

to rise. Through its quarterly *Survey of Economic Trends*, ICC kept a check on the views of over 1,500 firms in 50 countries regarding the business climate. The most recent survey covering the first quarter of 1978 showed that for the vast majority of firms confidence was still weak. Two factors were responsible for that situation: over the last 10 years, business profitability had been gradually eroded, and at the same time government interference had tended to increase. Declining profitability, together with the persistence of high inflationary pressures, constituted a major disincentive to investment. A return to price stability was absolutely essential for the revival of investment. But beyond purely economic factors, the growth of investment was closely linked with the re-establishment of the status of the entrepreneur, which had been somewhat questioned in the past. It also hinged on a clearer definition of the respective roles of government and business; that was increasingly recognized by some Governments which, both in developing and in industrialized countries, were re-assessing their relationships with private enterprise. There was considerable potential demand and an acute need for investment in the developing world. Through realistic economic planning, Governments could allocate scarce resources in a balanced fashion and so establish the basis for an acceleration of investment in the future. But Governments could not assume all tasks, and in particular the task of expanding agricultural and industrial production should rest principally with the private sector, assisted, as the case might be, by private foreign investors.

56. The revival of the world economy was also highly dependent upon the maintenance of an open trading system. ICC attached paramount importance to the Tokyo Round negotiations and hoped that rules would be adopted to prevent recourse to restrictive measures which were short-sighted and selfish. It seemed that two considerations were behind the present protectionist trends: the desire of the major countries to retain, and if possible to expand, their share of world exports at a time when the growth of world exports was slowing down, and the legitimate wish to maintain employment in particular domestic industries which, for one reason or another, had lost their competitiveness. The first consideration had given rise to a proliferation of subsidies, whilst the second had prompted Governments to impose import restrictions, reflecting the refusal of countries to adjust to the emergence of more efficient

and competing industries abroad. The unwillingness to assume the cost of structural changes had been reinforced by the fact that the cost was made greater by the adverse economic situation. However, ICC believed that protectionism froze existing patterns of production and diminished the pressures for adjustment; far from assisting Governments to ride out the recession, it actually exacerbated and prolonged it.

57. Turning to the question of greater integration of the developing countries in the world economy, she felt that the political climate was now more favourable than at the beginning of the decade. As the process of industrialization in some developing countries had moved faster, it had come to be realized that the world economy could not be artificially divided between developed and developing countries. The pattern of international economic relations was essentially an evolving one marked by growing interdependence.

58. ICC supported the United Nations in its determination to attack the economic and social problems of the less developed countries and it wished to contribute to action aimed at solving such problems. Both the ICC and its members, as private entrepreneurs engaged in all sectors of the economy, could play a crucial role in the development process. The experience of recent years showed that those developing countries which had encouraged private entrepreneurship and adopted market-oriented outward-looking strategies had attained relatively higher rates of fixed capital formation and growth.

59. If the business sector was to play its full part in the development process, it was essential that there should be regular communication and consultation with Governments and intergovernmental organizations. A most valuable mechanism to that end was the ICC/United Nations/GATT Economic Consultative Committee. ICC attached great importance to strengthening the domestic private sector in the developing world, and was expanding its programme of seminars and training for businessmen from developing nations on such topics as trade procedures, banking techniques and arbitration. It was also aware of the need for foreign investments in developing countries and would put forward at its congress in October 1978 precise proposals for expanding the contribution of world business to economic development.

The meeting rose at 5.50 p.m.

28th meeting

Thursday, 13 July 1978, at 11.10 a.m.

President: Mr. Donald O. MILLS (Jamaica).

E/1978/SR.28

In the absence of the President, Mr. Mwanguhunga (Uganda), Vice-President, took the Chair.

AGENDA ITEM 3

General discussion of international economic and social policy, including regional and sectoral developments (continued)

1. Mr. MAHGOUB (Sudan) remarked that inflation, monetary instability, recession, unemployment and

protectionist tendencies had created in the developed world an atmosphere of uncertainty about the future. The situation was even worse, however, in the developing countries, because the present world economic system was not adapted to meet their needs. "Stagflation", unemployment and stagnant or declining standards of living and *per capita* growth rates had led those countries to increase borrowing to such an extent that the level of their indebtedness was swallowing a grow-

ing percentage of their export earnings and aggravating their balance-of-payments problems. Economic surveys indicated that the gap between the developed and developing countries was growing wider and that only a massive transfer of resources could narrow if not bridge it.

2. The developing countries had hoped that the Conference on International Economic Co-operation would help to reduce the imbalance in world economic relations; in fact, however, the Conference had reached a dead end. They had then staked their hopes upon the Committee of the Whole established by General Assembly resolution 32/174, but it was common knowledge what the results of the first session of that Committee had been. The Sudanese delegation nevertheless considered, like others, that those negotiations had contributed to an understanding of different points of view and should serve as a starting-point for continuous efforts to generate the political will required to resolve the principal issues faced by the international community.

3. Referring to the negotiations in progress within UNCTAD and GATT, he deplored the lack of progress made in the implementation of the Integrated Programme for Commodities and, in particular, the Common Fund and individual commodity negotiations. Although stability in international commodity markets and the long-term stability of raw material markets were indispensable for developing and developed countries alike, some of the latter were still reluctant to agree to any action aimed at greater stabilization and the improvement of market structures. If the agreed objectives of the Integrated Programme for Commodities were to be attained, the developed countries would have to fulfil the commitments they had entered into at the fourth session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development held at Nairobi and show more co-operation. His delegation hoped that, as a result of the informal consultations being conducted by the Secretary-General of UNCTAD, the United Nations Negotiating Conference on a Common Fund under the Integrated Programme for Commodities would be resumed shortly. The entire Integrated Programme had to be implemented if the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development was not to hold its fifth session against a background of failure. As for the multilateral trade negotiations, they had made little progress in the space of five years.

4. All members of the Council recognized that the present international system must undergo structural changes and, in that respect, the international community had at its disposal the resolutions of the sixth and seventh special sessions of the General Assembly. It was most regrettable that many countries had cast doubt upon the relevance of those decisions, thus hampering the establishment of the new international economic order and the application of the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States. The restructuring of the world economy required the transfer of resources to developing countries, but the targets set almost 10 years earlier were far from achieved. The developed countries and international financial institutions should therefore assume commitments in that respect within the framework of the new international development strategy. The restructuring of the world economy would also require the transfer of technologies to the developing countries, so as to enable them to select those which suited their development goals. His delegation was relying on the preparation of a code of conduct

for the transfer of technology, and hoped that the United Nations Conference on Science and Technology for Development would make suitable arrangements for accommodating the needs of developing countries.

5. Turning to financial and technical assistance, which formed the core of the developing countries' needs, he said that the objective of his country's economic and social development plans was to satisfy the immediate needs of the people, as well as to lay the foundations for a prosperous economy for future generations. The Sudanese Government was giving priority to self-sufficiency in foodstuffs and to the provision of adequate health, housing and education services. The Sudan had accordingly formulated a number of agricultural and industrial projects, many of which were or were about to become operational. Although the country was now almost self-sufficient in food supplies, it still needed foreign aid to establish the socio-economic infrastructure that would bring the economy to the "take-off" point and place it in a position to satisfy the basic needs of the population. His delegation welcomed the decision taken by some of the developed countries to cancel the debts of poor countries, and hoped that others would follow suit. It also believed that it was necessary to speed up disarmament and to divert the resources thus released to social and economic development.

6. In conclusion, he expressed the hope that the current consultations on the reorganization and rationalization of the economic and social sectors of the United Nations system would yield satisfactory results, and that the Council would apply the recommendations annexed to General Assembly resolution 32/197.

7. Mr. CZARKOWSKI (Poland) said that the general debate on international economic co-operation and development revealed concern about the implications of the present situation for individual countries and for international economic relations. One of the main conclusions to be drawn from an analysis of the situation was that relationships between the economies of individual countries called for a qualitative transformation and an expansion of international economic co-operation which would contribute to the establishment of the new international economic order and the implementation of the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States. The mobilization of domestic resources for development, combined with the expansion of international economic co-operation based on equality, mutual advantage and non-discrimination, in a climate of peaceful coexistence, would create favourable conditions for the development of all countries, and particularly the developing ones. It was for the Council at its present session to devise measures that could be taken in that respect.

8. The search for ways of speeding up the expansion of international economic co-operation was all the more necessary as political developments were directly linked to the state of economic relations. During the past 10 years, the socialist countries had played a paramount role in the consolidation of world peace, but many obstacles still had to be overcome on the way to détente. His delegation hoped that the recommendations made at the tenth special session of the General Assembly, which had underlined once more the connexion between détente, disarmament and development, would have a positive influence on international economic co-operation.

9. The problem of development could not be dissociated from other economic problems; it entailed

both economic growth and social transformations and, moreover, depended on specific political circumstances. A combination of internal and external factors affected the rate of growth of every country and, consequently, the levels of living of nations and individuals.

10. The world of today consisted of States differently endowed with resources, at different levels of economic development and with different social and political systems. If, therefore, States were to implement the principles which were to govern their economic relations in the coming decade, they had no choice but to take into account the lawful interests of all countries, particularly the developing ones. As a member of CMEA, Poland was interested in closer economic co-operation with the developing countries and with developed market-economy countries on the basis of respect for the principles of equality, non-discrimination and the sovereignty of States. It was prepared to assist the developing countries in strengthening their development capacity, and therefore attached considerable importance to such features of social and economic progress as industrialization, the co-operative movement, the public sector, planning and programming machinery and progressive social and economic reforms. However, his delegation also shared the reservations expressed in respect of the basic needs concept and the idea that developing countries should be advised to change their priorities and to direct their development efforts towards the satisfaction of those needs.

11. The world economic and social situation called for concerted action. Inflation and unemployment in the Western countries were having a disruptive effect on economic co-operation and international trade, with corresponding repercussions on balances of payments. Short-sighted protectionism, as reflected in the maintenance of discriminatory measures and the introduction of new barriers which slowed down the process of the liberalization of international trade and economic recovery, was on the increase and added to the uncertainties in current international economic relations and domestic policies. Protectionist measures ran counter to an expansion of broad mutually-beneficial international co-operation and discouraged development efforts. In the long run, they would have a negative impact even in the countries applying them. Moreover, each country's import potential was directly proportional to its export earnings. But it was not enough to criticize protectionism, and many delegations had rightly stressed how important it was that the multilateral trade negotiations should produce satisfactory results.

12. Experience in the last few years had shown that, owing to the structural nature of the difficulties faced by the developed countries, economic mechanisms, and especially market and monetary mechanisms, could not be expected to bring about a readjustment of the situation by themselves. There was thus the need, recognized at the current session, for structural adjustments. In other words, since the over-all situation had changed so profoundly, there was an urgent need to seek ways and means of guaranteeing steady, rapid, balanced and just economic and social development. Responsibility for the choice of those ways and means undoubtedly lay with Governments, and the role of the United Nations should be to stimulate universal economic co-operation in the broad sense. The widening gap between developed and developing countries was a matter for serious concern, as under-development in one coun-

try affected growth in another. For that reason, the international community should strive, in the common interest, to bring about the development of all countries, and the developing ones in particular, by expanding and extending economic co-operation so as to improve the levels of living of all peoples.

13. His country fully supported the efforts of developing countries to achieve economic independence, as an indispensable foundation of their political independence, and for that purpose it was essential to promote international co-operation. Poland therefore approved the progressive principles contained in the Declaration and the Programme of Action on the Establishment of a New International Economic Order and in the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States. Consequently, all forms of colonial and neo-colonial exploitation of developing countries, particularly by transnational corporations, must be eliminated and favourable conditions created in those countries for the maximum mobilization of their domestic resources and the implementation of social and economic reforms. His country therefore supported the work of the Commission on Transnational Corporations; it had great hopes of the United Nations Conference on Technical Co-operation among Developing Countries, and was gratified by the successful conclusion of the work of the Committee on Review and Appraisal. Of similar importance, in that respect, was the effective preparation of the fifth session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development and the Third General Conference of UNIDO.

14. His country was also participating actively in the negotiations aimed at bringing about a new international division of labour and establishing a new, and more just, international economic order. It was particularly interested in all aspects of the expansion of international trade being discussed in various United Nations bodies. The negotiations within UNCTAD on the Integrated Programme for Commodities were of great importance, not only for the developing countries, but for all countries participating in world trade in raw materials. As a net importer of raw materials, his country was in favour of the multilateral regulation of commodity markets, provided that the interests of both producer and consumer countries were taken into account. Like the other socialist countries of Eastern Europe, it had also accepted the idea of the establishment of the Common Fund.

15. The Council was focusing particular attention at the current session on science and technology. It was common knowledge that technological progress was vital to development, that technological co-operation was essential, and that countries which were less developed in that respect needed modern technologies in order to build up their industrial potential. The United Nations Conference on Science and Technology for Development would therefore have to analyse and formulate recommendations likely to promote universal scientific and technological co-operation in the interests of development and peace, and for the benefit of all countries. But, first of all, it would be necessary to identify those areas in which technology was particularly useful. As had been emphasized at the regional preparatory meeting held at Bucharest, the Conference would have to consider all possibilities of co-operation aimed at achieving technological progress. His own country hoped that such co-operation would be sought at the world level, and was also interested in the potential role of science and technology in the future.

16. Studies of long-term economic trends at the sectoral, regional and world levels, in collaboration with the United Nations, were also important from the point of view of development planning and decision-making. The regional and world forecasts to be prepared in accordance with General Assembly and Council resolutions would be invaluable for intensifying international economic co-operation and speeding up the establishment of the new economic order. They would also render good service in the international negotiations on major economic problems and in the preparation of a new international development strategy. They would reveal existing and anticipated production capacities, as well as the degree of complementarity among various regions, and help to identify specific needs for international economic co-operation.

17. Another field of co-operation concerned the restructuring of the economic and social sectors of the United Nations system. His country, which was participating actively in the consultations on that important subject, considered that restructuring must proceed, as had been agreed, in accordance with the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations, and that the reorganization of the United Nations Secretariat should not prejudice the principle of the equitable geographical distribution of posts.

18. Countries members of CMEA, which had just been joined by the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam, were applying the Comprehensive Programme for the Further Extension and Improvement of Co-operation and the Development of Socialist Economic Integration by the CMEA Member Countries and endeavouring to broaden their economic relations at the international level. Lastly, the leadership of the Polish United Worker's Party attached special importance to the intensification of economic co-operation with developing countries. At present, Poland traded with more than 100 such countries, and in the space of two years had more than doubled its imports of manufactured goods from them. It continued to assist developing countries throughout the world, particularly in their industrialization programmes, and accepted, in repayment of the credit it made available to them, the output of their industries or other goods.

19. His country was interested in developing its economic and trade relations with the Western countries, particularly within the context of the Final Act of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe. It hoped that its efforts would meet with a response and that its Western partners would eventually eliminate all barriers to trade. In that spirit, the Soviet Union and other socialist countries members of CMEA had proposed, in ECE, the convening of three high-level all-European meetings (on the environment, energy and transport) the results of which, in addition to being of vital importance for the economic development and living conditions in Europe, would be felt well beyond the ECE region. His country was gratified by the very positive evaluation by the Executive Secretary of ECE of the progress achieved in the preparations for the meeting on the environment. That proved once again that the *Ad Hoc* Committee on the Restructuring of the Economic and Social Sectors of the United Nations System had been right to advocate the strengthening of co-operation within the framework of the regional commissions.

20. The general debate revealed that the gap between ideas on the world economy was narrowing from one

Council session to another. As the Secretary-General had indicated in his introductory statement, the transformation of international economic relations and the strengthening of development co-operation called for concerted decisions. The Council must therefore seek a broad consensus on major problems of international economic relations which would be sufficiently genuine and sincere for its decisions to be implemented. His country hoped that the current session would live up to expectations, and would permit the expansion of international economic co-operation for the benefit of all, thereby contributing to détente in the world and to the maintenance of international peace and security.

21. Mr. SALIBA (Malta) said he endorsed the views expressed by nearly all countries, irrespective of the nature of their economic system, concerning the world economic situation. However, the vast gap between aspirations and results was inevitably a source of disappointment. The fact that the world economic situation was far from satisfactory was not enough to explain that gap and should not conceal the real issue of global interdependence, which applied to all countries, regardless of their level of development, social and economic system, history or geographical situation. It was that interdependence which called for bold decisions that people should be made to understand and accept and for the application of just principles even if they were not always in the interest of all. In particular, countries in a dominant position must not equate global interdependence with the maintenance of the status quo.

22. The profusion of meetings, conferences and negotiations on the new international economic order were not producing any tangible or foreseeable results and served, on the contrary, as an excuse for postponing decisions. That situation was most disturbing and it was essential not to prolong unduly, for example, the work on the restructuring of the United Nations system, which was proceeding very slowly. It might even be asked, in the light of the discussions in the Committee of the Whole established under General Assembly resolution 32/174, whether those efforts were not doomed to failure.

23. Several delegations had rightly pointed out that economic development should go hand in hand with social development. It was difficult to reconcile such statements with the fact that developing countries which had given priority to social development were denied, on those grounds, the resources which they required. For its part, his Government had always endeavoured to promote social development by following an order of priorities which, in theory at least, seemed to find approval among developed countries. Yet, when Malta, encouraged by all the policy statements made in support of disarmament, had sought a transfer of resources amounting to the cost of one item of military equipment relatively modest in importance to maintain its level of development and to switch over from a war economy to one of peace, its calls had fallen on deaf ears. Would the response have been more favourable if Malta had requested those resources to increase its armaments, or if deteriorating economic and social conditions had created what could be called an unpleasant situation?

24. How could progress be achieved? First of all various United Nations bodies, including the Council, should focus attention on certain priority issues on which specific decisions could be taken, given the necessary political will. Secondly, criteria for the transfer of resources should not be unduly restrictive. Account

should be taken, in particular, of certain basic permanent economic weaknesses, such as the absence of natural resources, especially in small open economies, and the inherent shortcomings of certain categories of countries, such as small island developing countries; moreover, the extent to which a country's policy was in conformity with the principles and resolutions of the United Nations, particularly in the field of disarmament and social development, should also be ascertained.

25. He noted that the secretariat of the Council of Europe, whose Committee of Ministers was currently under the chairmanship of Malta, had issued a paper on the Council's intergovernmental and parliamentary activities which were directly related to a number of items on the Economic and Social Council's agenda, particularly with regard to the social aspects of economic development. Those activities were by definition of concern to the region, but the 20 member States of the Council of Europe—the majority of which were developed countries—would certainly wish to contribute, either individually or as a group, to the solution or mitigation of current difficulties.

26. Mr. EXCHAQUET (Observer for Switzerland) stressed the importance of the Committee of the Whole in the North-South dialogue, to which reference had rightly been made by the Secretary-General of the United Nations in his opening statement. In particular, the Committee might further elaborate the ideas expressed concerning the links between the increased transfer of real resources to the developing countries and the recovery of the world economy.

27. With regard to the work of the Committee of the Whole, which was to be resumed in the autumn, the Swiss delegation wished to list some considerations of a general nature. First, it would be necessary to facilitate the solution of substantive problems. Efforts should accordingly be directed towards securing prospects for progress on matters of substance. The answers to questions of form could then be determined more easily. Next, the Committee should make clear its wish to devote attention, at a high level, to a few general areas of common interest. Those areas in which genuine progress was considered both desirable and possible would be the subject of further discussion. The Committee might, for example, decide to maintain permanently on its agenda an item entitled "Consideration and assessment of the main factors influencing the world economy and, in particular, the economy of the developing countries". In addition, it might establish a link between the general area concerning the "transfer of real resources to the developing countries", taken up at its May 1978 session, and the two other general issues of agriculture and industrialization, by arranging for consideration to be focused on the possibilities of investment in agriculture and industry, and also in other sections. In that way, the debate would be expedited simultaneously in several major areas.

28. In spite of difficulties in the political and economic fields, Switzerland wished to demonstrate its desire to be associated—by participating in the work of the Committee of the Whole, of which it was a member—with the efforts aimed at international co-operation being made by the United Nations, particularly in favour of the third world.

29. Mr. SUSSEX (International Confederation of Free Trade Unions) said that the trade union movement was very concerned about the economic and social situation in the world, which was bad for all countries whether

industrialized or developing. There was every reason to be concerned, in particular, by the persistent nature of unemployment and under-employment which prevailed everywhere. In its *World Economic Survey, 1977*, the United Nations Secretariat had clearly brought out the seriousness of the situation, which it attributed to, among other things, the recession policy being followed in all quarters and the nature of the international monetary system. The free trade union movement had consistently maintained that the monetary system should be restructured, in particular by substituting SDRs for the national currencies which served as international reserve currencies, and that it was essential to establish a link between development financing and the creation of SDRs and to bring short-term capital movements under the scrutiny of the authorities.

30. The free trade unions had protested against events which threatened the rights acquired by workers and mortgaged the future. In Western Europe, they had called for a common economic recovery strategy based on the stimulation of the consumption of the lower income groups and public investment, in order to ensure full employment as a matter of priority. ICFTU had just adopted a charter on development, in the elaboration of which trade unions throughout the world had participated and which was its contribution to the implementation of the Programme of Action adopted at the ILO World Employment Conference. It hoped that the United Nations, in drawing up a new development strategy, would draw guidance from that charter and from the Programme of Action.

31. With regard to the elaboration of a new United Nations development strategy, the Committee for Development Planning had, in the report on its fourteenth session, made some useful suggestions which called for a few comments. ICFTU approved of the fact that the Committee had placed stress on growth, but it would have wished the Committee to give as much importance to the creation of jobs as to the satisfaction of basic needs as a means of increasing purchasing power, controlling inflation and improving income distribution. ICFTU also approved of the objective of institutional reform, which included recognition of the role of rural workers' organizations, in particular to ensure agrarian reform and development; in that regard, the new development strategy should refer to relevant ILO standards. The Committee for Development Planning had done well to extend the scope of the strategy to industrialized countries, since the reduction of working hours without loss of purchasing power, the improvement of labour conditions, the satisfaction of basic needs, and industrial planning were among the matters that had to be tackled. Governments should not merely make policy statements about the desirability of the mobility of labour, but must demonstrate in a tangible manner their good faith by giving adequate financial support to a genuine labour market policy.

32. As any strategy, whatever it might be, had to be based on a sound operational programme, ICFTU followed closely the operational activities of the United Nations system, particularly those of the ILO. Its members participated in a number of United Nations technical assistance activities. It hoped that Governments would increase their contributions to United Nations bodies, and in particular UNDP, that their financial contributions would be regular and reliable, and that they would avoid making contributions in inconvertible currencies, which amounted to tied aid. Such financial assistance should, moreover, be accompanied by know-

how and technological expertise. That was why it was necessary to increase the technical assistance potential of the specialized agencies, which should not become mere financing bodies. That twofold nature of assistance was important to the developing countries, and particularly to the least developed among them. Furthermore, ICFTU thought that UNDP should be asso-

ciated more closely with the world of labour and management, as had been recommended by the International Labour Conference in a resolution at its 63rd session in 1977, provided that the participation of the representatives of transnational corporations was not encouraged to the detriment of that of the trade unions.

The meeting rose at 12.20 p.m.

29th meeting

Thursday, 13 July 1978, at 3.50 p.m.

President: Mr. Donald O. MILLS (Jamaica).

E/1978/SR.29

AGENDA ITEM 3

General discussion of international economic and social policy, including regional and sectoral developments (*continued*)

1. Mr. SRIVASTAVA (Secretary-General, Inter-Governmental Maritime Consultative Organization) said that, like the Economic and Social Council, IMCO was greatly concerned with the subject of the transfer of technology to the developing countries. The desire of developing countries to participate equitably in international shipping was understandable and widely appreciated. The planning and maritime authorities in developing countries were now giving due importance to the development of a national maritime capability. The most serious handicap, however, was the shortage of maritime expertise and it was in that context that the transfer of technology was a matter of vital importance for the developing countries.

2. During the 20 years of the existence of IMCO, the shipping industry had undergone an unprecedented technological revolution. Ships had become more complex, more sophisticated, more automated, and more varied in type and size. There were now more than 65,000 ships traversing the oceans, from small ships carrying traditional cargoes to mammoth tankers, the whole amounting to about 400 million gross register tons. Those far-reaching developments made the promotion of maritime safety and the prevention of marine pollution from ships matters of great urgency; indeed, they were the two fundamental objectives of IMCO. As recent accidents had shown, no country was immune from the danger of pollution. IMCO was therefore giving continuous attention to the promotion of worldwide co-operation in the adoption of the highest practicable standards in regard to the design, construction and equipment of different types of vessels, the safety of navigation and the training of personnel.

3. In February 1978, IMCO had convened an international conference for the specific purpose of improving technical standards for the safety of tanker operations and the protection of the marine environment. The conference had adopted two instruments which should guarantee those improvements. In the last resort, however, the most crucial element in ensuring maritime safety and protecting the marine environment was the human factor. IMCO had paid its tribute to the seafarers of the world by dedicating its first World Maritime Day, held in 1978, to them. Recognizing the

great importance of effective training as shipping became more and more complex, IMCO had convened another international conference, which had just adopted the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers, 1978. IMCO had thus been able to establish a comprehensive and co-ordinated set of international standards covering different facets of maritime activity. Its efforts were now directed towards ensuring their universal acceptance and implementation, which necessarily involved a transfer of technology; hence the importance of the IMCO technical co-operation programme.

4. As part of that programme, IMCO had appointed regional maritime advisers in Asia, Africa and Latin America, who visited developing countries to provide on-the-spot advice to their maritime administrations. It had also appointed interregional advisers on maritime safety administration, maritime legislation and the prevention of marine pollution from ships. In addition, IMCO was making special efforts to secure the participation of developing countries in various technical meetings at its headquarters. It organized workshops and seminars devoted to subjects primarily of assistance to the developing countries, with the object of helping them to accept and comply with various technical standards and thereby develop their national maritime capability. IMCO had also prepared a number of manuals on specific matters such as the transport of dangerous goods, the combating of oil pollution, etc., which were of benefit to all countries, particularly developing countries. Finally, recognizing the importance of the training of personnel, IMCO was providing assistance to a number of developing countries for the establishment of national or regional maritime academies. The implementation of that comprehensive and pragmatic programme of technical co-operation with the developing world, which was making considerable headway, was helped by the financial support received from UNDP, UNEP and a number of aid agencies in developed countries.

5. IMCO was pursuing its activities in co-operation and consultation with other specialized agencies and programmes within the United Nations system, particularly with the ILO, UNCTAD and UNEP. Its technical assistance work had been greatly assisted by collaboration with the regional commissions. As an agency exclusively concerned with maritime matters, IMCO had closely followed and actively contributed