

"THE LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRIES"  
United Nations, Paris, 1-14/IX/1981

- (1) Statement by Secretary-General Kurt Waldheim for the United Nations Conference
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PRESS RELEASE

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## United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries

PARIS  
1-14 September 1981

UNCLDC/2  
1 September 1981

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

STATEMENT BY SECRETARY-GENERAL KURT WALDHEIM  
UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON THE LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRIES  
PARIS, 1 SEPTEMBER 1981

Following is the text of the statement to be delivered this afternoon at the United Nations Conference on Least Developed Countries by Secretary-General Kurt Waldheim.

I should like first of all to thank His Excellency Mr. François Mitterrand, President of the French Republic, for the moving address with which he has honoured us this morning. His presence in this room today was a symbol: a symbol of the solidarity and active support which the French Government gives to the efforts of all who know suffering, poverty, hunger and the despair which absence of hope engenders. France demonstrates, by inviting us to hold our meeting in Paris, its commitment to the noble principles which have inspired it throughout its history: justice, respect for human dignity, and progress for all beyond narrow egoism and short-sighted nationalism. On behalf of the United Nations, I wish to express to President Mitterrand, the Government of France and the great French people our warmest gratitude.

The fact that so many Heads of State, Ministers and high dignitaries are participating in this Conference testifies to the high expectations which the international community has of us. I should like to extend a warm welcome and to thank His Excellency Mr. Daniel Arap Moi, President of the Republic of Kenya and the current Chairman of the Organization of African Unity,

His Majesty Mr. Birendra Bir Bikram Shah Dev, King of Nepal, His Excellency Mr. Aristides Maria Pereira, President of the Republic of Cape Verde, and His Excellency Major-General Habyarimana Juvénal, President of the Republic of Rwanda, for demonstrating by their personal participation their support for the work of the United Nations and their determination to find solutions through co-operation.

And finally, I should like to thank my colleague and friend, Mr. Amadou Mahtar M'Bow, for enabling us to conduct our debate at UNESCO headquarters. His cordial hospitality is greatly appreciated.

Over the last several years the United Nations has sponsored a number of international conferences focussing on problems of great importance for the life and progress of the global community. Among all these problems, the one to which the present Conference is going to address itself is especially pressing. We have gathered here to devise ways and means to help to end the hunger and destitution of the poorest among the poor.

I must emphasize at the very outset that this is an objective which, at this stage, requires more than dialogue and debate. What needs to be agreed upon are not goals which are beyond question but the most effective means of achieving them within the framework of the overall development effort.

This Conference must evolve a concrete programme of action and do so with the sense of urgency and responsibility which the situation of the least developed countries demand. Let us consider a few facts which point out the gravity of this situation.

In the current world economic crisis, it is the least developed countries which are particularly vulnerable and which have suffered to a great degree. Available data indicate a steady decline in their overall economic performance throughout the last two decades. During the period from 1970 to 1979, real per capita gross domestic product in these countries as a whole rose by only eleven dollars. But agricultural production, which accounts for half of their total income, fell by more than ten per cent per capita in real terms.

Since the early 1970's, the world's monetary and economic relations have been under increasing strain. Developing countries, and the least developed among them in particular, find themselves buffeted by the unpredictable fluctuations of exchange rates of the major currencies. World inflation and recession have impaired the ability of most developing countries to import the raw materials and capital goods essential for their development process. As the export earnings of the least developed countries are often derived from a narrow base

of one or two commodities, wide price fluctuations have rendered their foreign exchange earnings unstable and have, therefore, affected their ability to plan and manage their economies. These countries have a limited base for mobilizing resources through taxation and savings. At the same time, they need to enlarge expenditures for providing basic administrative and social services and laying the foundations for viable development programmes.

As a result of all these factors, the least developed countries have witnessed significant per capita declines in many key economic areas. These have not been offset by an increase in the flow of external assistance. This assistance has to be significantly enhanced to enable these countries to undertake structural changes necessary for sustained growth.

The economic difficulties facing the least developed countries are so basic and so severe that extraordinary additional measures to help them are plainly needed. To be truly effective, the programme of action to be adopted by this Conference must simultaneously stress structural change and the provision of the basic social necessities; nutrition, health care, housing, education and employment. It also needs to provide for emergency situations in order to enable these countries to cope with the effects of natural disasters and shortfalls in resource flows.

This action will unquestionably call for intensive efforts by the Governments of these countries. However, They cannot embark on self-sustained development without greatly increased international support which should be provided as part of an integrated global effort and be in line with the priorities set by each of these countries. If they are to overcome the severe handicaps to their economic and social progress, then transfers of resources through appropriate financial and trade measures are obviously of prime importance, together with steps to stabilize and increase their export earnings. This need for increased transfers of resources on concessional terms was already underlined by the Fifth Session of UNCTAD and is an integral part of the International Development Strategy for the Third United Nations Development Decade. However, the response to this need has been very disappointing so far. The resources made available have at best only checked the continued deterioration in their economic situation.

Let me emphasize in this context that international assistance to developing countries, and particularly to the least developed amongst them, does not imply a one-sided relationship. All nations will benefit from a strengthened global economy and an improved climate for growth and investment.

All nations - industrialized and developing, with market and centrally-planned economies - have a clear interest in greater economic security and better management of the world's finite resources. For the accelerated growth of the developing countries and particularly the least developed amongst them, a much stronger political will and a sense of shared responsibility on the part of the entire international community is a prime necessity. It is not enough to adopt certain targets of performance. There must now be serious commitment to take the practical measures required to eliminate worldwide poverty and lay the foundations for self-sustained development.

The international community is faced with very disturbing trends which, if not reversed, can only lead to a further worsening of the world economic and social situation. The stark reality confronting mankind today is that close to 850 million people in the developing countries are living at the margin of existence, enduring sickness, hunger, homelessness and unemployment. Intolerable from a human point of view, it is a situation which ultimately poses a threat to world peace and stability.

I have repeatedly stressed that unilateral measures cannot and will not provide viable solutions to the interlocking problems facing the world economy. Only through multilateral co-operation and concerted measures involving all groups of countries can we achieve lasting solutions capable of restoring the momentum of economic growth and ensuring efficient and equitable economic relations.

Regrettably, the pace of progress in the international dialogue on economic issues continues to be slow. The adoption by the General Assembly of the New International Development Strategy for the 1980s, though an important step forward, has not yet been followed by policy measures adequate to meet its goals and objectives. No less disturbing is the continued inability of the international community to reach a final agreement for beginning the process of global negotiations.

Even so, the past few months have not been devoid of developments which give encouraging signs of a renewed sense of urgency in meeting this great challenge of our age. First, the meeting of the Group of 77 held last spring in Caracas established a comprehensive framework for the developing countries to pursue their mutual co-operation and collective self-reliance. Secondly, there seems to be a growing recognition on the part of the developed countries of the need for concerted action directed not only to the immediate but also to medium-term objectives. The major industrial countries recently reaffirmed in Ottawa their readiness to explore all avenues of consultation and co-operation, in a spirit of shared responsibility, with the developing countries in key areas of international economic relations. These developments augur well for the important talks next month at Cancun, Mexico.



I was also impressed by the fact that, after an extensive and constructive general debate, the recent Nairobi Conference has adopted a number of measures for concerted international action to promote the development of new and renewable sources of energy. The implementation of these measures, which, I am glad, involve specific attention to the least developed countries, would constitute an important contribution to meeting the world's growing energy requirements.

We need to consolidate and build upon these developments. It is opportune that this Conference is being held immediately before the forthcoming session of the General Assembly at which many of the issues involved will be thoroughly discussed. I hope that, over and above its substantive outcome, this Conference will provide a helpful impetus to international economic co-operation in the interests of all groups of countries.

The programme of action that will be decided here can be a major step on the long road to the economic transformation of the least developed countries. Given determination, political vision and international co-operation, it is certainly possible to render significant assistance to these countries in finding solutions to their economic problems. They are to be enabled to break away from the vicious trap of poverty and deprivation. The sooner this is done, the better it will be for international stability and indeed for peace and progress throughout the globe.

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PRESS RELEASE

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## United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries

PARIS  
1-14 September 1981

UNCLDC/3  
1 September 1981

### President of France opens Conference on Least Developed Countries in Paris

President François Mitterrand of France, at a special inaugural meeting held this morning at headquarters of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), inaugurated the United Nations Conference on Least Developed Countries. The holding of the Conference in Paris, he said, demanded the commitment of France to the goals of the Conference.

"We are on the threshold of a new millenium", he said. Six billion human beings will live on earth by the year 2000. Can we permit two billion human beings to live forever in the grip of famine and despair? That was the fundamental problem facing the international community.

Four heads of State or Government were present at the inaugural meeting which began at 11 this morning: President Aristides Pereira of Cape Verde, President Daniel Arap Moi of Kenya, King Birendra Bir Bikram Shah Dev of Nepal and President Habyarimana Juvénal of Rwanda.

The Conference scheduled to continue through 14 September, begins its work this afternoon. There will be an address by Secretary-General Kurt Waldheim, followed by statements by the Conference Secretary-General Gamani Corea, and Amadou Maktar M'Bow, Director-General of the UNESCO.

In his statement this morning, President Mitterrand said that the current unemployment problem which France was attacking was the same in all countries, tearing men away from the soil into the city, where doors are closed to them.

Injustice reigns, he said. Many did not have enough to eat while others wondered how to consume their super-abundance.

On competition in the market-place, he said it created more jobs than it destroyed. Helping the Third World is helping ourselves out of the crisis. Many were helping to restore the North-South dialogue, he said.

As to the major challenge facing the Conference that opened today, he said "least developed" seemed inadequate to describe the most destitute

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of the destitute. For 10 years the less developed countries had been marking time, barely keeping up and in some cases deteriorating economically. Thus, dependence on outside sources increased.

"How can we calmly look on as their vulnerability grows greater?" he asked. The international community must provide them with hope, give them the means to live.

France was aware of the urgency of the matter, he said. But France also knew that once the emergency was dealt with, the question of development remained to be solved.

France intended to carry out its action in five major areas. First, France hoped that a spirit of mutuality would replace distrust in North-South relations. He hoped the meeting at Cancun in October would help to shape that determination. France would do everything it could towards that goal.

Second, he said, there must be concrete measures of assistance to overcome the serious problems of developing countries caused by higher energy bills. France supported the establishment of an "energy subsidiary" in the World Bank.

Third, he said, there must be major financial funding. For its part, France pledged to reach by 1988 within the framework of its next development plan, the United Nations official assistance target of 0.7 per cent of its gross national product.

As a fourth facet of its action, France considered it essential to provide a greater assurance of continuity and reliability in income for the developing countries. France therefore supported a stabilization scheme for earnings based on raw material exports from the Third World. This would include commodities agreements. He praised the work accomplished by UNCTAD in this area and restated France's commitment to the Common Fund for commodities.

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As a fifth facet of action, he said, the search for improved welfare should be accompanied by an effort to preserve the national and cultural identities of peoples and to promote communication among them. He said the goals of the 1960s have moved forward to the year 2000. "The war on poverty has bogged down".

"Could it be this shattered image of the twentieth century we wish to bequeath to the twenty-first?" he asked. He hoped the Paris Conference would signal the reversal of that trend and mark the beginning of new hope.

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(A complete text of the statement by the President of France is available at the Press Documents Counter.)



PRESS RELEASE

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PARIS  
1-14 September 1981

## United Nations Conference on **the Least Developed Countries**

UNCLDC/4  
1 September 1981

### SECRETARY-GENERAL WALDHEIM OPENS CONFERENCE ON LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRIES

#### French Minister of Co-operation and Development elected President

##### Summary

"All nations will benefit from a strengthened global economy and an improved climate for growth and investment", Secretary-General Kurt WALDHEIM said this afternoon as he opened the United Nations Conference on the Least-Developed-Countries at the headquarters of the United Nations-Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in Paris.

The sooner the least developed countries were enabled to break away from the vicious trap of poverty and deprivation, the better it would be for international stability and indeed for peace and progress throughout the globe, Mr. WALDHEIM said.

Following the Secretary-General's address, the Conference elected by acclamation Jean-Pierre Cot, Minister of Co-operation and Development, France as President. Mr. Cot's nomination was put forward by Felipe Val di Viesco (Peru), Chairman at this conference of the "Group of 77" developing countries.

After his election, Mr. COT said that destitution in the least developed countries and their inability to cope with it made it the responsibility of the international community to come to their immediate assistance. The Conference must succeed, he said, first because it has an obligation to implement the resolution adopted at Manila in 1979 which called for a Substantial New Programme of Action for the 1980s and second, because failure at this stage would seriously prejudice the outcome of the anticipated global negotiations.

The Conference also this afternoon heard statements by the Conference Secretary-General, Gamani Corea, and by the Director-General of UNESCO, Amadou Mahtar M'Bow, who welcomed participating Governments to the Conference, which now number 127.

In his statement, Mr. COREA emphasized that the success of the present Conference would depend on the response of all countries, whether developed or developing, market economy or socialist, to an issue that those very Governments had for some time now identified as being of particular and crucial importance. It was at the UNCTAD meeting in Manila in June 1979 that the international community had unanimously called for a special effort in favour of the least developed countries. Mr. COREA expressed the hope that the Conference now convened would yield a broad recognition of the scale of effort which the international community as a whole would be called upon to make in support of the Substantial New Programme of Action for the 1980s. The efforts would cover not only increased external resource flows but also a broad spectrum of other measures.

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The Conference also this afternoon observed a minute of silence in tribute to the late President of Iran, Mohamed Ali Rajai, and Iran's Premier, the late, Mohammed Javad Bahonar.

In addition, the Conference organized its work, electing 15 Vice-Presidents (Algeria, Bolivia, Brazil, Canada, China, Ethiopia, Haiti, Iraq, Japan, Nepal, Norway, USSR, United Kingdom, United States) and appointing the members of its Credentials Committee (Angola, China, Cuba, Haiti, Kenya, Singapore, Spain, USSR, United States).

The general debate will begin when the Conference meets again at 10 a.m. tomorrow, 2 September. Listed to speak at that time are the Presidents of Kenya, Cape Verde and Rwanda; K.K.S. Dadzie, United Nations Director-General for Development and International Economic Co-operation; and the representative of Peru in his capacity as Chairman of the "Group of 77" developing countries.

The Committees are to begin their work in closed session at 4 p.m. tomorrow.

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Statement by United Nations Secretary-General

In his opening statement this afternoon to the United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, Secretary-General KURT WALDHEIM said the Conference needed to agree, not on goals which were beyond question, but on the most effective means of achieving them within the framework of the over-all development effort. "This Conference must evolve a concrete programme of action and do so with the sense of urgency and responsibility which the situation of the least developed countries demand."

He said the Conference Programme of Action must stress structural change, the provision of the basic social necessities and assistance in emergency situations. That action would require intensive efforts by the Governments of the least developed countries and greatly increased international support. Transfer of resources through appropriate financial and trade measures were of prime importance, together with steps to stabilize and increase export earnings.

"International assistance to developing countries, and particularly to the least developed among them, does not imply a one-sided relationship", the Secretary-General said. "All nations will benefit from a strengthened global economy and an improved climate for growth and investment. All nations - industrialized and developing, with market and centrally-planned economies - have a clear interest in greater economic security and better management of the world's finite resources. For the accelerated growth of the developing countries and particularly the least developed among them, a much stronger political will and a sense of shared responsibility on the part of the entire international community is a prime necessity. It is not enough to adopt certain targets of performance. There must now be serious commitment to take the practical measures required to eliminate worldwide poverty and lay the foundations for self-sustained development."

Unilateral measures could not and would not provide viable solutions to the interlocking problems facing the world economy, he said. Only through multilateral co-operation and concerted measures involving all groups of countries could lasting solutions be achieved.

Saying that the pace of progress in the dialogue continued to be slow, the Secretary-General referred to a lack of policy measures to implement the International Development Strategy for the 1980s and the "continued inability of the international community to reach a final agreement for beginning the process of global negotiations". Encouraging signs included establishment by the Group of 77 developing countries of a comprehensive framework for the developing countries to pursue their mutual co-operation and collective self-reliance, a growing recognition on the part of the developed countries of the need for concerted action and the recent adoption in Nairobi of a number of measures for concerted international action to promote the development of new and renewable sources of energy. The implementation of these measures, which, I am glad, involve specific attention to the least developed countries, would constitute an important contribution to meeting the world's growing energy requirements.

In conclusion, Mr. WALDHEIM expressed the hope that, over and above its substantive outcome, this Conference would provide a helpful impetus to international economic co-operation in the interests of all groups of countries.

(For a full text of the Secretary-General's statement, see Press Release UNCLDC/2 issued today.)

#### Statement by Conference Secretary-General

Following the election by acclamation this afternoon of Jean-Pierre COT, French Minister of Co-operation and Development, Mr. COT said he wished to share some of his own thoughts before taking up the impartial responsibility vested in him as President of the Conference. He emphasized the imperative need for the Conference to succeed, first of all because of the obligation to uphold the resolution adopted by UNCTAD at Manila, which requires that the Conference formulate, adopt and support the Substantial New Programme of Action for the 1980s. Equally, compelling, he added, was that the Paris Conference was but one in a number of meetings and that failure at this stage would seriously prejudice the outcome.

Drawing attention to the names of Tito, Nehru and Nasser, he said that the opening of this Conference marked the very day of the twentieth anniversary of the non-aligned movement. And he asked, "Are we, the nations assembled here, any nearer to the target of development?" The subject of this Conference is in itself, he said, an admission that on the path to progress, some countries are less developed.

He asked the delegations to remember throughout the proceedings that in the least developed countries one child in two does not reach the age of 5 and that this anguish, far from diminishing, actually grows worse. "Deforestation, quite an abstruse term", he explained, "means today that a growing number of families throughout the world can no longer cook more than one meal a day and must set aside half of every day to finding the wood to be able to do so". He drew attention to the trend of rural poverty forcing people to flee to towns and cities which, as they rise from the ground, develop their own shantytowns.

Mr. COT stated that "underdevelopment is not inevitable". Jean JAURES, in denouncing the colonial apparatus at the beginning of this century did so "in order to induce France to ponder on the anger and the pain that have been sown in these places and the bleak harvest that will be reaped one day". The socialists in France, Mr. COT said, are determined to establish a new international economic order, feeling quite simply that they are being faithful to the teachings of Jean JAURES.

He justified the decision to deal more particularly with the future of 31 least developed countries and some hundreds of millions of human beings, rather than with the billions of people in the developing countries for two reasons: first, the destitution is indeed exceptional



in these countries where the average annual income is not as much as the average weekly income of a skilled worker in an industrialized country; and, second, there is no hope of escaping from a decline in development other than through international solidarity, the main feature in the least developed countries not being the magnitude of the problem, but the impossibility of coping with it.

In closing, he applauded the concern of the Group of 77 for the least developed countries and approved their vigilance in avoiding rifts among themselves in this respect. While not expecting that the Conference could solve all the problems of the least developed countries in two weeks, Mr. COT said that each of those countries should be able to leave Paris with the feeling that the Substantial New Programme of Action would do something to help its particular situation. He then expressed the hope that the Conference would proceed as indicated in a Chinese proverb: "The longest journey starts with a single step".

#### Statement by Conference Secretary-General

Gamani Corea, Secretary-General of the United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries and Secretary-General of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) emphasized that the success of the present Conference would depend on the response "of all countries, whether developed or developing, market economy or socialist, to an issue that these very Governments have for sometime now identified as being of particular and crucial importance". He said that past efforts on behalf of the least developed countries were "truly limited". They not only fell vastly short of needs; they failed to constitute even the semblance of what might be described as a discernible and coherent programme for overcoming the problems of these countries. "Over the 1950s and 1960s", he said, "their economic growth exceeded their population growth by not much more than a bare one per cent annually - a margin too small by far to permit any meaningful transformation in their societies".

While the main thrust towards this goal had to be made by the governments and peoples of the least developed countries themselves, the Paris Conference was predicated on the belief that those countries "cannot set themselves along a path of growth and expansion by their own efforts alone. International support is critical to the success of their plans".

Mr. COREA stated that the Substantial New Programme of Action for the 1980s which the Conference is to finalise and adopt, "will gain in significance if there is at least a broad recognition of the orders of magnitude involved, a recognition of the scale of efforts which the international community as a whole is called upon to make in support of the programme through both bilateral and multilateral channels. We have estimated", he said, "that the least developed countries need an additional \$8-9 billion a year on average at constant prices over the 1980s, over and above the average of \$6.6 billion per year in 1980 prices over the past five years. The new resources could accrue not only through aid but also through other forms, such as improvements in external earnings and in terms of trade.

Another target which he had proposed was that "developed countries should devote 0.15 per cent of their gross domestic product to concessional aid to the least developed countries for the first half of the 1980s - a proportion that should increase to 0.20 per cent during the second half of the decade". According to a further yardstick put forward, 30 per cent of all concessional multilateral and bilateral aid would be allocated to the least developed countries.

In addition to recognizing the external resource requirements, the Substantial New Programme of Action should "pay serious attention to the modalities which govern the flow of aid," through such measures as the greater untying of aid, provision of quickly disburseable programme assistance and full implementation of an agreement reached in 1978 under UNCTAD auspices for the retroactive adjustment of the terms of the past official debt of the poorer countries. Mr. COREA also stressed the potential offered to least developed countries by co-operation among developing countries themselves in many key fields.

The post-conference arrangements would be aimed at, "watching over, at appropriate intervals, progress in implementation and at drawing attention to difficulties and shortcomings as they arise". Such periodic approaches would need to be made globally - for the programme as a whole - and regionally. However in the case of the least developed countries, the follow up would have to be done on a country-by-country basis, "to ensure that no country is neglected, that each gets individual attention, that each has an opportunity to present its problems and achievements to its partners and to receive, where appropriate, specific pledges of support".

The scale of the effort called for in support of the needs of the 31 poorest and weakest countries is, "manageable by any reckoning", Mr. COREA stated. Thus, he believed there should be a, "strong response on the part of all Governments, despite difficult domestic situation and constraints on domestic budgets".

He concluded by noting that success in the Paris Conference would be a good augury for other important events of consequence to international co-operation for development, such as the Cancun meeting and the global negotiations under United Nations auspices.

"So there is much at stake, there is a desperate need to be met, but at that same time there is also a political opportunity to be grasped."

Statement by UNESCO Director-General

Amadou Mahtar M'BOW, Director-General of UNESCO, in a statement welcoming Conference participants, said the President had always paid attention in his career to the needs of the peoples of the less developed countries, whether in the Third World or in the industrialized world.

The objectives which had inspired the founders of the United Nations were of primary importance today, he stated. If a nuclear confrontation had been avoided up to now, another "nightmare" hung over the world: poverty. Poverty covering entire peoples, famine, local wars, exodus of many men and women - through television they were taking human form, he said. Such disasters no longer concerned one region, but the whole world.

In conclusion, he wished the Conference all success.

Organizational Matters

The Conference dealt with a number of items pertaining to the organization of the current session in accordance with recommendations of a meeting of senior officials held on 27-28 August 1981. The report of the meeting (document A/CONF.104/13) was presented by Hans Ewerlöf (Sweden), its Chairman.

After adopting the rules of procedure (document A/CONF.104/11), the Conference constituted two Main Committees and elected their chairmen. Jose Brito (Cape Verde) will head Committee I which will be concerned with the finalization and adoption of the Substantial New Programme of Action with specific reference to: (a) objectives, priorities and policies at the national level; and (b) international support measures, including transfer of resources, technical co-operation and other international economic policy measures.

A.M.A. Muhith (Bangladesh) will chair Committee II which will consider the reports of the individual country review meetings held in preparation for the Conference and will focus on the new arrangements for implementation and follow-up of the Substantial New Programme of Action at the national, regional and international levels.

It was understood that the Committee would meet privately, the President said. He also said that it had been agreed that the Vice-Chairmen of the Committees would come from States members of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). They would be nominated following OECD consultations.

The Conference elected Tibor Fabian (Hungary) as its Rapporteur General and elected the following 15 countries as Vice-Presidents: Algeria, Bolivia, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, China, Ethiopia, Haiti, Iraq, Japan, Nepal, Norway, USSR, United Kingdom and the United States.

The 12-item agenda (document A/CONF.104/1) was adopted as presented, with the exception that the discussion of the immediate requirements of the least developed countries was scheduled for Committee I rather than the General Debate.

The Conference also appointed a Credentials Committee with the same membership as the Credentials Committee of the General Assembly at its thirty-fifth (1980) session, namely Angola, China, Costa Rica, Haiti, Kenya, Singapore, Spain, USSR and the United States. It was decided that Cuba would replace Costa Rica which is not represented at the Conference.

The Conference approved arrangements for its general debate in which ministers and other heads of delegation will make their policy addresses to the Conference from 2 to 10 September. Morning, afternoon and some night meetings are scheduled. The Conference agreed that statements in the general debate should be limited to the extent possible to 15 minutes for representatives of States and 10 minutes for other representatives.

Also approved was a tentative time-table which calls for conclusion of work in the main committees by Thursday 10 September, four days prior to the scheduled close of the session on Monday 14 September.

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PRESS RELEASE

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United Nations Conference on **the Least Developed Countries**

**PARIS**  
1-14 September 1981

UNCLDC/4/CORR.1  
2 September 1981

SECRETARY-GENERAL WALDHEIM OPENS CONFERENCE ON LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRIES

French Minister of Co-operation and Development elected President

CORRECTION

In Press Release UNCLDC/4 issued yesterday, 1 September, the second paragraph on page 1a should read:

"In addition, the Conference organized its work, electing 15 Vice-Presidents (Algeria, Bolivia, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, China, Ethiopia, Haiti, Iraq, Japan, Nepal, Norway, USSR, United Kingdom, United States) and appointing the members of its Credentials Committee (Angola, China, Cuba, Haiti, Kenya, Singapore, Spain, USSR, United States)."

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## United Nations Conference on **the Least Developed Countries**

**PARIS**  
1-14 September 1981

UNCLDC/5  
1 September 1981

### BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION ON THE PRESIDENT OF THE CONFERENCE

#### JEAN-PIERRE COT

Jean-Pierre Cot, who was this-afternoon elected President of the United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, has been the Minister of Co-operation and Development of France since May.

Until his entry into government, Mr. Cot was a professor of international law at the Sorbonne and Director of the Centre for Research and Studies for Disarmament (CEREDE). He is the author of numerous works and articles on international problems.

A member of the Socialist Party since 1969, he has served since 1970 as a member of the Policy Committee and, since 1976, as a member of its Executive Bureau. He was the national delegate of the Socialist Party to the European Communities from 1976 to 1979 and became one of its specialists on foreign policy. In this capacity, he was one of the originators of the disarmament plan presented by Mr. Mitterand in 1979 and was a member of the French delegation to the 1978 special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament.

Mayor of Coise Saint Jean Pied Gauthier in 1971, and General Counsellor of Savoie since 1973, Mr. Cot was elected to the National Assembly in March 1973 and was re-elected in 1978 and 1981. He is a member of the Committee of Foreign Affairs and is his party's spokesman on international issues. He was also a member of the European Parliament from March 1978 to June 1979.

Born on 23 October 1937, Mr. Cot is married and the father of three children.

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## United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries

PARIS  
1-14 September 1981

UNCLDC/6  
2 September 1981

### PRESIDENTS OF KENYA, CAPE VERDE, RWANDA ADDRESS CONFERENCE ON LEAST-DEVELOPED COUNTRIES: GENERAL DEBATE BEGINS

The United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries heard addresses this morning by the Presidents of Kenya, Cape Verde and Rwanda and then began a general debate, hearing a statement by the Chairman of the "Group of 77" developing countries.

In addition, a statement was made by K.K.S. Dadzie, Director-General for Development and International Economic Co-operation.

The Conference, which was opened yesterday afternoon by Secretary-General Kurt Waldheim, is scheduled to continue through Monday, 14 September.

The President of Kenya, Daniel ARAP MOI, who spoke as current Chairman of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), said the Conference will not be a success unless some firm pledges are made and quantified targets set. The OAU expects not more "compromise resolutions" but tangible support measures for the least developed countries.

The President of Cape Verde, Aristides MARIA FERREIRA, speaking on behalf of the African least developed countries, said that balanced and accelerated growth of the developing countries constituted a decisive factor in the growth of international peace and security. As long as privilege and domination persist, tension and instability will be permanent.

The President of Rwanda, Habyarimana JUVENAL, said that the Conference must result in specific and urgent measures. The developing countries must have food self-sufficiency, better planning, infrastructure, stabilization of the prices of their exports and training and education for their citizens.

The general debate is to continue when the Conference meets again at 3 p.m. today. Listed to speak at that time are the representatives of the United Kingdom (on behalf of the Presidency of the Council of European Communities), Japan, European Communities, United Republic of Tanzania, Benin, Ethiopia, Chad, Brazil and United States.

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Statement by President of Kenya

Following is a brief summary of the address made to the Conference this morning by the President of Kenya, Daniel ARAP MOI, who spoke in his capacity as current Chairman of the Organization of African Unity (OAU):

Twenty-one of the 31 least developed countries are on the African continent. The international community must focus its attention on the grave economic problems of those countries. Their problems are crippling, and there is little prospect of a breakthrough. Comprehensive and well-balanced measures are called for. The OAU does not belittle the efforts that have been made to help, but there has been disappointment and frustration. The economic structures of the least developed countries have not been transformed.

The primary responsibility for economic transformation rests with the least developed countries themselves. External assistance is welcome, but such assistance, to be successful, must be on a continuous and assured basis.

The opportunity provided by the Conference must revitalize the entire development effort. There must be concrete results. The matter is extremely urgent. The shortsightedness of those who think there is still time to debate is surprising. This Conference will not be considered a success unless some firm pledges are made and quantified targets are set.

The OAU expects not more compromise resolutions, but tangible support measures for the least developed countries. One prays that the sums spent on armaments can be diverted to rendering creative assistance in promoting the development of the poorest countries. The great threat today is not military aggression but hopeless poverty.

Living conditions in many countries are intolerable. In some of the least developed countries they have not improved in 20 years; in others they have become worse. Thirty per cent of foreign exchange funds of African countries must be spent on oil, 20 per cent on food imports and 10 per cent on debt servicing. Unless something is done, these countries will simply collapse. The international community is at a crossroads. What is needed is active implementation of agreed programmes. This Conference can be a turning point in international relations.

Statement by President of Cape Verde

Following is a brief summary of the statement made this morning by Aristides Maria PEREIRA, President of Cape Verde, speaking on behalf of the African least developed countries:

The historical ties uniting France and Africa are well known and it is with particular satisfaction that we see the realization of this Conference in the capital of the country whose Government shares several of the essential concerns and aspirations of our people.

The important contribution of France bears witness, he said, to its interest in righting the injustice in relations between States and in creating economic relations favourable to the growth and development of the developing countries as well as to contributing to the balanced expansion of the world economy. We are happy to note that the United Nations is at the forefront of the process for the establishment of a true and effective international co-operation for development.

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There is no doubt today that balanced and accelerated growth of the developing countries constitutes a decisive factor in the growth of international peace and security. The last decades have shown that it is a vain illusion to base peace solely on the absence of conflicts between nations. As long as privilege and domination persist tension and instability will be permanent.

We represent countries which have, in general, recently acquired their independence. We have however a number of constraints blocking our development: distortions in the inherited economic structure, disequilibrium among inherited economic and social factors and, above all, the existence of a system of international economic and political relations wherein the rich become richer and the poor constantly become poorer, compromise the national exploitation of our resources.

Among the measures of action of particular importance because of their bearing on the balance of payments and the equilibrium of our economies are two - the importation of foodstuffs and oil - for which the African least developed countries would hope to find a solution which would permit the stabilization of their economies and the financing of energy and agricultural projects.

The nations assembled here seek an ambitious ideal, but it is the role of this Conference, while establishing a solid base to promote a new international economic order to prepare the ground for tomorrow's realities.

#### Statement by President of Rwanda

Following is a brief summary of the address made to the Conference this morning by the President of Rwanda, Habyarimana JUVENAL:

Concrete results are expected of the Conference. Measures must be specific, concrete and urgent. When the fifth session of UNCTAD (Manila, 1979) recommended assistance for least developed countries, those countries thought they had a glimmer of hope for the future, but nothing came to alleviate their misery.

Among the problems of the least developed countries is unemployment, limited industrial development and energy. The land-locked nations face additional difficulties. Rwanda must import goods while its exports are limited to primary commodities.

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The 1980s will be catastrophic for the least developed countries if urgent and radical measures are not taken. Among other things, there will be growing trade deficits and an increase in the price of oil. Short-term measures are called for as well as a long-term programme.

The developing countries must gain food self-sufficiency and improve their planning infrastructure. For this latter purpose, a "Study fund" could be set up to finalize projects already planned. Rwanda thanks those partners which have helped it and asks them to increase their assistance. Only continuity of assistance, at least over the period of time of a project, would assure the success of the project.

The international community should help the developing countries stabilize their exports. The partners of the least developed countries should help them to provide for their people sufficient education to ensure that each citizen can play his role in national efforts.

The needs of the least developed countries are immense and growing while their means are small. Rwanda hopes the conference will sensitize the international community to the situation of the least developed countries and that there will be "generous gestures" made at the end of the conference.

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Statement by Director-General for Development and International  
Economic Co-operation

Following is a brief summary of the statement made this morning by the Director-General for Development and International Economic Co-operation, K.K.S. DADZIE:

The least developed countries are not standing still; they are being pushed backwards. Nothing less than a profound transformation is required in order to lay the conditions for sustained development. This calls for massive investment, much of it slow-yielding, over a considerable period of time. There is a strong awareness of the need for self-reliance and the full mobilization of domestic resources. But it is impossible for countries lacking in a surplus of income over essential consumption to mobilize the necessary resources through domestic saving. The bulk of their needs must therefore be found abroad through aid and trade.

It is essential in regard to the least developed countries to build a working consensus on the sharing of responsibilities among the developed countries, taking into account their relative capacities and strengths and, where appropriate, the specific characteristics of their economies. There are of course important differences of world-view on social and economic systems and on the re-ordering of the international economy. The imperative at this Conference, however, is to concentrate on what is to be done for the least developed countries, rather than on who owes what to whom.

Special measures for the least developed must be viewed as sorely needed supplements to, and indeed part of, an over-all programme for the developing world, but not as substitutes. The urgency of the problems brooks no delay, but the adoption of a programme for these countries should not detract from the importance of negotiations on other development problems. The problems of the least developed countries are manageable in terms of the capabilities of the economically advanced countries and the commitments contained in the International Development Strategy for the 1980s. Failure to grasp this opportunity would augur badly for other negotiations on international economic issues.

The United Nations system has a continuing role in the implementation of the conclusions of the Conference. At the national and regional levels, this will involve contributing to national efforts; in developing technical co-operation and promoting programme co-ordination; and helping to improve the capacity of countries to undertake development planning. Arrangements for follow-up at the country level must, in each case, reflect the specificity of national requirements and build on and supplement existing arrangements. At the global level, the United Nations organizations could make a significant contribution to the monitoring and analysis of the problems of the least developed countries. They could also develop programmes to give effect to the Programme of Action, and provide support for the exercise of review and appraisal which is the responsibility of Governments.

The success of the efforts of United Nations organizations are critically dependent on the initiatives and follow-up which may be undertaken by Governments themselves within the governing bodies of these organizations. It will also depend on the political commitment of the international community to further multilateral action in this field, and to channel additional resources through the United Nations system.

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Statement by Chairman of "Group of 77"

Following is a brief summary of the statement made in the general debate this morning by Felipe VALDIVIESO (Peru), Chairman of the "Group of 77" developing countries:

The international community has come to Paris to put an end to rhetoric. Only action can solve the situation. The programme for the least developed countries should not stumble against obstacles.

The Conference could give a fresh start to the North-South dialogue, but not replace it. The plight of 80 per cent of the countries here is a complex situation; the product of a historical process characterized by use of force and disregard of human morality. Two hundred years elapsed between the French Revolution and the call for a new international economic order. The developing countries cannot wait, a similar period of time, for the new order to be implemented.

The Conference is being held at a time of great tension among the great powers and at a time of worsening economic conditions. The only solution to the world's problems lies in the conscience of man. He must start by disarming if he does not want to commit suicide.

The developing countries have viewed with "relative optimism" the recent meetings at Ottawa and the planned meeting at Cancun on possible resumption of the North-South dialogue. But the Ottawa declaration was not specific enough.

It was essential to reactivate the South-South dialogue.

At the fifth session of UNCTAD V (Manila, 1979), the developed countries committed themselves to helping the least developed countries. However, at present, developed countries are attempting to curtail the assistance that UNCTAD can contribute in this field, saying that UNCTAD's activities should be rationalized and its budget should be kept to zero growth.

One of the most serious problems of least developed countries is the decline in their export earnings. If the situation is not halted soon, the least developed countries would have to suspend payments on loans, with all the consequences involved. It would be naive to expect that the decline in the purchasing power of the developing countries would have no effect on the industrialized nations.

The least developed countries also have to cope with natural disasters and refugees. Measures taken in this respect have been insufficient.

The Conference is an opportunity for the international community to reflect on solving the problems of the least developed countries. Past recommendations have not been implemented. Few countries have achieved the target of giving 0.7 per cent of their gross national product (GNP) in official assistance. An estimated \$61.7 billion is required for 1981-85 and \$72 billion for the remainder of the decade. The total - \$133 billion - is only one quarter of what the world spent on armaments in 1980 alone.

Development is a joint responsibility. All are in the same boat and the boat must reach shore safely.

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## PRESS RELEASE

*For use of information media, not an official record*

# United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries

PARIS  
1-14 September 1981

3rd Meeting (PM summary)

UNCLDC/7  
2 September 1981

### PARIS CONFERENCE ON LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRIES HEARS NINE SPEAKERS IN GENERAL DEBATE

Nine views on the plight of the world's 31 weakest and poorest nations were expressed this afternoon as the United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries continued its general debate.

The debate began this morning with a statement by the representative of Peru, Chairman of the "Group of 77" developing countries.

Speakers this afternoon were the representatives of the United Kingdom (who also spoke as President of the Council of Ministers of the European Communities), Japan, the Commission of the European Communities, United Republic of Tanzania, Benin, Ethiopia, Chad, Brazil and the United States.

In circulation today is a draft programme of action for the 1980s submitted by the Group of 77 (document A/CONF.104/L.2). It is to be considered by Committee I, which is meeting in closed session.

When the Conference meets again at 10 a.m. tomorrow, 3 September, it is first expected to hear an address by the King of Nepal, Birendra Bir Bikram Shah Dev. Then the general debate is to continue, with the following speakers scheduled: Organization of African Unity, Austria, Bangladesh, Food and Agriculture Organization, Botswana, Economic Commission for Africa, India, Norway and the German Democratic Republic.

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Statement of President of Council of European Communities

Following is a brief summary of the statement made in the general debate this afternoon by Neil MARTIN, President of the Council of the European Communities:

This Conference comes at a time when most countries, both developed and developing, are facing serious economic difficulties. Although the impact of these difficulties is great enough even in the richer countries, all of us are aware of how much graver is the plight of those countries who are the focus of attention of this Conference.

Perhaps the most disturbing and unacceptable thing is that while populations continue to grow in most of these countries food production has been stagnant. It is the purpose of this Conference to identify in what ways the entire international community should help the least developed countries to attain levels of economic growth providing an acceptable standard of living for all their peoples.

The European Community and its member States constitute the largest source of aid for the developing countries, and also their largest trade partner. Altogether we currently provide development assistance of well over \$12 billion a year. This is almost half of the total of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), and over six times as great as the aid given by countries of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA).

The Community is a major donor of food aid, under both regular and emergency programmes; and, while our long-term objective should be to enable poor countries to meet their own food needs, in the short and medium-term food aid is needed and must increasingly be directed to reinforcing the production efforts of the recipients. Additionally, the Community has one of the most generous of all the major generalized preference schemes, under which the least developed countries have unlimited duty-free access for all industrial and nearly all of those agricultural products covered by the scheme. We are nevertheless continuously seeking ways to improve our scheme. The most prosperous developing countries can also help here by removing trade barriers as their economies strengthen.

The European Community will seriously examine any recommendation made by the Conference to the developed countries for stabilizing the revenue of all the least developed countries from the export of primary commodities.

The World Development Report just issued by the World Bank has highlighted the fact that low income countries, especially the least developed and primary producers will remain dependent on concessional assistance and that aid will go on being their main source of external financial support. We welcome the significant part which the international financial institutions are playing in helping the least developed countries, the most important source being the International Development Association, and we hope that its Sixth Replenishment will become operational without further delay. We have

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supported the decision of the International Monetary Fund to enlarge the access of its members to its resources in support of sound adjustment programmes. The IMF's Compensatory Financing Facility is available to help countries experiencing short-term balance-of-payments crises because of export short-falls.

All the Community member States reaffirm their commitment to the 0.7 per cent target for over-all official development assistance. However, the task of increasing aid is the responsibility of the international community as a whole. The greatest effort must be made by those countries whose aid to the least developed countries is relatively low. We hope that, in the same spirit, some of those countries which are already giving generously will feel able to spread their aid over a wider range of countries, especially to those least developed countries who have the least possibilities of adjusting to the effects of rising energy costs. Those developing countries in a position to do so can also help their poorer neighbours.

I have so far been speaking not only for Britain, but for the Community. I should like to add a few points of purely British concern. The British economy itself has been going through a difficult period and it is only on the basis of first returning to sound economic growth that we can increase our aid, and provide a growing market for exports from developing countries. Despite required reductions Britain's aid remains very substantial. The amount available for spending in 1981/82 is over £1,000 million (\$1.8 billion). The terms of our aid to the least developed and other poorest countries are particularly generous. All official aid to these countries is on grant terms. At the same time, least developed countries like other developing countries, should do everything possible to provide a climate which is favourable to private investment for - as some have already experienced - this can also be of major developmental benefit.

Britain proposes to expand its aid to least developed countries in several specific areas: agricultural research; population programmes of international agencies; energy resource planning; and water supply, sanitation and preventive health.

In addition to the Government's official aid programme, I should mention the very significant contribution which is made by the voluntary agencies. These are funded principally by the voluntary contributions of individuals in Britain, and they work almost exclusively in the poorer countries.

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Japan Expresses Views to Conference

Following is a brief summary of the statement made in the general debate this afternoon by Hideo KITAHARA (Japan):

The least developed countries issue can be regarded as the most important challenge facing mankind. Japan will strive, together with other participating countries, to see that a truly effective programme is formulated in this Conference. Japan has increased bilateral official development assistance to the least developed countries from \$105 million in 1977 to \$344 million in 1980, which is a much higher rate of growth than that of overall official development assistance growth.

Only eight countries, among which four are developing countries, have so far concluded agreements on the common fund for commodities, and hence the number falls far below the 90 necessary for its effectuation. Japan urges every country to conclude agreements as soon as possible so that the results of North-South co-operation can become effective at the earliest possible moment.

Regarding the Substantial New Programme of Action for the 1980s, first, it is essential to prepare special international measures to support the self-reliant efforts of the least developed countries and to construct broad foundations of support with the co-operation of the whole international community such as developed countries, socialist countries, oil-producing countries, other developing countries in a position to do so, and international organizations. Secondly, assistance for rural and agricultural development, development of energy sources and human resources, improvement of the infrastructure and promotion of small and medium sized enterprises should be a basis for the development of the least developed countries. Japan intends to expand aid for what would directly contribute to improving the welfare of the people and aid for refugees from a humanitarian point of view. Japan will continue to increase aid to the least developed countries. Moreover, Japan will continue to endeavour to improve the modalities of aid, such as aid in the form of grant.

Third, it would be very significant for the least developed countries to review the results of their own development efforts with donor countries at an appropriate time. It would also be useful to conduct such a review at the regional and global level at appropriate intervals.

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Statement by representative of EEC

Following is a brief summary of the statement made in the general debate this afternoon by Edgard PISANI, member of the European Economic Community, speaking on behalf of the European Community:

Reality reveals that the Third World merits particular treatment. Those in the poorest nations have less chance; they have no zones of wealth, no strong to compensate the weak. The concept of profitability has to take less priority than need. The least developed countries require international intervention for their survival and sustenance, and the first priority is health. Their fragility and progressive decline require a large and stable volume of aid.

The world can feed humanity if it is willed in time. Twenty years ago, on the eve of the First Development Decade, the Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) predicted that without effort on the part of the international community, 250 million people would starve; and that was true. In 1969, on the eve of the Second Development Decade, it was predicted that without proper intervention, 400 million would be starving; and they are. In 1979, the outlook was for 800 million starving members of humanity. "Let us not be satisfied with saying it is intolerable. Let us do all possible to avoid it."

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Conference hears statement by Tanzania

Following is a brief summary of the statement made in the general debate this afternoon by K.A. MALIMA, Minister of Planning and Economic Affairs of the United Republic of Tanzania, a least developed country:

The economic situation in the least developed countries is bleak. These countries are characterized by low per capita income, a small share of the manufacturing industry and low literacy rates. There are about 280 million people in those countries, about half of them in Africa. Their purchasing power has declined. The increase in the flow of external assistance in the 1970s has been more than offset by the decline of their purchasing power.

In 1981, Tanzania would be spending 60 per cent of its export earnings on drastically reduced oil requirements. The decline in purchasing power is evidenced by the fact that in 1973 five tons of tea bought one tractor; in 1981 17 tons bought the same tractor. The transportation sector was in disrepair in Tanzania. Cherished programmes for health and education were threatened.

A number of resolutions have been adopted in favour of the least developed countries, but the meagre results show that such measures were far from adequate. Tanzania's programme focuses on what is needed to get it out of the "least developed" category. The time frame calls for the goals to be achieved by 1990 if the international community comes forward with the necessary assistance. The major task is increasing food production.

Tanzania's problems in many areas require immediate action as well as balance-of-payments support. The gross domestic product (GDP) must rise from 4 to 10 per cent a year. Programmes have been formulated in agriculture, industry, livestock, fisheries and mining.

Tanzania has a great potential, yet untapped, for off-shore fishing, but it is hampered by lack of equipment and training. Also, lack of fuel and personnel constrain the country's development of new roads.

The Conference should mobilize the financial resources and technical know-how which is necessary to tap the rich potential of the least developed countries.

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Intervention of Benin

Following is a brief summary of the statement made in the general debate this afternoon by Aboubacar Baba MOUSSA, Minister of Planning, Statistics and Economic Analysis, Benin:

The current decade follows a period of grave economic crises, the causes of which are multiple and complex and for which there is no consensus. For some, it is attributable to petroleum costs, for others to the deterioration in terms of trade.

But the experts must recognize that the least developed countries have the sad privilege of being most affected. During the 1970s the gross domestic product (GDP) in real terms increased hardly more than the increase in the birth rate, that is 3.4 against 2.8 per cent per annum.

Foreign trade during this period was characterized by a profound imbalance between imports and exports, which in turn upset the balance of payments. It is evident that such a situation cannot persist without risking the disintegration of the entire nation. It is to avoid this bleak outlook that the Government of my country appeals to international solidarity.

In order to raise the material and cultural standard of living of our people, a fair re-distribution of the benefits of growth and an improvement in the short term of the conditions of the masses living at a subsistence level are required. Planning is the method to insure these economic and social transformations and the purpose of our programme is to double the GDP within the decade. To this end, it is proposed to increase the annual growth rate by 7 per cent.

Financial needs are estimated at \$4 billion of which \$3 billion are sought externally.

Implementation is always slow at the start; it is therefore urgent to adopt during this present Conference the series of measures as defined in the Substantial New Programme of Action.

International aid cannot help to reach the goals set unless the modalities are fundamentally changed. Since independence, Benin has been the recipient of sizeable volumes of aid, but the complex conditions have been such that efficiency has been greatly reduced and the envisaged donor objectives hardly ever attained.

The conditions for the success of our task are simple. It is a question of taking concrete steps within the context of obvious development needs towards the survival of our country in the coming decade. It is also a question of donors providing aid on the softest terms possible. I remain convinced that we are "condemned to be successful."

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Statement of Ethiopia

Following is a brief summary of the statement made this afternoon in the general debate by Hailu YIMENU, Senior Minister and Secretary-General, National Revolutionary Development Campaign and Central Planning Supreme Council and member of Central Planning of COPWE of Ethiopia, a least developed country:

The good intentions apparent until the fifth session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) in 1979, in Manila, have not been realized. However, Manila was a milestone because the needs of the least developed countries had been recognized there. Manila was a breakthrough in regard to principles; now it is up to the Conference to take action to make good those principles.

It is possible that international events may detract attention from the plight of the least developed nations. This Conference, therefore, is urged "to concentrate on the matters for which it has been convened".

Serious constraints to development include substantial food deficits, the critical energy situation, soaring inflation and the cost of debt-servicing. Therefore, the international community must implement the immediate action programme. The question of energy must be faced realistically by the international community and discussed in all its aspects until a solution in the best interests of all is found. No plan that does not attack the question of energy will be successful.

Increasing the quantity and improving the quality of aid is essential to carrying out the Substantial New Programme of Action. Aid should be assured and predictable and should be freed from discrimination based on non-economic considerations.

Substantial external support is being requested to supplement national efforts by the least developed nations.

Ethiopia has submitted its 10-year investment plan for the 1980s for support by Governments. The major emphasis is on agriculture and rural development, including such sectors as transport and communications, education and health. The second emphasis of the plan is on industrialization.

All the least developed countries have come with concrete programmes and projects which need support. The medium- and long-term objectives are indicated and the external assistance required is set out. The time for action is now.

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Statement of Chad

Following is a brief summary of the statement made in the general debate this afternoon by Tahir SOULEYMAN, Minister of Planning and Reconstruction of Chad, a least developed country:

Chad has inherited from colonialism an unbalanced economic situation. The whole situation is bad, and the Government has not been able to satisfy the needs of the people, leading to political troubles. Two wars have destroyed the economic and social infrastructure of the nation. Chad appeals to the international community to help it reconstruct. For Chad, which is also land-locked, has an 80 per cent rate of illiteracy and has endured 15 years of war, the Conference is particularly important.

Without immediate and vigorous action by the international community, the new programme will not be implemented. It would be an illusion to expect results from the Substantial New Programme of Action if the Immediate Action Programme is not implemented. Therefore, the Immediate Action Programme must be an indispensable component of the Substantial New Programme of Action.

Chad subscribed fully to the draft resolution submitted to the Conference by the "Group of 77".

Rapid and substantial action in the areas identified by the least developed countries is essential. It would be regrettable to speak in the future about the "least developed countries", the number of which will grow if the prevailing situation continues.

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Views of Brazil

Following is a brief summary of the statement made this afternoon in the general debate by Carlos Augusto PROENCA ROSA (Brazil):

It is evident that the implementation of the Immediate Action Programme of 1981 left much to be desired. Our first resolve to ensure that the Substantial New Programme of Action contributes to the development of the least developed countries.

Unfortunately, it is also evident that circumstances today are worse than they were even a few years ago.

This Conference is neither an exercise in economics nor a technical gathering. We are representing Governments and our task is essentially political. As least developed countries cannot be disassociated from the rest of the developing world, neither is it possible to dissociate our Conference from the broader context of international economic co-operation for development and advent of the New International Economic Order.

Since Brazil shares common aspirations and experiences with the least developed countries, we find ourselves in a position of being able to render them our support, in particular in the area of technical co-operation adapted to their economic and social particularities. As a developing country, however, the co-operation which Brazil can render must also conform to the limitations of our own resources. These limitations will diminish as the consequences of the economic crisis give way to an increasingly self-sustained development process, which will generate positive results in our economy.

Brazil will continue to place emphasis on bilateral programmes of economic and technical co-operation and on programmes mutually agreed upon among the developing countries themselves. We are also firmly convinced that the other developing countries should be granted some form of preferential treatment as suppliers in the execution of multilateral assistance programmes to the least developed countries.

But it is also evident that the main responsibility for implementing the Substantial New Programme of Action rests with the developed countries.

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Views of United States

Following is a brief summary of the statement made in the general debate this afternoon by Peter McPHERSON (United States):

The United States has already taken many practical steps to help the least developed countries and will continue to do so. The ability of these countries to respond to challenges varies as do the problems faced and the policies adopted to address them.

Any effective action programmes must be geared to their specific needs. The problems are not insurmountable. Not long ago, the development prospects of many countries, now called "middle-income" or "newly industrialized", were considered bleak. But through their own unstinting commitment and efforts, and with support of the international community, they are now often in a position to help others.

"While the development process is complex and often uneven, one point is clear: the economic performance of developing countries has been determined primarily by their own economic policies and budget allocations. The international community can serve as an important, and sometimes even an essential, catalyst to development where appropriate economic policies and budget allocations are in place. However, foreign aid can never be a substitute for the countries' own efforts. Where policies distort or hinder the effective operation of the economy, economic performance will be poor. External action can achieve little under such conditions."

Concerted international action is of course needed to support the development of the least developed countries. At the same time, people in the United States are now being asked to make sacrifices to restore economic growth in the context of limited budget resources. It is therefore more important than ever to demonstrate that international action and resources for development support effective economic policies.

The main contributions that the United States can make to international action in support of development are: to restore non-inflationary growth in the United States economy and to assist other countries in doing the same; to maintain and work to increase the openness of United States markets to the exports of the developing countries; to maintain substantial levels of concessional assistance to the poorer countries, and to provide such assistance in forms and under conditions appropriate to individual countries; and to bring the vast resources of the United States private sector more effectively into the development process.

The following steps have been taken to promote exports of the developing countries to the United States: an immediate staging of most Tokyo Round tariff concessions; and under the Generalized System of Preferences, special consideration to products of interest to the least developed countries, over 80 per cent of United States imports from the least developed countries now enter duty-free. The United States is committed to continue to resist protectionist pressures and will work with all countries to strengthen the multilateral trade system. Between 1978 and 1980, United States bilateral economic assistance to the least developed countries grew from \$369 million

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to \$542 million, representing an increase of close to 50 per cent. The grant element of United States assistance to the least developed countries in 1979 was more than 96 per cent. The Agency for International Development has untied its development assistance loans and grants to the least developed countries, permitting procurement of goods and services not only in the United States but also in other developing countries. This Administration has requested a 16 per cent increase in foreign assistance in fiscal year 1982. In addition, it will continue its support of the multilateral development institutions, including the International Development Association. The sectoral thrust of the United States bilateral assistance programme will continue to be in agriculture, human resource development, energy, and population.

The creative energies and entrepreneurial initiative of the United States private sector have made a major contribution to global economic growth and development. This Administration will stimulate and encourage the United States private sector to help create new scientific technological breakthroughs. The United States hopes that other donors would also provide increased support to the development efforts, particularly the oil-exporting countries and other developing countries in a position to do so, as well as the members of group D (centrally-planned economies) whose development assistance efforts to date have been so limited. Regarding the further work of the Conference, the pace of progress envisioned is much faster than experience suggests is feasible. Similarly, the demands for increased assistance flows exceed what many donors are able to provide. These demands may also exceed the economic and institutional capacity of recipients to use such increases effectively.

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(This page completes press release UNCLDC/7)



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## United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries

PARIS  
1-14 September 1981

4th Meeting (AM summary)

UNCLDC/8  
3 September 1981

### KING OF NEPAL ADDRESSES PARIS CONFERENCE ON LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRIES: NORWAY ANNOUNCES NEW AID CONTRIBUTION

The United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries heard an address this morning by the King of Nepal and an announcement by Norway that it will contribute \$6.5 million to the least developed countries.

Johan Jørgen HOLST (Norway) said that, subject to parliamentary approval, his Government will contribute 15 million kroner, approximately \$2.5 million, to the Special Measures Fund of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and 25 million kroner, about \$4 million, to the United Nations Capital Development Fund. Both contributions will be earmarked for the least developed countries.

The Conference also continued its general debate, hearing the views of Austria, Bangladesh, Botswana, India, Norway and the German Democratic Republic, as well as the Organization of African Unity (OAU), the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA).

The King of Nepal, Birendra Bir Bikram Shah DEV, who spoke for nine least developed countries - Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Democratic Yemen, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Maldives, Nepal, Samoa and Yemen - said the most important quest that the least developed countries might like to make universally is peace and non-interference both in word and deed.

The general debate is to continue when the Conference meets again at 3 p.m. today. A meeting is also scheduled for 9 tonight. Listed to speak at the afternoon meeting are the representatives of Haiti, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), the Netherlands, China, the World Food Council, Canada, Upper Volta and Czechoslovakia.

Yesterday, the Committees began their work. Committee I elected Glen Shortliffe (Canada) as Vice-Chairman. Hans V. Ewerlöf (Sweden) was elected Vice-Chairman of Committee II. The Conference on 1 September elected José Brito (Cape Verde) and A.M.A. Muhtith (Bangladesh) as Chairmen of Committees I and II respectively.

(SUMMARIES OF THE STATEMENTS MADE AT THE MEETING HAVE  
BEEN ISSUED AS PAGES UNCLDC/8A THROUGH UNCLDC/8J.)

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King of Nepal Addresses Conference

Following is a brief summary of the address made to the Conference this morning by His Majesty, Birendra Bir Bikram Shah DEV, the King of Nepal, speaking for nine least developed countries - Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Democratic Yemen, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Maldives, Nepal, Samoa and Yemen:

It is painful to realize that one's country typifies the case of the least developed, but when one comes to think of the importance that several United Nations forums have devoted to the grave problems of poverty and underdevelopment it is a privilege to be a spokesman of the nine countries: Afghanistan, Bhutan, Lao Republic and Nepal are land-locked; Maldives and Samoa are sea-locked island countries; Democratic Yemen and Yemen have mountain deserts with a poor resource base; finally, Bangladesh has fallen prey to both natural and man-made disasters. The problems that face each are unique as well as common.

One of the major constraints that the least developed countries face in common is the lack of basic infrastructure for development. While the land-locked countries have to bear the burden of overland trade, the poor economies of island countries with strings of islets can hardly afford their own system of trans-shipment. As a result, communications through these islands are difficult and expensive.

The most important quest that the least developed countries might like to make universally is peace and non-interference both in word and deed. They would also urge for a recognition of the principles of equality and justice irrespective of race, colour, creed or political beliefs. Then finally, they seek co-operation which can take a manifold shape or form.

Also a subsistence economy based on agriculture is a common feature of the least developed countries. Almost all the countries represented have some key sectors which they consider merit a priority. They would choose to build up their infrastructure with a view to develop the sector they consider most vital. Often a lack of human and administrative infrastructure proves to be a hurdle for which co-operation is sought in the knowledge of technology, skill and management.

A poor man in a least developed country suffers from poor nutrition, illiteracy, lack of hygiene, minimal food, contagious diseases, unsafe drinking water, unemployment or underemployment, apathy and ignominy. When death comes to him finally he seems to be happier than those he has left behind him. The presence of the poor and hungry among us is a challenge to all value systems, all religions, all moral principles or political theories. It is also a challenge to the United Nations system.

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Statement by Secretary-General of OAU

Following is a brief summary of the statement made in the general debate this morning by Edem KODJO, Secretary-General of the Organization of African Unity (OAU):

The extreme poverty of three fourths of the world is spreading. The least developed countries are regressing. There cannot be peace as long as the spread between the richest and poorest grows and as long as 20 per cent of the world's population has 2 per cent of its income. The international community has to move off the beaten path and find the solutions the situation calls for.

Concrete action is called for to guarantee the future. In the immediate future, food production must be increased in the least developed countries and their food security must be assured to protect them against drought.

An energy facility should be set up. In addition, the rescheduling or cancelling of the debts of the least developed countries would certainly be a great support. Measures must be taken in the fields of health, rural development and literacy. An international emergency fund to compensate the least developed countries for natural or economic disasters should have priority.

New sources of financial assistance were necessary. Donors should provide automatic technical and financial assistance, and a reduction in delays in approving and funding projects. Furthermore, there should be criteria for the selection of projects and machinery for monitoring continued funding.

There should be at this Conference a thorough debate on energy.

The Conference should bring out of the rut the North-South dialogue, which is bogged down in the sands of indifference.

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Statement by Minister of State of Austria

Following is a brief summary of the statement made in the general debate this morning by Adolf NUSSBAUMER, Minister of State of Austria:

The regional preparations for the Conference opened up new prospects for co-operation. A new understanding resulted, giving a clearer idea of problems and serving as a basis for on-going co-operation after the Conference. There should be measures to promote agricultural production and development of national resources and the labour potential. Transportation and communications must not be ignored. Creation of jobs should be a matter of priority. Austria intends to follow-up on requests, particularly for the establishment of projects or continuation of existing projects, concentrating on areas where it has experience.

Austria recognized that it must do better in aiding the least developed countries. It would provide 35 million schillings, about \$2 million, to them as grants, either through bilateral channels or through international organs.

It is essential that the international community should reaffirm at this Conference its intention to provide greater and speedier assistance and should consider implementation of the Substantial New Programme of Action. Priority should be given to individual consultations with least developed countries, which should lead to specific proposals. The success or failure of this Conference will depend on the action taken to follow up. Financing must accord with the projects proposed so there must be flexible credits.

The Conference must assure that the least developed countries make rapid progress. There must be recognition of the need for action and the political will to take this action. The Conference will certainly have an effect on the North-South discussions on economic development that will take place next month in Cancun.

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Intervention by Bangladesh

Following is a brief summary of the statement made this morning in the general debate by Saifur RAHMAN, Minister of Finance of Bangladesh, a least developed country:

The primary task of the conference is to give assistance to the least developed countries - and it must be soon. Ten years ago, countries were designated "least developed", surely with the idea of doing something for them. Yet, today, life is even worse for the some 280 million people in those countries. They are just surviving for change to take place, they must have five things: better food and health services; sufficient energy; capital for investment; technology and expertise; and fair prices and market access for their products.

Actions to be taken by the least developed countries must be supported by the international community. The development momentum must be maintained on a long-term assured basis. The road ahead is bumpy and unpredictable. International assistance is called for in several areas. These are: resource transfer where there must be mass investment -- quadrupling assistance to least developed countries would only equal 5 per cent of world expenditure on defence; aid nationalization -- resources must be transferred in a way that they can be effectively and rapidly utilized; trade-- prices for commodities must be stabilized under the Integrated Programme for Commodities; the Common Fund must be made operational; and there should be trade concessions for the least developed countries, one of the least costly measures the international community can make.

All of this requires political will. France, Japan, Canada and Italy have had excellent performances. "The centrally planned economies cannot shy away from their responsibilities."

Success at this conference could breed further success in Cancun and in the global negotiations. The consequences of failure would be "overwhelmingly frustrating".

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Statement by FAO

Following is a brief summary of the statement made in the general debate this morning by EDOUARD SAOUMA, Director-General of FAO:

"During the past decade, production growth has kept pace with population growth in only five of the least developed countries. Annual fluctuations are very great, and add further to food insecurity. More than a third of their inhabitants are malnourished, and their dietary energy supplies cover only 86 per cent of their needs." Unless their agricultural production speeds up substantially and their export income rises sharply, these countries are condemned to rely on external aid. Moreover, they would exhaust their only riches, minerals and raw materials, not for development but simply to feed themselves.

A "Minimum Food Programme" could constitute the backbone of the "Substantial New Programme of Action" submitted to the Conference, in recognition of agriculture as the basic activity. The essential points of this minimum programme would be as follows: to stimulate agricultural production and productivity; to strengthen the individual and collective food security of the countries and regions concerned and their ability to face catastrophes; to mobilize the necessary surplus of resources for the benefit of agriculture and rural areas; and to liberalize access to the markets of the developed countries and ensure stable and fair export prices.

The Conference has before it proposals for tripling external aid to the least developed countries by 1984 and quadrupling it by 1990. I subscribe to these proposals, but suggest that to implement this minimum programme more resources would have to be devoted to agriculture, at least a third of external aid. Such external assistance to the least developed countries today hardly amounts to \$800 million, while it should reach \$5,800 million in 1990. Although hunger is not confined to the 31 countries in the group but ravages all of the Third World, the least developed countries have barely 270 million inhabitants. It is therefore not impossible to save them, and the Conference should commit itself to their support without neglecting its responsibilities towards the other developing countries.

The technical competence of FAO is at the disposal of the least developed countries; and our 1982-83 Programme of Work and Budget will devote due attention to them, especially in Africa.

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Views of Botswana

Following is a brief summary of the statement made in the general debate this morning by M.P.K. NWAHO, Minister of Commerce and Industry of Botswana, a least developed country:

Since independence, Botswana has devoted its efforts, with the help of friendly countries and organizations, to building a nation of which it could be proud. Without the assistance it has received, Botswana could not have achieved its present standard of living. Although Botswana has never suffered from natural disasters, it faces other obstacles to development: its land-locked situation; "unfriendly minorities" on its borders; and the uncertain future of its neighbour, Namibia. The inhospitable political events of the area all have adverse effects on the economy.

Botswana's plans for the 1980s far exceed its resources. It must depend on international help. The least developed countries want to return home from the Conference with an action plan that would give hope for the future, not with a pamphlet that the future will call "another piece of Conference rhetoric". What is needed is a "Marshall Plan for the 1980s". Negotiations should be hard and pragmatic.

The least developed countries should ensure that the benefits of economic development are shared by all and that all their citizens participate in the development process. As to measures of international assistance, no country or group of countries can exclude themselves on the grounds that they are not responsible for the state which the least developed nations now face. Their development is the responsibility of all mankind. Official development assistance for the least developed should be considerably increased as soon as possible and appropriately increased thereafter. Such a commitment should be written into the Substantial New Programme of Action.

Botswana favours an "energy chapter" in the Substantial New Programme of Action.

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Statement by ECA Executive Secretary

Following is a brief summary of the statement made in the general debate this morning by Adebayo ADEDEJI, Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA):

Development performance and prospects in the least developed African countries are seriously constrained by their special structural characteristics and by a continuously worsening world economic climate. These countries confront a variety of problems and constraints such as poor performance in agriculture, shortage of domestic and external capital, imported raw materials, skilled manpower and inefficient management. To this should be added lack of ancillary specialized institutions, excessive cost of production, weak absorptive capacity, inappropriate technology and technology policies and undeveloped infrastructure, including transport facilities, administration, education, health and housing. This is in addition to rampant inflation and serious structural limitations in international trade, as well as relatively small and scattered populations.

At the first meeting of the Conference of Ministers of African least developed countries which took place recently in Addis Ababa, the least developed African countries felt that now, more than ever before, there is an urgent need for emergency aid to enable them to cope with the serious short-term problems such as food shortages, scarcity of foreign exchange to import even the critical inputs and to mitigate inflationary pressures. The least developed African countries are strongly convinced that such immediate action is an essential component of the Substantial New Programme of Action for the 1980s and that it should be seen and pursued as a prerequisite for the successful implementation of the over-all substantial programme. Certain immediate measures are of critical importance: an increased proportion of short-term assistance in the form of balance of payments support which is more flexible and can be given readily; commodity support particularly for oil, food and material inputs that can bring about an immediate boost to the utilization of existing capacity; and debt relief.

In the context of the Substantial New Programme of Action for the 1980s, the least developed African countries urged the need to emphasize and articulate more fully the problems of food security and energy. I would like to appeal in the strongest possible terms to our development partners to be more forthcoming in providing the least developed countries with necessary support. Consideration of the expansion called for in the volume of aid should not be seen in isolation but should be taken together with consideration of the necessary changes in aid modalities encompassing the composition of aid, the conditions on which aid is given and the procedures which constitute the delivery system of aid.

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Statement of India

Following is a brief summary of the statement made in the general debate this morning by Khurshid Alam Khan, Minister of State for Commerce of India:

The international economic situation causes grave concern. The global negotiations, in which all had placed much hope, remain frozen. However, the Ottawa Summit of some developed countries gives cause for modest optimism that a re-establishment of a meaningful dialogue between the developed and developing countries is still possible. If the Cancun Summit succeeds in creating the right climate in which negotiations on all the issues of common concern to the developed and the developing countries can be undertaken, it will be no small gain for all.

Although the primary responsibility for economic development rests with each country that is only one element, however important, of the totality of the situation. It is not possible to over-emphasize the role external assistance plays in the developmental efforts of the less privileged countries. The developed countries who are best placed to do so, have an obligation to extend such assistance to the least developed countries. Any failure to measure up to these obligations would, in the long term, be counter-productive for the richer countries themselves. For, in the ultimate analysis, prosperity, like peace is indivisible.

The special needs of the least developed countries along with the unavoidable needs of the low-income countries cannot be adequately met unless the developed nations recognize the need to step up substantially the existing levels of official development assistance to the low income countries. Also, the fixing of targets for the Substantial New Programme of Action would have meaning only if the developed nations recognize this urgent need and indicate their contribution to the Programme for the least developed countries in the context of aid flows to the low income countries.

It is high time that substantial action-oriented initiatives are implemented on a time-bound basis in favour of the least developed countries. The individual review meetings have given some idea of the areas of support required by the least developed countries. Particularly, attention needs to be focused on their financial needs, and the amounts that would need to be available over and above their internal or domestic sources to meet their development and investment needs. It is also necessary and important to identify precisely at a micro-level the specific areas requiring support like social needs, infrastructural investments and technology. The cause of the least developed countries will call for a major multilateral action of sufficient scope.

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Statement of Norway

Following is a brief summary of the statement made in the general debate this morning by Johan J. HOLST, State Secretary for Foreign Affairs, Norway:

This Conference is important and timely. The 31 least developed countries, in the words of the report of the Brandt Commission, balance on "... a slim margin between subsistence and disaster". Despite a broad consensus which has emerged with respect to the goals and objectives of this Conference, divergent views prevail with respect to appropriate policy measures. We confront the formidable task therefore of reaching agreement on a coherent, sustained and effective Substantial New Programme of Action for the 1980s for the least developed countries. The issue at hand is one of activating existing potentials, of increasing the productive capacities and achieving a more balanced structure of production.

Growth, of course, is not a one-dimensional concept. In the view of my Government, we are not only aiming for a New International Economic Order, but for a New International Economic and Social Order. Measures which result in social progress and human development have a multiplier effect which sustain and accelerate growth in the long-term perspective. Proper attention must be paid to the contribution of women in the development process. In all countries women play an indispensable role in the process of economic and social development. Nevertheless large numbers of women remain on the periphery of the economies and the decision-making processes of many developing countries.

It is clear that the resources and the measures required are within reach provided the responsibility be equitably shared by all the industrialized countries and the developing countries which are in a position to offer assistance. The Action Programme therefore must incorporate objectives and measures for national and international action of a scale and magnitude substantially above the level of existing performance. It is important, of course, that the goals and objectives be realistic ones. I sound this note of caution because my country wants to see more results from this Conference than just another declaration of beautiful principles of limited operational value.

My Government, considers special and preferential treatment of the least developed countries in the field of trade an important matter of principle. It was the first industrialized country to introduce special trade preferences in favour of the least developed countries as a group. Other areas in which Norway continues to contribute significantly are in the fields of marketing, export promotion and price stabilization, and economic and technical co-operation.

While realizing that the least developed countries have to rely mainly on their own productive efforts in striving to break through the basic obstacles to sustained development and growth, external assistance may constitute the indispensable catalyst and provide the necessary lubrication for the development process. In the new medium-term plan for the period 1982-1985, my Government has committed itself to increase official development assistance appropriations from the present level of 0.27 per cent of our GNP to 1.3 per cent by 1985.

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My Government is of the opinion that the least developed countries, in their endeavour to follow up at the national level the global undertakings which will be contained in the Programme of Action, will be best served by making use of the existing consultative arrangements of the World Bank, the Club du Sahel, the various round tables sponsored by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and, most particularly, the UNDP Resident Representatives and the United Nations Resident Co-ordinators. At the global level we support the proposed follow-up activities.

Norway takes pleasure in announcing that, subject to parliamentary approval, it intends to make a special contribution of 15 million Norwegian Kroner, or, approximately \$6.5 million to the Special Measures Fund and a contribution of 25 million Norwegian Kroner, or approximately \$4 million, to the United Nations Capital Development Fund, especially earmarked for the least developed countries.

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Statement by German Democratic Republic

Following is a brief summary of the statement made this morning in the general debate by Friedmar CLAUSNITZER (German Democratic Republic):

What is needed in the interest of the least developed countries is international co-operation rather than confrontation, political detente rather than aggravated tension, curbing the arms race rather than continued super-armament. These essential preconditions and objectives should be duly taken into account in the Substantial New Programme of Action.

Primary responsibility for the economic situation of the least developed countries rests with the former colonial powers and those industrialized countries, which together with their transnational corporations, pursue a policy of neo-colonialist exploitation vis-a-vis these countries. Imperialist plundering is the root cause for the fact that the developing countries continue to be in a state of underdevelopment and that the least developed among them remain at the greatest economic disadvantage.

It is significant that the reports and proposals prepared by the least developed countries concerning their development in the 1980s are oriented first and foremost towards mobilizing their indigenous resources and underscore the principle that external aid should primarily encourage them to self-help.

The Substantial New Programme of Action should pay due regard to those objectively existing factors which are essential to the social and economic development of the least developed countries, such as the introduction and perfection of economic and social planning, the development of the public and co-operative sectors in the national economy, democratic land reforms, the creation of progressive social infrastructures, and full national sovereignty over their national resources, as well as the restraint and control of the activities of the transnational corporations.

Much has been done by the German Democratic Republic in the field of advanced education and training of nationals of the least developed countries. During the 1970s, specialists of the German Democratic Republic were on assignment in 12 of these countries; free material assistance worth over 285 million marks was provided during the same period. While many capitalist countries pursue a reprehensible "brain-drain" policy, the German Democratic Republic takes care that all nationals from least developed countries return home upon completion of their training.

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(This page completes press release UNCLDC/8)



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## PRESS RELEASE

*For use of information media, not an official record*

### United Nations Conference on **the Least Developed Countries**

PARIS  
1-14 September 1981

4th Meeting (AM summary)

UNCLDC/8/Corr.1  
4 September 1981

KING OF NEPAL ADDRESSES PARIS CONFERENCE ON  
LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRIES: NORWAY ANNOUNCES NEW AID CONTRIBUTION

#### CORRECTION

On page 5 of Press Release UNCLDC/8, in the summary of a statement by the representative of Bangladesh, the fifth sentence in the third paragraph should read:

"These are: resource transfer where there must be mass investment - quadrupling assistance to least developed countries would only equal 5 per cent of world expenditure on defence; aid rationalization - resources must be transferred in a way that they can be effectively and rapidly utilized; trade - prices for commodities must be stabilized under the Integrated Programme for Commodities; the Common Fund must be made operational, and there should be trade concessions for the least developed countries, one of the least costly measures the international community can make."

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# PRESS RELEASE

*For use of information media, not an official record*

## United Nations Conference on **the Least Developed Countries**

**PARIS**  
**1-14 September 1981**

5th Meeting (PM)

UNCLDC/9  
3 September 1981

### PARIS CONFERENCE ON LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRIES CONTINUES GENERAL DEBATE

The United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, continuing its general debate this afternoon, heard the views of the Foreign Minister of Haiti and the representatives of the Netherlands, China, Canada, Upper Volta and Czechoslovakia.

Statements were also made this afternoon by the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the President of the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and the Executive Director of the World Food Council (WFC).

In his statement, Raymond PERRAULT (Canada) announced to the Conference that his Government, subject to parliamentary approval, would change its scheme of tariff preferences to provide special and more favourable treatment on imports from least developed countries. Also, Canada will extend, on a unilateral basis to a number of least developed countries the benefit of the Agreement on Government Procurement of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT).

The general debate continues when the Conference meets again at 9 p.m. today. Listed to speak are Iraq, the Secretariat of the Commonwealth, Hungary, the International Labour Organisation, New Zealand and Gambia.

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(SUMMARIES OF THE STATEMENTS MADE AT THE MEETING HAVE  
BEEN ISSUED AS PAGES UNCLDC/9A THROUGH UNCLDC/9I)

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Address by Haiti

Following is a brief summary of the statement made in the general debate this afternoon by Edouard FRANCISQUE, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Haiti, a least developed country:

Today, least developed countries are demanding the establishment of justice and international solidarity that can end hunger, slums, illiteracy and unemployment. There will be a global collapse unless there is a reawakening of the international conscience.

There is no material obstacle to a rational solution of development problems. Children have died of hunger or from lack of medical care, when hundreds of thousands are spent on armaments. This is inadmissible, when many people have incomes of 30 cents a day.

Haiti is the only least developed nation in the Americas. That is due to a lack of understanding of how the Haitian people found liberty. This is not the place to discuss colonialization - that was over. But Haiti had been the victim of racism to the extreme. It had paid an indemnity of 150 million gold francs which unquestionably had shattered its chances for economic and social development.

Until 1973, Haiti had been bypassed by international assistance agencies. The Alliance for Progress, which had held out hope for others had been for Haiti "a disappointing mirage". Haiti still suffers from a misunderstanding of its "national reality".

Haiti has undertaken a programme of action for development of the country, of which the objectives are: satisfaction of essential needs through a better distribution of national income; food self-sufficiency by 1990; increased industrial production; and a reduction of differences between regions of the country.

Official aid is only one aspect of international relations. Stress should be put on trade, particularly concessions for the least developed, and on tourism. Haiti denounces a "certain form of co-operation" as being incompatible with its legitimate aspirations. Aid should not be given in ways that threaten the political stability of the recipient.

Haiti proposes that financial aid to it be more substantial.

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Statement of UNDP Administrator

Following is a brief summary of the statement made in the general debate this afternoon by Bradford MORSE, Administrator, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP):

We in the United Nations Development Programme are sure that the Conference will stand as an historic milestone in the evolution of international co-operation for development. Yet, hunger and deprivation do not wait on milestones. Although the countries of our concern are least developed, their futures are promising. Botswana and Guinea are among the richest African countries in mineral resources; Ethiopia, Mali and Sudan might feed the entire continent if their agriculture was properly developed. The task before us is clear: we must support the least developed countries in their efforts to marshal that critical mass of resources - the skills, the knowledge, the techniques, the capital - required to generate and sustain progress within the impoverished countries.

I cannot stress too strongly the role that technical co-operation must play in this crucial effort. The International Development Strategy for the 1980s adopted last year by the United Nations General Assembly, stressed that global development will "require a renewed emphasis upon technical co-operation and a significant increase in the resources provided for this purpose".

Over the past decade, UNDP expenditures in least developed countries have exceeded \$958 million, with almost one third of that amount devoted to the critical agricultural sector in the quest for greater food self-sufficiency. These resources have been augmented by \$97 million of additional resources from the Special Measures Fund for Least Developed Countries since its establishment in 1973 - the expenditures of which are fully integrated into UNDP's programme activities. While the least developed countries as a group constitute 12.4 per cent of the total population of all developing countries, fully 37 per cent of the Programme's resources during the next cycle is slated for technical co-operation activities for the benefit of these countries.

Another increasingly important programme administered by UNDP is the United Nations Volunteers, which provides the services of highly motivated, middle and upper-level operationally experienced specialists to some 90 developing countries. In 1980, more than 700 volunteers (almost 75 per cent of those in place) were serving in least developed countries, their ranks including engineers, agronomists, teachers, medical doctors, statisticians and some 50 other professional categories. UNDP also administers the United Nations Sudano-Sahelian Office, which is important to a number of least developed countries in Africa.

In view of this rather extensive experience, the Governing Council of UNDP has authorized me - within existing administrative resources - to undertake the necessary preparations to initiate those activities, consistent with UNDP's mandate, which might be requested by this Conference, regarding the implementation of the Substantial New Programme of Action.

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IFAD President addresses Conference

Following is a brief summary of the statement made in the general debate this afternoon by Abdelmuhsin M. AL-SUDEARY, President of the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD):

The shortfall in the flow of external assistance for agricultural development in the developing countries of the world was a matter of deep concern. There should be a much higher quantum of aid flow, especially to the least developed countries. Agriculture constituted the main source of income for roughly 80 per cent of the population of the least developed countries - but "far too little" was being done to assist this sector.

The IFAD mandate is to mobilize additional concessional resources for increased food production, alleviate malnutrition and rural poverty, and raise living standards of small farmers and the landless in the developing countries. In little more than three years of operations IFAD had committed nearly \$1 billion for agricultural and rural development projects and programmes across the three continents of Africa, Asia and Latin America. More than 70 countries had benefited from IFAD assistance. Of the \$962 million in loans approved by IFAD, the least developed countries had received \$323.6 million, or 34 per cent of total commitments.

There had been a decline in per capita agricultural output in the least developed countries over the past 15 years. Current estimates show that while the agricultural production in these countries is rising by an average of 1.6 per cent annually, the population growth is substantially higher - 2.5 per cent a year. Many of the least developed countries are themselves making serious efforts to tackle this problem, but there is an acute need for the richer nations to assist these countries in their attempt to escape from the poverty trap.

Special features of IFAD projects have made it possible for the small farmer and the landless to reap direct benefits. These projects provide access to new or improved lands resulting from irrigation or resettlement schemes, open up improved opportunities for securing credit, water and other inputs and services, ensure equitable cropsharing arrangements with landlords and stimulate the setting up of rural organizations through which small farmers can directly participate in development activities.

Concerning the still unresolved problem of replenishment of the Fund's resources for 1981-1983, contributions so far offered by member States exceed \$1 billion and agreement has also been reached on all the technical modalities of replenishment. However, in order to finalize the replenishment, one remaining issue - the question of relative shares between the Organisation of Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) - still needs to be resolved.

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Statement by Netherlands

Following is a brief summary of the statement made in the general debate this afternoon by Jan de KONING Minister for Development Co-operation, Netherlands.

We are one world and solidarity with the poorest in our world society now will shape our common future. Time has come - indeed we are already overdue - to work out a definitive plan of action and to start as soon as possible with its implementation. Concerning the actual implementation, my Government holds the view that it must be defined for each least developed country. The "lead agency" for the drafting of such a national plan cannot be any other than the Government itself, with donor countries or organizations assisting. With regard to multilateral aid, my Government specifically mentions UNDP, the World Bank and the Club du Sahel which with their long experience seem well equipped to provide such technical assistance and expertise to the economic-planning process of least developed countries. A valuable role can also be played by the United Nations Capital Development Fund, which is oriented towards the poorest countries and their people. My Government takes a flexible approach with regard to tying and untying of aid for least developed countries and to local cost financing. Together with other donors a more liberal approach could be pursued which responds closely to the need of each least developed country. Concerning the volume of aid, I realize that most developed countries are confronted with serious economic problems. In my country, too, unemployment is a serious problem; budgets for the next years will be severely cut. But the budget of the Netherlands development co-operation is not to be affected by this policy. Official development assistance will be maintained at about 1 per cent of the gross national product (GNP). It is my firm conviction that in the years to come the Netherlands will certainly not fall below today's level and there is every reason to improve. The gravity of our problems cannot be compared to the difficulties which face the least developed countries. Aside from extending and intensifying international aid efforts, special attention should be given to the improvement of the least developed countries, position in international trade.

The private sector from developed countries could under circumstances play a constructive role in the implementation of the Action Programme. I would also like to point out the contribution by the non-governmental organizations in the least developed countries.

The Netherlands has continuously stressed the need to keep in mind the improvement of the living and working conditions for the people in least developed countries, the men and women, whose specific and vital role increasingly demands the attention of us all. In 1980, our official assistance to least developed countries reached 0.19 per cent of our gross national product (GNP) and consisted of \$303 million of bilateral aid; \$76 million for technical co-operation; \$208 million in other grants and \$18 million in loans.

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Statement by China

Following is a brief summary of the statement made in the general debate this afternoon by Cheng FEI (China):

The international community, the developed countries in particular, should provide least developed countries with economic and technical assistance on preferential terms, transfer appropriate technology to them, and help them overcome financial difficulties, train personnel for national construction, and realize their development plans for the 1980s. In international trade, the developed countries should offer preferential treatment to the least developed countries, remove the tariff and non-tariff barriers, extend and improve the general preferences system, and give special considerations to the marketing terms of their export commodities.

For the developed countries to engage in economic and technical exchanges and trade relations with the Third World countries, including the least developed countries, on the basis of equality, mutual benefit, equity and fair treatment will not only be beneficial to the Third World countries but also be helpful and not harmful to the developed countries in their effort to overcome their economic difficulties. None of the many important economic issues, such as energy, raw materials, financing and trade, can be solved by a single country or a small group of countries alone; a rational solution to them can only be found through consultations between the developed countries and the Third World countries on an equal footing, by helping supply each other's needs and making up each other's deficiencies.

It will be an arduous, long-term task to establish the New International Economic Order. Nevertheless, as long as the North adopts a sensible attitude and takes into full consideration the just positions of the South, it will be possible to gradually establish a fair international economic relationship on the basis of North-South dialogue.

China will mainly rely on the efforts and wisdom of its own people and find a path to advance that is suited to its own conditions. In emphasizing self-reliance, China does not mean to practise autarky. It welcomes international assistance. It needs to learn from abroad all the experience in construction and advanced technology useful to it.

China is resolutely opposed to the practice in international relations of the strong bullying the weak and seeking hegemony. Countries should carry out economic and technical exchanges of various forms on the basis of equality and mutual benefit. At present, 25 countries out of the 31 least developed countries have good relations of economic and technical co-operation with China.

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World Food Council Executive Director speaks

Following is a brief summary of the statement made this afternoon in the general debate by Maurice J. WILLIAMS, Executive Director of the World Food Council (WFC):

An early doubling in real terms of the present level of official development assistance for the least developed countries is essential to enable them to implement the programmes and projects prepared with the encouragement of this Conference for the first half of the 1980s. Increased aid alone, however, may have the effect of a holding action - a substitute for domestic efforts. More investment and aid without careful policy and project preparation could be as ineffectual as having plans and projects without the investment resources to implement them.

The major issue for development in the 1980s is how to effectively relate structural and policy adjustments to the necessary resource transfers. The World Food Council has answered this problem for the critical area of food by sponsoring food strategies to engage the co-operative endeavours of interested developing and developed countries.

The Council views with deep concern persisting global food insecurity. Access to food grains, through trade and aid, on a continuous and reliable basis is essential for world food security. What is needed is a physical food reserve facility for low-income countries, paralleling the food financing facility of the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

Since an international wheat agreement with substantive economic provisions is not now possible, the World Food Council proposes a more limited wheat security reserve of nine million tons in favour of low-income developing countries unable to provide for their own food security. This reserve would assure that the normal food grain import requirements of low-income countries could be met even in periods of world food grain scarcity and high prices.

Substantial contribution to achieving United Nations objectives for world food security could be made by the establishment of a limited wheat reserve as well as by positive action on internationally-agreed food aid targets, specifically increasing food aid for low-income countries and raising the Food Aid Convention minimum to 10 million tons; and assuring emergency food aid through the assured replenishment at 500,000 tons of the emergency food aid reserve administered by the World Food Programme.

General agreement to avoid restrictive measures on channels of trade in times of food crisis should also be sought as a reinforcement of global food security.

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Address by Canada

Following is a brief summary of the statement made in the general debate this afternoon by Raymond J. PERRAULT (Canada):

More than 75 per cent of Canadian bilateral aid currently goes to low-income countries; over one-third of official development assistance was allocated to the least developed countries in 1980. Canada will continue to support multilateral organizations and international financial institutions. The Canadian International Development Agency will channel most of its resources in the 1980s to three sectors: rural development and food security; energy; and the development of human infrastructure. The agricultural sector will be the highest priority.

As a major food aid donor, Canada will increasingly direct its bilateral assistance to the most severe emergency needs of low income food deficit countries, and wherever possible its aid will be utilized as "development capital" for projects and programmes designed to increase self-sufficiency in less developed areas. Canada will also continue to be a major contributor to the World Food Programme. Canada's International Development Research Centre will undertake a major programme of energy research which will be conducted largely in the least developed countries and will stress the use of indigenous resources in solving local energy problems. In addition, Canada will be contributing \$25 million towards a programme to develop and apply new energy technologies particularly in the Sahel region. Canada also favours the establishment of the proposed energy affiliate of the World Bank.

In many of the least developed countries, particularly the smaller ones the non-governmental organizations are the major Canadian source of assistance. We accord particular importance for their work, not only because they are noted for their flexible, fast, low-cost, grass roots development work, but because of their invaluable educational work in promoting support for the development process in Canadian communities.

Canada believes that there would be real merit in an initiative which brings together non-governmental organizations and the private sector in developed countries with their counterparts from the least developed countries. If there were interest on the part of the non-governmental community in such an idea, the Canadian Government would be prepared to contribute up to \$100,000 towards the organization of a meeting and the travel costs of a non-governmental organization representative from least developed countries.

It is the intention of the Canadian Government, subject to Parliamentary approval, to introduce changes to its scheme of tariff preferences (Generalized System of Preferences - GSP), in order to provide special and more favourable treatment on imports from least developed countries. Canada has also decided to extend, on a unilateral basis, the benefits of the GATT Agreement on Government Procurement to a number of least developed countries in keeping with the agreement reached during the Multilateral Trade Negotiations discussions.

Concerning the Substantial New Programme of Action, the Conference should be wary of an inflexibility which could be created by techniques such as sub-targets. These could distort the efforts of bilateral donors. At the multilateral level, particularly in the international financial institutions, such sub-targets would be especially constraining.

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Canada is also concerned that the emphasis on an official development assistance - GNP sub-target may tend to diminish the importance of implementing the 0.7 per cent International Development Strategy target.

Canada wishes to launch a specific appeal to the socialist countries of Eastern Europe who have not been particularly active in the preparations for the Conference, to implement measures which are commensurate with their importance in the world economy. Also, developing countries in a position to do so should support the Substantial New Programme of Action in a manner consistent with their abilities.

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Statement by Upper Volta

Following is a brief summary of the statement made in the general debate this afternoon by Mamadou SANFO, Minister for Economy and Planning of Upper Volta, a least developed country:

While one third of the world lives in affluence and waste, two thirds live in poverty and lack. Is that destined to be? Upper Volta thinks not; the situation came from historical factors maintained by certain international factors. Upper Volta, far from being resigned to the situation, daily struggles against it.

There is a refusal to recognize the restraints that face the least developed countries. As far as international financing is concerned, there are long delays in mobilizing it - a situation which is sometimes subscribed to a least developed country's inability to absorb resources.

Upper Volta's programme of action is aimed at improving grain production, intensifying research in mining and geology, beginning the exploitation of strategic ores, and building roads. The country also plans to reduce its dependence on imported energy by building hydroelectric dams; financing has already been found for this project. Estimates are that per capita income will rise from \$172 in 1980 to \$320 in 1990. School attendance will go from 14 per cent in 1980 to 50 per cent in 1990. Upper Volta's plan has been based on the understanding that it can get international help. Among other things, the Government will exert control over the exodus of its manpower in order to ensure the success of the plan.

International assistance may be needed for a long time. However, such assistance must take into account national priorities. Upper Volta would like the establishment of a special fund to help the least developed countries with their energy bills.

History has shown that countries that were formerly powerful are now least developed ones. That makes Upper Volta think its situation is not irreversible. Solidarity for the development of the Third World is a way of bringing the world out of its current economic crisis and avoiding a major conflagration. The world must find a "new Marshall Plan".

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Statement by Czechoslovakia

Following is a brief summary of the statement made in the general debate this afternoon by Jan STRACAR (Czechoslovakia):

Czechoslovakia, with certain reservations, had joined in the consensus to help the least developed countries. The causes of the present plight of those countries were colonialism, neo-colonialism and the transnational corporations; as well as inflation in the capitalist economies. Those causes must be eliminated if there were to be real changes.

In mobilizing the internal resources of a country, only the State can play a role. The State sectors must be strengthened. Agrarian reform might strengthen the agricultural sector. As to external trade, the State can be effective by increasing foreign trade.

Concerning relations between Czechoslovakia and the developing countries, the most widespread form is reciprocal trade in goods, which is always carried out on the basis of respect for sovereignty, equality and mutual benefit. The Government has concluded long-term agreements with 16 least developed countries. Czechoslovakia has been involved in dozens of projects relating to engineering, textiles, sugar, cement, tanning and shoe-making. The plants built become the property of the States or national companies concerned. Technical assistance takes the form of sending experts or training personnel from least developed countries. Those projects illustrate the efforts of Czechoslovakia in making to develop economic ties with least developed countries.

All proposals made at the Conference must be taken into account. However, some proposals contain elements with which Czechoslovakia cannot agree. The relations between the least developed countries and the socialist countries are different from the relations between the least developed countries and the capitalist nations. The socialist countries have never practised, and do not today practise colonialism or neo-colonialism and cannot be grouped with those nations which bear the responsibility for the present adverse economic situation of the least developed countries. The demands of the developing countries cannot be applied to the socialist countries. The socialist countries, however, will continue to help the developing countries in accordance with their means. Bilateral or multilateral assistance can play only a supplementary - though not negligible - role.

International co-operation can develop to the fullest in an atmosphere of peace. There must be an end to the arms race. The lowering of military budgets would release great resources, part of which could be used for development.

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(This page completes press release UNCLDC/9)





## PRESS RELEASE

*For use of information media, not an official record*

# United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries

PARIS  
1-14 September 1981

6th Meeting (night summary)

UNCLDC/10  
3 September 1981

### LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRIES CONFERENCE HEARS SEVEN SPEAKERS IN GENERAL DEBATE

The representatives of Iraq, Hungary, New Zealand and The Gambia made statements tonight as the United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries continued its general debate.

Statements in debate were also made by the Secretary-General of the Commonwealth, the Director General of the International Labour Office (ILO) and the Director-General of the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO).

The Conference began on Tuesday, 1 September, and is to continue through 14 September.

Listed to speak when the Conference meets again at 10 a.m. tomorrow, 4 September, are Denmark, Soviet Union, Federal Republic of Germany, Finland, Malawi, France, Sweden, United Arab Emirates and Yugoslavia.

(SUMMARIES OF THE STATEMENTS MADE AT THE MEETING HAVE  
BEEN ISSUED AS PAGES UNCLDC/10A THROUGH UNCLDC/10G)

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(more)

6th Meeting (night)  
3 September 1981

Press Release/UNCLDC/10A  
page 2

### Speech by Iraq

Following is a brief summary of the statement made tonight in the general debate by Mahdi MOHSEN ODA (Iraq):

The fact that the problem of the least developed countries is still on the agenda of many international gatherings indicates not only the absence of the developed countries sincere political will but reflects also serious violation of the principle of international solidarity. The Conference is required to come up with a realistic strategy to overcome these problems, particularly so since the solution of these problems constitute one of the main elements in the establishment of a new international economic order.

The main responsibility in overcoming the problems must be borne by the developed countries, which have created them. "It is not logical nor just to put those responsibilities on the shoulders of parties who are not involved in the creation of such a situation; however, the volume and magnitude of the developing countries' problems require the collaboration of the international community."

The developed industrial countries have been able to shift the damaging effect of the present economic crisis to the developing countries. Iraq proposed the establishment of a long-term international fund to combat inflation exported to the developing countries in which the industrialized developed countries must participate, irrespective of their political and social economic systems, in the amount of inflation directly exported by them annually to the developing countries and in accordance with the reflected prices of goods and services imported by these countries annually. On the same basis, the developing oil-producing countries should participate in that fund.

On this occasion, Iraq would like to invite all the countries of the world and especially the industrialized developed countries to co-operate in order to implement this proposal.

"A recent phenomena that constitutes a serious constraint to development and international co-operation is that of naked aggression by imperialist and racist Powers against development projects and efforts in the developing countries. The most glaring examples of such aggression to stop development or to hinder the use of modern technology to achieve it are the Zionist attack against peaceful atomic installations in Iraq and Zionist aggression against Lebanon and the rest of the Arab nation. The aggression of racist South Africa against Angola comes within the same context and, together with the recent Zionist aggression against Iraq, has rightly been condemned by the international community. Such aggression against economic development necessitates that the international community devise effective measures to put an end to it.

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Views of Commonwealth Secretary-General

Following is a brief summary of the statement made tonight in the general debate by Shridath S. RAMPHAL, Secretary-General of the Commonwealth:

If we are to help the least developed countries, we must put the whole North-South dialogue on a constructive course and facilitate, in the global round and in other fora, basic and wider changes which could not comprehensively or even substantially be covered by a conference concerned only with the least developed countries. The least developed countries comprise only 180 of the 780 million in absolute poverty in the world and what divides them from others within the category of the low-income countries is an almost imperceptible line. The real gap is not between the least developed and others among the poorest, but between them collectively and the rich with incomes 40 times their own. For all these countries as a group, the average annual earnings of their people is about the equivalent of just two weeks unemployment benefits of an industrial worker in the European Economic Community.

A programme for the least developed countries must include commitments about financing. A greatly increased flow of concessional financing is an urgent necessity. This requires predictable concessional flows which depend on strong aid commitments. To those who look askance at time-bound targets it is worth recalling that the great success of the Marshall Plan derived in no small measure from the fact that it was basically a grant programme with a cost-ceiling (\$80 billion in 1981 prices), a time limit (four years) and a definite objective (reconstruction).

What is being proposed by UNCTAD is relatively small in absolute terms, and totally insignificant in relation to the economic capacity of the industrialized countries, or in relation to their budgets on military spending alone. It would be a mistake to assume that aid to the least developed countries can be increased through redistribution of aid from other developing countries. Most oil-importing developing countries, low-income and middle-income, are facing grave balance-of-payments problems and a severe resource constraint in financing high priority development activities. The need for further financing for all these countries is urgent, and there is no scope for reducing external flows to them.

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Statement by Hungary

Following is a brief summary of the statement made in the general debate tonight by Tibor MELEGA, Deputy Minister of Foreign Trade, Hungary:

The Government of the Hungarian People's Republic fully understands the endeavours of the least developed countries and it is our policy to support nations newly liberated from colonial oppression. We hold the view that, in accordance with the United Nations Charter on Economic Rights and Duties of States, the relations between countries should be based on total sovereignty over natural resources, on equality of rights and on mutual advantages.

We consider that the backwardness of the least developed countries is basically attributable to the colonialist and neo-colonialist policies of the imperialist powers. The progress of these countries is still being hindered by the activities of transnational corporations.

We have made considerable efforts to broaden our relations with the least developed countries. We have made intergovernmental agreements, whose aim is to facilitate the work of companies both in the least developed countries and in Hungary. In the past, we have sent a considerable number of Hungarian experts to the least developed countries, in return nationals from these countries (1,000 in 1980) have been trained in Hungary. We do not confine our assistance to the least developed countries to bilateral aid, as manifested in the Hungarian preferential tariff system which provides that all goods of the least developed countries are exempt from duty without restriction since January 1978. Hungary has also taken part in technical and scientific co-operation within the framework of the United Nations.

The Hungarian People's Republic wishes to continue taking part in furthering the development of the least developed countries although increasing international tension, the revival of the arms race and world economic difficulties set limits to our possibilities. We intend to concentrate mainly on the development of basic branches of production, infrastructure and a qualified labour force. Our experience therein enables us to offer effective assistance.

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Director-General of ILO speaks

Following is a brief summary of the statement made in the general debate this evening by Francis BLANCHARD, Director-General of the International Labour Office (ILO):

I should like, at the outset, to assure you of the willingness of the ILO to make a concrete contribution to the solution of the dramatic problems facing the least developed countries. First of all, the least developed countries must receive increased aid, which the most favoured countries have a responsibility to shoulder, whether they be market economies or planned economies. The contribution which both are making to these countries, although not negligible, is insufficient and unequally distributed. Therefore, the figures put forward in the draft programme of action are not only desirable but reasonable - reasonable because the amounts required to improve the situation of the least developed countries are not beyond reach.

Apart from an indispensable increase in transfers of resources, it must be hoped that this Conference will propose precise measures for improving terms of trade, for raising and stabilizing the price of basic products, and for finding solutions to the grave problem of the growing indebtedness of developing countries, particularly the poorest. The ILO devotes more than 25 per cent of its technical co-operation activities to these countries.

In the belief that development requires a judicious blending of economic and social objectives, we must warn against the temptation to reserve the greater part of available resources for projects of a purely economic nature to the detriment of social programmes. One conditions the success of the other. Another field to which the ILO has directed much effort and material is the development of human resources. I think we all agree, conditions should be created for a broad participation of men and women in the tasks of development.

It is not necessary to create new mechanisms as one is tempted to do every time a big problem comes up for discussion in international circles. Existing institutions have the experience, the methods and the contacts which this Conference will no doubt put to the test.

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WIPO Director General speaks

Following is a brief summary of the statement made in the general debate tonight by Arpad BOGSCH, Director General of the World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO):

The governing bodies of WIPO will meet in November to adopt programmes and plans for the next six years. The conclusions drawn from this Conference will give renewed emphasis and a sharpened sense of direction to our activities.

To overcome the grave problems of the least developed countries, what can be done, and what should be done, in the specialized field of activities of the World Intellectual Property Organization?

The protection of intellectual property - principally inventions, industrial designs, trademarks, literary, artistic and scientific works - is not an end in itself: the promotion of creativity, the respect of legal rights in intellectual creations and the dissemination and application of the results of creativity contribute to economic, social and cultural development. The responsibilities of WIPO are to promote creative intellectual activity and to facilitate the transfer of technology to developing countries. In the particular circumstances of the least developed countries, and based on our experience so far, I have three suggestions to make.

First, I suggest that the highest priority in our field is training. This means training the people who administer intellectual property laws, those who negotiate the legal aspects of technology transfer agreements and those who extract and disseminate technological information contained in patent documents. The priority for training is one which could well be confirmed and reinforced by this Conference.

My second suggestion is that least developed countries should be helped to take the fullest possible advantage of international co-operation for the sharing of the burden and the sharing of the results of technical work. In our field such co-operation is taking place both within particular groups of developing countries (for example, in Africa) and within global arrangements.

My third suggestion is that least developed countries should be helped, when considering the available options for legislation and institution-building, to choose at the outset the solutions which will be cheapest in terms of the skilled human resources required for their implementation. This may seem obvious, but it is seldom said and often forgotten, particularly by advisers from other countries.

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Statement by New Zealand

Following is a brief summary of the statement made in the general debate tonight by Malcolm J.C. TEMPLETON (New Zealand):

New Zealand is especially sensitive to the problems of developing countries because, as a country whose economy depends in large measure on the production and export of a few agricultural commodities, it shares some of those problems.

New Zealand believes that the new Programme of Action must stress the diversity in terms of size, population, location and economic potential. It must be a document which realistically assesses what measures are needed to promote structural transformation. And it must be a document which recognizes the differing impact that external economic developments have on individual least developed countries. Over-all, New Zealand would support a flexible approach towards overcoming the problems of the least developed countries in the uncertain economic environment of the 1980s.

For the same reasons, New Zealand would support a more flexible set of criteria to determine which countries qualify as least developed countries. The present criteria were formulated when the international economy was relatively stable. Admittedly this Conference is not about criteria - it is about measures for assisting least developed countries. New Zealand hopes, nevertheless, that the Committee on Development Planning will review the criteria in the near future.

New Zealand, a South Pacific country, has a special commitment to the South Pacific Island nations: nine independent States and two fully self-governing countries. They have all the structural deficiencies of least developed economies, but each has its own special problems. New Zealand has concentrated a growing proportion of bilateral aid in the South Pacific. In the present financial year, it has allocated almost 70 per cent of its bilateral aid to the region. New Zealand has concluded that the level of assistance it is able to provide will be most effective in its own neighbourhood, where it has special historical and political ties, and where it can most efficiently provide and administer aid programmes. Although this region includes only one officially designated least developed country, Samoa, several others would drop into a least developed income category if it were not for the present relatively high per capita level of aid. New Zealand tries to complement direct grant aid with development activities in other areas which it believes have a ready application to least developed country economies.

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Statement of The Gambia

Following is a brief summary of the statement made in the general debate tonight by Momodou S.K. MANNEH, Minister of Economic Planning and Industrial Development of The Gambia, a least developed country:

The Gambia has embarked on a programme to improve its economy and improve the standard of living of its people. Guided by the principle of self-reliance, the plan calls for increased economic growth by 4.5 per cent, food self-sufficiency, improved health and education services and the promotion of domestic savings. Bottlenecks to economic growth include persistent drought and lack of trained manpower, as well as a sharp drop in The Gambia's main export crop, while the prices of imports, particularly petroleum, rose sharply.

The central features of the second plan, the preparation of which is now in its terminal phase, will give special attention to the preservation of political stability and social equity and stepping up the efforts for accelerated economic growth with emphasis on the directly productive sectors, agriculture, manufacturing and tourism in particular, while progressively improving the welfare of all Gambians, with particular reference to the satisfaction of basic needs.

A number of important guidelines have been established to govern the terms and conditions of all forms of inflow of external assistance into The Gambia to ensure the effective utilization of external resources for our development: no development loans of less than 10 years' maturity will be accepted. Loans with excessively high interest rates will also not be taken; because of the indirect balance of payments effects of external financing of development projects, funds will not be detained for low priority projects even on soft loan terms; external financing will be sought to cover not only direct foreign exchange cost of projects, but also the proportion of local costs; as past investments have not generated sufficient income and revenues for the financing and proper maintenance of capital assets, major requirements will be formulated into projects and external financing on grant terms will be sought for them; external grant finance will also be sought to cover a substantial part of recurrent costs, including maintenance, following the completion of a project with major recurrent cost elements; and over-all, efforts will be made to ensure that procedures of disbursement of funds are sufficiently flexible, taking into account our pressing needs and special circumstances.

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(This page completes press release UNCLDC/10)





PRESS RELEASE

For use of information media; not an official record

## United Nations Conference on **the Least Developed Countries**

**PARIS**  
**1-14 September 1981**

Press Release/UNCLDC/11  
4 September 1981

### AGREEMENT ON COMMON FUND FOR COMMODITIES TO BE OPEN FOR SIGNATURE AND DEPOSIT OF RATIFICATION INSTRUMENTS IN PARIS DURING UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRIES

On the occasion of the United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, arrangements have been made exceptionally to have the Agreement establishing the Common Fund for Commodities open in Paris for signature and/or for deposit of an instrument of ratification, acceptance or approval throughout the period of the Conference.

In the eleven months that the Agreement has been open for signature, 44 countries have signed it. The Common Fund is a financial institution which is seen as a key instrument of the Integrated Programme for Commodities adopted at UNCTAD IV in Nairobi in 1976. The signatories to date represent 62 per cent of the \$470 million Directly Contributed Capital of the Fund. Entry into force will occur when the Agreement has been ratified by 90 countries, accounting for at least two thirds of this amount. Up to now eight countries (in chronological order, Indonesia, Denmark, Philippines, Bangladesh, Japan, Sweden, Norway and Haiti) have ratified it.

The main function foreseen for the Common Fund is to finance buffer stocking of commodities through International Commodity Agreements (ICAs) that would be associated with the Common Fund. Its main financial resource would be borrowing on the international capital market backed by governmental guarantees. In this way the resources which could be mobilized for buffer stocking could be many times larger than the Directly Contributed Capital.

A second "window" of the Common Fund would finance other measures in the commodity field such as research and development and productivity improvement. This account would be financed from voluntary contributions; a target of \$280 million was put forward. Up to now \$226-227 million has been pledged. In addition \$70 million would be allocated for this second account from the Directly Contributed Capital.

In view of the importance of commodity trade to the economies of the least developed countries, representatives from a number of countries, both developed and developing, have emphasized in their statements to the present Conference the need to bring the Common Fund into operation as soon as possible.

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# PRESS RELEASE

*For use of information media, not an official record*

## United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries

PARIS  
1-14 September 1981

7th Meeting (AM Summary)

UNCLDC/12  
4 September 1981

### CONTRIBUTIONS TO UNDP FUND FOR LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRIES ANNOUNCED AT PARIS CONFERENCE

#### Nine speakers heard in General Debate

Contributions to the United Nations Development Programme Fund for the least developed countries were announced this morning by Denmark (\$2 million) and Sweden (\$9 million for three years) as the United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries continued the general debate.

Speaking in the general debate this morning were the Foreign Ministers of Denmark and Sweden and the representatives of the Soviet Union, Federal Republic of Germany, Finland, Malawi, France, United Arab Emirates and Yugoslavia.

Also this morning, messages from the heads of State or Government of Afghanistan, Bangladesh and China were read to the Conference.

Listed to speak when the general debate continues at 3 p.m. today are Trinidad and Tobago, Sudan, Venezuela, Australia, Comoros, Indonesia, Democratic Yemen, Organization of the Islamic Conference and the OPEC Special Fund for International Development.

(SUMMARIES OF THE STATEMENTS MADE AT THE MEETING  
HAVE BEEN ISSUED AS PAGES UNCLDC/12A THROUGH UNCLDC/12I)

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Denmark speaks in general debate

Following is a brief summary of the statement made in the general debate this morning by Kjeld OLESEN, Foreign Minister of Denmark:

Denmark is gravely concerned that the least developed countries continue to face serious obstacles to their development and the situation seems without much hope unless the international community acts. The list of least developed countries must be kept under review throughout the decade. Denmark associated itself with the view that helping the Third World was helping the industrialized world out of its crisis.

Denmark has committed itself to the target of 1 per cent of Gross National Product ~~(GNP) in official development assistance to developing countries.~~ Much of Denmark's assistance goes to the least developed countries; in 1980 43 per cent of Denmark's bilateral aid went to those countries.

The adoption of sub-targets, when seen in the context of the 0.7 per cent target of official development assistance can lead to more equitable contributions from donors and facilitate review and appraisal procedures. The quality of Denmark's loans to the developing countries is comparable to grant aid. Regarding the wish that all aid be in grant form, Denmark will study that aspect of the matter.

The least developed countries hold the main responsibility for their development and must adopt measures at the national level. National and international measures must be mutually supportive. The action programme must reflect an appropriate balance between these measures.

In following up on the recommendations of the Conference it is important to rely to the largest possible extent on existing institutions, notably the World Bank consultative groups and the round tables of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The often weak administrative infrastructure of the least developed countries should not be unnecessarily burdened by the creation of new elaborate follow-up mechanisms where such are not needed. The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) should clearly play a role in the review and appraisal system at the global level.

Denmark will contribute to the UNDP Special Measures Fund 15 million d.kr., equal to roughly \$2 million, over and above its usual contribution of \$58 million to UNDP for 1981. This fund has the least developed countries as its special target group and already draws on the extensive administrative capacity and local expertise of UNDP. We would hope that such a contribution would also promote the role of UNDP in the follow-up of the important decisions and recommendations of this Conference.

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USSR Addresses Conference

Following is a brief summary of the statement made in the general debate this morning by I.T. Grishin (Soviet Union):

The most important prerequisite to overcome the least developed countries' economic backwardness is the radical and progressive social and economic transformation, including agrarian reforms, establishment of effective control over national resources and the active mobilization of domestic resources for development.

The current international situation unfortunately creates conditions which are far from being favourable for the solution of development problems. Imperialist circles create an atmosphere of mistrust and hostility in international relations, promote stockpiling nuclear and other weapons and undertake provocative aggressive actions against certain developing countries. Prospects of international economic co-operation and the advancement of developing countries including the least developed among them, depend on progress in strengthening universal peace and security and implementing effective measures of real disarmament.

Seeking control over world energy and raw material resources, imperialism openly tries to use force and brutally interferes with the struggle for the national liberation. The aim of its aggression is primarily those countries which seek genuine political and economic independence. Some Western Powers have chosen the way of economic aggression, blockade and boycott, using economic relations as means of blackmail and political pressure. Only by taking into account all these facts can one correctly estimate the real causes of the serious economic situation of the least developed countries and thereby elaborate effective measures to overcome their economic backwardness.

The consistent policy of the Soviet state is to provide effective assistance to the least developed and other developing countries in their struggle to overcome economic backwardness. The economic relations between the Soviet Union and the least developed countries as well as all other countries are inconsistent with exploitation, inequality and discrimination. Providing economic assistance, the Soviet Union does not impose any political conditions, does not seek control over the natural resources and economy of its partners. An important feature of Soviet co-operation with least developed countries is the fact that according to the partners' wishes priority is given to the development of the State sector. The Soviet Union will continue to assist the least developed countries in expanding their export resources.

At present, there exist in the world not only two socio-economic systems but accordingly two essentially different bases of economic relations with the developing countries. Therefore, any recommendations should not be formulated by mechanical extension of schemes and provisions typical for the capitalist economic system to the relations between least developed countries and socialist countries.

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Statement of Federal Republic of Germany

Following is a brief summary of the statement made in the general debate this morning by Rainer OFFERGELD, Federal Minister for Economic Co-operation of the Federal Republic of Germany:

In 1980, the bilateral official flows from the Federal Republic of Germany to the least developed countries reached almost DM 1 billion, almost twice the 1977 figure. It is now the least developed countries' largest bilateral donor. In addition, there is a German share of more than half a billion DM in the activities of multilateral organizations for the benefit of the least developed countries. Since 1978, the least developed countries have been receiving grants from the Federal Republic of Germany rather than loans. Most of these countries have already had their debts waived, a total of DM 3.5 billion.

Regarding the Programme of Action, several points are of particular importance. Aid has a lasting impact only if it serves to support efforts undertaken in the countries themselves. The German Bundestag and the German public quite rightly urge that German aid should be channelled, by way of support, to those countries in which efforts are already being made to alleviate the situation of people living in absolute poverty.

In addition, economic progress in the developing countries must have a direct impact on the poorest in particular. However, sustained improvement of the situation of these people will be brought about only if they themselves can take an active part in shaping their living conditions. In this endeavour, the non-governmental organizations are providing exemplary assistance which can be further developed.

The Programme of Action requires extra efforts not only from the Western industrial countries which already provide over 80 per cent of aid to the least developed countries. The Federal Republic of Germany hopes that the oil-exporting States will also channel a larger proportion of their aid to the least developed. And it calls on the socialist industrial States to lay aside their not very convincing restraint and make an appropriate contribution to the assistance to the least developed nations.

Concerning the difficult question of volume targets for official assistance, readiness to make honest and realistic compromises is essential. The economic situation has become difficult worldwide. Our contributions to these countries can no longer rise as quickly as they did in the last few years. Setting realistic targets would do more to help the partners in the least developed countries than making sweeping promises which cannot be kept.

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Statement by Finland

Following is a brief summary of the statement made in the general debate this morning by W. Breitenstein, Representative of Finland:

Today 270 million people living in abject poverty in the least developed countries have no hope of improving their lot through means of their own. Therefore, the future of these countries is a priority issue for the international community. At this Conference their claims and aspirations will be addressed as one single issue at the highest political level.

Finland has responded to the call of the Immediate Action Programme adopted unanimously two years ago in Manila by directing well over 30 per cent of our bilateral assistance to the least developed countries. This share is one of the highest among the industrialized countries and in volume it has doubled in the period 1978-1981.

Concerning trade, 98 per cent of Finnish imports from the least developed countries was non-dutiable in 1980. While endeavouring to continue our efforts to increase the volume of trade with the least developed countries, we will also concentrate on measures supporting them in creating new export production and marketing methods. Additionally, Finland has sponsored trade policy courses for the least developed countries and training programmes for trade promotion and customs administration.

Agricultural development and increase in food production constitute an essential economic and social priority. While contributing to satisfying the most fundamental human needs, they also lay the ground for overall development. Experience demonstrates that increase in this sector cannot be achieved without determined efforts, which fully involve the small farmers and the landless, as well as women in the development process. To improve human infrastructure, the establishment of vocational training facilities is an important first step.

For our part, Finland will continue to allocate at least 30 per cent of bilateral development assistance to the least developed countries. Measured against our intention to reach the 0.7 per cent target, this represents a significant increase. Finland also intends to double its assistance to the International Fund for Agricultural Development, and has decided to join the International Emergency Food Reserve and to increase its food aid through the World Food Programme. Finland will continue to increase its support for the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and accordingly will contribute to UNDP in 1982 38.5 million Finnish markkas, corresponding to an increase of 14 per cent over 1981. It will also nearly double its contribution to the United Nations Capital Development Fund, and will expand recently initiated co-operation with the United Nations Sudano-Sahelian Office which, among other measures, it will also assist the least developed countries in creating new export production and marketing their products.

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Malawi Addresses Conference

Following is a brief summary of the statement made in the general debate this morning by L.C. CHAZINA, Minister of Finance of Malawi, a least developed country:

The country paper that Malawi presented at Geneva in June 1981 contains very detailed information on the economic and social problems that we are facing and the measures that we are taking to correct them. However, for the sake of emphasis, may we point out that Malawi is a land-locked narrow strip of land and lakes, in the southern region of Africa. Its population totals about 6 million, 80 per cent of which continue to live in the rural areas and derive most of their incomes from small-scale farming. The country does not possess known mineral resources. The transport infrastructure remains poor, with routes to the coast still underdeveloped.

The provision of education facilities continues to lag behind the economy's manpower requirements and the medical facilities remain poor and inadequate.

Nonetheless from 1964 when Malawi became an independent and sovereign State to 1977, the economy achieved a per capita growth rate of more than 3 per cent per annum. However, since 1978, the economy began to experience some deceleration. The main contributing factors were unfavourable weather for maize and tobacco, falling prices for agricultural exports and rising costs of fuel.

In order to arrest the resultant unfavourable economic trends, the Government has taken a number of austerity measures since 1978/79. However, it was still necessary to resort to the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank for assistance.

For the next ten years, the strategy of Malawi is to attempt to transform the economy so as to attain self-sustained development in the 1990s. The structure of incentives and producer prices will be reviewed in order to discourage uneconomic undertakings and to maximize the country's income. The Government will direct a larger share of public investment to agriculture, transportation and education than in the previous decade, in order to alleviate the country's manpower problems.

In the belief that some of our problems and constraints can best be tackled from a regional perspective, we are committed to the framework of the Southern African Co-ordination Conference, and encourage its widest support.

It is obvious that if the economy is to achieve growth rates of 5 per cent or more, substantial additional injections of both private and official foreign capital will be required. It is important that aid modalities be flexible and that the major part of the external financing required be in the form of grants, so that debt servicing does not hamper development.

It is in the hope that the international community has sympathetically received and understood the aims and objectives of our Country Programme that we commend it to them, not only for their support and endorsement, but also for their commitment.

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Statement of France

Following is a brief summary of the statement made in the general debate this morning by Jacques DELORS, Minister of Economy and Finance of France:

The complexity, diversity and amplitude of the economic difficulties the world is now going through defy all existing theories and ways of thinking. Governments must all be determined to challenge their present dogmas and alleged certainties and therefore their practices, their ways of operating. It is obvious that there will be no individual solution to the crisis. It is only together that all countries will be able to achieve lasting growth and equilibrium again.

It is up to the least developed countries, and up to them alone, to define the meaning and finality of the development to which they aspire as well as the type of society they wish for their countries. In this respect, donor countries must abstain from imposing their own choices and priorities. The least developed countries must themselves implement the policies likely to further their development and to allow the action for international support to achieve maximum efficiency.

The strategic orientations concerning human progress, agricultural and rural development and self-sufficiency for energy, set for themselves by the least developed countries, must be effectively and concretely supported by all the partners of these countries. A new and important effort should be made by donor countries both with regard to the volume and the forms of aid. Expressed as a percentage of the gross national product (GNP), French aid to least developed countries will rise to 0.10 per cent in 1981, which corresponds to a 30 per cent increase in three years. France commits herself to reach 0.15 per cent of its GNP in 1985. The increased effort made by France for least developed countries will not be accomplished at the expense of developing countries. France means to simultaneously raise the whole of the resources earmarked for that end.

France will review the instruments, terms and conditions of its aid, so as to adjust them to the concrete problems and needs of the States and populations in order to increase their efficiency. No contribution shall be disregarded, including those made through the campaigning network of non-public organizations.

The strengthening of their human and technical capacities is one of the essential needs of the least developed countries. Similarly, the conditions of the aid should be improved. The grant element should be maximized and the two concepts of continuity and predictability should be considered as essential.

As to trade, France strongly supports products agreements. UNCTAD's achievement in this field is quite praiseworthy. France values the Common Fund and hopes that the countries represented here will join it as soon as possible. France also favours the creation of stabilizing mechanisms of income similar to those already set up by the European Community.

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Sweden Addresses Conference

Following is a brief summary of the statement made in the general debate this morning by Ola ULLSTEN, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Sweden:

The least developed countries are faced with an international economic situation they themselves neither caused nor can do much to influence. And these are the very countries that can least afford to cut back programmes against poverty and hunger. Efforts must involve all strata of the population both in the rural and urban areas; the role of women in this process is of utmost importance and special measures are called for to realize the full partnership of women.

It is sad to note, when adequate nutrition is the most basic requirement for human existence, that agricultural production has not kept pace with the population increase but, on the contrary, declined. Food security for the least developed countries requires access to food on a grant basis in situations of serious shortage and, in many cases, to satisfy long term import requirements.

The least developed countries are faced with a dual energy crisis: imports constitute a very serious balance of payments burden mainly due to the increased price of oil, while the rapid depletion of the traditional and most important sources of energy such as charcoal, animal wastes and particularly firewood, has grave consequences for the rural people and for the environment.

A full understanding of the interrelationships between population, resources, environment and development, and action on the basis of that understanding is vital. Also, considerable assistance is needed to improve infrastructures, administration, schools, hospitals and other services, towards the promotion of political stability and independence.

We note with satisfaction the intention of increasing the aid volume which has been announced by Canada, Finland, France, Italy and Japan. A special request must be directed to the United States and the Soviet Union. At a time when the least developed countries are faced with an increasingly disastrous situation, the two super-Powers engage in a race for military superiority. The US military budget is almost 10 times higher than total official development assistance (ODA) provided by countries of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). And no doubt the same relationship exists in the Soviet Union.

Sweden is ready to support the principle of a separate ODA-target linking aid to the GNP of donor countries with a view to reaching the percentage of 0.15 in 1985 and 0.20 in 1990 as called for by the "Group of 77" developing countries. The volume of budgeted Swedish aid has reached 1 per cent of GNP, and out of that total more than 30 per cent is already directed towards the least developed countries.

In 1978, Sweden wrote off all ODA debts owed to it by the poorest countries.

In trade participation, a major increase in financial and technical assistance is required in order to diversify economic structures; as are international schemes for the stabilization of export earnings; special attention to the trade policy fields and increased access to the markets of the more developed countries.

Sweden will pledge an additional 45 million Swedish crowns over a period of three years - around \$9 million - to its already large contribution to the UNDP's fund for the least developed countries.

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Statement of United Arab Emirates

Following is a brief summary of the statement made in the general debate this morning by KHALIFA AL MOUBARAK (United Arab Emirates):

In eight years the volume of United Arab Emirates assistance totalled \$9 billion, over and above the contribution to special funds.

All the least developed countries are still suffering at all levels from the consequences of imperialist domination. Other causes for their situation include inadequate economic structures and unfavourable natural conditions.

Assistance should be channelled to bring about the structural changes needed for the development of the developing countries. The imposition of inappropriate development models may have disastrous consequences for developing countries. It is essential to take into account the special characteristics of each country.

Even though oil revenues have increased, oil-producing nations have to respond to the growing aspirations of their populations. The United Arab Emirates had a gross national product of \$13 billion in 1980, but its imports cost \$9.8 billion.

The problems of man's development has precedence over other problems. That is why the United Arab Emirates has supported, since the Manila Session of UNCTAD, measures to help the least developed countries.

The United Arab Emirates will do its utmost to bring about a realistic action programme that is responsive to the aspirations of the least developed countries.

The United Arab Emirates will give to the least developed countries not only its moral sympathy but its effective and genuine support.

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Statement of Yugoslavia

Following is a brief summary of the statement made in the general debate this morning by Vuko DRAGASEVIC, member of the Federal Executive Council of Yugoslavia:

We do not have the right to ignore the situation of underdevelopment and the horrible prevailing inequalities in living conditions or to put off action, given the fact that this status quo is a source of instability and threat to peace. We should all make a maximum effort in order to have this Conference adopt measures which will really help in the development of the least developed countries and the attenuation of their problems. No one in this world should have a clear conscience when 280 million people are living in circumstances that cannot be described as worthy of human beings, in poverty and complete destitution, with an income of half a dollar per person per day, an amount that is 40 times less than that of the developed countries. According to World Bank data, over the past 30 years income per capita of the least developed countries has only increased by \$90, whereas in the developed countries it rose by \$6,000.

The present situation is the most visible expression of unjust and intolerable economic relations in the world, which brake progress and which contain dangerous elements of economic, social and political confrontation. It is one of the most dramatic manifestations of the crisis which weighs on the world economic situation, a convincing proof of the necessity of change, the expression of the demand for indispensable structural change.

Taking into account the gravity of the situation, Yugoslavia gives its full support to the implementation of a Substantial New Programme of Action for the 1980s. Yugoslavia itself applies a policy of exceptionally privileged treatment for the least developed countries. Over the past 15 years Yugoslavia, through a Fund intended to promote trade, has accorded these countries long-term credits amounting to \$450 million for numerous development projects. Similarly, in these last several years, trade between Yugoslavia and developing countries in general has increased by more than 20 per cent per year.

Another Yugoslav institution, the Solidarity Fund for Non-Aligned and Developing Countries, allocates no less than 75 per cent of the totality of its resources to least developed countries. It is along these lines that we will pursue our commitment to implement the decisions taken at this Conference and to discharge the responsibilities that may be contained in the Substantial New Programme of Action.

This Conference is of particular importance. The responsibility for its success rests with all of us. We must transcend narrow short-term interests and take an attitude that the circumstances demand of us, that is to say, to promote international co-operation in supporting the countries that are most weak economically.

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(This page completes Press Release/UNCLDC/12)



# PRESS RELEASE

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## United Nations Conference on **the Least Developed Countries**

**PARIS**  
1-14 September 1981

8th Meeting (PM Summary)

UNCLDC/13  
4 September 1981

### PARIS CONFERENCE ON LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRIES HEARS TEN SPEAKERS IN GENERAL DEBATE

Ten further statements were made this afternoon in the continuing debate of the United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries.

Expressing the views of Governments were the Representatives of Trinidad and Tobago, the Sudan, Venezuela, Australia, the Comoros, Indonesia, Democratic Yemen and Turkey. Statements were also made by the representatives of the Organization of the Islamic Conference and the Director-General of the OPEC Special Fund for International Development.

The Conference President, Jean-Pierre COT, said that by Monday, 7 September, the General Committee would make its first evaluation of the work that has been carried out by the two Committees of the Conference.

He also invited Governments to take advantage of their presence at the Conference to sign or ratify the Agreement establishing the Common Fund for Commodities. So far, it has been signed by 44 countries and ratified by nine (further information on the Common Fund is given in Press Release UNCLDC/11 issued today.)

The general debate continues at 9 p.m. today. Listed to speak are Kenya, Somalia, Gabon, the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, the United Nations Children's Fund, the United Nations Centre for Science and Technology for Development and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO).

(SUMMARIES OF THE STATEMENTS MADE AT THE MEETING HAVE  
BEEN ISSUED AS PAGES UNCLDC/13A THROUGH UNCLDC/13J)

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Statement of Trinidad & Tobago

Following is a brief summary of the statement made in the general debate this afternoon by Wilfred Sheik NAIMOOL (Trinidad & Tobago):

Trinidad and Tobago supports the case which has been made with unusual, if not unprecedented, clarity, force and detail for larger concessions of assistance in all sectors of the developmental process, in trade, in energy, in financial and technical assistance, in food and agriculture and in disaster assistance. With respect to the question of energy, assistance in this area should be such that conventional and alternative sources of energy might be exploited.

Small island states suffer from a high incidence of natural disasters, from low resource endowment which makes them heavily dependent on imports, from a lack of agricultural diversity and from a manpower shortage. Islands of the developing world do not have the ability properly to exploit even the wealth of the sea's living resources, not to speak of mineral resources which demand technology of the highest order. In the special requirements of the least developed countries which are insular States should be given the most serious attention.

The United Nations agencies and other international organizations have not been used by many countries to maximum effect. These bodies must be brought fully into the developmental exercise for they have the resources to make forceful impact. They also have a vast experience and understanding of the problems of the developing world. All available resources and services must be rationally utilized and existing development programmes, at the national, regional and international levels must be intelligently co-ordinated and expanded; and, by expansion, Trinidad and Tobago does not refer to the creation of new institutions or apparatus.

The least developed countries have the most important and most crucial role in their struggle for a better life. It is by ceaseless and selfless national effort, it is through integrity of effort at all levels, it is through discipline, through an organized, dedicated and properly motivated bureaucracy, that the achievement of goals will be ensured. And the least developed countries are aware of this and have the quality to bring their visions to reality.

(more)

Sudan Addresses Plenary

Following is a brief summary of the statement made this afternoon in the general debate by Nasr Eldin MUSTAFA, Minister of National Planning of the Sudan, a least developed country:

The presence of high officials at the Conference is proof not only of the desire to find solutions to the problems of the least developed countries, but also of the wish to avoid the danger inherent in the gap between the rich and the poor. The solutions are available, the Conference must find them.

The Sudan pays tribute to those nations which have accepted the proposals of the "Group of 77" developing countries regarding increased aid to the least developed. It is pleased to note the interest the Ottawa Summit took in the least developed countries and hopes the Cancun Summit will do the same, and break the deadlock in the global negotiations.

The Sudan believes that resources should be assured for the Immediate Action Plan without waiting for the resumption of the global negotiations and the establishment of the new international economic order.

Efforts have been made by the Sudan to involve its citizens in the decision-making aspect of the development process. The Government hopes that donors and financial institutions will extend assistance to help in this respect. This participation, as well as decentralization, is part of the democratic process in the Sudan.

It is essential to determine the volume of financial assistance. Massive aid is vital. Also, scientific and technological as well as social infrastructures must be set up.

In spirit, the Sudan supports the "Group of 77" proposal on the new Programme for the 1980s. The volume of assistance should be increased in an automatic manner.

The Sudan would like due attention given to the question of improving forms of aid, in order to increase the volume of grants, and loans on concessional terms. It also hopes the new Programme will include recommendations on improving the administration and management of the aid to be extended.

(more)

Statement of Venezuela

Following is a brief summary of the statement made in the general debate this afternoon by Alfredo TARRE MURZI (Venezuela):

Many of the serious and traditional problems of Asia, Africa and Latin America are due to the ominous activities of the transnational corporations which unjustly and improperly exploit the primary commodities of Third World countries. If the control that these corporations exert over international trade in the field of commodities is not broken or at least significantly reduced, the social and economic situation of the least developed countries will not change substantially.

In the industrialized countries, limits must be placed on the monopolies and oligopolies which exploit the human and material resources of the countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America; other sovereign and independent political decisions must be made by the Governments of the Third World Nations in order to defend, with patriotism and integrity, specific interests of their economies and peoples.

The entire United Nations system, without any ambiguity or favouritism must be placed in the service of the least developed countries. It should not be stated or assumed that there are United Nations services, bodies, programmes or functions which do not obey the dictates of the international community or which meekly serve the strategy of political, social, economic or cultural domination by any Power.

With regard to new forms of South-South co-operation, the countries of the Organization of Oil-Exporting Countries (OPEC), through their International Development Fund, will assume the financial obligations of the least developed countries in the Common Fund for Commodities. This outlay by the OPEC countries amounts to approximately \$40 million. Developing countries should not allow adversaries to state that there are interests, discrepancies and contradiction among them which prevent common action and a South-South dialogue based on more active and constructive regional exchanges. Now is the time for united and common action. This Conference is an opportunity within reach of the Third World for proving its political maturity. It must immediately establish and develop an emergency programme based on priority needs. Also, as the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) has proposed, it is necessary to struggle for a new system that will guarantee the international circulation of information, while attempting to achieve a free and balanced flow. An international order must be established which will ensure communication that is pluralistic and universal.

Venezuela is prepared to spare no efforts to assure that OPEC diversifies the channels used up to now and increases its fund for the benefit of the least developed countries. At the bilateral level, Venezuela is firmly committed to increasing and continuing its technical and economic co-operation with the sister republic of Haiti, just as it has also done in the Caribbean and Central American countries.

(more)

### Australia Presents Views

Following is a brief summary of the statement on Friday afternoon by David SADLEIR (Australia):

The North-South dialogue has faltered and on some important matters has frozen in an impasse. Global negotiations have not yet been launched and over-all the dialogue badly needs the inspiration that only a vigorous revival of enthusiasm and a stronger sense of political purpose and commitment can provide. This Conference gives us a handsome opportunity to set about the task.

For the least developed countries the crucial issue is how to escape from stagnation. The precise prescription will vary from country to country. In every case, however, real breakthrough will need action on three separate but nonetheless interconnected levels. At the level of the general economy, breakthrough will entail a significant increase in investment (broadly conceived) coupled with major improvement in the efficiency of that investment. At the sectoral level, it will demand greater self-reliance in food production and energy where this can be done in a cost-effective way and without damage to delicate ecological balances. At the level of strategy, a framework of effective policies will be needed which takes account of changing and particular circumstances and which fosters soundly based growth and productivity, in particular in rural areas.

Australia recognizes that external assistance must play a significant part in support of the efforts and policies of the least developed countries. In 1981-82, Australia's aid will increase significantly to these countries; moreover all Australian assistance to them is provided in grant terms. Much of Australia's aid is designed to ensure long-term food security, often in the context of World Food Programme projects aimed largely at lifting rural productivity. Because of Australia's role as a major food producer and our belief that we have the necessary expertise and both a capacity and obligation to help in this area, my Government has decided to establish in Australia a new agricultural research body, known as the Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR), which will concern itself with the needs of developing countries. The Australian Government has decided that a trust fund should be created for the Centre and that the initial commitment should be \$A25 million over four years.

In general, Australia will pay particular attention to its regional links and associations in South East Asia and the South Pacific.

It is imperative that international attention to the problem of the least developed countries must not cease with the end of the Conference. The machinery to keep their needs before the entire international community and provide for action at the country level as well as for international review should be lean, efficient and not duplicate existing national and international machinery.

Reflecting our concern for the grave problems faced by the least developed countries, Australia has set aside a separate amount of \$A1 million, the sole purpose of which will be to support worthwhile multilateral initiative on behalf of these countries.

(more)



Statement of Comoros

Following is a brief summary of the statement made in the general debate this afternoon by Said KAFE, Minister of Finance, Economic Planning and Foreign Trade of the Comoros, a least developed country:

The large participation in this Conference is evidence of the wide awareness of the problems of the least developed. Their problems will not be solved except through increased and continuous assistance by the international community.

An island country, newly independent, the Comoros faces problems beyond those of other least developed nations: lack of facilities for trade within and without the country, years of disturbances following independence, and poor sales for its exports, as well as falling rates on the international market.

Free enterprise constitutes the Government's policy of development. The Comoros hopes to achieve food self-sufficiency by the end of the decade. Maize production will increase the food supply and enable the Comoros to reduce cereal imports. Fishing projects will reduce the need to import protein.

Concerning energy, efforts must be made to develop new and renewable sources. Also, drought is a problem, and assistance is sought to aid in the search for and distribution of water. The health situation is precarious, and the Government hopes to provide a "reference hospital" while it develops rural medical facilities. In addition, housing programmes designed to improve the living conditions of the least fortunate will soon be underway. As to cash crops, in addition to vanilla and cloves, the Government is rehabilitating coconut plantations. Synthetic products are dangerous competitors to the Comoros' natural products, especially its perfume products.

Improvement of the transportation system is a second major task. The tourism potential of the country remains unexploited. The Government would welcome external help in that area.

In the difficult task of development, will alone is not enough. What is needed is financial means and technical assistance staff. The Comoros hopes the Conference can define the commitment of the international community to the specific needs of the least developed countries.

(more)

Address of Indonesia

Following is a brief summary of the statement made in the general debate this afternoon by Rusli NCOR, Deputy Foreign Minister of Indonesia:

The need for special measures in favour of the least developed countries has been recognized since the early sixties. However, due to global economic crises, measures designed in their favour have been ill-implemented; and having fewer resources to fall back on, the least developed countries' predicament has steadily worsened.

As stated by the United Nations General Assembly Resolution in 1978 (resolution 34/203), the main objective of this Conference is to finalize, adopt and support the Substantial New Programme of Action for the 1980s with a view to enabling the least developed countries to transform their economies towards self-sustained development and thereby overcome their poverty and secure the basic minimum needs of their peoples.

Despite our limited capacities and capabilities, Indonesia has been practicing technical and economic co-operation among developing countries in the past few years, as a reflection of our genuine wish to share the experience that we gained from our development process with fellow developing countries.

During the period 1978-1980, Indonesia extended technical co-operation to 20 developing countries, including least developed countries, under several tripartite and bilateral TCDC programme arrangements. These programmes covered, among others, the fields of agriculture, small scale industry, vocational training, family planning and rural development.

Economic co-operation among developing countries (ECDC) should, however, not be seen as a substitute for global economic co-operation between the developed and developing countries, nor should it replace the emphasis on restructuring the North-South relationship. On the contrary, South-South co-operation would be a dynamic component of an effective restructuring of international economic relations and also an important stimulus for the North-South dialogue by imparting a renewed impetus to the negotiations.

In a world where interdependence has become a pre-condition for mutual survival, the critical plight of the least developed countries should be a cause for compassion and a matter of mutual concern for all of us. I am convinced that by harnessing all the means and resources at our disposal and given the requisite political will, the international community would be in a position to give appropriate response to this challenge. My delegation stands ready to give you its full support and co-operation in your endeavour to make this Conference a success.

(more)

Address of Democratic Yemen

Following is a brief summary of the statement made in the general debate this afternoon by Farag Bin GHANEM, Minister of Planning of Democratic Yemen, a least developed country:

The "Group of 77" developing countries has presented excellent texts; the common and unified position of this Group is one example of co-operation among developing countries.

Democratic Yemen has reached acceptable rates of development. There is better distribution of benefits among the various sectors of the country. What, however, is the point of better distribution of revenue when the total revenue is so small? Democratic Yemen, which shares many of its problems with other least developed countries, will not be able to solve its problems in the near future.

Democratic Yemen hopes the international community will guarantee projects that yield social benefits. Donor countries should assist least developed countries in the provision of construction materials, modern machinery and training for personnel.

It is necessary to put into operation the Immediate Programme of Action. Democratic Yemen supports the recommendations of the African Ministers made at Addis Ababa.

Inflation has recently been accompanied by other negative trends, including the increase in interest rates on commercial loans, making some ventures that were formerly economically profitable no longer so. The charges on external debts, and the debt servicing, is at an "unbearable level". Democratic Yemen supports the "special window" of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to alleviate debt-servicing problems. There should be reforms in the international money system.

It is necessary to amend the "Group of 77" proposals concerning development planning, mobilization of local resources, housing and the environment. Account must be taken of the role of the public sector. If the State cannot have the instruments at hand, the least developed countries cannot assume responsibility for their own development.

Democratic Yemen supports all the material in the International Development Strategy for the Third United Nations Development Decade (1981-1990) and the regional strategy of the Economic Commission for Western Asia (ECWA). It appeals to the developed countries that their assistance be non-discriminatory. It should not be measured in terms of influence or political issues.

Democratic Yemen appeals to the international community to develop more specific criteria for designating countries as least developed. Use of the GNP as a criterion is an "exaggeration".

(more)

Islamic Conference Official Speaks

Following is a brief summary of the statement made in the general debate this afternoon by Z.A. OSMAN, Deputy Secretary-General of the Organisation of the Islamic Conference:

Sixteen member States of the Organisation of the Islamic Conference fall in the least developed countries category. It is, therefore, only natural that we take keen interest in the deliberations of the Conference. The Organisation of the Islamic Conference is composed of poor and developing countries. However, despite their own state of development, they are contributing to the efforts of the international community to provide assistance to the least developed countries, including the drought-stricken countries of the Sahel region. The Third Islamic Summit Conference held in Saudi Arabia in January 1981, adopted a comprehensive resolution on the problems of its least developed members whose deficits in the balance-of-payments have reached alarming proportions. It is gratifying that assistance from the OPEC member States has substantially increased in recent years to between 2 to 6 per cent of their gross national product (GNP), which is several times more than the official development assistance (ODA) target. The assistance from these countries is all the more commendable considering that the real wealth is not located in oil-producing countries but in the renewable resources of the industrialized States.

Concerning international economic and monetary relations, I would like to give the example of the assistance programmes of the Muslim and Arab countries which are disbursed on such favourable terms that the receiving countries in reality would pay back barely one third of these amounts. Moreover, this aid is extended without any special conditions, and the beneficiary is at liberty to utilize it for purchases of its choice. Since these purchases are usually made from industrialized countries, ultimately it is the latter who stand to benefit from the financial assistance extended by Muslim and Arab states to the developing countries. Unfortunately, by contrast, the majority of developed countries offer assistance under such terms which eventually reduces the value of their aid.

The time has come to ask how long we will allow the increase in the prices of manufactured products from the developed countries while continuing to block similar increases in the prices of basic raw materials produced by the developing countries. Will we continue to accept as normal that two thirds of humanity does not achieve even one tenth of world industrial production?

The Organisation of the Islamic Conference stands committed to the least developed member States for meeting the burden of international economic upheavals; accelerating the development of their conventional and non-conventional energy resources; and supporting activities aimed at their major transformation.

(more)

OPEC Fund Official speaks

Following is a brief summary of the statement made in the general debate this afternoon by Ibrahim SHIHATA, Director-General of the Fund for International Development of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC):

Of all existing international development finance institutions, the OPEC Fund could be most appropriately identified as a Fund of the Third World, an Energy Fund and a Fund of the Poorer Countries. Even before the term "least developed countries" was coined by the United Nations, OPEC donors were concentrating their assistance efforts on the poorest developing countries. They have in fact, accounted for about 50 per cent of OPEC aid in general and more than 77 per cent of the assistance directly provided by the OPEC Fund. The level of assistance to the least developed countries is, at any rate, equivalent to about 0.23 per cent of the total Gross National Product (GNP) of OPEC donors. I would like to underline two facts which until now have not, unfortunately, been clearly established in the public's mind: the first is that OPEC countries' assistance to the least developed countries represents in relative terms more than what other donor groups have given and even exceeds by more than 150 per cent the projected target for aid to the least developed countries established by the United Nations; the second is that OPEC aid efforts to the least developed countries as a group have surpassed in volume any additional cost they may have incurred as a result of the increase in oil prices, despite the steady rise of the volume of their oil imports.

As developing countries themselves, OPEC countries realize the extent of the needs to be met. The current liquidity of some of the OPEC countries is not to be mistaken as a sign of added income, as it merely represents another form of their mineral wealth, which is fast being depleted. Yet they are using a generous part of it to assist other developing countries and will continue to do so as long as they can afford it. 120 loans totalling US\$490 million have so far been extended to the least developed countries by the Fund representing 41 per cent of its total lending.

The OPEC Fund's fifth programme of operations, currently under implementation, includes all the least developed countries on its priority list of recipient countries. So far this year, 16 of these countries have received interest-free loans under this \$1350 million programme, with a few others scheduled to sign loan agreements this month.

We do not share the view, which seems to be gaining ground in certain Western circles according to which, first, the poor nations are to be blamed for their poverty, and, second, the present international economic system allows for enough "social mobility" among nations. On the contrary, we believe that the developing countries which have managed to achieve some measure of prosperity under the present system did so in spite of the system, and not because of it.

However, we do agree that development starts at home and also believe that the poorest countries of the world should direct their attention to population control efforts at the national level as a challenge of the highest political order.

The least developed countries should prove, through their own domestic action and the regional co-operation among them, that serious indigenous developmental efforts are being exerted and deserve to be supported.

(more)

Speech by Turkey

Following is a brief summary of the statement made in the general debate this afternoon by Kamran INAN (Turkey):

It is essential that the Conference looks to the future and lays the groundwork for true international solidarity. It becomes too difficult to attack the problems of poverty on the one hand and break the vicious cycle of international economic relations on the other hand. The problems of the least developed countries are the problems of the international community as a whole.

The new Programme should include more complete measures, specific measures rather than words of good intentions.

The fate of millions depends on the will of Governments to implement change. The development of the least developed countries becomes a prerequisite for the running of the world for the benefit of all countries.

The least developed countries should rely on their own resources, but that is now impossible. International support is necessary now and for a long time to come - not only from market economy countries but also from centrally-planned economy countries. The nations of OPEC also have a role to play.

An increase in aid can have no meaning unless its forms are improved. Therefore, the new Programme should have recommendations in this respect. There also is a need for balance-of-payments support and help for the development of a healthy export sector.

Assistance for the poorest countries should not distract attention from the global negotiations on development within the context of a new international economic order.

The adoption of the new Programme will have no real meaning unless follow-up machinery is established. Turkey supports the proposal that the UNCTAD Intergovernmental Group on the Least Developed Countries serves as a monitoring body.

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## PRESS RELEASE

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# United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries

PARIS  
1-14 September 1981

9th Meeting (night summary)

UNCLDC/14  
4 September 1981

### PARIS CONFERENCE ON LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRIES HEARS SEVEN SPEAKERS IN GENERAL DEBATE AT NIGHT MEETING

The United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, continuing general debate, heard the views tonight of Kenya, Somalia, Gabon, the Economic and Social Commission of Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Centre on Science and Technology for Development and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO).

The debate continues when the Conference meets again at 10 a.m. on Monday, 7 September. Listed to speak at that time are Spain, Mali, Peru, Belgium, the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, Guinea, the Economic Commission for Western Asia, Poland and the World Health Organization.

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(SUMMARIES OF THE STATEMENTS MADE AT THE MEETING  
HAVE BEEN ISSUED AS PAGES UNCLDC/14A THROUGH UNCLDC/14F)

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Statement of Kenya

Following is a brief summary of the statement made tonight in the general debate by Zachary T. ONYONKA, Minister for Economic Planning and Development of Kenya:

Despite the promises by the international community in successive conferences of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the external resource flows to the low-income countries have not been encouraging at all. Ten years have elapsed since the third session of UNCTAD adopted a resolution at Santiago, by which it recognized the special needs of the least developed countries and called on the international community to mobilize additional resources to assist these countries. Nevertheless, the flow of international aid to the latter group of countries and the developing countries at large has disappointingly fallen far short of expectation. Consequently, a combination of inadequate international support measures, grave balance-of-payment problems and chronic international economic crises have continued to compound the problems in these countries.

The main objective of this Conference is not to allocate blame or responsibility for the sad state of economic welfare that prevails today in the least developed countries. The fact is that most of these countries have, in the face of formidable obstacles, tried for several decades now to promote their socio-economic progress. For them to achieve sustainable growth and development, external assistance is almost indispensable. If that assistance is denied to them, many more decades will lapse while their people continue to live in poverty and misery.

The assistance they are seeking is not a substitute for their own local efforts but a supplement to help them overcome a far more challenging situation than that which the more developed nations of today had to surmount in the past as they strove to develop. Reference to mismanagement is not entirely convincing. The argument is in our view simply a red herring aimed at deflecting the Conference from its noble course.

This Conference will have achieved very little if it limits itself to analysing and high-lighting the problems of the least developed countries and fails to address itself to workable and concrete solutions which should be backed by specific measures to facilitate their accelerated implementation. While it is easy to identify the numerous critical socio-economic problems in the least developed countries, their solutions demand political will and commitment from the entire international community.

(more)



Somalia Addresses Conference

Following is a brief summary of the statement made in the general debate tonight by ABDURAHMAN JAMA BARRE, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Somalia, a least developed country:

There is an urgent need for emergency aid to cope with the serious problems confronting the poorest nations of the world, particularly in the area of: food shortage to avert hunger and starvation; easing their mounting import bills and difficult balance of payment situation; coping with the steeply rising prices and continuous inflationary trends; providing import support for mitigating the effects of scarce foreign exchange earnings; and debt cancellation and similar measures for easing their immediate and pressing problems. It would not be wise to ignore the urgency of the problem and discard the Immediate Action Programme. There is little the least developed countries can do to cope with their present difficult position without the help of the international community. The main development objective of Somalia is to improve the standard of living of the country's population through the development of its major resources. There is substantial scope for development, but the exploitation of these idle resources for the benefit of mankind is often frustrated by the lack of sufficient financial resources, a weak technical base, and a severe worsening terms of trade due to heavy imports of food and other essential commodities. Moreover, Somalia is affected by a recurrent drought with devastating effects on human and livestock population. Refugees have overstrained its financial and manpower resources and put a heavy pressure on our limited basic social services.

Somalia hopes its development partners will extend increased, flexible and concessional aid to the least developed countries. It looks for an increase in the flow of financial and technical assistance for its development needs both for the Immediate and Substantial Programmes of Action. The adoption of this Programme should in no way be taken or used as a pretext for inaction with regard to other developing countries. The submitted investment plans have been recognized as deserving substantial support from the international community. It is hoped, therefore, that the donor countries will express their support and commitment to these investment plans in this Conference.

Any future assistance to the least developed countries must be of sufficient magnitude to have a meaningful impact to the economies of these countries. International development aid should always be tailored to the needs, aspirations and economic realities of the recipient countries. It should come in a continuous and predictable manner and without any difficult conditions.

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Gabon Statement

Following is a brief summary of the statement made in the general debate tonight by Pascal NZE, Minister of Planning and Development of Gabon:

The developing countries have made their voices heard in international forums, where good intentions have resulted in resolutions. But nothing has happened to meet the fundamental needs of peoples. The poor become poorer and the rich, richer. The Conference is an opportunity to set up the machinery for the development of the least developed countries.

The points raised in the new Programme are the key sector conditions governing the development of the developing countries in general, and the least developing countries in particular. It would be advisable for the industrial countries and the international organizations to make the sectors mentioned in the plan more dynamic.

The action programmes require the mobilization of vast resources. The support of the industrialized countries is essential, and without hurting themselves. Helping the Third World will help themselves.

Some developing countries with great difficulties are not included on the United Nations list of "least developed countries". They should be included.

"To express solidarity with a sick man who is groaning in his bed is not sufficient. To seek the ways to help him is better."

(more)

Executive Secretary of ESCAP Speaks

Following is a brief summary of the statement made in the general debate tonight by BIBLIANO B. ARZADON of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP):

The ESCAP region suffers from the largest concentration of poverty. Although there are only seven least developed countries in the Asian and Pacific region, they account for almost half of the total population of all the least developed countries. The continuing deterioration in the economic situation in these countries has become a matter of deep concern, as they are, on the average, even behind the least developed countries of other regions. The majority of the people in these countries live in absolute poverty and are deprived of the minimum standards of nutrition, health, education, housing and transport.

At the regional level, ESCAP has taken a number of steps to prepare for this Conference. In preparing the regional input into the International Development Strategy for the 1980s, emphasis was placed on the special needs of the least developed countries of the region. The programme of work and priorities has given special attention to the requirements of the least developed countries. The secretariat also organized a regional meeting of experts on the least developed countries in July 1980, which discussed the potentials, bottle-necks and assistance requirements of the least developed countries of the ESCAP region.

Since the eradication of poverty is one of its major objectives, the Commission has accorded high priority in its work programme to activities relating to food security, agricultural production and rural development. Likewise, in the industrial sector, an ESCAP "club" has been set up to assist the least developed countries in the region in their programme of industrial development through technical co-operation agreements between these countries and other developing countries. The main purpose is to provide technical manpower and financial resource support to the industrial projects in these countries. The ESCAP Meeting of the Ad Hoc Group of Ministers of Industry held in July this year felt that the "club" was an institution with considerable promise and recommended that its activities be widened to cover more least developed countries of the region.

ESCAP, being the regional focal point of the United Nations, will continue to play a catalytic role to carry out, in close co-operation with UNCTAD and other relevant bodies and organizations, the decisions that will be taken during the Conference with regard to the implementation, follow-up and monitoring of the Substantial New Programme of Action for the 1980s.

(more)

UNICEF Executive Director speaks

Following is a brief summary of the statement made tonight in the general debate by James P. GRANT, Executive Director, United Nations Children's Fund:

More than half of UNICEF's resources are now earmarked for helping the least developed countries. Approximately half of these poor people served are small children and mothers - the most vulnerable of them all - whose living conditions determine their prospects of survival and growth. "Of the 122 million children born in 1979 - one in every 10 is now dead." During that same year an additional several million small children in the age bracket of one to four also died. It means that more than 40,000 small children died each day. They died very quietly in what many of us call "the silent emergency". We know how silently when we realize that the terrible Italian earthquake in 1980 - a "loud" emergency with approximately 3,000 deaths - properly commanded the headlines of the world, but that same day more than 40,000 small children around the world died without notice. UNICEF welcomes the growing flood of evidence that appropriate increased investment in low income countries in social development of small children and their mothers can be extraordinarily good for economic growth, with, for example, annual returns of 25 per cent and more in primary education in low literacy countries if measured over extended time frames of 15 to 20 years. We are also learning that those same investments can have a profound impact on the motivation for smaller families, and can contribute to a sharp drop in birth rates.

Is it realistic to believe sufficient will and commitment can be developed? Concerning benefits, increased investment in rural programmes by high income countries, the least developed countries and by the international institutions, including UNICEF, not only promise increased care of mankind's most precious resource, children, but also should result in accelerating economic growth toward self-reliance of the least developed countries over the remaining years of this century. Since the acceleration of social development programmes is largely dependent on increased supplies of local currencies, this provision by external sources results in foreign exchange earnings by the recipient countries.

UNICEF, in addition to seeking more money for the least developed countries seeks new and more refined approaches to increasing the benefit to children from each UNICEF dollar - with emphasis on community participation and use of village auxiliaries and para-professionals on a multi-sectoral approach.

UNICEF has been fortunate that the generosity of its contributors, has not slackened. Indeed, some industrialized countries have increased their contributions very significantly, and UNICEF's policy of applying resources to the day-to-day problems of children and mothers has recently attracted the generous concern of a new group of donors - the various funds of the OPEC countries and particularly of the Gulf Arab States. On 31 August, the new Gulf Arab States Programme for support of United Nations development activities promised to provide \$40 million in new support to UNICEF during this year.

UNICEF's practice is to use whatever financial and human resources become available which will produce the highest possible yields. To make such approaches effective, UNICEF has learned that the part women play in community life is the key: women as income earners, women as mothers, women in their nurturing function, women as managers of family life, women as teachers - are the most effective human resource and participant in UNICEF's work at the community level.

(more)

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Spokesman of UN Centre For Science and Technology  
for Development Heard

Following is a brief summary of the statement of Amilcar F. FERRARI, Executive Director of the United Nations Centre for Science and Technology for Development:

In the context of the International Development Strategy, the contributions that can be made by the scientific and technological programmes and activities with special emphasis on the needs of the least developed countries should be specially considered.

The Intergovernmental Committee on Science and Technology for Development has recently approved an operational plan which proposes a number of concrete measures which are necessary to deal with specific requirements of the least developed countries in the following eight major programme areas: scientific and technological policies and plans for development; creation and strengthening of the scientific and technological infrastructure; choice, acquisition and transfer of technology; development of human resources for science and technology; financing of science and technology for development; scientific and technological information; strengthening of research and development in and for developing countries and their linkage to the production system; and strengthening of co-operation in the field of science and technology among developing countries and between developing and developed countries.

In many of these major programme areas the approaches and designs for the least developed countries must be significantly different from the more advanced countries. For instance, in the design of scientific and technological infrastructure in least developed countries, it would be necessary to take into account such factors as lack of sufficient human and financial resources, geographical and physical constraints, and lack of an essential institutional base. The development of adequate teaching and training materials in science and technology for the special needs of least developed countries is provided for in the operational plan.

Special assistance programmes for the least developed countries with the purpose of establishing a minimum national scientific and technological information infrastructure with the possibility of sharing other information services have been proposed.

The Conference's decisions on the New Programme would provide further concrete basis for design of specific projects and activities in the operational plan for science and technology for development of the least developed countries. Such activities would be initiated after carrying out consultations at the national, subregional and regional levels with focal points and other organizations and institutions dealing with science and technology for development.

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Palestine Liberation Organization Observer addresses Conference

Following is a brief summary of the statement made tonight in the general debate by Omar MASSALHA, Observer of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO):

The struggle of the Palestinian people, and the PLO, is designed not only to bring political liberation but also economic liberation.

Priority should go to the least developed countries, aid for them is a duty of the international community, and the developed countries in particular. It is not charity. Imperialism has brought about this plight. Aid to the least developed countries and the developing countries in general is an urgent need for international peace and security.

The positive stand taken by a number of countries here leads the PLO to feel optimistic. Yet the developing countries cannot live on promises. There must be action. The PLO wishes the Conference all success.

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## PRESS RELEASE

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# United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries

PARIS  
1-14 September 1981

Press Release/UNCLDC/15  
7 September 1981

10th Meeting (All Summary)

### UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON THE LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRIES

#### NINE SPEAKERS HEARD IN GENERAL DEBATE THIS MORNING

Nine further statements on the situation of the world's poorest and weakest countries were heard this morning as the United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries entered its fifth day of general debate.

Views were expressed by the representatives of Spain, Mali, Peru, Belgium, Guinea and Poland, as well as by the Director-General of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), the Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Western Asia (ECWA) and the Director-General of the World Health Organization (WHO).

Mir Mahmud NABAVI (Iran), speaking in right of reply, referred to the statement made Friday by the Executive Director of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), James P. Grant. The representative of Iran paid tribute to the humanitarian work of UNICEF, but expressed deep regret that little attention had been paid in the statement to the historic facts by a reference to the "Arab Gulf". For a long time, the body of water had been known as the "Persian Gulf". That was the name given to it by long usage. It was regrettable that the incorrect name had been used by a member of the United Nations Secretariat. He was sure it was an oversight.

The general debate will continue at two meetings today, at 3 p.m. and 9 p.m. Listed to speak at the afternoon meeting are Bhutan, the World Bank, Ireland, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), Chile, Switzerland, the World Food Programme, Yemen and the West African Economic Community.

(SUMMARIES OF THE STATEMENTS MADE AT THE MEETING HAVE  
BEEN ISSUED AS PAGES UNCLDC/15A THROUGH UNCLDC/15I)

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Statement of Spain

Following is a brief summary of the statement made in the general debate this morning by Carlos ROBLES PIQUER (Spain):

The least developed countries need official development assistance (ODA) from the developed countries in order to meet their trade deficits. Also, among other things, there should be a revision in their favour of the rules governing international economic relations.

Regarding the socio-economic criteria used for designating least developed countries, there are others beyond the 31 so named that need favourable treatment because of the sharp drop they have experienced due to prolonged political disruption or their situation as small island States. In Spain's view, the international community should avoid favouring the least developed countries to the detriment of other poorer nations.

The international community must also avoid the creation of a dialogue between the least developed countries and a small group of donor countries, with the rest of the world standing by as "dumb witnesses". The responsibility of development belongs to the whole international community. Also, Spain sees no point in attempting to assign historical or current responsibility for the situation of the least developed countries. All States bear responsibility for improving the situation.

Spain, in an intermediate stage of development, will continue to assist the least developed as its means permit. It contributed \$50 million to the Sixth Replenishment of the International Development Association (IDA). Also, it gave \$32 million to the African Development Bank, and, in that context, hopes that obstacles to the participation of States outside the region in the African Development Bank will be removed. Spain has also helped the least developed countries in food aid, advice in developing national food strategies and technical assistance.

Spain does not favour the proliferation of small forums where "behind closed doors" problems of world importance are being discussed.

(more)



Statement by Mali

Following is a brief summary of the statement made in the general debate this morning by Ahmed Mohamed AG HAMANI, Minister of Planning of Mali, a least developed country:

The feeling of pessimism surrounding this Conference stems in part from the lack of official development assistance as well as lack of food.

Recent conferences have come up with little for the least developed countries and the situation will get worse until the international community comes up with action along the lines of the Marshall Plan. The Substantial New Programme must lead to structural transformations in the least developed countries.

Mali's growth rate has hardly topped its population growth. That is due to low agricultural production, a drop in exports, drought and desertification. But Mali has agricultural potential and mining resources which could be developed if its hydropower potential is realized. In addition, Mali has great human resources.

In its development, Mali will give pride of place to rural development and energy independence, as well as consolidation of its industrial sector. Mali has begun its development on the basis of decentralization, with the participation of people on the local level.

The least developed countries are concerned about food self-sufficiency and food security. There must be an increased volume of aid, under conditions that are more flexible than they now are. There should be political and financial commitment to the programmes of the least developed countries - to the programmes, not to individual projects.

In Mali's view, special measures should be taken in favour of land-locked, island and Sahelian developing countries.

(more)

Speech of Peru

Following is a brief summary of the statement made in the general debate this morning by Felipe VALDIVIESO (Peru):

The problems of the least developed must be set in the broader framework of the developing countries as a whole. The solution to their problems is in the interests of the international community as a whole.

Policies of détente and co-operation are beginning to break down, threatening peace and security. The Conference is an exercise in solidarity and it must proceed in that direction, going beyond mere good intentions. The magnitude of the efforts needed by the international community is enormous. There are many tasks. Rural development and the improvement of trade benefits, leading to reasonable food security and to filling energy needs, is most urgent.

An effective measure by the industrialized countries would be a commitment of 0.15 per cent of their gross national product (GNP) in official development assistance to the least developed countries in the period 1981-1985, with an increase to 0.20 per cent in the second half of the decade. This proposal of the "Group of 77" developing countries is objective, a pragmatic proposal for a realistic solution to the problem.

Peru supports the establishment of a new development fund within the International Monetary Fund (IMF), offering the least developed countries exceptionally favourable conditions. Concerning trade, Peru believes all exports of the least developed countries should be duty-free, under the Generalized System of Preferences (GSP). Non-tariff barriers should be removed.

Peru has decided to join the Agreement establishing the Common Fund for Commodities.

The "Group of 77" has made its proposals. It is now for the industrialized countries to pick up the challenge.

(more)

Address of Belgium

Following is a brief summary of the statement made in the general debate this morning by Daniel COENS, Minister of Development Co-operation of Belgium:

The disparities that exist between the poorer developing countries and the others have increased. Most developing countries have seen their trade increase; the least developed have not. Also, the least developed countries risk being unfavourably affected by a reduction in the global volume of international assistance unless a gesture of solidarity is made.

The national development plans are not all alike. Some are too ambitious and not in keeping with anticipated available resources, others are realistic and based on coherent national policies.

A paramount role must be played by the international funding institutions. There should be better complementarity between aid to structural projects and project assistance.

There should not be over-emphasis on technology at the local level. Moreover, Belgium favours improved health and education for a country's population as a whole, not just for an "elite" in urban areas.

Concerning follow-up to Conference recommendations, it would be useless to set up new machinery. The already existing round-tables and the consortia of the World Bank should be strengthened. Co-ordination would fall to the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD).

Aid to the least developed countries should be increased, if not doubled. Belgium is committed to the target of 0.15 per cent. It would be difficult to make a further commitment over the short-term as Belgium has commitments to other developing countries, which it intends to honour.

Belgium appreciates the attitude that non-governmental organizations are taking about helping to meet the fundamental needs of the least developed nations. It has co-financing arrangements with the non-governmental organizations in this respect and will continue the arrangement.

The least developed countries need infrastructure, technical training, and development of their agricultural and industrial sectors. Belgium is confident that the Conference will be a starting point for new co-operation among partners on or equal footing, replacing confrontation.

(more)

Speech of GATT Director-General

Following is a brief summary of the statement made in the general debate this morning by Arthur DUNKEL, Director-General, General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade:

In GATT, we follow closely the work and negotiations on international commodity arrangements under the auspices of such bodies as the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), the International Monetary Fund and various regional arrangements, such as the Lome Convention. Lessons from recent events, and the need to prepare for the future point to the importance of making a special effort to diversify the trade patterns of the least developed countries, beginning at the level of production. At the same time, improved marketing structures, methods and personnel training are essential. With this aim, I can assure you that GATT will give its full support to the action programme of the International Trade Centre of UNCTAD/GATT for promoting the exports of least developed countries, establishing efficient foreign trade promotion institutions, and training personnel to carry out those tasks.

In the same spirit, the least developed countries, newcomers to world markets, must be helped to make their product standards and trading practices meet the requirements of international trade. It is in these areas that GATT can make a contribution corresponding to the specific needs of the least developed countries.

The relative lack of structural diversity of the least developed countries prevents them from drawing much benefit from the operation of the most-favoured-nation clause. This is why special efforts have been made to identify products of special export interest to the least developed countries, so that, to the fullest extent possible, those products can also be subject to concessions. The Tokyo Declaration, which was adopted at Ministerial level in 1973 and which opened the way for the multilateral trade negotiations, provided for special attention to and appropriate treatment for the particular trade problems of the least developed countries. In general, barriers have been lowered on a broad range of products of present or potential export interest to the least developed countries, and agreements have been reached which are designed either to give technical assistance to improve the capacity of the least developed countries for overcoming those barriers, or to grant them special dispensations. I should also note that adoption in the Tokyo Round of the so-called "enabling clause" has established, within the permanent legal framework of the GATT trading system, the possibility of special treatment for imports from the least developed countries.

The work being done by the GATT Sub-Committee on the Trade of Least Developed Countries is also contributing to the growing recognition that, first, exports from least developed countries should not be treated as a source of revenue by their trading partners; second, that these exports seldom offer the kind of competition that could justify protective measures by the developed countries; and third, that consistent with the interests of developing countries in general, the least developed countries should benefit not only from the removal of obstacles to their trade but also from other positive assistance measures.

(more)

Statement of Guinea

Following is a brief summary of the statement made in the general debate this morning by Marcel CROS, Minister of International Co-operation of Guinea, a least developed country:

A consensus is still possible. This Conference must not be added to the list of failures which the international community has had to its sad credit over the last three years. All must listen to the views of the others and try to understand the positions. The Conference must meet the challenge it faces.

The least developed countries know that the responsibility for their development is their own. Foreign assistance could only be complementary. Foreign aid must be adapted to the specific conditions of the individual country.

Guinea has potential in mining, potential that might have been realized if the necessary resources had been available and might have changed the current economic situation of Guinea. Assistance from the donor nations must not be regarded as "heavenly manna on a silver platter". This is not in the interest of either the recipient or donor countries.

Guinea's main problems are low agricultural productivity; insufficient industrial capacity due in part to a lack of spare parts; old-fashioned transport infrastructure; balance of payments; and high debt servicing. The new programme is aimed at food self-sufficiency, independence of the mining sector, development of small industry and handicrafts, and meeting the needs of the workers. The aim is a growth rate of 5 per cent for 1981-1985.

The terms of granting aid should be shorter and more flexible, adapted to the needs of the individual country. External debts of the least developed countries should be rearranged, to allow for a longer maturity period. This should apply to loans granted under the Substantial New Programme of Action.

Concerning follow-up to the Conference, it would be wiser to avoid setting up new bodies. This function should be carried out by a United Nations organization or organizations.

(more)

Intervention of ECWA Executive Secretary

Following is a brief summary of the statement made in the general debate this morning by M.S. AL-ATTAR, Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Western Asia:

The countries of the ECWA region derive an additional commitment to the least developed countries through the Charter of Arab National Economic Action, adopted by the Eleventh Arab Summit Conference, held in Jordan, in November 1980. The Charter emphasizes the principles of balanced development, economic integration and collective self-reliance. It also calls for the rapid and effective reduction of the gap in development and income between and within each of the Arab countries.

The ECWA region, in spite of its recent affluence as a result of the rise in oil prices, is still populated largely by those whose incomes are not far above the average for developing countries. And, roughly half of the population of the region lives in non-oil producing countries. The two least developed countries in the region - Democratic Yemen and the Yemen Arab Republic - which comprise about 15 per cent of the region's population are among the poorest developing countries of the world. Life expectancy at birth is among the lowest in all least developed countries. So is the percentage of population having access to safe drinking water, and the daily supply of calories per capita as a percentage of the amount required. Literacy rates and availability of doctors are also among the lowest, while the incidence of disease is among the highest. The availability of social services and of transportation facilities are far below any acceptable norms.

Structurally, the economies of these countries are very weak. Agriculture, the main economic activity, is in a state of attrition. Industry is virtually non-existent, and efforts to promote it are thwarted. Also like many other least developed countries, they are very poor in natural resources. They have a large geographical area, sparsely inhabited and largely uncultivated, with deserts and difficult terrain making infrastructure investment highly costly.

The second Five Year Plan of the Yemen Arab Republic for the period 1982-1986, envisages a total expenditure of \$10-15 billion; only about \$2.9 billion of which are estimated to be available from domestic sources and undisbursed aid commitments. In Democratic Yemen, the total investment requirement for the 1980s is estimated at \$3.77 billion, 30 per cent of which will need to be financed from external assistance.

These resource gaps would be much larger if the prosperity of the neighbouring Gulf countries did not spill over to the two ECWA least developed countries in the form of remittances by Yemeni emigrant workers. Since 1973, these remittances have amounted to \$2 billion for the Yemen sub-region. This source of financing, however, may not continue at the same rate as in the past, due to the replacement of Yemeni workers by the more skilled and organized work-force supplied by countries of Southeast Asia and the Far East.

During the period 1973-1978, the oil-producing ECWA countries contributed, on the average, over 6 per cent of their GNP as total foreign assistance and about 5 per cent of GNP as concessional aid to developing countries. The share of ECWA least developed countries alone in the aid from ECWA oil-producing countries was about 5 per cent of the total aid.

(more)

Speech of Poland

Following is a brief summary of the statement made in the general debate this morning by Jerzy KAPUSCINSKI, Director-General, Minister of External Trade, Poland:

Development is and should be the primary responsibility of the people and Governments of the least developed countries themselves. International action can only be complementary to domestic endeavours and, moreover should not encroach upon the sovereign rights of the least developed nations to map their development strategies and programmes. The experience of socialist countries might be of considerable value in this respect.

Poland does not consider the setting out of the aggregate development and assistance targets as the best way to cope with the economic difficulties of developing and, in particular, of the least developed countries. First of all, the aggregate targets, precisely because they are not linked to individual country strategies, are likely to be challenged, an outcome that could lead to interminable discussions and squabbles and might put off the agreement on more important matters of policy. Second, target aggregation disregards the heterogeneity of and differentiation within the least developed countries group and would lead to the further deepening, rather than to the elimination of, the inequalities between the least developed nations. Third, as the aggregate targets are being agreed on through the process of international bargaining rather than through quiet economic analysis, it would be extremely difficult to arrive at an internally coherent set of targets, including consistency between the over-all and sectoral objectives.

Poland is now passing through a period of extreme economic difficulties resulting from the attempt to accelerate its economic development. In spite of these difficulties, and to the extent it is able to alleviate current acute economic problems, Poland will participate constructively in the elaboration of the new Action Programme for the least developed countries and will contribute, within its means and possibilities, to its successful implementation. As of 1 January 1981, Poland has granted duty-free entry for all goods exported by and originating from the least developed countries into the Polish customs area. However, it would be unrealistic to expect, under the present circumstances, any important farther reaching steps being taken by Poland in favour of the least developed countries in the first half of the present decade.

It would also not be rational to expect that Poland's contribution to the economic advancement of the least developed countries would materialize primarily through resource transfers. Resource transfers would amount to sacrificing national development and the satisfaction of domestic needs in favour of foreign countries and as such would not be acceptable to the society as a whole. Other forms of co-operation, however, could be in the areas of long-term import contracts and construction projects, geological research and training.

(more)

WHO Director-General Speaks

Following is a brief summary of the statement made in the general debate this morning by Dr. H. MAHLER, Director-General of the World Health Organization (WHO):

More than half of the world's population, living mainly in rural areas and urban slums, have grossly inadequate access or even no access at all to any regular form of health care, which gives rise to statistics such as 150 to 200 infants out of every thousand born alive dying before the age of one. The corresponding rate is ten times less in affluent countries.

Despite the absence of real dialogue between North and South in relation to a new international economic order, this dialogue - East and West and North and South - has taken place with respect to health. When the Thirtieth World Health Assembly decided in 1977 to adopt "Health for All" as the main social target of Governments and WHO for the coming decades, it referred to it as a level of health that would permit people to live a socially and economically productive life. Specifically, it means that there would be an even distribution among the population of whatever health resources are available; that people would use better approaches for preventing disease and alleviating unavoidable illness and disability, and better ways of growing up, growing old and dying gracefully; that health would begin at home, in schools and at the place of work; that essential health care would be accessible to all individuals and families, in an acceptable and affordable way, and with their full participation; and that people would realize that they themselves have the power to shape their lives and those of their families, free from the burden of disease.

In the final analysis, Governments - nationally and internationally - do have responsibility for the health and socio-economic development of all the world's peoples. This implies distributing resources for health more evenly, and to do so means giving top priority to the socially underprivileged - nationally and internationally.

Primary health care is the key to attaining health for all. It is the application of principles combining action by Governments, peoples, families, communities, the health sector and a number of other social and economic sectors.

As for realism, let us look at the costs. Recent studies have shown that considerable improvements in people's health can take place for an additional few dollars a year. This amounts to about one hundredth of what is spent on health by people in many rich countries.





## PRESS RELEASE

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# United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries

PARIS  
1-14 September 1981

UNCLDC/16  
7 September 1981

11th Meeting (PM Summary)

### PARIS CONFERENCE ON LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRIES HEARS 12 STATEMENTS

#### Six Governments Sign Common Fund Agreement

The United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries continued general debate this afternoon, hearing 12 statements.

Governments expressing views were Bhutan, Ireland, Chile, Switzerland, Yemen and Niger. Statements were also made by the representatives of the World Bank, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, the World Food Programme, the Holy See, the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions and the International Chamber of Commerce.

On another matter, six Governments today signed in Paris the Agreement establishing the Common Fund for Commodities. They were Lesotho, Nepal, Nicaragua, Turkey, United Republic of Tanzania and Yemen.

The general debate continues when the Conference meets again at 9 p.m. today. Listed to speak are Djibouti, Equatorial Guinea, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Malaysia, the Byelorussian SSR, Uruguay, the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA) and the World Federation of Trade Unions.

(SUMMARIES OF THE STATEMENTS MADE AT THE MEETING HAVE  
BEEN ISSUED AS PAGES UNCLDC/16A THROUGH UNCLDC/16L)

(more)

Statement of Bhutan

Following is a brief summary of the statement made in the general debate this afternoon by Lam PENJOR, Deputy Minister, Planning Commission, Bhutan, a least developed country:

In an effort to implement Bhutan's country programme within the present decade, we have taken firm steps to bring about the necessary changes such as decentralization of the development process, restructuring of planning methodology, fiscal and monetary policies, and mobilization of internal resources, in our economic structure. Our targets are realistic and, by any standard, within our absorbing and implementing capacity, provided we are assured a constant flow of financial and technical assistance from the international community.

We, the least developed countries, are looking forward to a role from the Substantial New Programme of Action in alleviating our problems similar to that of the Marshall Plan in restructuring the economies of war-torn Europe.

Bhutan would like to express gratitude to Australia, Austria, Denmark, India, Japan, the Netherlands and Switzerland for their positive reactions and keen interest in assisting us in some of the high priority areas of our socio-economic development. We do hope that other donor countries would now be in a position to come forward with positive responses to our needs.

Bhutan would also like to reiterate that its approach to national development is towards improving the quality of life while enhancing our national culture, tradition, religion and institutions for the attainment of economic self-reliance. Self-reliance has always been and will continue to be our national strength and fundamental developmental goal. Any global programme of action must be pragmatic and flexible to cater to the national aspirations and values of individual countries.

(more)

World Bank Official Speaks

Following is a brief summary of the statement made in the general debate this afternoon by Munir BENJENK, Vice President of External Relations of the World Bank:

In times of disruptive political and economic change, the multilateral institutions, particularly the International Development Association (IDA), have acted as a buffer, providing sustained assistance to those countries who receive less assistance from other donors. About 32 per cent of bilateral assistance is directed to the poorest countries, with only 15 per cent to the least developed countries. In contrast, about 50 per cent of multilateral assistance is directed to the poorest countries, with 23 per cent to the least developed countries. IDA, which allocates over 90 per cent of its lending to the poorest countries and almost 30 per cent to the least developed countries, is by far the most important multilateral source of funds. Current IDA planning calls for this proportion to be sustained throughout the 1980s. It is thus important for the objectives of this Conference that the past high level of support of multilateral institutions continue in concert with sustained bilateral assistance, with IDA being of particular importance.

But as the Bank's membership continues to grow, there will be additional pressures on IDA's resources, and this goal may become more difficult to achieve. Therefore, the levels of further replenishments of IDA should continue to increase in order to both meet the needs of the Bank's new members and to sustain the flow of resources to the poorest countries.

The increased allocation of Bank and IDA resources to the least developed countries over the years was assisted by a shift in Bank lending toward sectors of particular importance to these countries - agriculture and rural development, small-scale industry and urban sites and services, and human resource development. Future directions will include an emphasis on storage and marketing bottlenecks important for improving exports and domestic food management.

The public sector is not the only focus of the Bank's work. Lending to agricultural credit institutions and private development finance companies have helped to mobilize private domestic capital and strengthen indigenous entrepreneurial capacity. In recent years, the Bank has considerably broadened its policy dialogue with Governments to include incentive structures, trade regimes, and the climate for private sector development within the country. Political instability in some of the least developed countries has had the effect of discouraging the development of the private sector. In Africa in particular, the public sector has become over-extended, and a more balanced contribution needs to be developed over time.

Consultative groups are of great value in reviewing country prospects, defining areas of common concern, and providing a medium for informal discussion between donors. But regular, informal co-ordination at the country level and among national entities will continue to be equally important. Furthermore, fluctuating economic conditions often call for different means of co-ordination to be emphasized in different countries over time. Thus, the Bank feels that extension of formal aid co-ordination groups to all least developed countries should not be viewed as either a necessary or sufficient response to the call for a Substantial New Programme of Action.

(more)

Statement of Ireland

Following is a brief summary of the statement made in the general debate this afternoon by Jim O'KEEFFE, Minister of State for Development Co-operation, Ireland:

Irish co-operation with developing countries was pioneered by the non-governmental sector whose involvement continues to expand. We are proud of the contribution to development made by the large numbers of Irish people working in these countries, and the co-financing of their efforts is an important element of our bilateral aid programme.

Training and fellowships are features of Irish aid which receive particular emphasis. Ireland has funded courses of study for the nationals of developing countries in administration, communications, engineering, hotel management and veterinary studies. Priority is given, in so far as possible, to training conducted in the developing countries themselves. We believe that such training contributes to the effective mobilization by developing countries of their human resources, which should have an overwhelming priority for men and, perhaps more importantly, women.

Assistance in the field of trade promotion is a regular feature of our bilateral aid programme, emphasis being on the establishment of the necessary institutional infrastructure for trade promotion and on training.

As a small donor which channels more than two thirds of its total official development assistance through multilateral channels, Ireland has a specific interest in seeing greater emphasis placed on the least developed countries by the multilateral agencies.

Ireland intends to reach the United Nations target of 0.7 per cent of gross national product (GNP) for official development assistance (ODA) by the end of this decade by means of steadily increasing ODA allocations each year. I am happy to announce that my Government intends by the same date to devote at least 0.15 per cent of GNP to the least developed countries.

(more)

OECD Secretary-General Addresses Conference

Following is a brief summary of the statement made in the general debate this afternoon by Emile Van LENNEP, Secretary-General of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD):

The least developed countries face serious economic constraints in three key areas: first, to meet investment needs out of domestic savings; second, to finance development-related imports out of export earnings; and third, to meet debt service payments on non-concessional finance. Other poor countries also face these problems in varying degrees. The key distinguishing feature of the least developed countries is their fundamental deficiency in physical infrastructure and in skilled manpower and administrative and managerial capabilities.

If the economic potential of the least developed countries is to be developed and realized, it is essential that aid to these countries is designed so as to directly address the growth constraints which they all face. Donor countries should exercise the greatest possible flexibility in adjusting their aid programmes to the special needs of those countries, including greater emphasis on technical assistance and on local and recurrent cost financing, in particular as they relate to the development of the agricultural sector and of human resources. The OECD hopes that aid for these countries could continue to grow at rates similar to those experienced in recent years, notwithstanding the difficult economic and budgetary environment and constraints for aid programmes over-all.

The international community might explore what additional opportunities exist to facilitate the growth of dependable export earnings in the commodity sector, including efforts concentrated on the least developed countries' research and market promotion and ways and means to protect them against harmful effects of protracted, depressed prices of commodities. Consideration might also be given to what further steps could be taken to improve, including through special and more favourable measures, conditions of market access for least developed countries manufacturers exports in the non-tariff area and in the Generalised System of Preferences (GSP).

In respect of regional donor/recipient co-operation, the Club du Sahel, set up in 1976 with the support of OECD, offers a highly effective formula. It has served as a forum for a continuous and balanced dialogue between members of the Inter-State Committee on Drought Control in the Sahel (CILSS) and the donor community on the strategy for development; sectoral prospects and on major policy issues. The approach is one which might, with appropriate adaptations, be employed elsewhere.

(more)

Chilean Statement

Following is a brief summary of the statement made in the general debate this afternoon by Jorge BERGUNO BARNES (Chile):

The existence of the least developed countries within the international community can be compared to a disadvantaged group within a nation. They cannot be considered the exception to the rule of well-being, but as evidence of the structural weakness of the international economic system. It is unthinkable that aid to the least developed countries could serve as a retrogressive policy within the context of the North-South dialogue.

The Action Programme must involve the will of the whole of the international community to assist the least developed countries. The socialist countries of Eastern Europe must participate fully. No group of States can remain apart.

The Programme must be built on national plans, taking into account national characteristics. Targets must be human and social development, natural resources, trade and technical and financial assistance. Development of human resources is the most important.

The Programme must emphasize rural development, as well as development of mineral, water and energy resources. Regarding trade, there should be preferential access to markets and dismantling of tariff and non-tariff barriers.

Large-scale, continuous and predictable aid during the first years is essential. As to technical assistance, it is important to use national and regional centres. Chile is eager to participate in an exchange of information of this kind.

The Conference has been well prepared and cannot fail. But it will only be a starting point.

(more)

Statement of Switzerland

Following is a brief summary of the statement made in the general debate this afternoon by Marcel HEIMO (Switzerland):

The international community does not consider poverty inevitable, but attempts to vanquish it. This is why Switzerland attaches great importance to this Conference. Switzerland did not wait for this Conference, or for the decision of the fifth session of UNCTAD in 1979, to help the least developed countries. It gives assistance in the form of grants and its general scheme of tariff preferences is one of the most liberal. Still, Switzerland knows it has much to do and comes to the Conference prepared to increase its help, particularly in financial terms.

Structural reform must be stressed. Those responsible for external assistance must recognize that their aid projects have not always been formulated in the best interests of the recipient countries. Co-ordination between partners must be undertaken to have international aid respond in a more balanced way to the needs of the least developed nations.

The Conference is not an occasion for the presentation of a bill by one group, to be paid by another group. It is an occasion for agreement to be reached. In Switzerland, it is "inconceivable" that there should be an increase of assistance without the support of a majority of its citizens. The Government must be able to show them how the money will be used.

Local initiative must play the major role in development, with external aid "grafted on". Those responsible for external aid should respond to the aspirations of the least developed countries in terms of volume of aid and modalities and by creating more flexible funds.

Regarding consultations, Switzerland believes that each least developed country and its partners should meet to analyse specific problems and plan solutions. There could be a review at the world level by UNCTAD, but the major work should be done on a country-by-country basis. The consultations should be held under the aegis of the least developed country concerned, which would choose its own modalities.

(more)

World Food Programme Official speaks

Following is a brief summary of the statement made in the general debate this afternoon by B. de AZEVEDO BRITO, Executive Director, World Food Programme:

By the very nature of its mandate the World Food Programme has given highest priority to the least developed countries since it started operations nearly 18 years ago. We have thus acquired considerable first-hand knowledge of their problems in providing food aid for economic and social development projects, mostly in rural areas.

It is clear that the least developed countries, as well as other low-income, food deficit countries, will continue to need food aid. Yet, in the face of rising requirements, actual shipments of food aid in grains have been declining steadily over the past three years - from 9.6 million tons in 1978/79 to 8.8 million in 1981/82, substantially lower than the minimum target of 10 million tons set by the World Food Conference nearly seven years ago.

The recent approval of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) food financing facility which will provide additional credit to countries that face sudden and unexpected increases in their food import bills, is most welcome. This type of short-term financing could perhaps be supplemented by longer-term concessional credit, preferably in the form of programme or structural adjustment loans, either through international financing institutions or bilaterally. It would provide greater flexibility for recipient developing countries.

There is substantial scope for expansion in project food aid of the type provided by the World Food Programme. A four-fold increase by 1985 is needed. Over the past four years, the least developed countries have received nearly 40 per cent of total WFP commitments to development projects. Most of the other recipients are low-income, food-deficit countries, which, together with the least developed countries, account for 80 per cent of total WFP aid to development project over the same period. Nearly 60 per cent of new 1981 commitments were for projects in sub-Saharan Africa, most of them in least developed countries. WFP is particularly anxious that its projects receive adequate technical and managerial support and seeks to dovetail its assistance with infrastructural development projects of the World Bank and the regional banks.

How much assistance WFP will be able to provide, however, will depend on the level of its resources. Unfortunately, contributions towards the WFP pledging target for the current biennium (1981-82) amount to only \$722 million, that is to say less than three quarters of the \$1 billion target.

(more)



Statement by Yemen

Following is a brief summary of the statement made this afternoon by Fuad Kaid MOHAMMED, Minister of Development and Chairman of the Central Planning Organization of Yemen, a least developed country:

Yemen's first five-year development plan (1977-81) called for \$3.5 billion in investment and aimed at achieving an 8 per cent annual increase in the gross domestic product (GDP). During that period, new sources of income enabled citizens to satisfy many of the essential needs of which they had been so long deprived. Investment and capital formation grew and moderate increases in governmental and private savings were also recorded. During the same period, the volume of trade with all countries grew. Although the balance of trade was affected by the enormous increase in imports and the country's weak export base, the basic requirements of development made the import of the needed commodities, especially capital goods, a prime necessity. Low agricultural production also made it necessary to import more of the basic foodstuffs.

Notwithstanding the importance of the productive sectors in all national economies, the first five-year plan stressed the construction of the various economic infrastructures and the development of the essential service facilities that had been practically non-existent in the past. During the first years of the plan ambitious achievements were registered in the extension of electrical power and in the construction of roads connecting the major and some smaller cities. There were also tangible improvements made in telecommunications and marine, land and air transport networks. Similarly, the Government devoted special attention to education and health.

The next development plan will be finalized towards the end of this year. Our goals and our economic and social conditions were described at the regional preparatory meeting. Yemen will be organizing an international conference on development at Sana'a for the purpose of examining the outlines, goals and contents of its development programme and it will continue bilateral and multilateral co-operation with the international community. We will keep open every opportunity for the private and the non-governmental entities to participate in the effort to accelerate development and to build up the country's capability for self-generating, self-sustained development.

(more)

Address of Niger

Following is a brief summary of the statement made in the general debate this afternoon by Brah MAHAMANE, Minister of Planning of Niger, a least developed country:

Niger has noted all the statements of intentions concerning increasing international assistance, but the situation of the least developed countries has not improved. Today, the problems of development concern all States. Niger's economy can suffer no further lag. Otherwise back will come the misery of 1973. Niger hopes the perseverance of UNCTAD will overcome the obstacles, and a solution will be found.

Niger has made its priority food self-sufficiency. Almost 30 per cent of its finances have been devoted to rural development. Today, chronic hunger is only a bad memory. But Niger had to come a long way to achieve this. The five-year plan (1979-1983) is only an expression of the most basic needs.

The expansion of development in Niger depends on the prices on the commodity market. The drop in price of uranium - Niger's "only lifeblood" - would have negative results. If the price of uranium goes up, the Government can implement its five-year plan; if not, then Niger will have to seek external financing. Niger fully supports the proposal for the stabilization of commodity prices.

The international community should not doubt that Niger would use foreign aid for the good. The donors should indicate the amount of their assistance; that would give the least developed countries the minimum coherence they need to plan their development.

(more)

Holy See Speaker

Following is a brief summary of the statement made in the general debate this afternoon by William F. MURPHY (Holy See):

The concern of the Church for the whole human person is to offer a solid realistic hope for all, calling on all to build the future by common effort for the common good. The first step will involve a change of heart and mentality. This change is incumbent on all - the rich and poor, the powerful and the weak. In its work, the Conference will rediscover the values that will enhance life on earth.

The Church has and will continue to assist in the task in accordance with its mission. The Church has concrete programmes.

The problem of food is at the basis of every discussion at the Conference. Food self-sufficiency is not an unattainable goal. Allied is the problem of health and the delivery of health care to rural areas. In addition, there is the need for energy and for improved communications. It would be rewarding if the honest and realistic assessments of the needs in these areas could be met at the Conference with equally honest, realistic and generous responses.

As the commitments are made on the new Action Programme, the Holy See hopes that all the genuine aspirations of the 31 least developed countries will be met so that the common good of all humanity will be furthered.

(more)

ICFTU Speaker

Following is a brief summary of the statement made in the general debate this afternoon by Gemma ADABA, International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU):

The International Development Strategy for the Third United Nations Development Decade (1981-90) commits the international community to the establishment of the new international economic order. It is vital now that the principles of the Strategy be translated into action for the least developed countries. The Federation calls for political will and genuine commitment on the part of all United Nations members.

It is vital that special concessional assistance be granted to the least developed countries. The international financial institutions should convert all loans to grants, as far as these countries are concerned. The Federation appeals to the industrialized countries to commit themselves to the goals of the least developed countries, including the early operation of the Common Fund.

The Federation supports workers' education, technical training, rural development, trade union rights, rural and women's co-operatives, the right of association and collective bargaining.

(more)

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ICC statement

Following is a brief summary of the statement made in the general debate this afternoon by Marie PSIMENOS, International Chamber of Commerce (ICC):

The aim of the International Chamber of Commerce is to promote free enterprise in market-economy countries. It is active in more than 100 countries, many of them developing. ICC has been co-operating with developing countries for many years and, in this context, has provided a forum enabling businessmen from North and South to meet on an equal footing, without the constraint of bloc thinking, to work for the expanded free flow of trade.

Unless the needs of the least developed countries are met, the consequences will be grave indeed. While official aid plays a vital role in development, and should be increased, it must be supplemented with private investment.

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## United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries

PARIS  
1-14 September 1981

12th Meeting (night summary)

UNCLDC/17

7 September 1981

### GENERAL DEBATE OF PARIS CONFERENCE ON LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRIES CONTINUES AT NIGHT MEETING

Eight more speakers stated their positions tonight in the continuing general debate of the United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries.

The debate, which began on Tuesday afternoon, 1 September, is expected to conclude on Thursday, 10 September. The Conference is scheduled to end on Monday, 14 September. The Conference's two Committees continue their work in closed session.

Speaking tonight were the representatives of Djibouti, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Equatorial Guinea, Malaysia, the Byelorussian SSR and Uruguay, as well as the representatives of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA) and the World Federation of Trade Unions.

Listed to speak when the Conference meets again at 10 a.m. tomorrow, 8 September, are: Romania, Bolivia, Luxembourg, Tunisia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Italy, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the United Nations Department of Technical Co-operation for Development, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the International Council of Voluntary Agencies.

(SUMMARIES OF THE STATEMENTS MADE AT THE MEETING HAVE BEEN ISSUED AS PAGES UNCLDC/17A THROUGH UNCLDC/17H)

(more)

Statement of Djibouti

Following is a brief summary of the statement made in the general debate tonight by Aden Robleh AWALEH, Minister of Trade, Transport and Tourism, Djibouti:

The convening of the Conference is evidence of the growing awareness of the needs of the least developed countries. The situation is now urgent. The countries have various things in common: a population dependent on agriculture, an undeveloped industrial sector and balance-of-payments deficit, among other things.

My country had hoped to be named among the least developed. Djibouti is poor: foodstuffs have to be imported; water is a permanent problem; there are no mining or energy resources; energy has to be imported; the industrial sector is almost non-existent. The population of 350,000 includes 110,000 rural inhabitants. The life expectancy is about 50 years, more than 50 per cent of the population less than 20 years old. All this shows that Djibouti has the same characteristics as the least developed countries. But the difficulty is - the World Bank has said Djibouti has a gross domestic product (GDP) of \$437. There are factors that "correct" this figure: one is the important foreign community in Djibouti; another factor is that 15 per cent of the population are refugees. Further, drought has affected the population seriously.

Djibouti has been able to maintain itself, thanks to international assistance and its own efforts. Djibouti feels that it is entitled to "least developed country" status and asks this Conference to act in this respect.

(more)

Democratic People's Republic of Korea speaks

Following is a summary of the statement made tonight in the general debate by Dong-Hyok RI (Democratic People's Republic of Korea):

Increased assistance to the least developed countries is a major problem of our times. The situation remains unchanged; the prospects are disturbing. All their problems are exacerbated by the economic problems in the so-called developed capitalist countries. A billion people are subjected to poverty with no hope for the future. Most of the countries involved, which formerly were self-sufficient in food, no longer are. In 1980, they had to import 90 million tons of grain; in 1981, they must import 100 million tons. A firm struggle is called for by the developing countries, particularly the least developed countries, to banish the old economic order and establish a new one, eliminating exploitation. It is up to the least developed countries to fight vigorously for their rights, including those in the area of trade.

The transnational corporations each year gain huge profits - \$18-20 billion. On one side of the world are people dying of hunger; on the other side are people "worrying about their waistlines". As long as the international community does not pay attention, the unjust and unequal economic system jeopardizes the prospects of the least developed countries and the future of the world.

The transfer of science and technology from the industrialized nations to the least developed countries is one of the sine qua non of their development. The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) has a role to play in this respect.

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea is fully committed to help the least developed in any way it can.

(more)



Speech of Equatorial Guinea

Following is a summary of the statement made in the general debate tonight by Eulogio OYO RIQUESE (Equatorial Guinea):

Equatorial Guinea appeals to the international community to double immediately assistance to the developing countries. If assistance comes too late, the goals cannot be achieved. The more advanced countries should give the developing countries assistance on the basis of mutual advantage on an equal footing. The developing countries are aware that the main responsibility for their development rests on their own shoulders.

Although Equatorial Guinea is not at the moment one of the 31 least developed countries, the Government is sure it will eventually be included. The Government now invites all potential donors to participate in the coming Conference of Donors to Equatorial Guinea being organized under the auspices of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

(more)

Statement by Malaysia

Following is a brief summary of the statement made in the general debate tonight by Muhyiddin bin MOHAMAD YASSIN, Malaysia:

Malaysia hopes the developed countries will respond most sympathetically to the appeals for assistance by the least developed countries. We would like to see this assistance rendered without an over-emphasis on extraneous factors and also without prejudice to the territorial integrity and sovereignty of the recipient countries. We are at the same time conscious that the plight of the least developed countries cannot be resolved by external assistance alone. The role that these countries themselves have to play in their own upliftment is equally significant.

Malaysia, itself a developing country, is still a recipient of external assistance in her economic development efforts. We can appreciate some of the problems faced by least developed countries. To cite a case in point, we know how vulnerable it would be if we are over-reliant on one or two primary commodities for our economic existence. In such a situation, the vagaries in price of these commodities would have a direct bearing on the pace of socio-economic development. Malaysia has been endeavouring to diversify export earnings in order that its socio-economic development could proceed at a more predictable pace.

Malaysia's response to the appeals for assistance by the least developed countries is understandably constrained by financial and technical considerations. Despite this, we have extended our co-operation to a number of developing countries, including least developed, in certain areas in which we have acquired some experience and expertise.

Malaysia hopes that the document that eventually emanates from this Conference will be one that would be generally acceptable to all and would mark the beginning of genuine and concerted international efforts to assist the least developed countries.

(more)

Statement of Byelorussia

Following is a brief summary of the statement made in the general debate tonight by Vladimir MAKAROV (Byelorussian SSR):

Byelorussia's views on how to solve the problems of the developing countries, and the least developed countries were stated in the joint statement issued by the socialist countries at the fifth session of UNCTAD (Manila, 1979), meetings of the UNCTAD Trade and Development Board, and at the General Assembly. The solution of their problems must respect complete national sovereignty over national resources, as called for in the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States and other United Nations documents on the establishment of the New International Economic Order.

Also, there must be mobilization of national resources. The role of the State sector must grow.

Byelorussia supports the developing countries' call for the restructuring of international economic relations. The imperialists are trying to shift their economic crisis to the developing countries. Also, the developing countries are suffering from the protectionist tendencies of some imperialist States.

Such problems are not helped by decisions of the members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) to increase armaments or the decision to produce the neutron bomb. Byelorussia has made proposals for military disarmament and detente in Europe. The Security Council members should agree on a reduction of their military budgets, earmarking the savings for the development of the developing countries.

The socialist countries will extend active assistance, in accordance with their possibilities, assistance based on mutual sovereignty. Byelorussia reaffirms its willingness to continue co-operation with the developing countries, including the least developed among them.

(more)

Statement by Uruguay

Following is a brief summary of the statement made in the general debate tonight by Enrique ETCHEVERRY STIRLING (Uruguay):

The problems of the least developed countries can admit no further delay. But those problems must be considered in the over-all context of the developing countries. Often it is difficult to determine the differences between the 31 least developed nations and the other States of the developing world.

The developing countries have been clamouring for several years on every occasion for a correction of the gap between the developed and developing world. The application of the principle of non-discrimination continues to be a valid aspiration of the developing countries. Uruguay supports the Action Programme as set out by the "Group of 77" developing countries. The statement by the Chairman of the "Group of 77" outlines what the majority of countries of the world want to see prevail in international economic life.

The problems of the least developed countries must not be dissipated in the global economic problems.

There must be an increase in resources. No one wishes a horizontal dispersal of resources that would just bring about a "new reshuffling of developing countries".

Uruguay, a developing country, has similar characteristics to the least developed States. Its high literacy rate of 95 per cent means that it is human resources that Uruguay can offer in co-operation with the developing countries, particularly its sister State of Haiti.

(more)

CMEA Official heard

Following is a brief summary of the statement made tonight in the general debate by Nicolai BOGATY of the Council of Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA):

The position of CMEA and its member States on the causes of the plight of the least developed countries is well known. The CMEA States have worked for the expansion of economic relations, trade and technical co-operation on the basis of full equality, non-discrimination and mutual advantage. More than 4600 projects are in the works; 3200 of them are already operational. Since they are fully owned by the developing countries, there is no reverse flow of resources in terms of profits.

An important form of technical assistance is training. More than 4,000 students study in CMEA member States. Also, CMEA States send experts to the developing countries. In the CMEA States, there is practically no problem of access of goods of developing countries to their markets. Also, CMEA States are helping to bring countries such as Cuba and Viet Nam to the level of developed countries. Assistance to Cuba, for example, includes projects in energy, research and other areas. In Viet Nam, help takes the form of training national cadres. Ninety thousand Vietnamese students are studying in CMEA member States.

(more)

WFTU Official Speaks

Following is a brief summary of the statement made in the general debate tonight by Anton HANNA, World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU):

It is well known that world trade in commodities such as agriculture is under the grip of the transnational corporations. Studies by various United Nations agencies have shown that 80 to 90 per cent of the value realized at the consuming point turn up largely as the super-profits of the transnational corporations. The giant trading cartels are not paying a fair price to the real commodity producers OR a fair wage to the workers in those plantations which are directly owned and controlled by these cartels.

Member States of the United Nations should seriously implement the conclusions of the World Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development organized by the Food and Agriculture Organization in 1979. In this connexion, it has to be pointed out that countries like Afghanistan, Ethiopia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Democratic Yemen, the United Republic of Tanzania and others have formulated and are implementing democratic agrarian reforms, but the efforts of these States are obstructed by external intervention. It is deplorable that certain States which took on an international commitment to support land reform should give active assistance to semi-feudal forces which are working to sabotage the reform. In Southern Africa, the apartheid racist regime is intervening and exercising pressure on the neighbouring least developed countries.

Equally deplorable is the financial pressure exercised by lending institutions such as the International Monetary Fund on the least developed countries and other developing countries to impose so-called "austerity" policies on States, especially to reduce expenses on social protection for the most needy segments of the population.

Although some affiliates of the WFTU promote active participation of workers and peasants in development planning and implementation, the situation concerning trade union rights is quite unsatisfactory in some other countries. The WFTU would therefore urge the Conference to reiterate the need for the effective participation of the working people in development, a precondition for which is their right of association.

We feel that the arrangements at this Conference and in its preparatory work for the active involvement of non-governmental organisations, especially the trade unions, suffer from serious limitations. The issues demand broad debate at popular level and the education of public opinion in which the NGOs can play an important role.

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(This page ends Press Release/UNCLDC/17)



## PRESS RELEASE

*For use of information media, not an official record*

### United Nations Conference on **the Least Developed Countries**

**PARIS**  
**1-14 September 1981**

UNCLDC/18  
7 September 1981

#### SIX COUNTRIES SIGN COMMON FUND AGREEMENT IN PARIS

Representatives of six countries Lesotho, Nepal, Nicaragua, Turkey, the United Republic of Tanzania and the Yemen Arab Republic today, 7 September, became the first to avail themselves of the possibility of signing the Agreement establishing the Common Fund for Commodities in Paris on the occasion of the United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries.

They bring the number of signatories to 49. (see Press Release/UNCLDC/11 of 4 September for background on the Common Fund.)

In expressing his thanks to the six governments, Gamani Corea, Secretary-General of the Conference and Secretary-General of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, said he hoped the signatures would soon be followed by ratifications as none of the resources of the Common Fund could be used until the requisite number of ratifications was achieved (90 countries representing two thirds of the \$470 million Directly Contributed Capital of the Fund.) To date, only nine countries have ratified or approved it: in chronological order they are Indonesia, Denmark, the Philippines, Bangladesh, Japan, Sweden, Norway, Haiti and, on 2 September, China.

Signing today were E.R. Sekhonyana, Minister of Planning of Lesotho; Dr. Yadav Prasad Pant, Minister for Finance, Commerce and Supplies of Nepal; Alejandro Serrano Caldera of Nicaragua, Kamran Inan of Turkey, K.A. Malima, Minister of Planning and Economic Affairs of Tanzania, and Fuad Kaid Mohammed, Minister of Development of the Yemen Arab Republic.

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## PRESS RELEASE

*For use of information media, not an official record*

# United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries

PARIS  
1-14 September 1981

13th Meeting (AM Summary)

UNCLDC/19

8 September 1981

### TWO FOREIGN MINISTERS AMONG MORNING SPEAKERS AT PARIS CONFERENCE ON LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRIES

The Foreign Ministers of the Lao People's Democratic Republic and Italy were among the 11 speakers this morning in the general debate of the United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries.

Also speaking were the representatives of Romania, Bolivia, Luxembourg, Tunisia, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the United Nations Department of Technical Co-operation for Development, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the International Council of Voluntary Agencies, on behalf of all non-governmental organizations present at the Conference, and the World Confederation of Labour.

The debate continues when the Conference meets again at 3 p.m. today. Listed to speak at that time are Egypt, Thailand, Sri Lanka, Guinea-Bissau, Bulgaria, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), Lesotho, Congo, Democratic Kampuchea, the Economic Community of the Great Lakes Countries and the International Federation of University Women.

(SUMMARIES OF THE STATEMENTS MADE AT THE MEETING HAVE  
BEEN ISSUED AS PAGES UNCLDC/19A THROUGH UNCLDC/19K)

(more)



Statement of Romania

Following is a brief summary of the statement made in the general debate this morning by Corneliu MANESCU (Romania):

The establishment of a new world order implies machinery and concerted action to eliminate the injustices of the present world and encourage new international co-operation.

The main objective of the Conference should be to define short-, medium- and long-term programmes for the least developed nations. It is up to all States to mobilize their resources to overcome underdevelopment. A particular responsibility falls on the developed countries. Assistance must be urgent, concrete and effective.

International assistance given to the least developed countries should not exclude, or decrease aid to, other developing nations.

Preferential trade benefits and easy access to science and technology are some of the concrete measures that can be taken in favour of the least developed countries. Also, a reduction of military expenditures would free additional resources for development purposes.

The developing countries should show unity and solidarity. They should constantly act together to maintain and defend their position.

Over one fourth of Romania's trade is with developing countries. There are 25,000 persons from those countries training in Romania. Fifteen thousand Romanian experts are in the developing nations.

(more)

Bolivian Statement

Following is a brief summary of the statement made in the general debate this morning by Agustin SAAVEDRA WEISE (Bolivia):

Bolivia fully associates itself with the statement made by the Chairman of the "Group of 77" developing countries.

Bolivia, a developing country, is not small in territory; it has resources; it has only 6 million people. There are no simple answers as to why Bolivia is a developing country. Bolivia's political past had included a tendency towards obedience to authority. Bolivia's situation, described by some as political instability, is an expression of the crisis of the world economic system.

One of the reasons for Bolivia's current situation is its situation as a land-locked country. Since the Pacific War of 1879, Bolivia is the only country in the world which, once having had an extensive coastline, now is isolated, without "a window on the world".

Concerning trade, Bolivia will welcome any measures to protect the prices of raw materials and expand markets. As to the Action Programme, Bolivia fully supports the position of the "Group of 77". It should reflect a commitment between the negotiating parties and the will to help on the part of those countries in a position to do so.

(more)

Luxembourg addresses Conference

Following is a brief summary of the statement made in the general debate this morning by Paul HELMINGER (Luxembourg):

The least developed nations have lost ground, not only in relation to other developing States, but even in comparison to their own situation in 1960. This is why, over and above the assistance given to developing countries as a whole, urgent measures must be taken in their favour. A simple transfer of resources is not enough. They must generally be treated in a better way.

Only international solidarity can resist the economic crisis which may cause the bankruptcy of some of the least developed nations.

Luxembourg will participate in efforts to help the least developed, within the limits of its ability. Its assistance will be channelled through the European Communities and multilateral organizations.

Luxembourg hopes to increase its assistance financially. More than 30 per cent of Luxembourg's public assistance goes to least developed countries. It would like to find partners among the least developed countries.

(more)

Statement of Tunisia

Following is a brief summary of the statement made in the general debate this morning by Mahmoud MESTIRI (Tunisia):

The Conference will strengthen the solidarity of the developing countries a solidarity which must be maintained, because it conditions the success of any action, general or specific, which the developing countries undertake at the international level.

Tunisia is committed to devoting a substantial share of the resources it expects to receive from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in the next programming cycle to projects of technical co-operation among developing countries.

All developing countries face the same problems and confront the same unfavourable environment. Concerted international action to change that environment is essential if any special measures to help the least developed countries are to succeed. Any special remedies devised in Paris to help the least developed should be applied to any similar situation in any other developing country.

The Conference is only the first step. The second, perhaps the most important, is the resumption as soon as possible of global economic negotiations for an over-all agreement which alone can lead to the necessary restructuring of international economic relations on a sound and durable basis, for the benefit of all States, particularly the least developed.

(more)

Statement of Lao People's Democratic Republic

Following is a brief summary of the statement made in the general debate this morning by Soulivong PHRASITTHIDETH (Lao People's Democratic Republic), a least developed country:

It is regrettable that the Immediate Action Programme for the least developed countries worked out at Manila in 1979 had not been implemented. This situation is bad, and deteriorating. This is particularly true of those least developed countries that are land-locked. Also, many are frequent victims of natural disasters. Helping the least developed nations is the duty of all States since peace and security depend, in part, on the balanced and accelerated development of the poor countries.

The Conference has before it a legitimate proposal for action. Among the equitable proposals is the call for countries to give 15 per cent of gross national product (GNP) in official development assistance (ODA) to least developed countries in 1981-1985, increasing it in the second half of the decade.

The Lao Republic believes that financial assistance should be in the form of grants and should not be linked. It also calls for balance-of-payments support and for assistance towards the local expenses and operating costs of projects. Priority should be given to assist least developed countries with on-the-spot training of local people to administer projects.

Long wars waged by the aggressive imperialists have prevented the Lao Republic from emerging from its long state of underdevelopment. Since 1961, the enemies of the Lao Revolution have tried to sabotage the peaceful work of development, destroying projects and damaging goods and equipment. An economic blockade is practised by one country with which the Lao Republic has a border. The Government must pay exorbitant transit costs. It asks the international community to call on that country to act according to international law in regard to land-locked countries.

What is worse, the imperialists who have led the war against the Lao Republic have not contributed financially to its recovery and rehabilitation. The Lao Government regrets that several States of the Development Assistance Committee of the Organisation of Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) have not helped the Lao Republic simply because it has chosen a political and social system different from theirs. They are unconcerned about the Lao Republic's development. The Government expresses its appreciation to Viet Nam, the Soviet Union and other brotherly countries for their technical and economic co-operation, which is of a disinterested nature.

The Lao Republic supports the Action Programme and hopes other groups will not weaken it.

(more)

IMF Official Speaks

Following is a brief summary of the statement made in the general debate this morning by Azizali MOHAMMED, Director of External Relations of the International Monetary Fund (IMF):

The combined current account deficit of the least developed countries in 1980 reached \$7 billion, equivalent to well over 10 per cent of their gross national product (GNP) and almost equalling their annual export earnings. Among specific steps taken by the Fund, the expanded compensatory financing facility is expected to be especially beneficial for the least developed countries, which are particularly susceptible to balance-of-payments from crop failure or sharp increase in cereal prices and from export shortfalls. Under a second set of recent changes, the Fund's general resources have been increased, as has members' access to them. At present, there are nine stand-by and extended arrangements in effect with the least developed countries.

In the last one and a half years total new loan commitments from the Fund's resources in favour of these countries reached SDR (special drawing rights) 1.5 billion. Moreover, all Fund members on the list of least developed countries are among those eligible for an interest subsidy to alleviate their financing costs. In addition, assistance from a Trust Fund financed by part of the profits derived from the sale of gold by IMF has amounted to SDR 525 million, or approximately \$660 million from 1976 until early this year. Direct transfer to them of profits from the gold sales yielded a further \$100 million, while new allocations of special drawing rights to the least developed countries during the period 1979-81 totalled SDR 248 million.

A perhaps even more critical IMF contribution has been in the form of general advice, policy support and technical assistance aimed at developing the technical and administrative capabilities of the least developed countries.

The outlook for the least developed countries constitutes a cause for increasingly deep concern with their combined current account deficit, assuming a growth rate of 4 per cent and unchanged real oil prices, projected at \$8.5 billion or in excess of their combined GNP in 1981 - more than double the ratio of total deficit to GNP for all non-oil developing countries. There is little expectation that these large imbalances will be corrected quickly and this underscores the critical importance of ensuring a sufficient increase in concessional external assistance to the least developed countries.

The Fund's ability to assist them to achieve and sustain high rates of growth is a limited one. The Fund is a monetary institution and its financial resources are available to members in support of policy measures embodied in programmes of balance-of-payments adjustment, including structural elements. The Fund must maintain the revolving character of its resources, and this requires that the resources obtained from the Fund by its members must be repaid within a reasonably short period. The bulk of the foreign resources needed by them must come from aid agencies, both bilateral and multilateral.

(more)

Under-Secretary-General for UN Technical Co-operation Speaks

Following is a brief summary of the statement made in the general debate this morning by Di JILONG, Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations Department of Technical Co-operation for Development:

As the main operational arm of the United Nations Secretariat for technical co-operation activities, the Department is directly concerned with the social and economic problems of developing countries. It is primarily a technical rather than a financing organization and acts as executing agency for other funding bodies in the United Nations system.

Technical assistance can be an important precondition, and make the critical difference in national capacities for development, as well as in promoting a climate in which pre-investment activities can be launched and lead eventually to sizeable investments.

While the social and historic backgrounds and economic endowments of the least developed countries vary widely, they have three basic constraints in common: the first is the lack of appropriate or adequate institutional infrastructure; the second is insufficient development of human resources potential; the third constraint is limited knowledge of resource endowments and prospects for their exploitation. These three constraints are inextricably linked and of equal importance as the sine qua non of development.

There must be general agreement that the most important test of the success of any conference is what happens afterwards. The Department of Technical Co-operation for Development stands ready to play its part in three major ways:

First, the Department could greatly increase its activities designed to help build and enhance the development capacities of the least developed countries, particularly as regards their institutional and physical infrastructures, and identify and exploit natural resources and energy, including the search for new and alternative sources.

Second, the Department could help individual least developed countries to strengthen their planning capacity and prepare for the review meetings on their country programme.

Third, at the global level, for the implementation of the Substantial New Programme of Action for the 1980s, the Department has a major contribution to make towards the determination of the framework for country reviews as a whole, as well as to the monitoring and evaluation of over-all progress.

(more)

Italian statement

Following is a brief summary of the statement made this morning in the general debate by Emilio COLOMBO, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Italy:

The United Nations offers the best framework in which to pursue the complex North-South dialogue.

The prospects for global negotiations will be measured by the success of this Conference. Today's economic machinery is inadequate in a world that has seen the birth of new economic Powers, the weakening of others and the widening of the gap between rich countries and poor ones.

The international community must break the cycle of underdevelopment and reduce world tension. East-West détente should be given a broad meaning which includes overcoming the differences of North and South, the elimination of poverty and the social, economic and cultural development of the least developed countries.

Regarding the problems of energy supply the least developed countries face, the least developed cannot bear the cost of oil. Italy urges the creation, therefore, of an energy-lending facility within the World Bank. As to resource transfers, a large part of public aid to development should go to the least developed States. Italy hopes, if possible, to go beyond the target of 0.15 per cent of GNP in public aid. Also, the Italian Government is considering the possibility of turning into grants the financial credits it has extended to least developed nations.

Italy sees five areas where donor countries and specialized agencies could meet in an effort to overcome obstacles to development projects: food productivity, food security; a new International Wheat Agreement; closer co-ordination; and an increase in official development assistance to the food and agriculture sectors.

(more)



UNEP Official speaks

Following is a brief summary of the statement made in the general debate this morning by Yusuf J. AHMAD, Assistant Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP):

Both the problems faced by the least developed countries and the remedies sought by them are essentially environmental in nature or involve development projects and programmes with large ecological components. The country reports before us are replete with references to desertification, soil erosion, drought, tropical deforestation, deterioration in the quality and quantity of water, absence of river and lake basin development programmes, lack of renewable sources of energy and the like. The least developed countries are requesting assistance to meet these specific problems. Their concerns reflect a recognition of two inter-connected realities: first, the basic need to maintain and preserve natural resources by respecting their ecological balance, and, second, the dependence in large measure of the quality of life and the viability of economic development itself upon the integrity and productivity of the environment and natural resources.

The environment is not merely an area of competence, it is an encompassing term. Environment constitutes an integral part of the development process in different sectors. UNEP's role has been to identify and help assess environmental problems and stimulate, catalyse and co-ordinate effective action to promote environmentally sound development in all sectors.

UNEP is fully supportive of the Programme of Action proposed by the Secretary-General of the Conference. Although, UNEP is not a funding agency, it could offer some form of technical assistance to the least developed countries in a number of these areas of urgent concern, including anti-desertification and anti-deforestation programmes, water resource management, including environmental aspects of river and lake basins' development as well as those of irrigation and drainage, water supply and sanitary waste disposal, establishment of appropriate mixes of energy sources, possible support in land pollution, including pollution from pest management control systems, introduction of environmental law and the setting up of environmental machinery.

(more)

Statement of NGO Representative

Following is a brief summary of the statement made in the general debate this morning by Sibusiso BENGU, International Council of Voluntary Agencies, on behalf of the non-governmental organizations (NGOs) present at the Conference:

Experience shows that NGOs are on the one hand essential to effective processes of development and on the other dependent upon the co-operation of Governments.

We emphasize that the "Non" in NGO does not convey in any sense a negative, but a willing and voluntary approach to human needs, and underpins the efforts of governments with the "human touch". It is in this spirit that we offer a brief set of observations at a practical level. They impinge at most points upon the political decisions of Governments in which we may play our personal part as citizens and electors, and our collective part as pressure groups.

We begin by asking what may be the meaning behind the words "Substantial" and "New". We hope that they reflect, a change of attitude, in that the participation of people is seen as an essential complement to the impersonal transfer of resources as aid. In the participation of people we underline the decisive importance of the work and contribution of women, both individually and collectively and notably in the least developed countries, where its relative significance to survival and improvement of the human condition is even greater.

In the process of development through industrialization, food remains of vital importance. The NGOs wish particularly to be associated with support for in-country production of basic foodstuffs, which should not be displaced by the production of cash crops. We note that in the efficient production of food, or of cash crops for that matter, equitable systems of land tenure and usage are an essential factor. Stark contrasts in "consumption patterns" are not only to be distinguished as between North and South, but also within individual societies.

Conservation of resources in all its forms is increasingly important to improvement of the standard of life. NGOs would wish to be associated with support for practical measures in this area. However, our support for the exploration of new and renewable sources of energy is not an excuse for the extravagant use of exhaustible fuel sources.

We must make reference to the subject of racism. The North/South contrasts reflect, historically and residually, the pervasive influence of racism, which brings in its train vast problems, such as that of refugees, and the ever more pressing one of the danger arising from institutionalized racist practices. We see these attitudes, in whatever guise, as inimical to the co-operation which we all seek to bring to fruition and our activities will be animated by this conviction.

(more)

13th Meeting (AM)  
8 September 1981

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page 12

World Confederation of Labour spokesman heard

Following is a brief summary of the statement made in the general debate this morning by Blaise ROBEL, World Confederation of Labour:

The Confederation unites trade unions of the Third World. The Second United Nations Development Decade (1971-1980) did not benefit the poorest countries. The least developed nations, which once numbered 25, are 31 today. Measures proclaimed "have remained a dead letter" through absence of political will. A paradox exists between declarations and practice.

Underdevelopment is caused by the development of a few dynamic countries that dictate their laws to others. The dependence of developing countries is increased by the present international division of labour. Twenty times more money is being spent on armaments than on development. If that trend continues, \$1,000 billion will be spent in the year 2,000, enough money to eliminate poverty in the world. The full and effective participation of workers and peasants in the development process - conception, programming, decision-making and control over implementation - is the only way to guarantee the sharing of the fruits of development. This presumes the existence of worker organizations able to motivate the workers.

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## PRESS RELEASE

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# United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries

PARIS  
1-14 September 1981

14th Meeting (PM Summary)

UNCLDC/20  
8 September 1981

### THIRTEEN SPEAKERS ADDRESS PARIS CONFERENCE ON LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRIES

#### 144 Countries Now Registered at Conference

The United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries heard 13 more statements this afternoon as it continued the general debate.

The representatives of Egypt, Thailand, Sri Lanka, Guinea-Bissau, Bulgaria, Lesotho, the Congo and Democratic Kampuchea expressed the views of those Governments and a statement was also made by the Executive Director of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO).

The representatives of one intergovernmental organization and three non-governmental organizations also spoke this afternoon: Economic Community of the Great Lakes Countries, International Federation of University Women, Afro-Asian People's Solidarity Organization and the International Movement for Fraternal Union between Races and People.

To date, 144 countries have registered to participate in the Conference.

Listed to speak in the general debate when the Conference meets again at 10 a.m. tomorrow, 9 September, are Nepal, Burundi, Kuwait, Greece, Uganda, Maldives, Vietnam, the International Trade Centre of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development and the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, and the International Co-operation for Socio-Economic Development.

(SUMMARIES OF THE STATEMENTS MADE AT THE MEETING HAVE BEEN  
ISSUED AS PAGES UNCLDC/20A THROUGH UNCLDC/20M)

(more)

Statement by Egypt

Following is a brief summary of the statement made in the general debate this afternoon by Kamal KHALIL (Egypt):

Egypt advocates the preparation of an emergency plan for the least developed countries. The solution to their problems lies within the context of a solution to global economic problems. Their special situation, however, calls for emergency action.

This Conference must draw on international co-operation for progress. The component parts of this co-operation are not ideas about assistance or grants - notions linking "co-operation" and grants should be eliminated. This co-operation is between developing and developed nations. This form of co-operation will not be for the benefit of the least developed alone. It should steer clear of political commitments and strategies. Any link between this Conference and politics will divert the Conference from the strong base on which its work has been founded.

The idea behind the Conference is not to penalize former colonial Powers for what has happened in the past. The responsibility for development should rest with the entire international community. If certain States are trying to dodge, they are dodging their responsibility, and the plight of the least developed countries will worsen.

Egypt supports the action programme submitted by the "Group of 77" developing countries.

The new programme for the 1980s is relatively long-term. The urgent needs of the least developed cannot be delayed. So the plan must incorporate emergency measures.

(more)

Statement of Thailand

Following is a brief summary of the statement made in the general debate this afternoon by Arun PANUPONG, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Thailand:

In the joint efforts to raise their standard of living and improve their economy, it is recognised that the primary responsibility must, of course, rest with the least developed countries themselves. However, the existing problems are so vast that for their efforts to succeed they must receive determined and substantial support from the international community as a whole. Moreover, the present Conference must be seen within the wider perspective of the international economic environment and in particular of the new international economic order and the North-South dialogue. This opportunity must be utilized to create a climate of confidence which would facilitate future North-South negotiations.

As to the content of the Substantial New Programme of Action for the 1980s, there is a real need for developed countries to increase the level of transfer of financial resources to the least developed countries. The development of human resources through technical assistance must also be stressed. Thailand's own experience has shown the need to go beyond the eradication of illiteracy to the establishment of training programmes, vocational schools and courses on technical subjects. Thailand believes that in this aspect other more advanced developing countries have a positive role to play in conjunction with the efforts of the developed countries, either bilaterally or through the United Nations system.

Despite limited resources, Thailand has provided assistance both in cash and in kind to at least 14 least developed countries. Aid has spanned a wide variety of subjects including geology, rice milling, telecommunications, shrimp and fish cultures, engineering and agriculture.

(more)

UNIDO Executive Director Speaks

Following is a brief summary of the statement made in the general debate this afternoon by Abd-El Rahman KHANE, Executive Director of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO):

The contribution which industry can make to solving the problems of the least developed countries is essential. Industrialization is not an end in itself; in the Third World it is a dynamic instrument capable of promoting justice and reducing poverty. Industry serves agriculture. In the field of public health, pharmaceuticals are necessary; thus, industry serves public health. Further industrial development provides the largest opportunities for employment.

In recent years, UNIDO has been giving attention to the industrial development needs of the least developed countries. Priority must be given to technical and financial assistance in the areas of agriculture, infrastructure and industrial development, in that order. Trained personnel are also badly needed.

The volume of technical assistance provided by UNIDO to the least developed has greatly increased - from \$3 million in 1974 to \$19 million in 1980. Eighty per cent has been financed under the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and the rest by UNIDO funds. If resources are made available, UNIDO technical assistance to the least developed countries could reach \$46 million in 1986 and \$69 million in 1989.

Unless adequate budgetary resources are allocated to it, UNIDO will not be able to meet the needs of the developing countries and, in particular, the least developed among them, in industrial development.

UNIDO is ready to co-operate with other United Nations bodies, as well as the countries concerned, to bolster international efforts to transform the economies of the least developed countries.

(more)

Sri Lanka Speaks

Following is a brief summary of the statement made in the general debate this afternoon by N. BALASUBRAMANIAM, Sri Lanka:

Four of the seven countries of the South Asian region to which Sri Lanka belongs, are in the least developed category. It was only a few months ago that the first steps were taken by the countries of the region who met in Colombo to discuss economic co-operation among themselves. Regional co-operation could play a significant role for both the least developed countries, as well as for the other developing countries of the area in many diverse fields, such as trade, shipping, finance, technology and technical assistance. Sri Lanka, which is an island developing country, views with sympathy and concern the problems and difficulties facing the least developed countries and, in particular, those countries in the group from our region.

The problems of under-development are, however, only symptoms of a deep malaise afflicting the global economy. The disease has taken a more virulent form in the case of the least developed countries. It is therefore appropriate that the international community has thought fit to hold this Conference to deal with their problems. However, let us remember that a permanent cure lies not in treating the symptoms but in attacking the disease at its very roots.

A review of the first phase of the Immediate Action Programme adopted in 1979, shows that the promised greatly expanded assistance to the least developed countries was in most cases not forthcoming or else was swallowed by the rapid inflation of prices of vital imports of these countries. Indeed, during the year 1979 in each of the key areas of total GDP, the per capita levels either stagnated or declined. Total concessional assistance in real terms also declined. It appears that these trends continued in 1980 except for an increase in agricultural output.

More urgent efforts should be made in the context of the Substantial New Programme of Action to transform the economies of the least developed countries towards self-sustained development.

(more)



Statement of Guinea-Bissau

Following is a brief summary of the statement made in the general debate this afternoon by Vasco CABRAL, Minister of Economic Co-ordination and Planning of Guinea-Bissau, a least developed country:

Any commitments made without a commitment of resources will lead to the same disappointing results as in the past. Long and costly dialogue will discourage even the most optimistic. Without political will to implement it, the action will be a "morass of recommendations". Failure will have heavy consequences for the future.

The Action Programme should establish a link between the financing of development and the programming of ordinary projects. It should provide for the participation of all in the development process, define clear principles for administration and elaborate special plans for trade exports. Measures should include substantial food aid, balance-of-payments support, the stabilization of export earnings from commodities and aid for the elaboration of the projects proposed in the Substantial New Programme of Action.

Stress should be laid on education and training, which will help to solve the unemployment problem. In Guinea-Bissau, emphasis will be put on technical training. Aid is needed for this purpose as well as for health. In Guinea-Bissau, the need is for preventive medicine programmes and health education.

In 1981, Guinea-Bissau has a trade deficit of \$32 million. Its external debt is \$170 million. It is dependent on others in the areas of technology, trade and finance. It is strongly dependent on foreign aid. But it has resources which, if developed, could break the vicious cycle and lead to development. These resources include fisheries, land not yet under cultivation, forestry and mining - phosphates, bauxite and oil. It needs to import technology and adapt it to its culture. The Government intends to exercise control over imports, State expenditures and oil imports in order to subordinate everything to its development priorities.

For Guinea-Bissau, international aid is essential: for paying its financial arrears - \$7.5 million; for establishing a two-month foreign exchange reserve - \$11.5 million; and for paying its public debt - \$6 million.

Also, a national reserve of rice must be established.

(more)

Statement of Bulgaria

Following is a brief summary of the statement made in the general debate this afternoon by Georgi PIRINSKI, Bulgaria:

Like all other socialist countries, Bulgaria has from the very outset of its relations with the least developed countries firmly based them on the principles of true and effective partnership for development. During the past quarter century it has steadily built broad systems of bilateral co-operation with most of the least developed countries fully harmonious with their indigenous development efforts. It therefore has not had to engage in rethinking and reformulating its approach to these countries only now during the past two or three months of preparation for this Conference.

As we recall that this year marks the 1300th anniversary of the existence of Bulgaria as a State, we have also been reflecting that it is only during the last three and a half decades that Bulgaria has been reborn as a modern country with a balanced and sizable industrial base, a sophisticated social welfare system and a dynamic national cultural life. It is thanks to a determined, all-out national effort to attain such progress, combined with a comprehensive bilateral system of broadest co-operation and integration with the Soviet Union and other socialist countries, that this was possible. These links have not sapped Bulgaria's export earnings, they have not led to accumulation of a debilitating mountain of debt nor to the preservation of an inefficient commodity structure of exports. Rather the exact reverse has been the actual case. They have provided the vitally necessary external support for accelerated socio-economic progress.

There is, however, one overriding factor which determines the success of any development effort and that is the preservation of international peace and security. Indeed at this time when our Conference is meeting we are daily witnessing a sharp rise of tensions in the world. The abrupt and unprovoked adoption of a policy base on force by certain Western circles, the rush to armaments build-up, the ease with which painstakingly constructed agreements and beginnings of goodwill are now being discarded and destroyed are all deeply disturbing.

The deep commitment of Bulgaria to actively implement and expand broad, mutually beneficial co-operative relations with the developing countries and the least developed countries in particular can be illustrated by the more than 50 industrial projects of a total value of over 250 million dollars which are now being constructed in Afghanistan, Benin, Ethiopia, the Peoples Democratic Republic of Yemen, Guinea, Laos People's Democratic Republic and the United Republic of Tanzania. Under Bulgaria's general system of preferences, duties, on all goods originating in the least developed countries have been completely abolished.

In line with its means, Bulgaria is resolved to further expand its economic co-operation with the least developed countries in future on the same comprehensive development-oriented basis.

(more)

Lesotho statement

Following is a brief summary of the statement made in the general debate this afternoon by E. R. SEKHONYANA, Minister of Planning, Employment and Economic Affairs of Lesotho, a least developed country:

Lesotho is reasonably encouraged by the representation of the donor community at the Conference. The Conference should sensitize the international community to a meaningful appreciation of the plight of the least developed countries. It should make a commitment of support and translate that commitment into an effective and increased flow of resources and supportive measures.

The adoption of the "Group of 77" Action Programme would be a step in the right direction,

The development of the economies of the least developed countries is the primary responsibility of these countries themselves. All have plans for social and economic transformation. They are not demanding hand-outs but supportive measures. They are seeking complementarity of effort.

The success of the Action Programme will depend on the inclusion of the Immediate Programme of Action as a component, including measures to cope with food shortages, scarcity of foreign exchange, and the like.

The least developed countries are caught in a vicious circle involving among other things, high population growth, low levels of education, poor health and nutrition, lack of both physical and human infrastructure, low productivity, rising costs, imported inflation and lack of financial resources. Under these circumstances, it is difficult to say whether the high rate of population growth is a result of under-development or vice versa. Foremost are problems relating to food supplies, energy and manpower improvement and utilisation.

The future prospects of the least developed nations in real per capita terms would indeed be bleak, if not desperate, without the implementation of the Substantial New Programme of Action. This is in spite of the substantial efforts by these countries to improve the internal situation as well as the acknowledged resource flows from the international community. The social and economic development plans of these countries recognize that there is room for further important improvements in the internal situation. The international community is likewise urged to recognize that more could be achieved by way of commitment to and the implementation of the new Programme. With sympathetic political will and courage, possibilities exist for realization of this formidable but noble goal. It is imperative that resource flows to these countries be greatly enhanced in both quantitative and qualitative terms. Lesotho firmly supports the modalities proposed by the "Group of 77".

The commitment to the implementation of the Substantial New Programme of Action would be a determined approach towards the realization of the New International Economic Order.

(more)

Speech of Congo

Following is a brief summary of the statement made in the general debate this afternoon by Jean-Baptiste TATI LOUTARD, Minister of Culture and Arts in charge of scientific research of the Congo:

Man is still gathering and hunting food today, although the neolithic age passed 8,000 years ago. Europe, today one of the most dynamic centres of the world, discovered agriculture 3,000 years after Egypt. Such diversity was due to the relative isolation of human settlements. But today that isolation has been overcome through the development of transportation and communications, and the world has found unity. Those "haves" who think they can close their doors on the problems of the "have nots" will produce an asphyxiating climate for the whole human race. There must be a dialogue between the developed and developing worlds.

The question of the environment must not be neglected in the development process. One of the reasons for the disappearance of the Mayan civilization is thought to be a poor use of the environment. Another feature of the development process must be full participation of the people.

The international community must give the least developed countries the necessary means to enable them to be masters of their own destiny, in accordance with their cultural identities.

(more)

Statement of Democratic Kampuchea

Following is a brief summary of the statement made in the general debate this afternoon by I.M. SAROEUN (Democratic Kampuchea):

Previous speakers have stressed the need for international solidarity and that poverty is not an act of fate. The obstacles are many, but it is to be hoped that they are not insurmountable. If the new programme receives the necessary support, it will help to prevent a widening of the gap between the rich and poor countries.

Although Democratic Kampuchea is not a least developed country, it is the "least advanced" among the less advanced. There is a reason for that. A war of aggression is being waged against it by Hanoi, supported by a world Power. The action programme, to be effective, shall have to be implemented in a political environment that does not negate it. The major requirement is one of preserving an environment of peace, stability and security, which is now being threatened by expansionism. As the King of Nepal asked the Conference, how many least developed countries are left in peace to develop along their own paths? Imposed wars annihilate what has been patiently and painfully developed over decades. Development is also hampered by the problem of people who become refugees in their own countries.

War and the threat of war not only make détente an empty word, they compel the use of resources for defence, not development. Democratic Kampuchea is suffering from barbarous aggression and so is at this time a "least advanced" country. Its major problem is survival. In the vast regions under its control, reconstruction is going on actively. It is in this context that Democratic Kampuchea wants to draw attention to the need for peace, stability and security. Without those conditions, any efforts at development are doomed to fail.

The people of Democratic Kampuchea, in opposing expansionism, are making their contribution to peace, stability and security in the region. Once Vietnamese troops are withdrawn, the people of Kampuchea will redouble their efforts to rehabilitate the country and contribute to the development of the economies of the least developed.

(more)

Representative of Economic Community of the Great Lakes Countries speaks

Following is a brief summary of the statement made in the general debate this afternoon by Sylvère BISHIRANDORA, Economic Community of the Great Lakes Countries:

The Community, which includes Burundi, Rwanda and Zaire, hopes that industrial co-operation will create favourable conditions for collective autonomy at the regional level while providing the framework to strengthen the development efforts of individual countries. Such co-operation is not only necessary, but urgent, particularly since the African continent is overflowing with riches.

The Community proposes to reduce the large number of consultants who only produce studies and instead to use the intellectual potential, both national and international, in the efforts to develop the countries still underequipped.

(more)

Statement by representative of women's organizations

Following is a brief summary of the statement made in the general debate this afternoon by Constance JONES, of the International Federation of University Women, speaking also for other international women's organizations:

Women are at the centre of everything connected with development. It is therefore essential that women, equally with men, participate both as agents and as beneficiaries in all sectors and at all levels of the development process. The Federation recommends that training programmes be designed especially for women to help them in their efforts to increase yields of food crops, in processing and preparing food, as well as in improving the nutritive content of the family diet.

Women, who compose 80 per cent of the agricultural workers in the least developed countries, should have the same access as men to education, training and extension programmes so that they can take advantage of the appropriate farming technology for their area. They should also be provided with rights in land tenure; credit and marketing services and co-operatives should be fully opened to them and they should be able to participate in decision-making at all levels.

Feasibility studies should include the effects of projects and programmes on the situation of women. No development project should be put into operation if it is going to have a damaging effect on them. In the Substantial New Programme of Action consideration should be given to women as beneficiaries and agents of change, for compelling reasons of both justice and development.

(more)

14th Meeting (PM)  
8 September 1981

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Afro-Asian Solidarity Organization speaks

Following is a brief summary of the statement made in the general debate this afternoon by Zain SALIT, Afro-Asian People's Solidarity Organization (AAPSO):

The conditions of the least developed countries are an insult to humanity. The AAPSO supports the Action Programme proposed by the "Group of 77". The AAPSO organized a seminar on development, with particular emphasis on the least developed countries, which was held from 6 to 10 July in Grenoble. The people of the least developed countries must have the right to choose their own social and economic systems. No measures adopted will be effective unless plans are made to prevent the plundering of economic surpluses. The Action Programme should be worked out so as to maintain the unity of the developing countries.

(more)



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Spokesman of International Movement for Fraternal Union Between Races  
and Peoples Heard

Following is a brief summary of the statement made in the general debate this afternoon by EYA NCHAMA, International Movement for Fraternal Union Between Races and Peoples:

"The blood of Africans has built the developed countries." It is perhaps a camouflage to isolate discussions of the least developed without taking into consideration interactions between the developing and the developed countries. It is up to the developed nations to do something. Our movement has been set up to struggle against the former international order that exploited people in Africa, America and Asia. The answer to overcoming the current economic suppression is organization. We must work together seriously, for without co-operation, the world will be plunged into decadence and obsolescence. Governments often turn a deaf ear - they don't want to understand. But we are all here together and can begin to discuss the problem, which is nothing less than dictatorship.

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## United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries

PARIS  
1-14 September 1981

15th Meeting (AM Summary)

UNCLDC/21

9 September 1981

### PARIS CONFERENCE ON LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRIES HEARS 10 MORE SPEAKERS IN GENERAL DEBATE

Four least developed countries - Nepal, Burundi, Uganda and Maldives - were among the 10 speakers this morning as the United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries continued general debate.

The other speakers were the representatives of Kuwait, Greece, Viet Nam, the International Trade Centre and two non-governmental organizations: International Co-operation for Socio-Economic Development and the International Alliance of Women.

Listed to speak when the general debate continues at 3 p.m. today are the representatives of the United Nations Fund for Population Activities, the Republic of Korea, Argentina, the Ukrainian SSR, Zaire, Cyprus, Mexico, Zambia, the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania, the World Federation of United Nations Associations and the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat).

(SUMMARIES OF THE STATEMENTS MADE AT THE MEETING  
HAVE BEEN ISSUED AS PAGES UNCLDC/21A THROUGH UNCLDC/21J)

(more)

Statement by Nepal

Following is a brief summary of the statement made this morning in the general debate by Yadav Prasad PANT, Minister of Finance, Commerce and Supplies of Nepal, a least developed country:

To launch their programmes successfully, the least developed countries will need external assistance in a sufficient magnitude in the coming years, along with a substantial liberalization in the modalities of aid. The international community should also be prepared to readjust the existing aid practices as well as other standard approaches to development problems and to introduce changes in the existing conditions and procedures of foreign aid. There are many areas where standard cost-benefit approach is irrelevant or needs substantial modification. The countries will also need sufficient technical and managerial manpower, to streamline administrative infrastructure support, to prepare feasibility studies and conduct surveys, and to implement projects and programmes, on a larger scale. Other types of support as in tariff, trade and transit facilities are also of equal importance. In the absence of strong support from the international community - both developed and developing - it will not be possible to launch the Programme of Action successfully.

Nepal supports the proposal of devising an effective mechanism to constantly monitor and review at country and global levels the Substantial New Programme of Action. The follow-up and monitoring devices should avoid the setting up of new institutions which may overlap the existing ones.

Nepal's difficulties include the rapid growth of population which has brought out serious ecological imbalances as a result of deforestation, soil erosion and loss in agricultural productivity; the high cost of import of petroleum products; and the difficulties experienced as a land-locked country in regard to the high transit cost, arising from inadequate transit infrastructure facilities.

Priority has been given to the agricultural sector, especially food production both for domestic consumption and exports. The entire structure of Nepal's development programme is based on the efficient use of the country's resource potentialities - land, forest and water. The public sector development outlay needed to achieve the modest growth targets is estimated at \$1.8 billion during 1980-1985 and \$3.1 billion during 1985-1990. Of this 60 per cent - \$1.09 billion for 1980-1985 and \$1.8 billion for 1985-1990 at constant prices of 1979/1980 - will have to be met from foreign assistance.

One does not necessarily have to wait for the outcome of the long process of negotiations within the framework of the North-South dialogue. Nepal does not subscribe to the view that priority consideration of the problems of the least developed world would bring adverse effects on international efforts to build a new international economic order. On the contrary, it would strengthen the weakest and enable them to make effective participation towards the establishment of such an order.

(more)

Statement of Burundi

Following is a brief summary of the statement made in the general debate this morning by Serge KANANIYE, Minister of Planning of Burundi, a least developed country:

This Conference is evidence of world understanding of the plight of the least developed countries. To move from understanding to action is vital.

The main bottlenecks facing Burundi are demographic pressure, under-employment, its land-locked situation, the cost of energy and a low internal financing capability. In regard to its land-locked status, Burundi's capital is 1400 kilometres from the nearest seaport. This is particularly serious as 70 per cent of the country's imports come from outside the African continent and 80 per cent of its exports go to developed countries.

As to energy, no substitution for oil can be foreseen in the 1980s, nor can it be possible to produce it nationally. The creation of an energy-related facility would thus contribute significantly to the implementation of planned projects.

Although agriculture is the major sector, Burundi hopes to diversify the economy. Also, it is vital to build a railroad infrastructure to compensate for the country's land-locked status. Another need is training. The total amount needed for the 1980s is \$6 billion. International aid is essential.

There is need for new aid modalities based on effectiveness and speed. Delays in the disbursement of funds are harmful to project implementation. As to follow-up, Burundi strongly sees the need for the establishment of machinery to ensure the implementation of the Action Programme.

(more)

Kuwait statement

Following is a brief summary of the statement made in the general debate this morning by Hassan Ali DABBAGH (Kuwait):

Kuwait has been giving development assistance since 1961 when the Kuwait Arab Development Fund was set up with capital of 50 million dinars. It was at first limited to helping Arab countries; at that time oil was being sold at "ridiculously low prices". Now the Fund's capital is 2 billion dinars - about \$7.2 billion and assistance also goes to countries in Asia and Africa. Its objectives have not changed, however. The Fund does not finance more than 50 per cent of any given project. The assistance given by Kuwait has nothing to do with the increase in the price of oil since 1973. There have been increases also in the prices of manufactures and food. The Fund has assisted 22 of the least developed countries, for a total of \$911 million - or, if technical assistance is included, \$931 million. The terms of the loans are favourable; interest never exceeds 2.5 per cent and the length is 25 years, in some cases longer. Kuwait feels its bilateral relations are not incompatible with a global solution to the problems of the least developed countries.

Speedy assistance is required. But the problems of the least developed cannot be solved by international assistance alone. Their problems are not different from those of the developing countries as a whole, and the present economic system needs to be revised in a bold fashion so that all benefit from it.

Kuwait continues to provide the least developed countries with assistance and the benefit of its experience. The elimination of economic disparities is essential. Every country has a role to play in the development process, and would be serving their own interests by doing so.

(more)

Address of Greece

Following is a brief summary of the statement made in the general debate this morning by Ambassador E. MITSOPOULOS, Greece:

One of the major endeavours of the least developed countries must be the increase, by appropriate strategies, of their agricultural and especially food production. My country is well known for its close relationship and provision of technical and other assistance to developing countries, including the least developed of them in various fields, e.g. agricultural production, health services, housing, construction, merchant marine training, handicrafts, fisheries, tourism, management of enterprises, sea and air transportation and naval construction. Recently, Greece decided to offer every year a series of scholarships for training through the Intergovernmental Maritime Consultative Organization (IMCO) and through the Hellenic Public Power Corporation in which the least developed countries have the largest shares.

In this respect, we believe that technical co-operation is as useful as financial assistance. Such efforts are aimed to contribute to the implementation of the Programme of Action of this Conference and through it to the achievement of a better and more balanced world for the benefit of all.

Our own experience as a developing country until recently, and our close and excellent relations with all the developing countries, constitute an advantage for our mutual understanding and can thus contribute to the successful discharge of our additional responsibilities in this field as a member of the European Economic Communities.

(more)

### Ugandan Statement

Following is a brief summary of the statement made in the general debate this morning by Sam N. ODAKA, Minister of Planning and Economic Development of Uganda, a least developed country:

The position of the "Group of 77" is the most appropriate approach to the subjects of this Conference. Some delegations, or groups of delegations may be of the opinion that the position of the "Group of 77" emphasizes almost exclusively what is expected from the donors, without emphasizing also what the least developed countries can do for themselves. Consequently, they have gone to the other extreme of focusing almost exclusively on what the least developed countries can and must do for themselves. This latter approach misses the essential point of this Conference, namely to secure positive agreement of the donors to assist the least developed countries in their effort of development. Uganda notes with satisfaction that a number of important donor countries and agencies, notably France, the Nordic Countries, the European Economic Community (EEC) and the Fund of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) have taken positions which give some hope to the "Group of 77".

The most effective aid for the immediate rehabilitation effort of Uganda is the balance-of-payments support which will enable Uganda to procure inputs, equipment, spare parts and raw materials for the renovation of the facilities in the productive sectors of agriculture, livestock, forestry, industry and mining. This form of procurement assistance is also urgently required in the economic infrastructure sector, and in the social service sectors.

The Conference might wish to consider the creation by bilateral and multilateral institutions of special windows or special allocations with specific targets for the benefit of the least developed countries. A discussion on new mechanisms for increased financial transfer to the least developed countries which is proposed by the "Group of 77" should be given due consideration. Substantially increased assistance should be accompanied by effective improvements in aid modalities as proposed by the "Group of 77". Considerable further progress can still be made, particularly in areas concerning the need for more non-project assistance, for funding local and recurrent costs, for flexibility in the utilization of aid, for improved and simplified aid procedures, for increased aid co-ordination and for ensuring more continuous and predictable aid flows. Uganda also strongly hopes that there will be some agreement at this Conference on special international support measures for the least developed countries in other crucial areas such as commodity agreements, compensation for shortfalls in export earnings, support for minerals and energy development, food sector development, the reduction of tariff and non-tariff barriers, and access to markets and technical assistance.

(more)

Speech by Maldives

Following is a brief summary of the statement made in the general debate this morning by Fathulla JAMEEL, Minister of External Affairs, Maldives, a least developed country:

Maldives is among the 20 poorest countries in the world in terms of gross national product (GNP) per capita and is among the poorest of the island developing countries. Our economy is based on three major activities, and they are: fisheries, tourism and shipping. We have significant development potentials, and have been fairly successful in directing investments into these areas where we have comparative advantage.

But there are major obstacles to Maldives' progress, above all the lack of financial resources for development projects. With appropriate external assistance the Government and people of Maldives can solve most of these problems, and are determined to do so. Fisheries resources have considerable potential, but there is a growing need for planned exploitation in order to increase earnings. This cannot be achieved unless we are able to introduce modern methods of fishing through skill investment, and to improve landing and storage facilities, processing capacity and access to markets. We strongly believe that social and economic development will come about only if the living standard of the rural masses is improved. Our programmes incorporate measures to alleviate their conditions, and to promote health care and upgrading of skills.

Our efforts and resources alone will not be sufficient. A large dose of external finance is required, and Maldives feels that there is a need to look at the criteria on which aid flow is decided. Sometimes donors decide on the quantity of aid purely on per capita basis; as a result of this the countries who cannot count their heads in millions are left in the cold. A few years ago, Maldives experienced a tragic epidemic of diarrhoeal disease which cost us more than two hundred lives. A visiting expert from the region, who came to assist, told us not to be alarmed for having lost a few hundred lives, because in some countries such epidemics cost them thousands of lives. When we come to the matter of life and death, deprivation of basic needs, can we use the yardstick of numbers, or per capita analysis? I certainly cannot agree.

For the successful implementation of the Substantial New Programme of Action a considerable aid volume increase must be accompanied by new criteria and improvements in aid modalities and management.

Maldives also feels that it is most important to establish a mechanism for continuous review and implementation of the Substantial New Programme of Action and intends to establish focal points for continuous contact with our development partners.

(more)



Statement of Viet Nam

Following is a brief summary of the statement made in the general debate this morning by MAI VAN BO (Viet Nam):

Viet Nam is a developing country. If only the criteria of per capita income were used, it would be a least developed country. Thus, Viet Nam has sympathy for the situation of those countries. The neo-colonialists and the transnational corporations continue to exploit the least developed countries, though through circumstance their methods have become more subtle. It is the responsibility of the developed capitalist countries to ease the burden of the least developed States.

The imperialist, racist and Zionist forces are in "close collusion". There is aggression against Angola and Iraq. Measures being used against the developing countries include economic sabotage, blockades, and cutting off aid. World opinion is concerned that certain States are using economic aid as a form of political pressure.

Foreign aid is important, but it must be based on mutual advantage. Aid that does not benefit the donor does not exist; therefore, it must be asked whether aid given benefits the recipient or not. It should meet the development needs of the recipient.

Imperialist reactionary forces have tried to force Viet Nam to a state of collapse. They have staged an economic blockade against Viet Nam, have cut off aid and have tried to convince others to do so. Fortunately, Viet Nam has been helped by its friends. In particular, the Soviet Union and the member States of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA) have helped Viet Nam to overcome its problems. Such aid differs from the aid provided by imperialist countries.

Viet Nam is prepared to consolidate and increase economic and technical co-operation with other developing countries, including the least developed.

(more)

International Trade Centre Executive Director Heard

Following is a brief summary of the statement made in the general debate this morning by GÖran M. ENGELOM, Executive Director, International Trade Centre, UNCTAD/GATT (ITC):

ITC, which is a joint subsidiary organ of GATT and the United Nations, the latter acting through UNCTAD, is the focal point within the United Nations system for technical co-operation with the developing countries in trade promotion. Since its inception, the Centre has assisted many developing countries in establishing national institutions and introducing appropriate strategies for trade promotion: market development assistance, through supply studies, market research and marketing; information systems, and technical advisory services for export financing, costing and pricing, packaging, quality control, commercial publicity; training and manpower development programmes in trade promotion methods and techniques; "generic" promotion, and a programme for improving import operations and techniques.

To enhance the ITC's ongoing technical co-operation in this area and make it more specific and significant, a special programme of technical co-operation with the least developed countries was introduced in 1979, along with a programme on trade promotion oriented to rural development.

A major prerequisite of all trade promotion activities for the least developed countries is to take stock of their supply potential for specific products. The research carried out by ITC has identified a large variety of non-traditional products to be considered for diversifying the export pattern of the least developed countries. In order to promote export production and marketing of these new and promising products, ITC has recently initiated pre-feasibility studies for a number of these products having consumer and industrial uses.

ITC supports developing countries' joint efforts to promote primary commodities on the world market. Multinational generic promotion has been undertaken for commodities such as jute, tea, cotton and hard fibres.

Towards the creation of a pool of trained and skilled manpower, ITC is organizing basic training programmes in export marketing and import operations and techniques. Furthermore, specific product-oriented seminars are being organized to give better appreciation on the problems and prospects for their export development and marketing.

The trade prospects of the least developed countries depend on the substantive external support and also on the policies and programmes which will be pursued for proper utilization of their human and natural resources with an outward orientation.

(more)

International Co-operation for Socio-Economic Development Spokesman Heard

Following is a brief summary of the statement made in the general debate this morning by Menotti BOTTAZZI of the International Co-operation for Socio-Economic Development:

This organization, comprised of 16 Western groups and eight in the Third World aims to sensitize public opinion and to carry out projects in Asia, Africa and Latin America. It has carried out 6,000 projects in the Third World, at a cost of \$250 million. It serves as a forum for dialogue and exchange of experience. There is concern about the absence of social and cultural criteria in the criteria used to select projects and in the choice of technology. Would the projects and programmes be the same if the people involved in them had been asked their views?

The stress on participation by the people in the development process is not found in all countries. Therefore, it is important that non-governmental organizations take advantage of the opportunities available to them. The organization works to mobilize public opinion in the industrialized countries to the need for deep-seated restructuring, particularly in the monetary and financial field and trade in commodities.

(more)

Representative of Two Women's Groups Heard

Following is a brief summary of the statement made in the general debate this morning by Mala PAL, International Alliance of Women and the All India Women's Conference:

Our organizations have been insisting that a concentrated effort should be made to give rural women the same opportunities, such as education and training, as rural men and every development project should be thoroughly scrutinized to see if it is going to have a damaging effect on the already desperate situation of rural women. We are glad to know that the participation and integration of women in development will be duly taken into account in the New Action Programme for the least developed countries which this Conference will formulate.

We are doing our best in a humble way by organizing seminars to create awareness of the situation and provide appropriate technology. The fundamental issue is the participation of women as well as men in the process of development as well as in its benefits, for the compelling reasons of both justice and development.

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# United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries

PARIS  
1-14 September 1981

UNCLDC/22

9 September 1981

16th Meeting (PM Summary)

### PARIS CONFERENCE ON LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRIES

### HEARS 11 STATEMENTS AS GENERAL DEBATE NEARS END

Nearing the end of its general debate, the United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries heard 11 more views this afternoon on the situation of the world's 31 weakest and poorest nations.

The debate, which will continue at 10 a.m. tomorrow, 10 September, is scheduled to conclude tomorrow afternoon. The Conference's two Committees have been meeting in closed session since 2 September.

Expressing the views of their Governments this afternoon were the representatives of the Republic of Korea, Argentina, Ukraine, Zaire, Mexico, Zambia and Cyprus.

Other statements were made by the United Nations Fund for Population Activities; the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat); the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania (PAC), a national liberation movement; and the World Federation of United Nations Associations, a non-governmental organization.

Listed to speak in the debate tomorrow morning are Cape Verde, Algeria, the Philippines, the United Nations Educational, Social and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), Israel, Portugal, Afghanistan, the Office of the United Nations Disaster Relief Co-ordinator (UNDRO) and the International Association of French-speaking Parliamentarians.

(SUMMARIES OF THE STATEMENTS MADE AT THE MEETING HAVE BEEN ISSUED AS PAGES UNCLDC/22A THROUGH UNCLDC/22K)

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United Nations Fund for Population Activities Spokesman Heard

Following is a brief summary of the statement made in the general debate this afternoon by Dr. Nafis SADIK, Assistant Executive Director, United Nations Fund for Population Activities (UNFPA):

The United Nations Fund for Population Activities, in an effort to assist developing countries in dealing with their population problems, has, to date, supported projects in 139 countries and territories and is currently providing assistance to projects in all of the 31 least developed countries. The population of the least developed countries now numbers approximate 286 million persons and is growing at an average rate of 2.7 per cent annually. Many cities are growing at rates of 5 to 7 per cent annually, well in excess of the economic and social absorptive capacity of the urban sector.

Among the challenges that have to be addressed are those of the increasingly large numbers of new entrants to the labour force, the demand for food, fuel, shelter and other basic goods, over-exploitation of natural resources and in particular, unsound agricultural and grazing practices. In 1976, the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council directed UNFPA to give special attention to meeting the requests of those developing countries having the most urgent need for assistance in the population sector. Based on four demographic parameters - fertility levels, rate of population growth, level of infant mortality, and population density on arable land - and one economic indicator - per capita income - 20 of the 31 least developed countries have been identified as "priority countries". The findings of "needs assessment" exercises as well as the nature of country requests have shown that the majority of least developed countries initially need better data to understand the dimensions of their population situation. They also need to build up their institutional capacity and to train and better utilize their human resources.

The proportion of our resources allocated to the least developed countries has been steadily increasing - from little more than 5 per cent in the first five years of the Fund's operations to 15 per cent per annum in 1980 and 1981. That we are committed to substantially increasing our aid to least developed countries is best evidenced by the fact that over the past three years our Governing Council has approved population projects for a total amount of \$146 million to 20 of the 31 least developed countries which represents about 25 per cent of the over-all amount of UNFPA-assisted country programmes. In recent years, however, increases in requests for assistance to UNFPA from developing countries have far out-distanced increases in voluntary contributions to the Fund.

In focusing on the problems of the least developed countries, we must not allow ourselves to lose sight of the vast untapped potential that exists. It is the responsibility of the international community to assist these Governments in their efforts to develop that potential in order to achieve a sustainable and desirable standard of living for their population.

(more)

Republic of Korea address

Following is a brief summary of the statement made in the general debate this afternoon by Byong-Ki MIN (Republic of Korea):

The Republic of Korea has dispatched 72 medical doctors to 19 African developing countries since 1968 and has also provided medical equipment and supplies to these countries. At present, 23 medical doctors are working in 13 African countries. The Government has provided grant aid in the form of Korean-made products and, from 1963 until 1980, it has provided technical training for about 2,600 persons from 82 Asian, African, Latin American and Middle East countries in such fields as agriculture, fisheries, construction, mining and industry. The funding for a certain portion of the training was provided by United Nations agencies and developed countries. The Government also dispatched 79 technical experts to 33 developing countries from 1967 until 1980 in such fields as sericulture, fisheries, rural development, agriculture and mining. It is prepared to increase its technical co-operation with other developing countries, particularly with the least developed countries in the 1980s and also to increase its grant aid.

It is of the utmost importance to ensure that increased external capital flows be made available to the least developed countries and the Republic of Korea supports the position that each developed country should commit itself to the 0.15 per cent target of its GNP. It is desirable that donors provide assistance to the least developed nations essentially in grant form, that donors adjust retroactively the terms of their outstanding official development assistance (ODA) loans to grants, and that, as a general rule, all official development assistance loans to the least developed be untied.

The approach of technical and economic co-operation among developing countries should be fostered to enable least developed countries to draw on relevant experience from other developing countries and from among themselves. Developed countries and international agencies are urged to help finance technical and economic co-operation activities and to co-operate with Governments in the use of institutions in developing countries for training, consultancy services, expertise, and the like.

Regarding trade, it is necessary to grant unlimited preferential duty-free treatment to all the exports of the least developed countries. Moreover, the least developed countries should be exempted from safeguard or other measures which could limit their exports.

(more)

Speech of Argentina

Following is a brief summary of the statement made in the general debate this afternoon by Victor E. BEAUGE (Argentina):

The problems of the least developed countries involve the fundamental needs of human beings and the idea that their situation may be permanent is unacceptable. Therefore Argentina is participating actively in the Conference. The problems of the least developed countries can best be dealt with within the context of the problems affecting all developing countries.

As to Argentina's efforts for development, it will, among other things, increase its contribution to the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD). It provides technical assistance in the fields of education, science and culture. Regarding technology, Argentina is actively working to develop an intermediate technology adapted to the needs of the developing countries.

International assistance must be untied and must never be a vehicle for unacceptable interference.

Dialogue and mutual knowledge will open up new prospects. There should be direct contacts between the authorities in the areas of trade, tourism, transport and the transfer of technology.

Argentina will continue its bilateral efforts for development co-operation and will also encourage action by its private sector.

(more)



Ukrainian Statement

Following is a brief summary of the statement made in the general debate this afternoon by Nicolai RECHETNIAK (Ukrainian SSR):

The problems of the least developed countries stem from the fact that not too long ago many were the most exploited by the world capitalist system. Some continue to be exploited today.

The Ukraine's assistance to the least developed is wide-ranging. Experts go to the developing countries. In addition, many from those countries are training in the Ukraine. Such courses, established under United Nations auspices and in operation for many years, have been well received.

The efforts of the least developed countries must receive multilateral and bilateral support from the international community. The additional resources needed can be found by the achievement of disarmament and by the creation of a climate of peace and security. Threats and naked aggression, among other things, complicate the problems of the least developed countries.

Unfortunately, not all the least developed countries have been able to rid themselves of the burdens of the past. Some are still "agrarian appendages" supplying raw materials to the world capitalist system.

In view of the Ukraine, a major task of the Conference is to condemn imperialism, colonialism, neo-colonialism, apartheid, racial discrimination, hegemony, expansionism and all forms of foreign domination as major impediments to the socio-economic development of the developing countries.

The documents before the Conference have some drawbacks. They give "photographs" of the situation in the least developed countries rather than analysis, and overlook the true reasons for that situation. No reference is made to the rapacious neo-colonial domination of the transnational corporations of the imperialist countries. The documents have "dubious provisions" such as the idea of an international tax. Also, the Ukraine objects to the use of the term "donor country" which ignores the fact that some countries have different socio-economic systems from others.

The Ukraine is ready in the future to render all possible assistance to help towards the economic independence of the developing countries.

(more)

Statement of Zaire

Following is a brief summary of the statement made in the general debate this afternoon by Bagbeni Adeito NZENGEYA of Zaire:

Many special measures were called for by the United Nations General Assembly in 1974, including the establishment of a Special Fund to help the poorest countries, which was to become operational in 1975. Now five years later, what has been done? Further steps to help the least developed countries were called for in 1979 in Manila at the fifth session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD).

An appreciable increase in financial assistance is essential. Europe recovered from World War II because it received assistance that was foreseeable, continuous and guaranteed. That was called the Marshall Plan and it assured Europe's rehabilitation. Can there not be a "Marshall Plan" today?

Many of the least developed countries face economic dependence on States outside Africa, a deterioration in local markets, energy dependence, low financing capability and heavy debts.

The measures needed to help solve these problems include implementation of the Integrated Programme for Commodities, including making operational the Common Fund; an increase in the transfer of resources; and, of course, launching of the global negotiations on economic issues.

(more)

Mexican Address

Following is a brief summary of the statement made in the general debate this afternoon by Placido GARCIA REYNOSO (Mexico):

The world economic crisis has hit countries at all levels of development, of all systems of production and in all geographical areas, but it has hit hardest at the most vulnerable countries. For them it is a question of survival.

Since 1974, when the General Assembly adopted the Declaration and Programme of Action on the Establishment of a New International Economic Order, the developing countries have been striving hard to achieve the objectives of those documents. Now, to formalize the Substantial New Programme of Action, the Conference has before it the "Group of 77" developing countries draft on measures for international assistance. The Conference should not just "finalize" the Programme, but should support it as called for in the International Development Strategy for the Third United Nations Development Decade (1981-1990). Various factors, including the inflexibility of certain developed countries and their resistance to drawing up individual commodity agreements, must not be allowed to prevent a fruitful outcome of the Conference.

There must be an auspicious climate for the coming Cancun session on international co-operation for development.

Mexico, keenly aware that solidarity with the least developed countries must be shared by the entire international community, supports the least developed countries and is working to see that the Action Programme is unanimously approved.

As for Mexico's development assistance, it, together with Venezuela, provides the Central American and Caribbean States, including Haiti, with oil on concessional terms. Mexico plans to maintain that policy of co-operation and extend it to such areas as agriculture and tourism.

(more)

Statement by Zambia

Following is a brief summary of the statement made in the general debate this afternoon by J. M. S. LICHILANA, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Zambia:

Zambia is not among the 21 African countries which have been classified as least developed. This is simply because we are endowed with rich mineral resources in certain parts of our country. That, however, does not mean the average Zambian is better off than his uncle or father-in-law across the border in Botswana, Malawi or Tanzania. What puts Zambia in the middle per capita income group is in reality a mirage created by those who collect and correlate statistical data which is relied upon in determining who is the poorest among the poor.

A number of speakers before me have clearly pointed out the interdependence of the economies of both the rich and the poor nations of the world. The opulence of Western Europe and North America is partially due to the material resources from the developing countries. What we are seeking to establish is merely a redistribution of wealth through the transfer of resources and technology from the rich to the poor countries.

Some in our midst have attributed national economic policies as the major cause for continued lack of visible development in developing countries. That is certainly not so in my part of the world. Zambia is part of southern Africa, an area where the economies, transport and communications systems of all the States are intertwined. Since the turn of the century, our development programmes have been more on a complementary basis except that some States were regarded as sources of raw materials and cheap labour. This unbalanced complementarity is what the majority-ruled States in the sub-region are committed to correct.

It is evident that some of those who are criticizing our economic policies are the ones who have benefited most from easy acquisition of our natural resources for over three quarters of a century. Yet they are among those who support racist regimes in southern Africa under the false apprehension that our mineral resources will only continue to be available to them when the black man is under perpetual suppression by a white man.

We in southern Africa are as anxious as anyone else to grow sufficient food for ourselves, to build decent houses for ourselves, to provide education to our children, and cure the infirm in our midst. We have already established a Southern African Development Co-ordinating Conference whose main objective is to harmonize our development programmes. We have the will to do so but our greatest impediment is the presence of racists in our sub-region and their supporters outside the Continent.

I wish to appeal to all those Governments which are supporting the racist minorities that their economic interests in southern Africa will be better protected under black Governments in all our States. They should bear in mind that orderly and meaningful development will come about when there is racial harmony. Zambia was the twenty-fourth country to sign the Agreement establishing the Common Fund.

(more)

### Statement of Cyprus

Following is a brief summary of the statement made in the general debate this afternoon by Petros MICHAELIDES (Cyprus):

Immediately after its independence in 1960, Cyprus embarked on a development programme that steadily raised the standard of living of all its people. Through careful planning, hard work and wise counsel from United Nations specialized agencies, Cyprus was able, in the course of one and a half decades, to achieve a level of economic, social and cultural growth that was the pride of its people and a model for other developing countries.

Because of its strategic position, however, foreign interference never ceased and this process of development was abruptly and violently interrupted in 1974. In the period of a few days, 1.5 per cent of its population lost their lives (that would be roughly 8 million persons in France), one third of its people were forced to flee from their homes and places of work, and approximately 40 per cent of its territory fell under foreign occupation. That 40 per cent represented an estimated 70 per cent of the island's gross national product (GNP), 82 per cent of tourist accommodation, 60 per cent of agricultural exports, 55 per cent of mining output. Unemployment, which stood at 1.2 per cent, jumped to more than 30 per cent.

When, however, the terrible shock had been absorbed, and when it was realized that despite unanimous resolutions adopted at the United Nations, a just and viable solution was not forthcoming, the people of Cyprus picked themselves up and set about, once again, to rebuild their lives and their economy.

Seven years after the man-made catastrophe of 1974, the fundamental problem which concerns freedom and justice still remains, but satisfactory progress has been made in meeting the most pressing problems facing the country. Much remains to be done in the fields of temporary housing, employment, and replacement of the infrastructure that was lost. However, despite the difficulties that still exist, Cyprus is able to offer assistance and technical training to its brothers from the less developed countries.

Already, a great number of foreign students are following training courses in the fields of forestry, co-operative development, catering and hotel trades, agriculture and fisheries. Cyprus accumulated experience in mass housing, soil conservation, solar energy, water development, irrigation systems, public health and education is available to all who would like to benefit from it.

(more)

HABITAT Executive Director speaks

Following is a brief summary of the statement made in the general debate this morning by Arcot RAMACHANDRAN, Executive Director, United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (HABITAT):

Since food, and shelter are the basic necessities of life and have the most direct and personal effect on every individual in society, it would be logical to place a very high emphasis on these items in the Substantial New Programme of Action for the 1980s. Almost without exception, the least developed countries are experiencing rapid population growth and the resultant shifts of people from rural to urban areas. Given that most of these urban settlers are unskilled or, at best, semi-skilled workers, the existing economies of most developing countries cannot conceivably absorb them in any meaningful work. However, there is enormous potential to expand the construction sector and, thus, provide a foothold for urban migrants who can then make their way into other sectors of the economy as these also begin to expand. Capital investment in equipment should be kept as modest as possible, and funding should be concentrated in two other areas: institution-building and manpower development.

The United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) does not advocate continuing long-term reliance on international funding for national shelter programmes. The true role of international investment should be to provide the seed money which will put national financial institutions on a sound footing and enable them to mobilize their own schemes. The fostering of production of local building materials and components, drawing on and adapting traditional knowledge should also be financially supported. In most cases, a seriously applied Government policy of restricting imported materials which are in competition with local materials should be sufficient incentive to encourage independent entrepreneurial action, with only minimal demands on the Government investment budget. Although the construction sector has been overlooked in almost all the country presentations made to this Conference, such an oversight is seen as a serious constraint on the practicability of the Substantial New Programme under review. The United Nations Centre for Human Settlements would like to suggest that the construction sector is one which deserves consideration for such inclusion, as human settlements programmes are identified as being among the important tools for bringing about equitable social and economic improvement.

(more)

Pan Africanist Congress of Azania Spokesman Heard

Following is a brief summary of the statement made in the general debate this afternoon by Ike MAFOLE, Pan Africanist Congress of Azania:

The victims of the inhuman acts of colonialism are the poor and exploited peoples of the Third World whose representatives are gathered here today conscious of their common plight caused and perpetuated by the imperialist-dominated international economic order. The "haves" obviously have vested interest in the maintenance and consolidation of the existing relationship whilst the "have-nots" are struggling to bring it to an end so as to bring about a just world order where there would be no exploiter and exploited.

The industrialized countries will not voluntarily abdicate their present economic, political and military position of dominance without being forced to do so by the least developed countries of the Third World. No accommodationist approaches will save the least developed countries from their present economic plight. No North-South dialogue will bring about the just and equitable distribution of the world resources and wealth. Only revolutionary changes within the least developed countries or internationally will do so, thus bringing about a total restructuring of the present economic order.

The Pan Africanist Congress of Azania stands for the total overthrow of settler colonialism and imperialism in racist South Africa and is fighting to repossess our land, seize political power, and exercise our inalienable right to self-determination and national independence. There can be no compromise on these principles. In Azania, the only way out of this vicious circle is armed revolutionary struggle. And the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania is totally committed to this method of struggle which is presently the principal method for genuine liberation.

(more)

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WFUNA Speaker Heard

Following is a brief summary of the statement made in the general debate this afternoon by Makkawi AWAD EL MAKKAWI of the World Federation of United Nations Associations:

Members of the Federation are the domestic reflections and proponents in their own countries of the Charter-centred purposes and activities of the whole United Nations community. They believe the elimination of racism and discrimination is a prerequisite for the full development of people in peace and justice. Also the recognition of non-governmental organizations as an essential and legitimate mechanism is an integral part of development co-operation in the community.

In addition, development education is essential to development co-operation and affects the North just as much as the South. The immediate importance of associating non-governmental organizations with the processes of follow-up is recognized and encouraged by the practical offer of support to co-ordination of non-governmental organizations' activities made in the address of the representative of Canada.

(THIS PAGE COMPLETES PRESS RELEASE UNCLDC/22)





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## PRESS RELEASE

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# United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries

PARIS  
1-14 September 1981

17th Meeting (AM Summary)

UNCLDC/23

10 September 1981

### EIGHT SPEAKERS ADDRESS GENERAL DEBATE OF PARIS CONFERENCE ON LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRIES

Eight more Governments stated their views on the help needed by the world's 31 poorest and weakest nations this morning in the continuing debate of the United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries.

The representatives of Cape Verde, Algeria, the Philippines, Israel, Portugal, the Central African Republic, Afghanistan and Samoa expressed the views of their Governments. Statements were also made by the Director-General of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), a representative of the Office of the United Nations Disaster Relief Co-ordinator (UNDRO) and a representative of the World Federation of Democratic Youth, a non-governmental organization.

The general debate is expected to conclude at this afternoon's meeting, which begins at 3 p.m. Listed to speak are Iran; Cuba; Liberia; Panama; Saudi Arabia; the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya; Togo; the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

(SUMMARIES OF THE STATEMENTS MADE AT THE MEETING HAVE  
BEEN ISSUED AS PAGES UNCLDC/23A THROUGH UNCLDC/23K)

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17th Meeting (AM)  
10 September 1981

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### Statement of Cape Verde

Following is a brief summary of the statement made in the general debate this morning by Jose BRITO, Secretary of State for Co-operation and Planning of Cape Verde, a least developed country:

The will must be found to help the least developed countries immediately. Any delay will have the most serious consequences. The Conference should not draw up recommendations which cannot be implemented or which address the wrong problems. There must be concrete results.

Cape Verde's difficulties include a lack of infrastructure, persistent drought and low export earnings - exports cover only 5 per cent of the cost of imports. The gross domestic product (GDP) is \$170; agriculture covers only 16 per cent of GDP. Cape Verde's first objective is to eliminate the vestiges of colonialism and speed up the growth rate. Among the main goals are meeting the essential needs of the people, reducing economic dependence, creating jobs and training technicians and experts.

The Conference will be successful only if the declarations of intent made in Paris are followed by action that is felt in every village in the least developed countries.

(more)

Algerian Statement

Following is a brief summary of the statement made in the general debate this morning by Abdelaziz KHELEF, Minister of Commerce of Algeria:

The Conference should take the exact measurement of the problems facing the least developed in order to find true solutions.

The problems of the least developed countries are but the most urgent of those problems faced by the developing countries as a whole. Their situation is a result of exploitation by the colonial and neo-colonial system - the pillage of resources, cultural alienation and destruction of the weft and warp of the socio-economic system. The pillage of natural resources and markets continues.

The short-term measures adopted by the industrialized countries in the current economic crisis only deepen the economic morass in which the developing countries find themselves.

The process of global negotiations covering trade, energy, raw materials, development and monetary issues is important because it can break the impasse in the North-South dialogue. Two years have been lost.

Algeria condemns the aggression of the Pretoria régime against Angola. That régime must obey the rules of the international community on Namibia.

This Conference should not only adopt an action plan, but also make commitments for implementation of the plan. It must define the mechanism for implementation at a country-by-country level and globally.

(more)

Speech of the Philippines

Following is a brief summary of the statement made in the general debate this morning by Pablo R. SUAREZ (Philippines):

One can almost forgive the sceptics who ask: "Whatever happened to the solemn determination of the international community to come to the aid of the least developed countries? Was Manila an expression of high resolve, or merely of high drama?"

There is no doubt that this Conference will accomplish its task. There are no dissenters to the thesis that the least developed countries should be especially assisted. The lurking tragedy is if the international community once again frustrates the hopes of the peoples in the least developed countries by congratulating itself prematurely, seeing the adoption of the Substantial New Programme itself as the attainment of the final goal of this Conference.

The primary responsibility for their development rests with the least developed countries, and they set their own priorities. It is heartening to note, however, that most of them are placing major emphasis on food and agricultural production. The agricultural sector as the major focus of development strategy in the least developed countries is an obvious choice. Agriculture provides a living for 80 per cent of their inhabitants, produces nearly 50 per cent of their gross national product (GNP) and supplies two thirds of their export earnings.

Accelerated economic development can come only under internal conditions of political and socio-economic stability. The Philippines agrees with the view that development will require greater discipline in economic management, coupled with a more equitable distribution of income and a more serious dedication to developmental objectives.

The Technical Assistance Council of the Philippines, which became operational in January 1980, has offered banking, aquaculture management (prawn culture), tax research in support of fiscal policy formulation and project identification and project study preparation. The Council has proposed to conclude a continuing programme of co-operation with the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) to enable the Council to offer four courses next year: basic foundry technology, general machine shop practice, small business consulting and project study preparation.

To date, participants from the following countries have participated in the training programmes: Bangladesh, Bhutan, Botswana, Ethiopia, Lesotho, Mali, Nepal, Samoa, Sudan, Uganda and the United Republic of Tanzania.

(more)

UNESCO Director-General Speaks

Following is a brief summary of the statement made in the general debate this morning by Amadou Mahtar M'BOW, Director-General of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO):

Two questions must be addressed by the Conference: the material magnitude of international intervention in the problems of the least developed countries, and the nature of that intervention. Will it be to mitigate the pain of the least developed or to get at the root of the causes of their problems? The only real help would be in the form of long-term co-operation. This is where the interests of the least developed converge with the other developing countries - the establishment of international relations of solidarity and equity.

There must be trust in the initiative of all individuals, communities, regions and sub-regions. UNESCO hopes to contribute, within the fields of its competence, to this goal. It will work in the fields of education, culture, science and communication.

Scientific and technological capacity is essential for development. UNESCO hopes to contribute in this respect and to contribute also to a new world where peace and justice reign.

(more)

Statement of Israel

Following is a brief summary of the statement made in the general debate this morning by Meir ROSENNE (Israel):

The question is whether this Conference can mobilize the international will and the resources necessary to help the least developed nations. Analysis shows that the external financing needed for the 1980s amounts to about \$150 billion, or \$15 billion a year. This is more than twice the level of present external financing and it seems unlikely that the target will be met. Therefore, the least developed countries should count more on themselves.

Especially important is the improvement of the agricultural sector. If agriculture does not improve, the least developed States will have to depend on external financing not for their development but to assure their survival. Therefore, priority must be placed on agriculture.

Israel has a good deal of experience to share with the least developed nations, particularly in the area of water shortage. It is setting up a practical model, designed to help the agricultural sector of countries at all stages of development. Israel can co-operate not only in agriculture, but also in the areas of vocational training, public health, co-operatives, rural development and arid zones. Israel has sent 8,000 of its experts abroad. About 25,000 technicians from developing countries have trained in Israel.

Technology cannot be transferred unless it is adapted to local conditions. Israel's motto is "don't Adopt - Adapt". Israel will continue to share its experience and know-how as its contribution to socio-economic development.

Israel will not reply to the "virulent attack" made on it by a speaker in the general debate.

Women must play a dominant role in the development process.

(more)

Portuguese statement

Following is a brief summary of the statement made in the general debate this morning by Leonardo DUARTE MATIAS, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs of Portugal:

Among other things, it is important that there be an improvement in the markets for the products of the least developed countries. There must also be development and strengthening of existing economic and social structures.

The individual effort of each least developed country is essential if this situation is to be improved.

In addition, it is essential that the least developed countries adopt development policies capable of absorbing international assistance.

Portugal is in an intermediate stage of development and should not be considered a donor country or as committed to the assistance agreed on at the Conference. Portugal will, however, intensify its public aid within the limits of its ability. The least developed countries will receive 50 per cent of this aid.

The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) should co-ordinate implementation of the action at the global level. Whenever possible, existing machinery should be utilized.

(more)

Statement of Central African Republic

Following is a brief summary of the statement made in the general debate this morning by Firmin FRISAT of the Central African Republic, a least developed country:

The Central African Republic hopes the Paris Conference will mark the emergence of Third World countries as full economic partners in their own right. If this is to come about, developing countries must find the will to make the necessary domestic structural changes. They have that great will. But it is also necessary that the rules governing the international economy be modified and that the industrialized nations agree to help.

The Central African Republic is going to invite the participation of each citizen in the national recovery.

The Central African Republic is in an unprecedented financial and economic crisis. Political quarrels have worsened the situation. It was necessary to bring order, and this explains the change that has occurred in the country since 1 September. The Military Committee for National Recovery is determined to bring all efforts to bear on meeting the needs of the people and on setting the economy back on its feet.

The Military Committee for National Recovery calls on all the Central African Republic's traditional friends to help it out of the crucial crisis it is in. Aid is essential if the gross domestic product (GDP) is not to fall even lower.

The country needs assistance in the following areas: agriculture and rural development; communications; natural resources; small and medium-size enterprises; foreign trade and reduction of dependence on energy.

The Central African Republic will find it difficult to meet all the conditions set by donor countries.

(more)



Afghanistan Statement

Following is a brief summary of the statement made in the general debate this morning by Mehrabbuddin PAKTIAWAL of Afghanistan, a least developed country:

The living conditions of Afghanistan, with only half of those born remaining alive beyond the age of 5, those surviving having an average life of 50 years, and one third of the population living in absolute poverty, could hardly have continued. When people's frustration crossed the limit, revolution became inevitable. Since the revolution in 1978, the resultant positive changes are indicative of the consolidation of the people's Government. While no danger to peace arises from the internal developments in Afghanistan we are being made the victim of aggressive acts instigated by imperialism and hegemonism. The enemies of progress are destroying educational institutions, water and power works, bridges, and basic health centres, which are so essential for development. Being a land-locked country, Afghanistan is subjected to exploitation by unjust international trade terms and numerous restrictions.

In 1979, we launched a Five Year Socio-Economic Development Plan, the basic objectives of which are to eliminate backwardness, to increase national production, to bring about progressive social changes and to raise the living standards of the people. The Plan envisages an average growth of 4.5 to 5.2 per cent annually.

Of the roughly 65 million hectares of land in Afghanistan, only 8 million is arable, of which only half is cultivated. To upgrade our land, numerous feasibility studies and projects have been undertaken, such as in irrigation and water storage capacity. However, the international organizations who had neutral and progressive approaches before have begun to suspend assistance.

Industry, mining and energy are destined to play an increasing role in the economy of the country, but with the rugged terrain and land-locked situation, development is not easy. While the public sector will spearhead the industrialization process, the private sector too will be encouraged and promoted to participate in the medium and small industries. The Government also welcomes foreign investment and a number of joint ventures are already working. The uncovered gap to finance development for the 1980s is around \$2 billion for which we need the assistance of the international community.

We believe in détente and strongly feel that reduction of the military expenditure is the most effective way to move towards disarmament. Billions of dollars saved on the reduction of military budgets can be spent much more usefully on meeting the socio-economic needs of the least developed countries.

(more)

Samoa address Conference

Following is a brief summary of the statement made in the general debate this morning by Maiava Iulai TOM of Samoa, a least developed country:

The grim global economic situation of today has accentuated hardships, and as the developed and more powerful economies become preoccupied with protecting themselves in these unsettled times, the developing countries, and more particularly the least developed countries, find themselves in a process of rapid economic deterioration, a process they are powerless to arrest, and a process they are forced to watch with increasing despair.

Time and time again, recognition has been accorded by the international community to the need for urgent measures to alleviate the desperate situation of the least developed countries. Only the will to act continues to elude the international community. Samoa hopes that this Conference will result in a firm step towards consensus to translate general agreement on broad principles into concrete measures. The success of this Conference, hopefully, would also spur the international community on to wider international co-operation.

In addition to the typical limitations of economies in the earliest stages of development, an island country like Samoa finds remoteness and the smallness of the domestic market serious disadvantages. Both outward and inward movement of goods and services are seriously affected by high transportation costs and adverse terms of trade.

The highest priority is accorded in Samoa's development endeavours to the implementation of agricultural projects aimed at increased productivity to ensure adequate food supplies and to earn foreign exchange. This is difficult to achieve, however, because of the high prices of fuel and other essential imports. Fuel alone is presently costing Samoa more than its total export earnings at prevailing prices. Its trade deficit will this year be the highest ever. Balance-of-payments support is therefore a most urgent need.

Samoa stands firmly with its brothers of the other least developed countries in a collective plea for additional resource flows in the 1980s, and international support measures to enable them to secure the basic minimum needs of their peoples, and to undertake structural transformation of their economies. At the same time it is very conscious of the fact that none of the measures that may be implemented can be of lasting benefit to the least developed countries if they are not accompanied by international willingness to fashion a more just basis for international economic relations.

(more)

UNDRO Spokesman Heard

Following is a brief summary of the statement made in the general debate this morning by Andre Wilmots VANDENDAELE, United Nations Disaster Relief Office (UNDRO):

It is certainly not a coincidence that the 31 least developed countries who place their hopes before this Conference are also those listed among the countries most often affected by natural disasters. The continual aid rendered by the international community is often represented as some percentage of their national revenue, a statistic which conceals the fact that a significant part of the population is totally dependent on this subsistence aid.

Through a cruel irony of nature, certain countries have been successively stricken by drought and floods. It is normal to think first of the subsequent losses and human suffering and to sympathize; but it is necessary to recognize that these circumstances should trigger an act of international solidarity. Not only is the fruit of their labour destroyed, but their production base is damaged to the point of causing a true economic regression. One could ask what the reaction of public opinion would be in Western Europe if one of those nations saw, for example, a quarter of its population lose half of its annual income. It is in this context that one must examine what happens sometimes in certain least developed countries.

The ability to reduce the economic consequences of a natural disaster is closely aligned to the level of income of the afflicted nation; an obvious fact frequently forgotten. They therefore depend more than anyone else on the mobilization of external resources.

It would be dangerous to the future development of these poor countries, however, to consider humanitarian aid as a part of regular external assistance for development. The two forms of aid should be considered separately.

Emergency aid does not resolve the permanent consequences of a disaster, for which the only remedy is rehabilitation and reconstruction.

Emergency aid operations are costly and their efforts greatly diminish resources available for economic development. For this reason, Governments must be encouraged to take preventive measures. UNDRO, in collaboration with other specialized institutions, is prepared to promote the awareness of activities able to mitigate the consequences of disasters.

(more)

World Federation of Democratic Youth Spokesman Heard

Following is a brief summary of the statement made in the general debate this morning by Ranajit GUHA, Vice-President of the World Federation of Democratic Youth:

When talking about steps to be taken to avert more human tragedy in the least developed countries it is necessary to point to causes and forces responsible for conditions facing them: first, is the centuries-old colonial exploitation, which did not come to a halt with the political independence of these countries; second is the harmful role being played by the multinational corporations in subverting the least developed countries' fragile economic structures; third is the deadly effect of the brain-drain and constant machinations to prevent the developing world from acquiring modern scientific know-how and technology; and fourth is the unabated arms race conducted in the interest of the military industrial complex. Therefore, a great deal of responsibility lies with the developed West to assist developing countries by rendering disinterested technical and scientific know-how in order to build their independent industrial and economic structures.

Based on our limited possibilities, the World Federation of Democratic Youth is making all efforts to popularize the noble actions of the United Nations. The establishment of a New International Economic Order is one of the most important activities that our Federation supports.

(THIS PAGE COMPLETES PRESS RELEASE UNCLDC/23)



## PRESS RELEASE

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# United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries

PARIS  
1-14 September 1981

18th Meeting (PM Summary)

UNCLDC/24

10 September 1981

### PARIS CONFERENCE ON LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRIES CONCLUDES GENERAL DEBATE

The United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries concluded its general debate this afternoon after hearing statements by Iran, Cuba, Panama, Saudi Arabia, Libya, Liberia, Togo and by the representative of the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

The representative of Iraq spoke in exercise of the right of reply to remarks made this afternoon by the representative of Iran, and a statement in right of reply was also made by the representative of Iran.

In closing the general debate, Conference President Jean-Pierre Cot (France) said he thought there had been a "meeting of the minds" by many delegations on a number of questions before the Conference. He urged participants, in the decisive days ahead, to continue their constructive co-operation so the Conference could reach a successful conclusion.

Also this afternoon, the representative of the Soviet Union introduced a report on co-operation between the Soviet Union and the least developed countries in the commercial, economic, scientific and technical fields (document A/CONF.104/17).

The Conference will meet again in plenary session at 10 a.m. on Monday, 14 September, the day on which the Conference is scheduled to end.

According to the Conference secretariat, 162 speakers took part in the debate which was opened on 2 September by the Chairman of the "Group of 77" developing countries. The speakers represented 108 Governments, nine inter governmental organizations, 12 non-governmental organizations, four regional groups and two national liberation movements. Statements in the debate were also made by 27 United Nations officials. Outside the general debate, the Conference was addressed by the King of Nepal and the Presidents of Cape Verde, Kenya and Rwanda.

(SUMMARIES OF THE STATEMENTS MADE AT THE MEETING HAVE BEEN  
ISSUED AS PAGES UNCLDC/24A THROUGH UNCLDC/24L)

(more)

Statement of Iran

Following is a brief summary of the statement made in the general debate this afternoon by Ahmad AZIZI (Iran):

If a structural change in the existing global economic system is desired, methods to realize the goals must be sought through a fundamental analysis. The analysis should be oriented towards severing influences of Eastern and Western super-Powers and, thereby, towards establishing a true justice throughout the world.

The present prevailing system, based on the exertion of power and exercising of force, has caused the widening of the gap between haves and have-nots. Imperialist, led by the United States, through infiltration into the political and social structure of deprived countries and their ruling system, paves the way for establishing unjust economic norms and the continuation of its domination; and, at the same time, attempts to alienate the people of these countries from their genuine cultural values. The contemporary history of Iran, Algeria, Afghanistan, El Salvador and Viet Nam vividly manifests the untiring efforts of Eastern and Western imperialism for the continuation of their dominance.

As long as the neo-colonialist relations, regardless of its Eastern or Western shapes, are culturally and economically predominant in the world. The unequitable prevailing economic situation continues to exist. As long as the oppressed people of the world have not challenged the domination of imperialism and its lackeys, through an all-out confrontation, being prepared to run the risk of their lives, one should not expect that mere economic measures can lead to a fruitful solution.

Granting material and spiritual aid to the oppressed people throughout the world is one of the fundamental objectives of the Islamic Republic of Iran. It is for this very reason that from the outset of the Islamic Revolution of Iran, imperialism, headed by the United States, has spared no effort to destroy this revolution by utilizing all its means, ranging from foreign aggression to internal conspiracy, from assassination of our revolutionary personalities to propaganda against the Islamic Revolution in a global dimension.

The war imposed by Iraq has deprived Iran of the possibility of playing an active financial role in assisting the oppressed people of the world. Iran is fighting in self-defence in a condition where almost no Government in the world has contributed, in whatever form, any economic aid to the conduct of self-defence. On the contrary, the imperialist Governments and their allies, while supplying arms and ammunitions, have provided Iraq with all its logistical requirements.

Iran recommends that the least developed countries rely on the grace of God and their own potentiality, and not attach much hope to any help on the part of super-Powers and their allies.

(more)

Cuban Statement

Following is a brief summary of the statement made in the general debate this afternoon by Jorge BOLANOS (Cuba):

The struggle for disarmament and détente is indissolubly linked to the struggle for the emancipation of the people. Thousands of millions of dollars are being spent in a way that can only lead to the extinction of mankind. The decision by the United States to produce "the infernal neutron bomb" is the most recent manifestation of this policy.

Regarding international trade, the countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America import four times as much as they export. The prices for their exports are currently stagnant or growing at a very slow rate. All this has caused serious deterioration in their terms of trade. They must spend a good deal on importing oil. As to agriculture, it is the basis of the Cuban society. Land must serve the people, not the transnational corporations.

All the developing countries are toiling unselfishly and they justly demand assistance, especially from those who are exploiting them. The fate of the new Action Programme must not be the same as that of the Immediate Action Programme for 1979-1981. The international community must be vigilant in seeing that implementation of the national plans of the least developed countries does not involve any discrimination or political strings.

The problems of the developing world must be seen in an over-all coherent manner. When all aspects are put together, they make a gloomy picture. All problems must be attacked by all countries. Cuba is co-operating with 33 developing countries in such sectors as public health, education, agriculture, construction and communications.

(more)

Address of Panama

Following is a brief summary of the statement made in the general debate this afternoon by Josefa Maria PRADO (Panama):

Panama is itself engaged in the process of development and national liberation. The peoples of the Third World, suffering from hunger, poor health and poor housing, demand the right to live in dignity. To deny them help would be a crime against humanity. No one has the right to turn his back on the least developed countries. Man will not be able to live with his conscience if he denies this aid to almost 300 million human beings who live in misery.

There are people who have to meet their basic needs of food, health and education on only 50 cents a day. The illiteracy rate is horrifying. And the situation is getting worse. The Conference must reach agreement on commitments of assistance.

The International community must awake from lethargy and, in an act of faith, give impetus to substantial programmes to help the peoples of the least developed countries.

In the quest for international solidarity, there have been stages: the meetings at Arusha, Caracas, Addis Ababa and Bangkok. Now, in Paris the Conference must adopt a programme that will, among other things, help the least developed nations in such areas as national resources, agriculture, health and education.

Panama resolutely and firmly supports the draft action programme submitted by the "Group of 77" developing countries and urges the Conference to adopt it.

Panama will continue to co-operate in all ways with Haiti.

A human ideal - justice - has brought Panama to the Conference in order to lay a solid basis for a new international economic order. Let this ideal become crystallized.

(more)



Saudi Arabia Addresses Conference

Following is a brief summary of the statement made in the general debate this afternoon by Mohammed MIRDASS (Saudi Arabia):

Justice cannot exist without economic equality. The previous economic situation has been upset by numerous factors, such as the food crisis, inflation, unequal development and population growth. Hence there is need for a new international economic order in the interest of all countries, which will prevent the concentration of wealth and well-being only in certain States. Saudi Arabia supports the establishment of this new international economic order and thus supports the launching of global negotiations.

All countries, market-economy or centrally-planned, must shoulder their responsibility and help the developing countries, particularly the least developed among them. Saudi Arabia hopes the advanced countries will make the transfer of resources so that the new Action Programme can be carried out.

The official development assistance goal contained in the "Group of 77" draft is reasonable, not exaggerated in any way.

Saudi Arabia, a developing country, suffers from the economic crisis too. It relies on one exhaustible resource - oil. It is therefore in a race against time to complete its development process.

Saudi Arabia hopes the Conference will come up with a programme that can command real support, not just moral sympathy.

Saudi Arabia has contributed bilaterally, regionally and multilaterally for the development of developing countries, including support given to the Arab and African Development Banks and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD). The country's share in a number of institutions and organizations is about 20 per cent of total revenues. Saudi Arabia's contribution to the International Development Fund of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) exceeds 30 per cent of that Fund's resources. Among other things, Saudi Arabia has given \$8 billion to the International Monetary Fund, \$3 billion to the World Bank, \$30 million for refugees in Southern Africa and \$100 million for the countries of the Sahel.

Saudi Arabia's bilateral aid from 1976 through 1980 totalled \$20 billion as grants or as loans with favourable terms. The aid given by Saudi Arabia amounts to 6 per cent of gross national product (GNP). That is very much more than the assistance given by the advanced countries, which has not exceeded one third of 1 per cent.

(more)

Statement of Libya

Following is a brief summary of the statement made in the general debate this afternoon by Misbah OREIBI (Libya):

Life in the least developed countries is an insult to human intelligence, a stigma on the dignity of man and a violation of ethics. A lack of national resources and the greed of the imperialists have moulded the background which has led to the situation they are now in. These countries are making every effort to develop their economies. It is imperative that the international community assist them.

This is one world, comparable to a single ship, and therefore it is inconceivable that the least developed countries can be allowed to sink while the developed countries are safe. Two things are needed: assistance, whether in the form of financial flows, transfer of technology or technical assistance; and the establishment of a new international economic order. Without the second, the first would be only a temporary solution.

All assistance extended by Libya is unconditional, with no strings attached. Libya contributes through a variety of channels and will continue to do so.

Without external assistance, the least developed countries will not be able to break the vicious cycle of poverty.

In Libya's view, this Conference should pave the way for another Conference on the establishment of the New International Economic Order.

(more)

Liberian Speech

Following is a brief summary of the statement made in the general debate this afternoon by Sylvester H. GRIGSBY, Liberia:

My Government is of the strong conviction that the task of development begins at home. However, we hold the view that the effect of unfulfilled promises of previous global development strategies has had a devastating impact on Africa. It is in this connexion that we see the objectives and targets of the proposed Substantial New Programme of Action as being in consonance with the objectives of the Lagos Plan of Action for the implementation of the Monrovia Strategy for the Economic Development of Africa.

In pursuance of the objectives of the Lagos Plan of Action, Liberia continues to have as corner-stones of its regional economic policy the Mano River Union with Guinea and Sierra Leone and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) comprising the 16 West African countries. These two organizations are aimed at promoting regional co-operation and economic integration. My Government is also a strong advocate of measures being undertaken for the ultimate establishment of an African Common Market.

We believe that economic co-operation among developing countries can serve as a dynamic vehicle for promoting global economic co-operation between the developed and developing countries and for the effective restructuring of the international economic system. This belief forms the basis for Liberia's concept of international economic interdependence. It is also demonstrated in our active support of the Lome Convention between the ACP states and the European Community.

In this light, we encourage this Conference to adopt appropriate mechanisms for the expansion of trade among the developing and least developed countries, and between the developing and developed countries. There is a particular urgency for establishing banks and other financial institutions to finance intra-Third World trade and facilitating export credits and guarantees.

Liberia considers this Conference crucial to further progress towards the restructuring of the international economic system to achieve equality, justice and stability in international economic relations.

(more)

Statement of Togo

Following is a brief summary of the statement made in the general debate this afternoon by Ayivi Mawuko AJAVON, Togo:

Togo is not one of the least developed countries, but identifies strongly with them, as well as with the rest of the "Group of 77" developing countries, because there is no doubt today that balanced and accelerated development constitutes a decisive factor in promotion of international peace and security.

The least developed countries are particularly vulnerable to the economic crisis prevailing at present. Their economic performance has constantly slipped over the last 20 years. The international community is being called upon to address itself specifically to the problems of the least developed countries whose economic situation demands concrete and urgent solutions.

The least developed countries do not form an isolated group, cut off from the mainstream of the international economy. Therefore, improvements, notably in the terms of trade, inflation and augmentation of general development assistance are just as important to all developing countries as to the least developed.

We must consider measures in favour of the least developed countries as an integral part of a global programme of co-operation for development - a development that would conform to a new international economic order that is just and equitable.

By calling for a revision of international economic relations, the developing countries do not intend to be satisfied with simple financial and technical assistance. They are asking especially for justice and equity.

One of the primary goals of my country is food self-sufficiency, and we are deploying considerable efforts for the development of agriculture.

International assistance to developing countries and particularly the least developed countries is not a one-way street. All countries will benefit from a strengthened world economy.

(more)

African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States heard

Following is a brief summary of the statement made in the general debate this afternoon by Babou Ousman JOBE, of Gambia, speaking for the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States (ACP):

The ACP is composed of 61 member States or 350 million humans - half of the developing world. Our goal is to foster close economic co-operation among members towards the advancement of our people.

The least developed countries, while focusing efforts on their basic needs are also being required to "keep the wheel of economic development turning".

The World Bank recently predicted that by 1985 food production will fall short by 45 million tons in the least developed countries. In order to first respond to the necessity of expanding food production and relieving malnutrition, the agricultural sector should be given the international community's maximum attention. Basic research suitably adapted to local conditions must be the corner-stone of further development. Appropriate technology is needed to render local transport more relevant to local needs. The subsequent programmes should spread to the most remote rural areas, where priorities should include safe drinking water and foodstuffs at affordable prices.

Not only is the quantity of aid important, but also the quality of aid flows. Thus far, aid modalities have been criticized as being unnecessarily slow and complicated.

To implement development programmes, \$103 billion is required for the African least developed countries. Of this, \$62 billion is expected to be mobilized from domestic resources, leaving \$41 billion to be sought in foreign aid.

The ACP sees the Immediate Action Programme as a sine qua non of the Substantial New Programme of Action to be implemented at this Conference.

No country or group of countries can continue to disregard the development of others. All are inextricably linked, therefore, new methods of relating are necessary. Our group is willing to link hands with all present toward a new international economic order that is more equitable, more human and more fraternal.

(more)

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees Speaks

Following is a brief summary of the statement made in the general debate this afternoon by Poul HARTLING, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR):

Out of a total of some ten million refugees and displaced persons of concern to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, almost half are in the least developed countries. I have two duties: to provide international protection to refugees, and to seek permanent solutions to their problems. But before durable solutions can be found, relief aid aimed at meeting the refugees' most immediate needs is obviously required. Although relief is an essential measure, every effort is made to prevent it from becoming open-ended. The most desirable long-term solution is voluntary repatriation; it helps bring much needed stability to developing regions, thus allowing them to concentrate all their efforts and resources on the arduous task of nation building.

UNHCR's programmes aim at bringing refugees to a level of self-sufficiency comparable to that of the local population and to enable them to participate in the social and economic life of the host country. Africa has more refugees than any other continent. They have been received with the greatest generosity and understanding. African countries have granted refuge and shared their resources with those in need. African Governments, working in close co-operation with the Organization of African Unity and my Office have consistently facilitated durable solutions to the problems of refugees.

As for refugees for whom voluntary repatriation is not feasible, one important solution has been the creation of rural settlements in the countries where the refugees were received. Thus, large numbers of refugees have settled in Tanzania and the Sudan where they have become productive farmers; the integration projects have become important elements in the national and regional development schemes. In Somalia, with one of the largest refugee populations in the world, various circumstances have made it difficult to pursue durable solutions on a large scale. The refugee situations in the Horn of Africa and the Sudan exemplify the kinds of problems faced by developing countries. The sheer magnitude and weight of the numbers of refugees threaten to affect the economies and progress of these countries.

In Asia, UNHCR's two main areas of concern today continue to be the situation of Afghan refugees in Pakistan and of Indo-Chinese in South-East Asia.

It is of paramount importance that international assistance supplement local efforts. During 1981 and 1982, UNHCR plans to spend more than \$400 million on behalf of the 4.5 million refugees and displaced persons living in the group of least developed countries. Efforts of such magnitude, combined with the invaluable contributions of the voluntary agencies, should lead to refugees becoming self-sufficient and prevent them from becoming yet another burden on this group of countries. The burdens falling on developing countries, so generously receiving the refugees, must be shared in a spirit of solidarity by others who are better off.

(more)

Right of Reply

Mahdi Mohsen OWDA (Iraq), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, referred to remarks made by the representative of Iran in his statement this afternoon:

Iraq had entered war with Iran not of its choice but because it was forced to do so, owing to the aggressive attitude of Iran since the present régime assumed power. He said that attitude was clearly manifested by the aggressive official declaration threatening war against Iraq and was translated into actions, such as the setting up in Quom and Teheran of special organizations and units to conspire against Iraq and the neighbouring countries.

Those actions were escalated into acts of terrorism and sabotage, he continued, and "they constituted without doubt a flagrant violation to good neighbourly relations and the principle of non-interference in internal affairs of other States". The present régime had also committed acts of military aggression against the Iraqi borders, coupled with repeated violations of Iraqi air space by the Iranian air force. Those violations totalled 249 during the period February 1979 - September 1980. Iraq submitted 239 official complaints to the Iranian Government in this respect.

He said Iraq had been forced to defend itself and repel the Iranian aggression but, despite all this, Iraq had declared its readiness during the first week of the conflict to cease fire, provided that Iran recognized the sovereign rights of Iraq over its waters and territories. Iraq had also responded positively to all the initiatives proposed for ceasing hostilities and reaching a peaceful settlement with Iran. It had also responded favourably to Security Council resolution 479 (1980) calling for a cease-fire and it informed the Secretary-General of its position. Iraq had also responded positively to the initiative of the goodwill mission of the Islamic Conference and offered to cease fire unilaterally during the period 5-8 October 1980 and that offer was actually implemented on the dawn of 5 October 1980. However, Iran had responded to this initiative by launching a massive attack by land, sea and air against Iraq.

Despite all this, Iraq continued to welcome all initiatives proposed by the United Nations, the non-aligned movement and the Islamic Conference, he said. All the above-mentioned efforts had failed due to the intransigent attitude of Iran and its insistence on continuing its aggression. Iraq desires to put an end to this war and reach a peaceful settlement. However, it is not willing to renounce its legitimate rights and sovereignty as well as those of the Arab nation.

"The economic disasters which the Iranian people face today are solely the responsibility of the present régime in Iran", he declared.

(more)

Right of reply

Manouchehr MARZBANIAN (Iran), also speaking in the right of reply, said the Conference was being held under the auspices of the United Nations, an Organization which condemned breaches of the peace. He had not expected that the Conference would allow a brutal aggressor to raise its voice. That country, a signatory of the United Nations Charter, had invaded Iran while other signatories of the Charter had remained silent.

Iran had not intended to expose the sufferings of its people to the Conference. It just wanted to express its unity and solidarity with the least developed countries and to explain why Iran has economic difficulties. For Iran, it was a matter of dismay that development was jeopardized by "messengers of destruction and annihilation". Iran would reply to Iraq not at this Conference but on the battlefield.

(more)



Introduction of Report

G.A. KRASNOV (Soviet Union) introducing a report on major results and future trends in co-operation between the Soviet Union and the least developed countries in the commercial, economic, scientific and technical fields (document A/CONF.104/17) said that many least developed countries have shown an interest in fuller information on the question. Some documents provided an inaccurate version of Soviet assistance. Therefore, the Soviet Union was presenting the report on Soviet co-operation with the least developed over the last 10 years, and prospects for future co-operation. Precise figures were given.

Closing Statement by President

Conference President Jean-Pierre COT of France, in a closing statement, said that participation at the Conference illustrated global awareness of the problems of the least developed countries as well as the importance of development problems as a whole to the countries represented at the Conference.

At the end of the debate, he said, he saw a "meeting of the minds" by a large number of delegations on certain matters: the will to concentrate the debate on essentials; the need to locate properly the needs of the least developed countries within the context of the North-South dialogue, and the development of Third World countries as a whole; analyses, largely common, of cause and remedies of the problems of the least developed; the need to define commitments, including those of a financial nature; and the nature of effective follow-up machinery.

He urged Conference participants, in the decisive days ahead, to continue to be constructively co-operative so the Conference could reach a successful conclusion. He would spare no efforts to see that the Conference did not disappoint expectations.

(This page ends Press Release/UNCLDC/24)



## PRESS RELEASE

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# United Nations Conference on **the Least Developed Countries**

PARIS  
1-14 September 1981

UNCLDC/25  
11 September 1981

### FIVE MORE COUNTRIES SIGN COMMON FUND AGREEMENT IN PARIS

The number of signatories to the Agreement establishing the Common Fund for Commodities has risen to 55 as a further five Governments have availed themselves of the possibility of signing the instrument in Paris on the occasion of the United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries.

The five countries which signed on 10 and 11 September are: Afghanistan, Benin, Comoros, Gabon, and Guinea-Bissau. The officials were: Mehrabbuddin Paktiawal, First Vice-Chairman, State Planning Committee of Afghanistan; Abou Bakar Baba-Moussa, Minister of Planning, Statistics and Economic Analysis of Benin; Said Kafe, Minister of Finance and Economy of Comoros; André Magongo Nzambi, Ambassador to the United Nations in Geneva of Gabon; and Dr. Vasco Cabral, Minister of Economic Co-ordination and Planning of Guinea-Bissau.

(See Press Release UNCLDC/11 of 4 September for background on the Common Fund and UNCLDC/18 of 7 September on earlier signing in Paris by six countries. Please note that in UNCLDC/18 the number of signatories should have been 50 and not 49.)

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## PRESS RELEASE

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# United Nations Conference on **the Least Developed Countries**

PARIS  
1-14 September 1981

UNCLDC/26  
14 September 1981

### DETAILS OF DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE AND CO-OPERATION PRESENTED AT PARIS CONFERENCE

The national delegations attending the United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, in the course of their statements made in the general debate which concluded last Thursday (10 September), provided detailed information about their financial and other assistance to developing countries in general and to the least developed countries in particular. The details which emerged from these statements are summarized in the attached tables (in English only). These should be seen as the efforts under way prior to the negotiations conducted at the Conference.

The Paris Conference is scheduled to end today. A press release describing its main results will be issued after the conclusion of the final plenary session.

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A. OECD COUNTRIES

Countries	Aid		Quality of aid to LDC's (modalities)
	Volume		
	Total ODA	ODA to LDCs	
Australia	1981/82 FY aid flow of \$662 million is 18% increase on 1980/81 FY.	1980/81 FY level and share of aid disbursements to LDCs will be more than double those in 1977/78 FY.	Gives only grants. Much of its aid is designed to ensure long-term food security.
Austria	ODA to reach 0.7% of GNP by the end of the decade.	In the prospective financial law for 1982 US\$ 2 million (exclusively for the LDCs) will be added to the development cooperation credits already available (either through bilateral or multilateral channels).	Aid given essentially in the form of grants. Prepared to be very flexible in local cost financing.
Belgium		Now 0.14% of GNP. Expects 0.15% by 1985.	
Canada	Aims at 0.5% by 1985 and 0.7% by 1990. Has doubled official global allocations to humanitarian and refugee relief.	One third of ODA allocated to LDCs in 1980.	Gives only grants. Prepared to be very flexible in local and recurrent costs financing.
Denmark	Accepts sub-targets as proposed by G.77 for Programme of Action. ODA above 0.7% target. Announces \$ 2 million to Special Measures Fund above usual \$ 58 million for 1981 to UNDP.	43% of bilateral assistance in 1980 to LDCs. Total assistance to LDCs in 1980 = 0.25% of GNP.	Almost 96% grant element.
Finland	ODA to reach 0.7% before end of decade. Intends to double flow to IFAD and UN Capital Development Fund. 14% increase in contribution to UNDP in 1982.	30% of bilateral ODA to continue to be allocated to LDCs.	Converted all loans into grants.
France	ODA as a per cent of GNP to increase to 0.7% by 1988.	ODA as a per cent of GNP to LDCs to increase to 0.10 in 1981 and 0.15 by 1985.	Intends to review terms and conditions of aid to LDCs, to increase grant element, finance local and recurrent costs, provide continuous and predictable aid.
Germany, Fed. Rep. of		Aid to increase from DM 1.0 billion in 1980 to DM 1.33 billion in 1981. DM 1/2 billion to multilateral agencies for the benefit of LDCs in 1981. Is now the largest bilateral DAC donor to LDCs.	Aid given in the form of grants rather than loans. DM 3.5 billion of LDCs debts waived. Finances foreign exchange costs and local costs.
Italy	ODA as a per cent of GNP to reach 0.7% by 1990. 1981-83 commitments amount to It.L. 4700 billion.	ODA as a per cent of GNP to LDCs to reach and possibly exceed 0.15 by 1990.	Examining the possibility of changing loans into grants.
Ireland	ODA as a per cent of GNP to reach 0.7% by end of decade.	ODA as a per cent of GNP to reach 0.15 by end of decade.	

Countries	Aid		Quality of aid to LDC's (modalities)
	Volume		
	Total ODA	ODA to LDC's	
Japan	Has set up a medium target for 1981-1986 = doubling ODA of 1976-1980.	Bilateral ODA increased from \$ 105 m. in 1977 to \$344 m. in 1980. Will make efforts to further increase its aid.	Will be improved, with an increase in grants.
Luxembourg		More than 30% of aid allocated to LDCs. In favour of 0.15% target (without any reduction of aid to other developing countries).	
Netherlands	Total ODA at present at 1% of GNP	Can accept sub-targets of 0.15% for 1985 and 0.20% for 1990. Provided 0.19% of GNP to LDCs in 1980.	In 1980 Netherlands provided US\$ 76 million in the form of technical cooperation, US\$ 208 million in other grants and US\$ 18 m. in the form of loans.
New Zealand	Special regional commitment to the South Pacific island nations.		Gives only grants.
Norway	ODA as a per cent of GNP already 1.0%. Government intends to increase it to 1.7% by 1985.	ODA as a per cent of GNP to LDCs is currently 0.27. Supports sub-targets (0.15 and 0.20%). Contribution of N.K. 15 million (appr. \$ 2.5 million) to Special Measures Fund and N.K. 25 million (appr. \$ 4.0 million) to UN Capital Fund, earmarked for LDCs.	All ODA in grant form. Finances local and recurrent costs; commitments are long-term.
Sweden	ODA as a per cent of GNP already 1.0%.	Accepts ODA targets of 0.15 by 1985 and 0.20 by 1990. Additional \$ 9 million given to UNDP for LDCs. 30% of ODA already directed to LDCs.	ODA debts to LDCs written off in 1978. Supports : untying, local and recurrent cost financing, long-term commitments, and simplified aid procedures.
Switzerland		45% of aid in 1980 allocated to LDCs.	Aid entirely in form of grants. Has financed local and recurrent costs when necessary.
United Kingdom	Accepts 0.7% target. \$ 1.8 billion planned aid in FY 1981/82.	30% of aid to LDCs in 1980. 1130 British experts in 1980 sent to 17 LDCs.	All ODA is in grant form. Has made agreements for retrospective terms adjustments with 10 LDCs.
United States	Congress asked to increase aid for 1982 by 16%. Increase in IBRD capital and participation in sixth IDA accepted. 1980's cuts in contribution to IDB and ADB re-instated.	ODA up to \$ 542 million in 1980 as compared to \$ 369 in 1978.	Has introduced more flexibility in present aid; grant element is 96%. Has announced greater simplification of procedures and decentralisation of authority.
European Communities (Presidency)	Accepts 0.7% target.	22 LDCs receive 56% of funds allocated for country programmes under the fifth EDF.	EDF aid under Lomé Convention generally given on grant terms and very flexible.
Commission for the European Communities	Accepts 0.7% target.	Supports 0.15% target in grant form.	

Countries	Other measures
Australia	Additional A.\$ 1 million to existing institutions in 1981/82 to support worthwhile multilateral activities benefitting LDCs has been announced. Establishment of an Agricultural Research facility exclusively on problems of developing countries (with a trust fund for the Centre with an initial commitment of A.\$ 25 million over 4 years).
Austria	Preparing new law on preferential tariffs which will benefit LDCs.
Canada	Created last month Petro-Canada Int. to assist oil importing developing countries to exploit their own energy resources. (Particularly hydrocarbons). Intends introducing changes in GSP in order to provide more favourable treatment on imports from LDCs with duty free entry for all imports from LDCs presently covered in its system. Also announces the implementation of GATT Agreement on Government Procurement. Has offered \$ 100,000 for a meeting to bring together NGOs and private sector of developed countries with counterparts from LDCs.
Denmark	Supports ITC (is among its largest contributors).
Finland	98% of Finnish imports from LDCs non-dutiable in 1980. Has sponsored trade policy courses for LDCs with GATT/ITC.
France	Supports commodity agreements and Common Fund. Favours stabilisation mechanisms for export earnings.
Germany, Fed. Rep. of	Open-minded regarding further preferences, especially for agricultural products from developing countries. Favours a scheme to stabilise LDC export earnings.
Italy	In favour of the creation of an IMF energy facility. Supports the extension of Stabex to other LDCs.
Ireland	Supports trade promotion through the International Trade Centre of UNCTAD/GATT.
Japan	Within its GSP, special preferential treatment for LDCs introduced in 1980 and extended until 1991. Has adhered to Common Fund in June 1981.
Netherlands	In favour of liberal trade policy towards developing countries. Giving serious consideration to Stabex or equivalent system in favour of LDCs.
New Zealand	Has established an industrial development scheme benefiting South Pacific islands. Also provides support for agriculture and shipping in the South Pacific region.
Norway	Since 1976 Norway has offered duty free import access under its GSP to all products from the LDCs. A new guarantee scheme for Norwegian private importers procuring in LDCs has been introduced.
Sweden	Advocates international schemes for stabilisation of export earnings and an UNCTAD study of a special scheme for LDCs. Also supports liberal access for LDCs exports, including zero tariffs within GSP, export promotion, and Common Fund. 95% of Swedish imports from LDCs are duty-free.
Switzerland	Has very liberal GSP scheme.
United Kingdom	Will make \$ 2.7 million available over the next 3 years in order to strengthen a number of African national agricultural research systems. Plans to increase multilateral aid to population activities up to \$ 11 million in 1982/83. Proposes to allocate \$ 3.6 million for technical cooperation activities in energy resource planning. Plans to increase aid for water supply, sanitation and preventive health to \$ 7.2 million by 1984.
USA	Has implemented Tokyo Round decisions in respect of LDCs (80% of imports from LDCs duty free).
European Communities (Presidency)	Will give serious consideration to recommendations made by the Conference to the developed countries for stabilizing the revenues of all LDCs from the export of primary commodities.
Commission for the European Communities	In favour of Stabex extension to all LDCs.

B. DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

Countries	Aid		Quality of aid to LDC's (modalities)
	Volume		
	Total ODA	ODA to LDCs	
Iraq	Aid amounted to \$1153 million in 1979 and \$2762 in 1980.  Also contributes to the financing of international financing institutions (OPEC fund, IPAD, Common Fund).	Amounted to \$245 million in 1979 and \$860 million in 1980.  Under the first Arab Development Decade, annual amounts have been allocated to finance development projects in Arab LDCs during the 80's.	Loan and grants are untied. Has also offered a wide range of technical assistance.
Kuwait	Aid represents 6% of GNP.  Present capital of Kuwait Fund for Arabic Economic Development = US\$ 7200 million	16 African LDCs have received US\$538 million from the Fund.  6 Asian LDCs have received US\$206 million from the Fund.	Also lends to non-Arab countries. Beneficiary must finance half of the project costs (mainly local costs). Interest is less than 2.5% with a minimum 25 years maturity and a grace period of 4 to 9 years.
Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	Aid represents 2% of GNP.		All assistance is unconditional.
Saudi Arabia	Aid represents 6% of GNP.  Provides 20% of contributions to certain international financial institutions and more than 30% of contributions to OPEC fund. Between 1976 and 1980 has given \$8 billion to IMF, \$5 billion to World Bank, \$30 million for refugees in Africa and \$100 million for Sahelian countries.  Put \$10 billion at the disposal of IMF in 1981.	Gave US\$1.2 billion for 22 LDCs in 1980.	Grants or loans are on soft terms.  Grants amount to 37.5% of total assistance
United Arab Emirates	Aid has amounted to \$9 billion in eight years (in addition to its contribution to special funds), and represents 15% of GNP.		
Venezuela	Supports financial institutions providing assistance to LDCs.  In favour of a greater diversification of OPEC assistance and an increase in the OPEC fund to help LDCs.	Intends to continue and increase its technical and economic support for Haiti.	Loans are on concessional terms.
OPEC Fund	Current fifth programme of aid amounts to \$1750.	Since fund's inception, 41% of aid allocated to LDCs (-US\$490 million).  Grants offered to LDCs to pay their "directly contributed capital" to the Common Fund.  Will contribute \$46 million to the second account of the Common Fund to be used for the benefit of the poorer countries.	In 1981, under the fifth programme, 16 LDCs received interest-free loans. More LDCs expected to sign such agreements this month.  Priorities - energy and food production projects.  Will continue to exercise maximum flexibility with regard to types of financing and rules and procedures.

Countries	Other measures
Iraq	<p>Has concluded trade agreements and sent trade missions in order to expand imports from LDCs.</p> <p>Has proposed a long-term international fund to offset inflation exported to developing countries, to be financed by industrialised and developing oil producing countries (modalities to be studied by experts meeting in Baghdad).</p>
Venezuela	<p>Together with Mexico, by virtue of the San José Agreement, finances oil imports of Central American and Caribbean countries on highly concessional terms.</p>



C. SOCIALIST COUNTRIES

Countries	Aid and other measures
Bulgaria	<p>Has economic cooperation agreements with 7 LDCs.                      More than 50 industrial projects are being constructed with Bulgarian assistance.                      Under its GSP, duties on all goods originating in LDCs have been abolished.</p>
Czechoslovakia	<p>Has economic cooperation agreements with 7 LDCs. Intends to further increase economic and trade cooperation in the 1980's.                      Has long-term trade agreements with 16 LDCs and scientific and technological agreements with 15 LDCs. Within its GSP preferences are granted to LDCs.</p>
German Dem. Rep.	<p>Has evolved new forms of economic, scientific and technical cooperation with 27 LDCs.                      Contributions to international organizations also used for training organized in GDR.</p>
Hungary	<p>Government agreements provide the framework of economic, commercial and financial relations with LDCs.                      Intends to concentrate mainly on participation in the basic branches of production and improvement of infrastructure and the qualified labour force.                      In 1980, 1000 experts from LDCs were trained in Hungary.                      All goods of LDCs are exempt from duty without any restriction since 1 January 1978.</p>
Poland	<p>Helps LDCs primarily through measures other than resource transfers, in particular by implementing an integrated vertical approach to export expansion in these countries and concluding long-term contracts.                      Is prepared to establish various projects (in such fields as exploration of resources, manufacturing of products, construction industry) and to provide expertise and aid in building up educational and training systems.</p>
Romania	<p>Is expanding trade and technical cooperation with LDCs.</p>
USSR	<p>The volume of economic and technical cooperation extended to developing countries has increased 1.8 times during past five years; it will increase by more than twofold during 1981-1985 and will continue to increase at about the same rate until 1990.                      Cooperation agreements with developing countries are linked with current and long-term plans of recipient countries. Priority is given to the development of the state sector.                      An integrated approach, covering industry, energy sector, agriculture, transport, exploitation of national manpower and health, is followed.                      Long-term public concessional loans are provided, as well as grants-in-aid mainly to overcome effects of natural disasters.                      From 1971 to 1980 there was a threefold increase in loans to LDCs. Grants-in-aid to LDCs account for approximately 80% of aid to all developing countries.                      Long-term trade agreements have been concluded with the majority of LDCs.                      The trade turnover with LDCs has increased fivefold between 1971 and 1980 (covering both imports of traditional and new goods from LDCs and exports of energy, basic metals and machinery to LDCs). This turnover is expected to increase at an average annual rate of 8-9% up to 1990.                      Implements UN convention on transit trade of the land-locked countries and has inter-governmental airline agreements with 18 LDCs.</p>



## PRESS RELEASE

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# United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries

PARIS  
1-14 September 1981

UNCLDC/28  
14 September 1981

### PARIS CONFERENCE ON LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRIES CLOSSES SESSION WITH ADOPTION OF SUBSTANTIAL NEW PROGRAMME OF ACTION.

A Substantial New Programme of Action recommending a doubling of present official development assistance to the least developed countries by 1985 was approved by consensus this afternoon, 14 September, as the United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries concluded a two-week session in Paris.

The Programme of Action, contained in the report of the Conference to the General Assembly, will be before the Assembly at its thirty-sixth session, which opens tomorrow, 15 September, in New York.

The New Programme deals with financial assistance, ways in which aid is most effectively given, technical assistance, commercial policy measures, transport and technology. (For a summary of the recommendations, see Press Release UNCLDC/29 issued today.)

Following the adoption of the New Programme this afternoon, statements were made by the representatives of Peru for the "Group of 77" developing countries, the United Republic of Tanzania for the African Group of States, Bangladesh, the United Kingdom for the European Communities, New Zealand, Australia, the United States, Finland, Canada, Saudi Arabia, Bulgaria for nine socialist countries, China, the Holy See and Norway.

The representatives of Afghanistan and Pakistan spoke in the right of reply.

In another action, the Conference took note of the review meetings held before the Conference in Vienna, Addis Ababa, the Hague and Geneva and recommended that the reports, along with the development programmes of the least developed countries, be considered in specific country reviews that may take place as follow-up to the New Programme.

Closing statements were made by the Conference President, Jean-Pierre Cot (France), and the Conference Secretary-General, Gamani Corea, who is the Secretary-General of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD).

The Conference adopted a resolution this afternoon whereby it expressed its appreciation to France for the preparation and organization of the Conference and for its generous hospitality.

Statements of appreciation to those participating in the Conference were made by Norway on behalf of the Organisation of Economic Co-operation for Development (OECD) and Peru for the "Group of 77".

(more)

### Adoption of Credentials Committee Report

The Conference this afternoon approved without a vote the report of its nine-member Credentials Committee (document A/CCNF.104/20). By so doing, it approved the credentials of 139 Governments represented here. The Committee's report indicates that no credentials have yet been received from Costa Rica, Lebanon and Paraguay.

Aftab Husain SYED (Pakistan) said his Government's acceptance of the credentials of Afghanistan should not be construed as accepting that regime. That position was consistent with the stand Pakistan had taken in other international forums.

### Reports of Committee Chairmen

José BRITO (Cape Verde), Chairman of Committee I, said the Committee had based its work on the draft submitted by the "Group of 77" developing countries. Proposals had been submitted by other delegations. The texts submitted to the General Committee reflected the agreement reached in Committee I, some of them requiring negotiation by the Committee's officers.

The work in Committee I was "extremely positive" and would doubtless be a constructive contribution to the North-South dialogue.

A.M.A. MUHITH (Bangladesh), Chairman of Committee II, describing his Committee's work, introduced the draft resolution recommending that the reports on the review meetings organized by the Conference secretariat, along with country programmes, be considered in specific country reviews in the follow-up to the new action programme (document A/CONF.104/L.16).

Regarding the follow-up, he said the Committee had reached agreement on almost all points except certain issues, including the role of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and the manner in which the global review would be carried out. However, those outstanding issues had been resolved with the agreement of almost all delegations. The result of the Committee's work was available in document A/CONF.104/L.16.

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Draft Reports of Country Review Meetings

Acting without a vote, the Conference adopted the draft resolution on the reports of the individual country review meetings (document A/CONF.104/L.16).

By this text, the Conference recommended these reports, along with the country programmes, for due consideration in specific country reviews that may take place in the framework of the implementation, follow-up and monitoring of the Substantial New Programme of Action.

Adoption of New Action Programme

On the proposal of the President, the Conference then adopted unanimously the Substantial New Programme of Action for the 1980s. Following that action, the Chairman of the Group of 77, Felipe VALDIVIESO (Peru), said the Conference's action was recognition of the seriousness of the problems faced by the least developed nations and the urgency with which solutions must be found. New and increased resource flows were necessary. The problems of the donor countries had a direct and negative influence on the least developed.

He said the "Group of 77" had shown in Paris a capacity for dialogue, and flexibility, in order to bring about the adoption of the New Programme. Everyday, the "Group of 77" saw a greater number of countries in the dialogue. It saw clarity appearing on the horizon after a long period of darkness.

K. A. MALIMA (United Republic of Tanzania), speaking for the African Group of States, said the Programme just adopted might not be either substantial or new, but it brought the problems of the least developed countries into sharper focus and constituted an overriding political commitment by the international community.

While the Africans would have wanted a stronger, more unequivocal statement regarding the flow of resources, within a time-frame, the Conference had not been a failure but rather a "qualified success". The Paris Conference was only a beginning, but a significant one. The African Group would do everything possible to ensure the successful implementation of the new Programme.

A.M.A. MUHITH (Bangladesh) said targets had been laid down. Whatever the arguments against targeting, it was the only modality - to set goals and try to achieve them. Bangladesh was happy targets had been included.

Bangladesh accepted the Programme as a milestone even though in comprising not all points were satisfied. Bangladesh thanked all those who had worked so hard for accommodation.

(more)

Rex BROWNING (United Kingdom), on behalf of the European Community said that the Community and its Member States were deeply satisfied with the results of the Paris Conference on the Least Developed Countries. They warmly welcomed the Substantial New Programme of Action and intended to co-operate fully with the least developed countries in its implementation.

Following this Conference, and as agreed in the International Development Strategy for the Third United Nations Development Decade, he said serious consideration would be given by donor countries to increasing substantially and in real terms official development assistance (ODA) for the least developed countries during the decade. To this end, Member States of the European Community which give aid would aim to allocate 0.15 per cent of their gross national product (GNP) as ODA to the least developed countries. Some have already surpassed this target, he added.

He referred to the Conference's recommendation to developed countries as a whole to stabilize the earnings of the least developed countries from exports of primary products, and the community's willingness to examine in a constructive spirit the most appropriate means of meeting it. He urged all other countries trading in primary commodities with the least developed countries to consider taking steps to similar effect.

Concerning the expansion of the production and exports of the least developed countries, the Community was prepared to examine its Generalized Scheme of Preferences, he said, and would spare no effort to join with others in promoting rural development and food security in the least developed countries.

One of the most important achievements of the Conference, he said, was the very clear dispositions which it made for follow-up, covering the role which the least developed countries and their bilateral and multilateral partners would be called on to play.

J.V. SCOTT (New Zealand) said his Government would continue to concentrate its development assistance in the Pacific region. Among other reasons, New Zealand felt that many island developing countries would be "least developed" without assistance. For that reason, New Zealand could not accept the financial sub-targets included in the new Programme.

H. KITAHARA (Japan) expressed the pleasure of his Government for the Substantial New Programme of Action being adopted by consensus. He then touched upon the transfer of resources to the least developed countries which, he said, is the most important part of the New Programme. Japan was glad to see that due consideration had been given to its proposal (document CRP/26) in the final formulation of the Programme of Action. He hoped that the aggregate official development assistance disbursed to the least developed countries during the first half of the 1980s would be more than double the amount disbursed during the second half of the 1970s.

He reiterated that Japan would make every effort to increase positively its assistance to the least developed countries within the context of its new medium-term target of ODA. Also, Japan supported continuation of studies in the relevant international organizations of compensation for export earnings shortfall.

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J. A. PIPER (Australia) said his Government had already doubled its assistance to the least developed countries in the period 1978-1981.

Joseph WHEELER (United States) pledged to work with the least developed countries to meet their development objectives. The international commitment recognized that national circumstances must be taken into consideration and a variety of criteria used in allocating assistance. The United States' policy of not accepting specific targets for official development assistance had not changed.

The United States could not support the concept of international taxation. Also, the United States believed the International Monetary Fund was the best forum for consideration of export earning shortfalls. Among other things, it could not pay the transport costs of food aid, other than grants.

Wilhelm BREITENSTEIN (Finland) said his Government's official development assistance (ODA) would go to 0.32 per cent next year. Also, it had committed itself to giving 30 per cent of its ODA to the least developed countries. Thus, Finland was confident that its ODA to the least developed countries would be doubled in coming years.

Glen SHORTLIFFE (Canada) said this Conference reaffirmed the importance of the role that can be played by the United Nations in bringing together representatives. Real and constructive progress had been achieved here. Canada recognizes that many delegations have had to make compromises. However, a very positive result has been achieved.

Canada supports the new Programme which represents an important undertaking and will bring steady growth in the least developed countries. The Programme is an important step in the North-South dialogue and will contribute to a successful outcome at Cancun.

Mohammed MIRDASS (Saudi Arabia) said his country had extended considerable financial assistance in the form of grants and easy-term loans to 60 developing countries, including 22 of the least developed. The annual average of this aid totalled \$4 billion, \$1½ billion of which was in grant form. This aid represented 6 per cent of the GNP of Saudi Arabia. This was 41 per cent of the total extended by members of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) and 15 per cent of the assistance tendered by the members of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).

Georgi PIRINSKI (Bulgaria), on behalf of "Group D" (centrally-planned economy) countries, expressed sympathy for the plight of the least developed nations. The socialist countries had tried to make constructive contributions, including at this Conference.

The position of the socialist countries on the least developed countries was well known and had been expressed at UNCTAD IV and UNCTAD V and in 1980 at the General Assembly's eleventh special session and thirty-fifth regular session.

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The problems of the least developed were caused by the colonial oppression of most of them, and economic domination. Regarding the Programme's recommendations on financial assistance, the socialist States regarded them as being directed to the industrialized developed States.

The socialist countries, among other things, opposed the action by imperialist States in imposing their will on other States. They also called for an end to the arms race, freeing resources for development. The socialist States would continue their co-operation with the least developed countries.

Xianwu ZHANG (China) said the positive results of the Conference augured well for the North-South dialogue. China, a developing socialist country, supplies assistance on the basis of "mutual help among poor friends". China could not in any way compare with the developed countries mentioned in the new Programme. It was now going through a period of economic readjustment. The Chinese were striving for modernization. But they would continue to try to provide economic and technical assistance to the developing countries, including the least developed.

Hegemony was engaging in aggression and expansion all over the world. It talked about peace and détente, but that did not hide its aggression and expansionism. All peace-loving countries must unite against hegemonism.

William MURPHY (Holy See) said that although the Substantial New Programme of Action is the result of compromise, it did spell out the problem and ways to solve it in a spirit of fraternal solidarity. He reiterated the desire of the Catholic Church to be of assistance in whatever way possible, nationally and internationally, to co-operate and contribute to the effort which would result from this Conference.

Paal BOG (Norway) said compromise was the only realistic approach. A positive spirit of compromise had prevailed through the negotiations and had led to the Conference's success.

Norway regretted that the Programme did not include commitments over and above what had been agreed on. The task now was to implement the Programme and Norway would do all possible in continuing its tradition of helping the least developed countries.

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Right of reply

Jaafar KAZIM (Afghanistan) said he regretted that the representatives of the military régime of Mohamed Zia ul Haq had attacked his country at this Conference. His was the legal Government of Afghanistan, the only legitimate and legal representative of the Afghan people and a full-fledged member of the United Nations. It was unfortunate that the representative of the military régime in Pakistan had wanted to disturb the achievements of the Conference with irrelevant political remarks. The reactionary position of the delegation was known to all here and need not have been raised at the Conference.

Aftab Husain SYED (Pakistan) said his Government had a great interest in the success of the Conference and had merely noted, in connexion with credentials, Pakistan's consistent position previously expressed in other forums.

The régime in Kabul was not accepted by a majority of the people, he said. As a result there had been a large influx of refugees into Pakistan. His Government had accepted them and helped them on a humanitarian basis. Because of the magnitude of the refugee problem, Pakistan had had to seek help from international agencies.

He said Pakistan rejected the false allegations made about it. Pakistan did not recognize the régime in Kabul.

Statement by Conference Secretary-General

Gamani Corea, Secretary-General of the Conference and of UNCTAD, expressed satisfaction that the Conference had been able to accomplish what it had set out to do, namely to formulate, adopt and support a Substantial New Programme of Action for the least developed countries. The Programme provided the international community with a point of departure from which it could proceed to new co-operative relationships with a group of countries that had been described as being the poorest and weakest of developing countries.

In his view, the Conference had, moreover, succeeded in focusing attention on the problems of these countries - in itself an achievement - and had been an occasion for some donors to announce increases in aid over present levels. Finally, he attached greatest importance to the process of monitoring and follow up that had been provided for under the Programme.

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Statement by Conference President

The Conference President, Jean-Pierre COT (France) said representatives should ask whether the New Programme fulfilled the expectations of all concerned. The results achieved by the Conference did just that, in his view. Commitments had been made by the international community, without reserve. Also procedures for follow-up had been determined, thus assuring that least developed countries would not be forgotten.

The developing countries had said that the problems of the least developed countries differed only in degree from those of other developing States. The donor nations had shown their practical will to act by taking on specific commitments, he said. The "Paris spirit" showed the will to act positively to solve the problems of the developing countries, particularly the least developed countries.

In addition, the non-governmental organizations and the media here had given a wider reflection of the work of the Conference and thus contributed to its importance.

The commitment for official development assistance might seem modest in view of the vast problems, he said. Nevertheless, the commitment was a step in the right direction - that of defining qualitative targets.

On the question of implementation of the New Programme, he said, the follow-up machinery should guarantee the least developed countries that their concerns will not be forgotten and that commitments of aid will be monitored.

The contribution of this Conference to solving the problems of the least developed countries would not eliminate those problems overnight, but it had shown that men and women of good will, in a spirit of co-operation, could take a new step along the path of the North-South dialogue. The Conference had given insight into the political will needed for the establishment of the New International Economic Order.

He then declared the Conference closed.



## PRESS RELEASE

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# United Nations Conference on **the Least Developed Countries**

PARIS  
1-14 September 1981

ROUND-UP OF SESSION

UNCLDC/29  
14 September 1981

### UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON THE LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRIES ADOPTS SUBSTANTIAL NEW PROGRAMME OF ACTION FOR THE 1980s

The United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries today adopted a Substantial New Programme of Action (SNPA) that will increase aid to the world's poorest and weakest countries in the 1980s and help bring about far-reaching restructuring of their economies in the interest of enhancing their long-term viability.

#### Substantial New Programme of Action

Climaxing two weeks of discussion and negotiations in which representatives of 142 countries took part, the final plenary session approved a wide-ranging programme that is designed to transform the economies of the least developed countries towards sustained self development and enable them to provide at least, internationally-accepted minimum standards of nutrition, health, housing and education, as well as job opportunities to all their citizens, particularly to the rural and urban poor.

The Substantial New Programme of Action was set forth in a resolution adopted unanimously. It has three chapters: Chapter I deals with the general situation and national measures; Chapter II covers international support measures; and Chapter III describes arrangements for implementation, follow-up and monitoring.

#### International Support Measures

The provision, adopted by consensus, stated that "All donors have agreed to make a special effort to increase their contribution to the least developed countries ... most donors of Official Development Assistance (ODA) will devote in the coming years 0.15 per cent of their gross national product (GNP) to these countries. Others will double their ODA to the least developed countries in the same period. Taken together these efforts are likely to achieve, by 1985, a doubling of ODA to the least developed countries, compared to the transfers to them during the last five years". This pledge was considered as likely to go a considerable way to meet the needs for increased aid of the least developed countries.

During week-end negotiations, agreement was reached on that part of the Programme dealing with additional financial resources that would be made available to the least developed countries.

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On the basis of development programmes presented by the least developed countries, their external financing requirements (which exceed \$6.6 billion per year at 1980 prices) would be 35 per cent higher in real terms on average during the first half of the decade, representing an extra amount of \$5.7 billion on average per year, while in 1990 total concessional flows should rise to \$24 billion per year at 1980 prices.

The dependence of the least developed countries on external aid is indicated by the fact that they are now able to finance only half of their imports out of export earnings. The import costs of these countries has risen by \$10 billion in the last decade with only a small increase in the real volume of imports. With the growth in population there has been an actual decline in per capita terms. Recognizing this situation, the Conference stated in the Programme of Action that only a "substantial" increase in official development assistance in real terms during the 1980s would enable the least developed countries to achieve the objectives of their country programmes.

In the Programme, donor countries also reaffirmed their commitment to the target of 0.07 per cent of GNP for overall ODA to all developing countries as envisaged in the provisions of the International Development Strategy for the Third United Nations Development Decade and agreed that the flows of ODA would be increasingly directed towards the least developed countries.

At the final plenary meeting a number of industrialized market-economy countries took the floor to state their commitment to one or the other of the specific targets mentioned in the Substantial New Programme of Action namely the allocation of 0.15 per cent of GNP or the doubling of aid to the least developed countries.

Agreement was also reached on other international support measures related to aid modalities, technical assistance, commercial policy and transfer of technology. These measures taken together were also considered as likely to have considerable impact on the situation of the 31 least developed countries.

For example, in the key area of aid modalities - improving the terms and arrangements under which aid is provided - the Programme stated that donor countries and institutions should make their best efforts to reach decisions at the earliest opportunity on proposed measures such as providing "as a general rule" assistance to the least developed countries in the form of grants and extending aid to the maximum extent possible on an untied basis i.e., without obligating the recipient to use the aid to purchase goods from the donor countries.

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In the field of commercial policy, the Programme calls for simplification and improvement of preferential schemes with a view to providing the fullest possible duty-free treatment to the exports of least developed countries. It also states that action should be taken in the appropriate fora with a view to reducing any tariff or non-tariff protection such as tariff escalation effects and quantitative restrictions which might hinder the least developed countries' exports of major processed goods.

Another action called for in relation to commercial policy was a study by developed countries trading in primary commodities with least developed countries of ways and means to help the least developed countries offset the damaging effect of loss of foreign exchange earnings from fluctuations in their exports of primary commodities. They were also invited to report on progress in good time for a comprehensive factual report on their findings to be submitted to the sixth session of UNCTAD in 1983.

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### National Measures

In the introduction to the Chapter on the general situation and national measures the Conference stated that the least developed countries have the primary responsibility for their overall development. Chapters are devoted to measures that should be envisaged at the national level in key sectors such as food and agriculture, human resources and social development, natural resources and energy and the manufacturing industry. Among the objectives cited are the 4 per cent annual growth target in agriculture set in the International Development Strategy for the Third United Nations Development Decade for all developing countries, so that food production in each country would increase faster than population growth with a view to guaranteeing food security. The target set for the manufacturing industry in the least developed countries should aim at increasing the rate of manufacturing growth to an overall annual growth of 9 per cent or more.

### Review and follow-up mechanism established

The Programme emphasizes that regular review and monitoring of its implementation at national, regional and global levels is essential. National reviews would be fundamental for the execution of the SNPA in the least developed countries while the regional and global reviews will be crucial in ensuring international support for it. The review mechanism as a whole will be a "means to ensure that every least developed country receives an adequate minimum flow of assistance and demonstrates a minimum standard of performance in economic development."

At the national level least developed countries which do not already have arrangements for consultations with trade and aid partners through mechanisms such as World Bank Consultative Groups, UNDP Roundtables and the Club du Sahel, may invite donors and partners to take part in consultative groups, for the purpose of reviewing implementation of the SNPA at appropriate intervals. The first round of such country reviews should take place as soon as possible and preferably by 1983.

At the global level UNCTAD will play the focal role in elaborating the detailed arrangements for implementation, co-ordination and monitoring of the SNPA. The SNPA will be considered at UNCTAD VI in 1983 and a Mid-Term Review of the of the Programme will be carried out by an Intergovernmental Group on the Least Developed Countries meeting at high level in 1985. This Group will also consider the possibility of a global review at the end of the decade in the form of another United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries.

### List of least developed countries

The 31 countries which the General Assembly has designated "least developed" and for which special aid was requested are: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Benin, Bhutan, Botswana, Burundi, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chad, Comoros, Democratic Yemen, Ethiopia, Gambia, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Haiti, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lesotho, Malawi, Maldives, Mali, Nepal, Niger, Rwanda, Samoa, Somalia, Sudan, Uganda, United Republic of Tanzania, Upper Volta and Yemen.

14 September 1981

### General Debate Summary

One hundred and fifty-eight speakers representing Governments, inter-governmental and non-governmental organizations, national liberation movements and United Nations bodies took part in the Conference general debate which was held from 2 to 10 September.

All speakers stressed the severe economic crisis the 31 least developed nations are experiencing, citing the factors they have in common such as low per capita income, illiteracy, food and energy dependence and heavy debts. Attention was also drawn to the particular problems suffered by some of the least developed because of their status as land-locked nations or small islands or other factors.

Many speakers emphasized the need for urgent action to help, while others stated that their difficulties could not be eased until the roots of the problem were eliminated through a restructuring of the international economic system. Some speakers expressed hope that a successful outcome to this Conference would give impetus to efforts being made next month in Cancun, Mexico, outside of United Nations auspices, to launch a round of global negotiations on raw materials, energy, trade, development, and money and finance.

One speaker, Libya, proposed that this Conference should pave the way for another on the establishment of a new international economic order.

Some Governments held the view that the difficulties of the 31 poorest and weakest States differed little from the problems of many other developing countries and that international assistance should not be given them to the detriment of other countries in severe need.

A number of speakers lamented the fact that the Immediate Action Programme for the least developed countries, agreed on by Governments in 1979, had not resulted in any concrete measures to help them.

All agreed that, while the responsibility for economic and social developments rests on the country concerned, assistance by the international community was essential. Some speakers made the point that all countries, regardless of their socio-economic systems, had an obligation to help the least developed, while others stressed that international aid must not be accompanied by any political strings. That aid, some said, must be continuous, predictable and assured.

Representatives of States members of the "Group of 77" developing countries supported a draft programme of action submitted by the Group at the start of the Conference. In particular, support was voiced for the proposed target whereby the industrialized countries would give 0.15 per cent of their gross national product (GNP) to the least developed countries in the form of official development assistance by 1985, raising the amount to 0.20 per cent by the end of the decade.

Various countries, including the socialist countries of Eastern Europe, emphasized that the arms race must be halted and that international peace and security must be maintained if there is to be social and economic development.

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A number of representatives from Third World countries listed dependence on expensive imported petroleum as one of their major economic problems. Support was given by both developed and developing countries to the creation of an energy-related lending facility within the World Bank.

Some speakers took the opportunity to condemn the aggression and apartheid policy of South Africa, and Zambia told "all those Governments, which are supporting the racist minorities that their economic interests in southern Africa will be better protected by black Governments in all our States".

#### Other Conference Actions

Acting on 1 September at the first meeting, the Conference elected Jean-Pierre Cot, Minister of Co-operation and Development of France, as its President. The 15 countries elected Vice-Presidents were: Algeria, Bolivia, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, China, Ethiopia, Haiti, Iraq, Japan, Nepal, Norway, USSR, United Kingdom, United States. Tibor Fabian (Hungary) served as Rapporteur.

At the final plenary meeting the Conference approved the report of its Credentials Committee and took note of the review meetings held prior to the Conference in Vienna, Addis Ababa, the Hague and Geneva and recommended that the reports, along with the development programmes of the least developed countries be considered in specific country reviews that were to take place in follow-up to the New Programme. The Conference also adopted a resolution expressing appreciation to France for its generous hospitality.

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