### UNITED NATIONS



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SECOND COMMITTEE

23rd meeting
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at 10 a.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 23rd MEETING

Chairman:

Mr. PETRESKI

(The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia)

#### CONTENTS

AGENDA ITEM 96: ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT (continued):

- (a) IMPLEMENTATION OF DECISIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT
- (b) DESERTIFICATION AND DROUGHT

AGENDA ITEM 94: MACROECONOMIC POLICY QUESTIONS (continued):

(c) EXTERNAL DEBT CRISIS AND DEVELOPMENT

OTHER MATTERS

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## The meeting was called to order at 10.20 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 96: ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT (<u>continued</u>) (A/50/25, A/50/171, A/50/182-E/1995/66 and Corr.1, A/50/254-S/1995/501, A/50/366, A/50/371, A/50/400, A/50/407, A/50/425-S/1995/787, A/50/475, A/50/518; A/C.2/50/2)

- (a) IMPLEMENTATION OF DECISIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT (A/50/3, A/50/74 and Add.1, A/50/218, A/50/453 and A/50/515)
- (b) DESERTIFICATION AND DROUGHT (A/50/227-E/1995/99, A/50/347 and A/50/516)

## General discussion (conclusion)

- 1. Mr. CANCHOLA (Mexico) said, with reference to preparations for the special session of the General Assembly planned for 1997 to examine Agenda 21, that the session should focus on how work relating to environment and development was allocated among the various United Nations bodies and how activities and other matters were coordinated.
- 2. The special session should result in the adoption of a fundamental policy statement. The discussions should refrain from calling into question the outcomes of negotiations or commitments made at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development and should guard against attempts to transfer the burden of implementing such commitments. There would be no point in holding a special session if it was to be merely a matter of reaffirming previously adopted provisions. The aim in view was clear: to identify the obstacles preventing the full implementation of Agenda 21 and to find means of overcoming them. Preparations for the session did not need to be exhaustive and could well be carried out as part of the work of the Commission on Sustainable Development and the Economic and Social Council, or of the General Assembly itself.
- 3. Mr. LORENCIO (Brazil) said that, while document A/50/453 was a good point of departure for discussions on the special session of the General Assembly to consider Agenda 21 in 1997, States should continue to formulate proposals to enrich the debate. Their thinking ought to be based on the principles stated in the Rio Declaration. In that regard Brazil noted that the commitments undertaken, particularly those concerned with the transfer of technology and financial resources, were not always respected. International cooperation should be strengthened in order to achieve a real partnership.
- 4. With regard to the special session of the General Assembly, it might be still too soon to plot its progress and decide its agenda, but it had already been recognized that the question of consumption and production methods should be considered and that priority should be given to the implementation of the major United Nations conventions on climate change, biological diversity and desertification.

- 5. The major social groups, particularly non-governmental organizations, would have an essential role to play in the consideration of Agenda 21. More active participation by regional commissions should also be encouraged by providing them with sufficient funds.
- 6. Mr. DIALLO (Executive Secretary of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee for a Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, particularly in Africa), replying to questions and observations by various delegations, said that 115 countries had signed the Convention and that 14 had ratified or acceded to it. He hoped that the 50 ratifications required could be obtained before June 1996, adding that an allocation would have to be made under the budget for the 1996-1997 biennium for the meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention in June or September 1997, before the special session of the General Assembly.
- The Intergovernmental Committee had noted the various observations regarding the need to understand better the problem of desertification, its human and social dimensions, its effect on migrations and its interaction with climate change and issues relating to biological diversity. He had been asked to continue his work on informing and raising awareness in all countries, whether or not they were affected by desertification - Switzerland, Denmark, Spain, Japan, the International Fund for Agricultural Development and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) had offered help in that connection - and to continue supporting the launch of national and subregional programmes of action in Africa, in close cooperation with the relevant subregional organizations. The Committee should also support other countries affected by the introduction of mechanisms to promote subregional activities. Cooperation should also be pursued with the secretariats of other conventions and with the relevant United Nations institutions and programmes. In addition, the participation by developing countries affected by desertification in the work of the Intergovernmental Committee ought to be increased.
- 8. Among noteworthy measures already taken by the secretariat were a subregional project for Palestine, Jordan and Israel, currently in progress, and the organization of various information seminars in the Middle East, which would be funded by contributions from Switzerland, Japan, UNEP and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). Similar meetings would be organized in various Latin American countries. One such meeting would take place in January 1996 in Buenos Aires to study the preparation of national activities and the formulation of cooperation mechanisms among the countries of the region. Such activities would be organized with the financial support of Spain and help of UNEP and UNDP.
- 9. The CHAIRMAN said that the Committee had concluded the general debate on agenda item 96 (a) and (b).

<u>Draft resolution on the Convention on Biological Diversity</u> (A/C.2/50/L.8)

10.  $\underline{\text{Ms. REBONG}}$  (Philippines), submitting draft resolution A/C.2/50/L.8 on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that under the draft resolution the General Assembly welcomed the results of the first meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, took note of the results

of the first meeting of the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice, called on States that had not yet ratified the Convention to expedite their internal procedures of ratification, acceptance or approval, and invited the Executive Secretary of the Convention to report, through the Economic and Social Council, to the General Assembly at its fifty-first session on the results of the second meeting of the Conference of the Parties. She expressed the hope that the draft resolution would be adopted by consensus.

AGENDA ITEM 94: MACROECONOMIC POLICY QUESTIONS (continued)

(c) EXTERNAL DEBT CRISIS AND DEVELOPMENT

<u>Draft resolution on enhancing international cooperation towards a durable</u> solution to the external debt problem of developing countries (A/C.2/50/L.7)

11. Mr. CABALTULAN (Philippines), introducing draft resolution A/C.2/50/L.7 on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that its general aim was to strengthen the activities of the international community in order to achieve a comprehensive, effective, equitable and durable regulation of the debt problem of developing countries. It had already introduced innovative measures to that end, which, far from causing economic upheavals, had actually tended to prosperity.

#### OTHER MATTERS

- 12. Mr. CABALTULAN (Philippines), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, noted that the General Assembly should authorize the commitment of travel expenses for the representatives of developing countries that were not members of the Commission on Sustainable Development who wished to take part in the meeting of the Intergovernmental Panel on Forests. He therefore requested the Chairman to send a letter to that effect to the Chairman of the Fifth Committee.
- 13. The CHAIRMAN suggested that the Committee should take the action suggested.
- 14. It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 11 a.m.