been some progress in partial disarmament, as demonstrated by the treaties on outer space and the non-proliferation of nuclear

¹/ United Nations publication, Sales No.: 62. IX.1 (E/3593/Rev.1).

weapons. Indeed, most Governments appeared to regard partial measures as the most promising way to proceed and he thought that national and international studies of the consequences of such measures could be valuable.

19. It would be unwise to suspend action on the item. If his delegation's suggestions were accepted,

work on the item would be slightly reoriented and significant results could well be achieved. It was important that the debate on disarmament should continue, and equally so that the studies of the effects of disarmament should be pursued.

The meeting rose at 12.5 p.m.