

19 January 2001

Statement by H.E. Ambassador Jorge Iván Mora Godoy, Ambassador, Permanent Representative of Cuba, on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, at the Working Party on the Medium-term Plan and Programme Budget on its 37th session

Distinguished delegates,

The Group of 77 and China reiterate the importance of financing the participation of experts from developing countries in UNCTAD's expert meetings on a predictable and stable basis. The provision of the resources needed for this purpose from the regular budget is of paramount importance.

The use of resources allocated by the General Assembly from the savings account to finance such participation, in 1999 and 2000, has clearly demonstrated the significant positive effect on the quality of the discussions and deliberations of the expert meetings.

UNCTAD's expert meetings are the foundations of the intergovernmental machinery work. Undermining the importance of these meetings, puts at risk the quality of the work undertaken by the three Commissions and the Trade and Development Board.

As the Report of the Secretary-General, submitted at the end of 1999, points out, the use of resources from the regular budget facilitated the number of experts from developing countries participating in these meetings, to nearly double. This means that the developing countries continued to finance at their own expense the participation of some of their experts. It is clear that the use of these resources contributed to a broader participation of experts from developing countries, not regularly associated with the expert meetings, hence contributing to better exchange of national experiences. At the same time, the mechanism devised to utilize these resources guaranteed equitable geographical distribution, including from least developed countries, and provided better gender participation.

We welcome the support expressed by a number of developed countries to the use of a stable source to finance the participation of experts from developing countries in UNCTAD's expert meetings.

We also welcome the announcement by the secretariat during the 37th session of the Working Party, that the Secretary-General of UNCTAD has submitted to New York, in conformity with TDB Decision No. 465 (XL VII) of October 2000, a request for resources from the regular budget to finance this participation.

We urge that this request be fully taken into consideration and reflected in the UN budget for the biennium 2002/03.

We are committed to any full or very comprehensive and durable solution to that issue which touches upon the core existence of the UNCTAD intergovernmental machinery.

Thank you.