



General Assembly

Distr.
GENERAL

A/46/520
2 October 1991

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

Forty-sixth session
Agenda items 12, 21, 43, 77, 78,
79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 88, 89, 90,
137 and 143

REPORT OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

CRITICAL ECONOMIC SITUATION IN AFRICA:

- (a) FINAL REVIEW AND APPRAISAL OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS PROGRAMME OF ACTION FOR AFRICAN ECONOMIC RECOVERY AND DEVELOPMENT 1986-1990
- (b) AFRICA'S COMMODITY PROBLEMS

LAUNCHING OF GLOBAL NEGOTIATIONS ON INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC COOPERATION FOR DEVELOPMENT

DEVELOPMENT AND INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC COOPERATION

UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT

PROTECTION OF GLOBAL CLIMATE FOR PRESENT AND FUTURE GENERATIONS OF MANKIND

INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION FOR THE ERADICATION OF POVERTY IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

EXTERNAL DEBT CRISIS AND DEVELOPMENT

OPERATIONAL ACTIVITIES FOR DEVELOPMENT

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IMPLEMENTATION OF THE COMMITMENTS AND POLICIES AGREED UPON
IN THE DECLARATION ON INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC COOPERATION, IN
PARTICULAR THE REVITALIZATION OF THE ECONOMIC GROWTH AND
DEVELOPMENT OF THE DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION AND THE DIVERSIFICATION
AND MODERNIZATION OF PRODUCTIVE ACTIVITIES IN DEVELOPING
COUNTRIES

RESTRUCTURING AND REVITALIZATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS
IN THE ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND RELATED FIELDS

STRENGTHENING OF THE COORDINATION OF HUMANITARIAN EMERGENCY
ASSISTANCE OF THE UNITED NATIONS

Letter dated 1 October 1991 from the Permanent
Representative of Ghana to the United Nations
addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit herewith the declaration of the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the member States of the Group of 77 adopted on 30 September 1991 on the occasion of their fifteenth annual meeting, held at United Nations Headquarters in New York (see annex).

On behalf of the Group of 77, I would highly appreciate it if you would arrange for the present letter and its annex to be circulated as an official document of the General Assembly under agenda items 12, 21, 43, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 88, 89, 90, 137 and 143.

(Signed) Kofi Nyidevu AMOONOR
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of Ghana
to the United Nations
Chairman of the Group of 77
New York

ANNEX

DECLARATION OF THE MINISTERS FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS
OF THE GROUP OF 77

I

1. The fifteenth annual meeting of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Group of 77 was held in New York on 30 September 1991.

2. The Ministers welcomed the admission to membership of the United Nations of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, the Republic of Korea, Federated States of Micronesia and the Republic of the Marshall Islands, as well as Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. The admission of these new members strengthens the ideal of universality of the United Nations.

3. The Ministers took note with appreciation of the results of the Tenth Ministerial Conference of the Non-Aligned Movement held in Accra, Ghana, from 2 to 7 September 1991.

4. The Ministers welcomed the Special High-level Meeting of the Economic and Social Council held in Geneva on 4 to 5 July 1991 on the subject: "Impact of the recent evolution of East-West relations on the growth of the world economy, in particular on the economic growth and development of the developing countries, as well as on international economic cooperation", and the useful contribution to the preparation of this meeting from the Colloquium held in Algiers from 4 to 6 May 1991. The Ministers noted with satisfaction the assurances given by the developed countries and multilateral financial institutions that assistance given to the Eastern European countries would not be at the expense of the developing countries.

5. The Ministers expressed grave concern over the continuing deterioration of the economic and social situation in most developing countries, which is due largely to the adverse international economic environment. The Ministers also noted with concern that the inadequate fiscal and monetary policies of the major industrialized countries continue to have a serious adverse impact on the prospects for growth and development in the developing countries. They urged that the tendency towards the marginalization of the developing countries should be reversed and that conditions be created to spur growth and development on a wide front, particularly in developing countries.

6. The Ministers reiterated that recent developments in the international political and economic scene have strengthened their resolve to implement the goals and objectives of the Group of 77 as enunciated in past Ministerial Declarations, in particular the Caracas Declaration of June 1989.

7. The Ministers expressed concern at the concerted effort being made to introduce conditionalities - political, social and economic - in redefining the basis for international economic cooperation. The Ministers stressed that the development path followed by a country is a product of a complex interplay of historic, social, geographic and cultural factors. Each country has to define for itself its national goals, objectives and priorities in its struggle to eradicate poverty and accelerate growth and development, in the full exercise of its sovereign rights. The Ministers stressed that the role of international cooperation is to support and supplement the national efforts of developing countries. In this connection, the Ministers questioned the assumptions underlying the methodology of a recent development publication of a United Nations agency which seeks to impose a uniform perspective of growth and development oblivious to the diversity and uniqueness of each country.

8. The Ministers underlined the importance and relevance of the landmark resolutions adopting the declaration of the Eighteenth Special Session of the General Assembly on International Economic Cooperation, in particular the Revitalization of Economic Growth and Development of the Developing Countries, and the International Development Strategy for the Fourth United Nations Development Decade. They reiterated the need for political will on the part of developed countries for the effective implementation of their commitments embodied in these resolutions.

9. The Ministers reiterated that in an increasingly interdependent world the goals of sustained economic development of developing countries is overwhelmingly dependent on a favorable international economic environment. The Ministers expressed their view that the emerging global economic order should provide for more equitable economic opportunities for all nations, important features of which should be the strengthening of a free, open and non-discriminatory multilateral trading system, effective macroeconomic coordination, and fiscal discipline to ensure stable conditions conducive to development in the world economy. In this context, the coordination of international macroeconomic policies should be broadened to take into account the concerns of all countries, in particular developing countries. Such coordination should be directed towards global economic growth and social development so as to achieve equitable distribution of the fruits of progress through an expanded world economy.

10. The Ministers recognized that economic and social development is a goal which is also an essential element for ensuring lasting peace and security. Noting the recent changes which have occurred in the international political situation, they stressed that the economic development of developing countries has become more urgent than ever in order to achieve an

equitable and universal new international economic order. In this connection, they reaffirmed that there is an urgent need to resume the North-South dialogue on a constructive basis as an instrument for the promotion of the economic growth and development of developing countries.

11. The Ministers welcomed the proposal of the Secretary-General of the United Nations for an international conference on the financing of development and expressed the hope that this proposal would be given concrete shape during the forty-sixth regular session of the General Assembly.

12. The Ministers noted the role of the United Nations in the promotion of peace and security and emphasized the need to make the United Nations system more responsive to the development needs, objectives and priorities of the developing countries.

13. The Ministers took note of the measures for reform and restructuring of the United Nations in the economic, social and related fields and reiterated the important role of the United Nations in international economic cooperation in promoting the development of developing countries and resolved to strive to make the United Nations more democratic, effective and efficient to enable the Organization to meet new challenges. In all its intergovernmental structures the United Nations must promote a more equitable and balanced representation of its members to reflect its increased membership and the ideal that its decision-making process be made more democratic and transparent.

14. In regard to the agenda item of the United Nations General Assembly on the strengthening of coordination of humanitarian emergency assistance, the Ministers stressed that the discussion and outcome should be based on a clear definition of the types of emergency situations, on respect for the fundamental principles of national sovereignty, on the basis of the request and consent of the affected country, on the allocation of new and additional financial resources for this purpose, taking into consideration the existing structure within the U.N. system in this field, and bearing in mind United Nations General Assembly resolutions in this regard. To this end, they stressed the need for a concerted effort by the developing countries to coordinate and harmonize their position on this item.

II

15. The Ministers emphasized that the problem of the external debt and debt servicing of developing countries continues to impose severe constraints on their economic growth and development. The servicing of this huge external debt has drained badly needed resources for investment. It has also led to a situation where every year there is an increasing net transfer of resources from developing to developed countries.

The response of the international community to the debt problem has been sporadic, piecemeal and inadequate. The Ministers stressed that only a comprehensive and durable solution to the external debt problem which would take into account the need to significantly reduce the stock and service of all types of debt to all types of debtor countries and include anticipatory measures to prevent the proliferation of the debt problem, would lead to the alleviation of this burden on the developing world. In the absence of such measures the efforts being made by developing countries for their accelerated development would be thwarted and bring in its wake the greater risk of social and political turmoil. In this respect, the Ministers emphasized that a durable solution must include strengthening and liberalization of the international trading system as the most important source of real growth and development and, therefore, of the resources necessary for debtor countries to face their financial obligations. They also took note of recent debt reduction measures and initiatives as an important step towards a durable solution of the external debt problem, and emphasized the need for similar arrangements to be extended to all indebted developing countries. At the same time they reiterated the advisability of seeking innovative and creative ideas for the solution of the external debt problem in an International Advisory Commission on Debt and Development under the aegis of the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

16. The Ministers emphasized that concessional finance is vital for developing countries. They urged developed countries to work towards realizing their commitment of attaining the internationally agreed target of 0.7% of GNP as official development assistance.

17. The declining flow and scarcity of resources, the Ministers reiterated, was a matter of grave concern. In this connection, they noted that commercial financial flows to developing countries have virtually come to a halt. Moreover, the flow of foreign direct investment to developing countries has declined and in the past decade foreign direct investment has been predominantly directed towards the triad - EEC, Japan and North America. While a large number of developing countries have taken important measures for reform and liberalization of their economies, these efforts have not been matched by a corresponding increase in the level of foreign direct investment in these countries.

18. The Ministers reiterated that the present international monetary system which is based on the dominant role of the major developed countries is in need of reform. They expressed serious concern over the lack of progress in efforts to effect meaningful reform and to restructure the international monetary and financial system. The International Monetary Fund should ensure efficient multilateral surveillance particularly over balance of

payments trends and exchange policies of the major developed countries. They called for a broadening of participation in the process of coordination of global economic and monetary policies.

19. The Ministers reiterated their conviction that a free, open and nondiscriminatory international trading system is necessary for the economic prosperity and development of all countries especially the developing countries. They noted with concern that world trade with regard to the products exported by developing countries continued to be characterized by market instability, a sharp and continuous decline in prices of those products, restricted access to the markets of developed countries, and upsurge of protectionism, unfair competition, production and export subsidies by developed countries and in some cases price-fixing by some transnational corporations. The Ministers agreed that international trade will function best in an environment of growth and dynamism in the world economy. There is a need for policies and measures to be directed in the first place to arresting and reversing negative trends particularly those apparent in the last decade. International organizations in the field of trade should be strengthened to play their part in the achievement of these objectives. The strengthening of the trading system also requires the resolution of a number of ongoing issues, some of which are of special interest to developing countries and are crucial to the development process.

20. The Ministers reaffirmed their commitment to a successful conclusion of the Uruguay Round of trade negotiations within the GATT so as to avoid the negative consequences of failure which would surely fall upon developing countries. Only an early, fully comprehensive and balanced outcome of the negotiations, taking into account the interests of all parties, specially the needs and concerns of developing countries can ensure a new era of growth for the world as a whole. To that end, they particularly urged the developed countries to comply with the commitments undertaken in the Punta del Este Declaration and at the Ministerial Meetings of Montreal and Brussels, and called upon all developing countries to strengthen their mutual understanding and solidarity in the negotiating process of the Uruguay Round.

21. The Ministers reaffirmed the important role of UNCTAD, with its universal character and its development mandate, in international economic cooperation and in forging multilateral solutions in the interconnected areas of money, finance, trade, commodities and development. The Ministers expressed concern that the commitments undertaken in the Final Act of UNCTAD VII have not been adequately implemented. They noted that UNCTAD VIII, to be held in Colombia, in 1992, will take place at a singularly complex juncture, involving both opportunities and challenges for advancing international cooperation for

development. UNCTAD VIII, with its development oriented agenda, will provide a privileged opportunity to restore a fruitful dialogue on development taking into account global political, economic and technological changes of the recent past and the close interrelationship between inter alia trade, investment, technology and sustainable development. The Ministers strongly hoped that their partners from the developed world would use the unique opportunity of UNCTAD VIII to achieve a maximum positive action-oriented outcome. The concrete results of the Conference will breathe new life into the development dialogue, give a much needed impetus to multilateral economic cooperation and impart fresh vigor to UNCTAD's work on national and international policy-making. The Ministers reaffirmed the continuing validity of the UNCTAD mandate and considered that the strengthening of UNCTAD in its three basic functions - global analysis, conceptual innovation, policy coordination; negotiations; and technical assistance - will be instrumental to the revitalization of the development process of the developing countries.

22. The Ministers expressed their concern that the persistent commodity problems caused by the deterioration in the terms of trade and increased protectionism have adversely affected commodity-exporting developing countries. They stressed the exceptional importance that international trade in commodities have for the world economy and in particular their dominant influence on the development of the majority of developing countries. They stressed the need for the international community to support developing countries in their efforts to improve processing, marketing, distribution and transportation of commodities so as to continue the process of diversification and restructuring of their economies.

23. The Ministers reaffirmed the importance of the Integrated Programme of Commodities and to this end noted the commodity development programmes of the Common Fund for Commodities, which go a long way in facilitating technological innovation to meet the challenges of substitution and competitiveness posed by the rapid achievements of science and technology. The Ministers called upon all countries that have ratified the Agreement establishing the Common Fund to ensure that both accounts of the Common Fund become fully operational as soon as possible. They also urged those countries who have not yet ratified the Agreement to rethink their position. The Ministers called upon the international community to increase funding for the Common Fund for Commodities.

24. The Ministers observed that only one international commodity agreement is in force in economic terms. The Ministers called for an early renegotiation, reactivation and revitalization, as appropriate, of international commodity agreements to enhance price support measures for developing countries dependent on the export of commodities.

25. The Ministers stressed that science and technology is crucial for the promotion of economic growth and development of developing countries. The benefits of science and technology can be optimized by jointly promoting and strengthening endogenous capacities of developing countries and by evolving effective modalities for the access to and transfer of technology on concessional and preferential terms. The Ministers expressed concern at the increasing trend to hinder the free flow of technology to developing countries. These measures, whether unilateral or multilateral, widen the chasm between developed and developing countries and are contrary to the principles of free trade and not in consonance with the basic aim of promoting development in the developing countries by increasing efficiency and competitiveness.

26. The Ministers noted that no significant progress has been made in the implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action on Science and Technology for Development adopted in 1979. In this context, they called on all countries, especially developed ones as well as on the international development institutions, to seriously consider the establishment of a United Nations financing system for science and technology for development as envisaged in the Vienna Programme of Action.

27. The Ministers reaffirmed that food and agriculture, inter alia, adequate production and food security, have special importance in the development of developing countries. They highlighted the importance of ensuring developing countries' access to markets in the context of a full liberalization of agricultural trade and the supply of the inputs necessary for production, taking into consideration the interests of the net food importing developing countries. They also stressed that an increase in agricultural production in developing countries can be a basis for industrial growth and diversification of their economic structure. The Ministers called upon the international community particularly the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, to closely monitor further development in the global food situation with a view to responding adequately and timely to the needs of developing countries. The Ministers called on all donor countries to ensure the maintenance of food assistance and to increase its share of aid channeled through the World Food Programme to enable the Programme to continue its activity in support of development and in meeting emergency food needs of developing countries. The Ministers reaffirmed that the right to food is a universal human right and should be guaranteed to all people and should not be used as an instrument of political pressure.

28. The Ministers reiterated that the adequate supply of energy is vital to the acceleration of growth and development of the developing countries. The Ministers called upon all countries to

assist the developing countries in developing their energy resources. The international community should explore ways and means of overcoming the adverse effects of energy price fluctuations on developing countries. In view of their crucial importance for all countries, it is necessary to develop new and renewable sources of energy in accordance with the objectives of the Nairobi Programme of Action.

29. The Ministers expressed deep concern over the continued deterioration of the economic and social situation in the least developed countries. They further noted that over the past decade most of the least developed countries have experienced negative growth rates and suffered from inadequate international development assistance to implement their programmes of economic development and structural transformation. The Ministers expressed their appreciation to many developed and other countries and to international organizations for their contribution to mitigating the exceptionally grave situation in the least developed sub-Saharan countries, and emphasized that this drive should be continued and expanded. Referring to the serious vulnerabilities of the least developed countries, the Ministers reaffirmed the special needs of these countries and called for full implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the 1990s as well as other concrete measures in specific areas considered important to spur growth and development in these countries on a sustained basis.

30. The Ministers reaffirmed that people are central to all development activities and that human resource development is an essential means of achieving economic and social development goals. They urged that the development of human resources should be undertaken in an overall, well conceived and integrated approach, taking into account such areas as health, nutritional improvements, education and training as well as creating more opportunities for employment. In this regard, human resource development should be designed for purposes of realizing the potential capabilities, skills and self-reliance to meet the growing manpower requirements of the developing countries.

31. The Ministers emphasized the importance of achieving adequate levels of industrialization in developing countries as one of the main ways to assure the reactivation of their economic growth and development. They pointed out the necessity to properly assist the different stages of industrialization of developing countries. They noted that the target established at the Lima Conference of 25% of world manufacturing value added is far from being achieved by the developing countries. They called for the application of the principle of comparative advantage for the phasing out of industrial units in the developed countries in areas in which the developing countries' industries are more efficient and to this end called upon developed countries to

eliminate protectionist measures in support of their uncompetitive industries.

32. The Ministers expressed concern over the continued deterioration of the economic situation in most African countries. They noted that Africa's dependence on few commodities for its export income, the declining terms of trade for commodities and the mounting debt burden have created a vicious circle from which it has become very difficult for Africa to extricate itself. Africa's external debt has increased considerably since 1982 and currently stands at over \$270 billion dollars. The Ministers drew the attention of the international community that five years after the adoption of the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development (UNPAAERD) by the U.N. General Assembly, the economic crisis facing African countries presently has not significantly been any different from what it was. In view of the critical economic situation in Africa, the Ministers appealed to the international community to give adequate support to the implementation of a new agenda of international economic cooperation with Africa for the 1990s, designed to achieve the accelerated transformation, integration and growth of the African economies based on measurable goals and targets within a well-defined time-frame and with built-in monitorable performance criteria.

33. The Ministers recalled all previous decisions of the Group of 77 concerning the land-locked developing countries and noted with concern that the measures taken so far have not been sufficient to tackle the serious problems faced by these countries. They reiterated the need to address the specific problems of these developing countries with regard to reducing the costs of their access to and from the sea and world markets. They stressed the need for the international community to assist and improve the quality, efficiency and reliability of transport facilities, diversify their economies and increase financial resources and technical cooperation to promote the above-mentioned activities. In this context, the Ministers stressed the need and importance of cooperation between landlocked and transit developing countries.

34. The Ministers recognized the acute problems faced by island developing countries arising from their small size, remoteness, high exposure to natural disasters, limitations in transport and communications, great distances from market centers, limited availability of fresh water, heavy dependence on imports, depletion of their non-renewable resources and shortage of administrative personnel. They noted that the specific problems of island developing countries and the growing incidence of natural disasters retarded their growth and increased their susceptibility to the hostile economic environment, and expressed the need for the international community, particularly the donor

countries and the United Nations system to address the specific problems of these island developing countries.

35. The Ministers reaffirmed the principles of universality, multilateralism, voluntary/grant nature, neutrality, non-conditionality and flexibility in meeting the technical cooperation requirements of developing countries. The Ministers pointed to the importance of meeting increasing resource needs of developing countries in regard to the operational activities for development. They stressed that the way to achieve this objective is through substantial and urgent increase in real terms of the overall level of resources for operational activities for development of the United Nations system on a continuous, predictable and assured basis bearing in mind the special needs of the LDCs. They further stressed that the developing countries should assume full responsibility for the execution of projects funded by the United Nations system in order to ensure that they are managed in an integrated manner, to strengthen national capacities and to ensure the long-term sustainability and wide impact of projects in the development process. In this connection, greater flexibility should be allowed the developing countries in their selection of executing entities. Moreover, the Ministers emphasized that the programming of operational activities must be in full accord with the priorities, objectives, national plans and development strategies of developing countries, who are solely responsible for their definition. In this regard, the Ministers stressed the need for the full implementation of General Assembly resolution 44/211.

36. The Ministers noted that rapid population growth in developing countries may be a constraint on their development efforts. The international community should support the national policies and programmes of all countries, especially developing countries, taking into account the sovereign right of all countries to formulate, adopt and implement their population policies, mindful of their culture, values and traditions, as well as their social, economic and political conditions. Such population programmes should be accompanied by improvements in the quality of human resources and expansion of job opportunities. In this regard, the Ministers welcomed the convening of the International Conference on Population and Development in 1994.

37. The Ministers noted with great concern the refusal of Israel to comply with U.N. resolutions to put an end to its occupation of Arab territories in Palestine, Syrian Golan and parts of Southern Lebanon, and the continuation of the Israeli occupation authorities in establishing settlements in those territories and bringing in new Jewish immigrants depriving the indigenous people of their land and sovereignty over their natural resources, thus impeding their economic and social development and the peace

process in the Middle East. In this context, the Ministers affirmed the urgent need to see the termination of this occupation. Taking into account the recent developments on the Middle East question, the Ministers called for a halt to these settlement activities and the removal of these settlements from all occupied Arab territories.

38. The Ministers noted the evolving situation in South Africa which has so far led to the repeal of some major apartheid laws. Taking into account the on-going efforts to end violence in South Africa, the Ministers called for more initiatives to address the undemocratic constitution that is now in place. In this regard the Ministers supported the call to speed up the process of negotiations through the establishment of appropriate interim measures to oversee the period of transition to a democratic South Africa as well as the convening of a democratically elected Constituent Assembly to draft a new constitution. The Ministers, noting that the current level of changes in South Africa are not yet profound and irreversible, further noted the necessity of maintaining pressure against South Africa in order to expedite the initiation of real negotiations. The Ministers further called for continued assistance to the democratic forces in South Africa.

39. The Ministers called upon the international community to adopt urgent and effective measures to eliminate the use of coercive economic measures, in particular against developing countries, as a means of forcibly imposing the will of one state on another, a trend which persists and has taken new forms, as evident in blockades, embargoes and the freezing of assets of developing countries. The Ministers noted that these coercive measures have not been authorized by the relevant organs of the United Nations.

40. The Ministers expressed their support for resolution 13/2 adopted at the thirteenth session of the Commission on Human Settlements and endorsed at the second regular session of the Economic and Social Council in 1991, that it is highly opportune to convene, possibly in 1997, a United Nations conference on human settlements (HABITAT II) to review past policies and decide on a strategy and guidelines for future action. Planning and development of human settlements can greatly enhance social and economic development, and thereby contribute to alleviating poverty and promoting sustainable development.

41. In the context of the restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations in the economic, social and related fields, the Ministers welcomed the establishment of the new United Nations Drug Control Programme and expressed their desire that the programme be strengthened.

42. The Ministers reiterated the importance of social matters within the system of the United Nations. They stressed the need for a concerted effort by developing countries to coordinate and harmonize their positions in this area. In this regard, the Ministers welcomed the possibility of convening a world summit for social development.

III

43. The Ministers stressed the historic importance of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development to be held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in June 1992. The holding of this Conference has raised expectations, particularly in developing countries, that environmental issues and development will be treated in an integrated manner, and the hope of all citizens on our planet for a sustainable lifestyle in a clean, safe and healthy environment.

44. The Ministers reaffirmed the provisions, which include commitments, principles and objectives, contained in General Assembly resolution 44/228 and stressed that these should be integrated in the outcome of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development. They reiterated that international cooperation should support and supplement national policies and efforts of developing countries in pursuance of their sustainable development. Any meaningful participation of developing countries in international efforts regarding the protection and enhancement of the environment is dependent upon the revitalization of their growth and development.

45. The Ministers highlighted the strains to the environment being imposed by unsustainable patterns of production and consumption in the developed countries. The developed countries have the main responsibility for environmental degradation and must take remedial action accordingly.

46. In this regard, the Ministers emphasized that new and additional financial resources should be made available to the developing countries and that environmentally sound technologies must be transferred to them on preferential and non-commercial terms to enable them to address environmental concerns.

47. The Ministers stressed the importance of the final stages of the preparatory process for UNCED, in particular PREPCOM IV, which should reach final decisions on all issues for recommendation to UNCED 1992. They expressed the hope that the outcome of the Conference, embodying a declaration of principles, programme of action, a framework convention on climate change, a convention on biological diversity and suggestions for institutional arrangements, would be balanced and match the expectations, particularly in developing countries, raised by this Conference.

IV

48. The Ministers stressed that in addition to efforts undertaken by developing countries to promote economic and technical cooperation among themselves, the objectives set forth by the Caracas Programme of Action on ECDC need to be further pursued and accomplished. In this context, they called upon the donor countries as well as the United Nations organizations in all their programmes to extend their support to these efforts to strengthen the collective self-reliance of the developing countries. The Ministers also stressed the importance of urgent consideration of the implementation of the recommendations contained in the South Commission report "The Challenge to the South".

49. The Ministers took note of the postponement of the Eighth Meeting of the Intergovernmental Follow-up and Coordination Committee on ECDC (IFCC-VIII) which was scheduled to take place in September 1991. In this connection, the Ministers requested the Chairman of the Group of 77 in New York to immediately undertake the necessary consultations with Member States to find a host for the meeting. In the event that no offer to host the meeting is received by the end of April 1992, the Chairman of the Group of 77 is expected to undertake the necessary measures for convening IFCC-VIII at a suitable date, preferably in August 1992 in one of the regional commissions or in New York.
