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REPORT OF THE LATIN AMERICAN AND CARIBBEAN REGIONAL
PREPARATORY MEETING FOR THE UNITED NATIONS
CONFERENCE ON ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT

(Mexico City, 4-7 March 1991)

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A. ATTENDANCE AND ORGANIZATION OF WORK

Place and date of the Meeting

1. The Latin American and Caribbean Regional Preparatory Meeting for the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development was held in Mexico City from 4 to 7 March 1991.

Attendance

2. The Meeting was attended by representatives of the following States members of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean: Argentina, Barbados, Belize, Bolivia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, France, Guatemala, Guyana, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Netherlands, Paraguay, Peru, Portugal, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Spain, Trinidad and Tobago, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uruguay and Venezuela.

3. In addition, representatives of the following associate members of the Commission also attended the Meeting: Aruba, British Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico.

4. A representative of Norway, a State member of the United Nations, which was not a member of the Commission, also attended as an observer.

5. The United Nations Secretariat was represented by the United Nations Centre on Transnational Corporations.

6. The Meeting was also attended by representatives of the following United Nations organizations: United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) (UNCHS), United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), World Food Programme (WFP).

7. The following United Nations specialized agencies were represented: International Labour Organisation (ILO), Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO),

World Health Organization (WHO), World Bank, International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), World Meteorological Organization (WMO), United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO).

8. The Meeting was also attended by representatives of the following intergovernmental organizations: Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), Central American Bank for Economic Integration (CABEI), Commission of the European Communities (CEC), Permanent Commission for the South Pacific (CPPS), Caribbean Community (CARICOM), Central American Monetary Council (CMC), Group of Latin American and Caribbean Sugar Exporting Countries (GEPLACEA), Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA), Board of the Cartagena Agreement (JUNAC), Organization of American States (OAS), Permanent Secretariat of the General Treaty on Central American Economic Integration (SIECA), Latin American Economic System (SELA).

9. The following non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council were also represented: Category I: International Chamber of Commerce, World Confederation of Labour (WCL), World Federation of Democratic Youth, International Federation of Business and Professional Women, International Organization of Consumers Unions (IOCU), Inter-Parliamentary Union. Category II: Latin American State Petroleum Enterprises Mutual Aid Association (ARPEL), Latin American Association of Development Financing Institutions (ALIDE), Baha'i International Community, Population Council, International Council of Scientific Unions, Greenpeace Latin America, Latin American Iron and Steel Institute (ILAFSA), World Vision of Mexico, World Council of Indigenous Peoples. Roster: Friedrich Ebert Foundation.

10. Other non-governmental organizations were represented, as follows: Latin American Industrialists Association (AILA), Latin American Shipowners Association (ALAMAR), Caribbean Conservation Association (CCA), Latin American Centre of Workers (CLAT), Ecumenical Documentation and Information Centre, Salvadoran Centre for Appropriate Technology, Comité Nacional Pro Defensa de la Fauna y la Flora (CODEFF), Colegio de México, Chilean Commission on Human Rights, Commission on Continental Waters of the Pact of Ecological Groups, Permanent Conference of Political Parties of Latin America, Forum 92, Fundación Pro Sierra Nevada de Santa María, Fundación Universo Veintiuno, Grupo de Estudios Ambientales, A.C. (GEA), Instituto Latinoamericano de la Comunicación Educativa, Movimiento Ecologista Mexicano, A.C., Movement for Universal Peace, Organization of the Cooperatives of America (OCA), Inter-American Regional Organization of Workers (ORIT), Partido Verde Ecologista, Prevention of Cruelty to Animals and Plants (PCAP), Secretariat of the Treaty for Amazonian Cooperation, Union of Latin American Universities.

11. Attending the Meeting as specially invited guests were Mr. Maurice Strong, Secretary-General of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, Mr. Enrique Iglesias, President of the Inter-American Development Bank, Ms. Margarita Marino de Botero and Mr. Paulo Nogueira-Neto, members of the Brundtland Commission, Mr. Guillermo Cano, Executive Director of the Environment and Natural Resources Foundation (FARN) and Mr. Alfredo Sfeir-Younis, of the World Bank.

Credentials

12. Pursuant to rule 15 of the Commission's Rules of Procedure, the credentials of the delegations as submitted to the Executive Secretary were examined and found to be in order.

Opening meeting

13. The opening ceremony of the ministerial stage took place on 5 March at 10 a.m. in the Salón Adolfo López Mateos at the Residence "Los Pinos". Addresses were delivered by Mr. Fernando Solana, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Mexico; Mr. Maurice Strong, Secretary-General of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development; Mr. Gert Rosenthal, Executive Secretary of ECLAC; Mr. Francisco Rezek, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Brazil, and Mr. Carlos Salinas de Gortari, President of the United Mexican States.

14. The Minister for Foreign Affairs of Mexico welcomed the Ministers and representatives of the countries members of ECLAC to the Latin American and Caribbean Preparatory Meeting for the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development. He said the Meeting provided a valuable opportunity for defining a common Latin American and Caribbean position on environment and development. In his view, the preservation of the environment was an enormous challenge on the present international agenda, in the presence of which the Governments of the region faced the dual task of trying to meet the demands of the population for improved living conditions while at the same time conserving natural resources by protecting the environment.

15. Environmental imbalances and their solution were everyone's responsibility. Nevertheless the developed nations, which down through history had based their growth on the unconfined exploitation of their own and other countries' natural resources, were the main energy consumers and also the leading producers of industrial waste and should do more to meet the costs of repairing environmental depredation.

16. He noted the need to establish common regional strategies based on the principle of proportional co-responsibility, which

took account of environmental challenges without disassociating them from the urgent need to re-embark upon the path towards growth and made it possible to redouble the efforts being made to combat poverty. Those strategies must necessarily be based on a new dimension of international cooperation, which called for an environmentally sound technology transfer effected on preferential terms and for more financial resources to make it possible to cope globally with the whole problem of environment and development.

17. The Secretary-General of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development said that the Regional Preparatory Meeting was one of the most important milestones along the road to the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development which would be held in Rio de Janeiro in 1992. Mexico City was a particularly fitting site for the Meeting both because its challenges reflected to a large degree those of the region and because under the leadership of President Salinas it had given a fine example of how current problems could be converted into opportunities for a more promising future.

18. He described as excellent the document entitled Sustainable Development: Changing Production Patterns, Social Equity and the Environment prepared by ECLAC for the Meeting, and also welcomed the valuable contributions contained in Our Common Agenda, which had been prepared by the Latin American and Caribbean Commission on Development, under the auspices of IDB and UNDP, and in the Action Plan for the Environment in Latin America and the Caribbean, which had been endorsed by the Ministerial Meeting held in Trinidad and Tobago, in 1990, under the auspices of UNEP.

19. He drew attention to the past contributions of Latin America and the Caribbean to reflection and action on the problems of the environment, and the current commitment of the region to the 1992 United Nations Conference, which, by virtue of its high level of representation, would be a true "Earth Summit". The Government of Brazil, the host country of the Conference, was preparing for that event with great resourcefulness and the presence of its Minister for Foreign Affairs at the current Meeting symbolized the importance which the country attached to it.

20. The Conference, whose theme was the environment and development, would emphasize that the transition towards sustainability would require the progressive integration of those two components. He also stressed the importance of the subject of poverty both as a cause and an effect of environmental deterioration and urged that the highest priority be attached to the eradication of poverty as mankind moved towards the twenty-first century.

21. He defined the transition towards sustainable development as a multidisciplinary, systemic and global task. At the country level, the changes must involve the participation of ministers of

the economy and of development, in addition to those from other sectors. The primary actors, however, were the people. The active participation of business sectors, non-governmental organizations and other groups was therefore important.

22. While sustainable development clearly emerged out of national priorities, to achieve it countries needed international support. In that regard, efforts must be made to deal with the problems of debt and the transfer of resources. He invited IDB and other regional organizations to provide technical support and suggested that a promising basis for that could be the Sustainable Development Network launched by UNEP.

23. After observing that the Rio Conference would provide an opportunity to redress imbalances and to make fundamental changes in economic behaviour and international economic relations, he concluded by saying that of all the regions of the world Latin America probably had the greatest stake in the Conference and could make the greatest contribution toward ensuring its success.

24. The Executive Secretary of ECLAC began his address by expressing his appreciation to the Government of Mexico for its tireless support of the work of the Commission.

25. Since the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment, held in Stockholm in 1972, considerable progress had been made in understanding the link between development and environment. The current meeting offered an opportunity to explore that link within the framework of the proposal for Changing Production Patterns with Social Equity, which had been well received by the Governments of the region at the twenty-third session of the Commission. The document on sustainable development which ECLAC had presented at the present Meeting examined an important thematic aspect of the proposal: the need for change in production patterns to be compatible with efforts to conserve the environment. That meant that environmental problems were an integral part of the development process and could not be dealt with in isolation from it. In integrating development and environment, the point was made that the motivating force behind development must now be qualitatively different from that of the past.

26. The document pointed out that, in a region whose development essentially depended on the exploitation, processing and marketing of its natural resources, the protection and proper management of those resources were consubstantial with the task of raising the living standards of the population. At the same time, it was becoming necessary to tackle the problems of living standards and conditions to which uncontrolled urban growth had given rise.

27. Moreover, the interdependence of environmental and developmental problems raised the issue of international cooperation. Its effectiveness depended first on the countries'

reaching a consensus on the need to take a joint approach and then on recognition that their varying degrees of responsibility for those problems called for proportionality in the effort to correct them. In that context, the United Nations Conference on Development and Environment offered an opportunity to take an integrated approach to the eradication of poverty and the achievement of a world ecological balance for future generations. At the same time, it had the potential for breathing new life into international cooperation in terms of legal and institutional questions, sustainable development financing, development and access to environmentally sound technologies, questions relating to international trade and other matters. Finally, the contribution which the Latin American and Caribbean region could make to the Conference through its Governments and independent organizations made it possible to envisage a fruitful preparatory period and to be confident that the Conference would move forward on issues of particular interest to the region.

28. The Minister for Foreign Affairs of Brazil noted that the growing incorporation of environmental considerations into economic and social development strategies was primarily justified by the imperative need to save the planet. The risks represented by the continuation of current patterns of consumption, waste and environmental deterioration could not be ignored. The importance of promoting effective policies of sustainable and environmentally sound development was not limited to purely ethical considerations. Predatory forms of growth jeopardized the natural resource base underlying economic prosperity and thus threatened the possibilities for improving the quality of human life, particularly in the developing countries.

29. The entire regional coordination effort --and the current meeting as a vital link in that chain-- would culminate in the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development. The region would play a unique role in that forum, which would likely be unprecedented in the history of the United Nations in view of the scope of its mandate. In Brazil's view, the common mission of the countries of the region was to avoid any simplification or reductionism in their analysis of environmental problems. Enhancing the quality of the environment in the developing world depended mainly on improving the economic and social conditions of its peoples. The growth of the industrialized economies in the 1980s had not been shared by the developing nations as a whole. On the contrary, the gap between rich and poor had grown wider as a consequence of the external debt crisis, increases in international interest rates, and trade protectionism in the industrialized world.

30. The region did not seek to evade its responsibility for maintaining the environmental balance on the planet. That did not mean, however, that it accepted the unjust maintenance of the current patterns of economic and social imbalances, which condemned

so many people throughout the world to an existence at levels well below those befitting human dignity. What the region sought was genuine solidarity among countries, in a changed world in which the destruction of nature was not the inevitable corollary of economic progress and in which the benefits of technology and the enjoyment of comfort and prosperity were no longer the privilege of the few.

31. Mr. Carlos Salinas de Gortari, President of the United Mexican States, welcomed the distinguished visitors of the Latin American and Caribbean nations and, on behalf of the people and the Government of Mexico, expressed his thanks that his country had been chosen as the venue for the Regional Preparatory Meeting. He paid tribute to the Executive Secretary of ECLAC and to the Secretary-General of the United Nations Conference for their efficiency in making the Meeting possible. He congratulated the Government of Brazil, through its Minister for Foreign Affairs, on the fact that Rio de Janeiro had been chosen as the venue for the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development and offered his full support in that endeavour.

32. As the first point in his statement, he referred to the consensus reached by humanity since the conference held at Stockholm concerning the non-viability of a style of development based on the devastation of natural resources and destruction of the environment, a style of development which did nothing but eliminate the possibilities for recovery and growth. One of the most important conceptual and political advances in recent decades was that of sustainable development in conjunction with a cleaner form of growth which appropriately valued and reproduced the capital which represented the region's natural heritage.

33. With regard to transformations in the international context, he said that interdependence, economic globalization and the integration of regional markets were the coordinates within which the debate on environment and development should be situated. However, for sustainable development to become viable in each country, it would be necessary to identify causes and differentiate responsibilities and solutions with equity on the basis of each country's specific realities and its context within the region. A purely conservationist approach was insufficient for the region, since it would involve sacrificing the sustainable development priorities of the peoples of the region; commitment to conserving the environment should therefore be consonant with commitment to development.

34. In the national context, Mexico felt that the prime task should be to take steps at the domestic level to bring about an extensive modernization of production, aimed at achieving full integration into the world market on the basis of growth, while taking the environmental dimension fully into account as an inherent condition.

35. Looking ahead to the 1992 United Nations Conference in Brazil, he noted that a purposeful, constructive regional attitude would be desirable. In the context of the ideas proposed by ECLAC in the document Sustainable Development: Changing Production Patterns, Social Equity and the Environment, the following issues should be emphasized by the international community: i) introduction of an equity principle among countries on the basis of the postulate that those who contributed most to pollution should contribute most to solving the problems created by it; ii) acceptance that each nation should have a proportionate share in that effort; iii) necessity for the region's own efforts to be complemented by a supportive international climate and specific agreements concerning finance, investment, technology and trade, in which the elimination of protectionist barriers was a prerequisite to sustainable development; iv) international support for country projects in the environmental field (in that regard the creation of a Global Environment Fund was a positive step); v) respect for the principle of national sovereignty, since the Latin American and Caribbean countries were the main interested parties in conserving their natural patrimony, and since that principle was an inalienable right and fundamental guarantee of peace, cooperation and international development; vi) promotion of a new world model for the use of energy; and vii) regulation of transboundary traffic in wastes.

36. Lastly, he proposed as tentative guiding criteria for the work that lay ahead the solving of the dichotomy between economic growth and environmental protection; political commitment to environmental conservation based on scientific research and progress; and the need to open up new opportunities for society to make a decisive contribution, such as through the work of non-governmental organizations.

37. In conclusion, he declared the Meeting open and expressed his conviction that the work being undertaken would be worthy of its purposes and would benefit not only the region but all the peoples of the Earth.

Election of officers

38. The officers of the Meeting were as follows:

<u>Chairman:</u>	Mexico
<u>First Vice-Chairman:</u>	Uruguay
<u>Second Vice-Chairman:</u>	Barbados
<u>Third Vice-Chairman:</u>	Ecuador
<u>Fourth Vice-Chairman:</u>	Cuba
<u>Fifth Vice-Chairman:</u>	Spain
<u>Rapporteur:</u>	Costa Rica

Agenda

39. The Meeting adopted the following agenda:

1. Election of officers
2. Adoption of the provisional agenda
3. Changing production patterns, social equity and environmental sustainability in Latin America and the Caribbean
4. Conclusions and recommendations
5. Adoption of the report.

Adoption of the report submitted by the Rapporteur

40. The Rapporteur introduced the draft report of the Meeting, informing the participants of the procedure to follow in submitting to the ECLAC secretariat any changes they deemed appropriate to the texts of their own interventions, for incorporation in the report.

41. The draft report was then adopted by the ministers.

Closing meeting

42. During the closing meeting, the floor was taken by the Executive Secretary of ECLAC, Mr. Gert Rosenthal, the Minister of Environment and National Service of Trinidad and Tobago, Mr. Lincoln Myers, speaking on behalf of all the participating delegations, and the Chairman of the Meeting, Mr. Patricio Chirinos.

43. The Executive Secretary of ECLAC said the meeting had produced concrete decisions and guidelines of a pioneering nature where sustainable development was concerned. The region's determination to make a significant contribution to the preparations for the Conference in 1992 had also been clearly shown. He drew attention to some intangible but important results, including the fact that environmental issues had now been placed within easier reach of the people who formulated and executed national policies and that the standard of living had been viewed as being of equal importance as the quality of life.

44. He stressed the inter-secretariat and multidisciplinary characteristics of the Meeting, in which leaders in the areas of environment, the economy and external relations had met together to work on the construction of an appropriate link between subjects relating to development and those associated with environment. He

said he was entirely satisfied with the results of the arduous work carried out over the past few days, which had made it possible, where preparations for the United Nations Conference were concerned, to come up with an input which went beyond the confines of the region, as predicted by the Secretary-General of the Conference at the opening ceremony of the Meeting.

45. He ended his intervention by reiterating his gratitude to the Government of Mexico, expressing his gratification for the cooperation of other United Nations bodies and paying tribute to the valuable work performed by the participating delegations.

46. The Minister of Environment and National Service of Trinidad and Tobago, speaking on behalf of all the participating delegations, said he felt honoured to perform the agreeable duty of addressing the present historic meeting, at which the Tlatelolco Platform had been formulated and a course of action had been laid which was aimed at making the 1992 Conference a source of pride for the whole world.

47. The date of the United Nations Conference was of particular significance for the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean in that it marked the 500th anniversary of Christopher Columbus' voyage and represented the first time in the history of humanity when decisions of such global importance for the future would be taken.

48. He affirmed that the exchanges of view held during the Meeting had made it possible to produce a document of which the region could be proud and in that connection expressed his gratitude and that of the delegations present to the Government of Mexico and the ECLAC secretariat. Finally, he expressed his hopes for the success of the preparations for the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development.

49. The Chairman of the Meeting expressed the profound gratitude of the delegation of Mexico for the enthusiastic participation of the delegations and the high quality of the working sessions. He especially thanked the ECLAC secretariat for its important contribution to the success of the Meeting. He also expressed satisfaction for having seen proof of the resolute political will of the countries represented to reach regional consensus on the basis of which a common proposal could be elaborated for the 1992 Conference.

50. The Tlatelolco Platform opened the way to a process of reflection and seeking. The diversity of opinions expressed had not been an obstruction but had rather provided an effective stimulus because of the heartening attitude adopted by the delegations. A consensus existed in the region concerning the need to change the economic profile, strengthen the democratic process and defend, reproduce and, in so far as possible, conserve the natural

heritage, while at the same time taking a decisive stand on social problems and poverty.

51. After stating that Latin America and the Caribbean had once again shown themselves to constitute a vigorous region with an excellent understanding of the complexity of the international situation, the current period in the history of the human race and the problems experienced by countries, he expressed gratitude for the unshakable will, the political awareness and the generosity of the delegations and for the support provided by the ECLAC secretariat, and declared the meeting closed.

B. SUMMARY OF DEBATES

Statement by the Chairman

52. At the opening of the debates, Mr. Patricio Chirinos, Chairman of the Meeting, extended a cordial welcome to the participants in the Latin American and Caribbean Regional Preparatory Meeting for the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development and said it was a great honour for the Government of Mexico to preside over the Meeting. He expressed gratitude for the report received from Mr. Gert Rosenthal, Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), and Mr. Maurice Strong, Secretary-General of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, which had made the Meeting possible. He also expressed gratitude for the participation of Mr. Enrique Iglesias, President of the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), and Mr. Francisco Rezek, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Brazil, and reiterated what Mr. Carlos Salinas de Gortari, President of Mexico, had said in his message about how very gratifying it was that Brazil would host the United Nations Conference in 1992.

53. He said that the views of the Government of Mexico had already been conveyed in the President's message. He only wished to reiterate his Government's desire that the Preparatory Meeting would result in useful proposals leading to the improved well-being of the people of the region.

Statements by the ECLAC secretariat

54. The Executive Secretary of ECLAC informed the participants about the meeting between members of the ECLAC secretariat and representatives of non-governmental organizations engaged in activities relating to environment and development, held at Tlatelolco on Sunday, 3 March 1991. The purpose of the meeting was to learn the views of non-governmental organizations with regard to the activities being carried out in preparation for the United

Nations Conference on Environment and Development and, in particular, their reactions to the document prepared by the ECLAC secretariat for the Regional Preparatory Meeting.

55. At the meeting with the NGO representatives, there had been a useful exchange of ideas and proposals for future action. In view of the diversity of opinions expressed by the representatives of non-governmental organizations, it was agreed not to accept the secretariat's offer to address the Regional Preparatory Meeting through a single spokesman. However, a large number of NGO representatives decided to convey their views to the Meeting in writing so that a message could be circulated to the participants. The message was therefore distributed as a conference room paper, as were other texts by non-governmental organizations.

56. Mr. Carlos Massad, Deputy Executive Secretary of the Commission, said that the ECLAC document Sustainable Development: Changing Production Patterns, Social Equity and the Environment offered a comprehensive view, from the economic perspective, of the problems of development and environmental sustainability. That view had led to an awareness of the need to achieve linkages and a dynamic balance among the various forms of capital: human, natural, physical, financial, institutional and cultural. The achievement of such integration was a task for the entire community at all levels, including at the level of economic policy, and the document explored in detail the relationship between economic policy and the environment. The democratic, participatory system was the one most suited to providing a degree of stability to policies, which was an essential condition for their success.

57. The ECLAC document contained a set of concrete examples taken from actual situations in Latin America, as well as a series of specific proposals for action, based on the conviction that the sustainability of development was a problem not only for the developing countries but for the international community as a whole.

Statements by countries and bodies

58. The Meeting was then addressed by representatives of the countries members of ECLAC, by representatives of international organizations and by special guests. In their statements, the participants reiterated their appreciation for the generous and warm hospitality provided by the Government of Mexico. They also thanked the secretariat for its organization of the Meeting and more particularly for its preparation of the document Sustainable Development: Changing Production Patterns, Social Equity and the Environment, which they felt was an extremely useful contribution to the discussion of the subject by the region.

59. The representative of Ecuador underscored the importance which his Government attached to the environment and recalled that the

President of the Republic of Ecuador, Dr. Rodrigo Borja, had declared the 1990s to be the Decade for the Enhancement of the Environment. The development models which were largely responsible for the degradation of the environment had failed to overcome the grave difficulties besetting the societies of the region. There was therefore no question of improving them, but rather of changing the concept of development style to make it more global, on the basis of a universal commitment.

60. The protection and exploitation of biodiversity, inherent in the sovereignty of the country endowed with diverse biological resources, were tasks for which human, financial and institutional resources were required. In view of the international repercussions of the issue, cooperation in technological development and in the conservation of protected areas and shared ecosystems was becoming essential.

61. Ecuador's ecosystems, including its Amazonian region, were part of its sovereign and strategic patrimony. That was why his country attached special importance to the Treaty for Amazonian Cooperation, signed by eight countries, and to the urgent need to implement programmes based on a firm set of policies and strategies for sustainable development.

62. Mr. Enrique Iglesias, specially invited guest and President of IDB, surveyed the situation with regard to environment 20 years previously, the progress made by the region since then and the way in which the problem should be dealt in the future.

63. The region had become aware that the problem of protecting the environment was everybody's responsibility, and that new awareness had resulted in the organization of various forums on related topics and the mobilization of a large number of non-governmental organizations in the work involved.

64. Referring to the future role of the region, he noted that it should draw attention to its salient characteristics, including its enormous wealth in world terms, its huge population, the large size of some of its cities and the fact that one third of its population was affected by extreme poverty.

65. The region's responsibilities lay in two areas. Domestically, the countries had to make environmental problems known; and regionally, these responsibilities involved various United Nations agencies and IDB. This issue required further study, especially with regard to what commitments might emanate out of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development.

66. He drew attention to the pioneer role which IDB had played in the region in supporting projects on environmental protection and noted the enormous potential it now had to finance environmental projects on the basis of the Enterprise for the Americas Initiative

sponsored by the Government of the United States, which would make it possible to channel resources released from the obligation to repay part of the external debt towards environmental projects.

67. The representative of Colombia said that, despite the general recognition of the political, multilateral and global nature of environmental problems, the development model which had created it remained unchanged. Not only did the developed countries have to change their patterns of production and consumption, but so did the countries of the region, which had imitated those patterns under the false illusion that that style of economic development led to better living conditions and greater equity. While the Rio de Janeiro Conference would not resolve all matters of concern to the Meeting, it offered an exceptional, and perhaps ultimate opportunity to bring about a change in an ill-conceived development model that trapped the region in the inertia of the consumer society while its peoples were afflicted by the reality of rampant poverty.

68. Because of its condition as an Amazonian, Caribbean, Andean, Pacific, and Orinocan country all at the same time, Colombia was home to more than 10% of the planet's living species. His country was currently experiencing a historic moment as it drafted a new constitution. The proposed draft enshrined the right to a healthy environment inseparable from the already consecrated right to life.

69. It was important for the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean to agree on joint positions and to present a common front during the international negotiations. No other region could express better than Latin America and the Caribbean the interests of the developing world, for the good of all mankind.

70. The representative of the UNEP Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean (ORPALC/UNEP) analysed the efforts made by UNEP in the past two decades to conceptualize the relationship between development and environment and propose practical action in that regard. He drew attention to the close links between UNEP and ECLAC, noting the pioneer work performed by the Joint ECLAC/UNEP Development and Environment Unit, which for over a decade had contributed to the study of that relationship and had devised new ways of coping with the challenges posed by development. As an example of that work, he referred to the joint ECLAC/UNEP publication entitled El Reto Ambiental del Desarrollo. The progress logged and interpretations formulated by the Regional Office were also discussed in the recently published book entitled Medio Ambiente y Desarrollo, which had been written from an evolutive perspective.

71. The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development represented a challenge to the international community to move on from rhetoric to action by overcoming the inertia resulting from debilitating conflicts on the one hand, and, on the other, by

implementing policies in support of environmental causes and aimed at establishing strategies, steps to be taken and sources of finance. He stressed the importance of the intergovernmental meetings convened by the UNEP Regional Office, at which regional and subregional programmes of common interest had been adopted and development policies had been studied in the world context. He drew special attention to the Brasilia Declaration of 1989 and to the Call to Action adopted along with the Action Plan for the Environment in Latin America and the Caribbean in Port of Spain in 1990.

72. The Action Plan had been prepared in the region under the supervision of UNEP, working in collaboration with ECLAC, UNDP and IDB. It was an operational document designed to help in establishing a regional position. He noted the importance of its framework, the willingness reflected in it to continue moving ahead, the programme elements contained in it, the consultation systems adopted and the establishment of its secretariat within UNEP.

73. The representative of the Organization of American States (OAS) stressed the importance of an atmosphere of cooperation and compromise to meet environmental challenges of the region and the world. It was essential at the Conference to try to avoid unnecessary North-South rhetorical confrontation. In that context, he expressed his organization's commitment to act as a catalyst for North-South dialogue as well as to fulfil its traditional functions as an agency for technical cooperation. He offered the organization's support to ECLAC and its member nations in the preparations for the United Nations Conference.

74. OAS had been actively promoting the economic, social, educational, scientific and cultural development of the region. Given the cross-boundary nature of many environmental problems, the challenges which awaited the region were accelerating. A Working Group on Environment of the OAS Permanent Council had been created the previous year. Its report called for action by the Inter-American System in the field of environment and development. Accordingly, the General Assembly of OAS in June 1991 would consider a proposal for the creation of an inter-American commission on the environment. Since the Stockholm Conference in 1972, the Environment and Social Area of OAS had provided more than US\$50 million for technical cooperation related to environment and development and had assisted countries in formulating over US\$4 billion worth of sustainable investment projects. OAS had also provided more than US\$30 million to assist member countries on research to improve the management, conservation and development of natural resources, and to strengthen their institutional capabilities in environmental research and development.

75. OAS was a founding member of the Committee of International Development Institutions on the Environment, and was one of the

first agencies to sign the Declaration of Environmental Policies and Procedures Relating to Economic Development. It had worked in close collaboration with international, regional and bilateral organizations such as UNEP, UNDP, the World Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and a number of NGOs in the development of diverse environment-related projects and programmes. All agencies should expand their cooperative efforts in a similar way. He stressed particularly the role of regional and inter-American agencies serving Latin America and the Caribbean on issues of environment and development.

76. The representative of France thanked the Government and people of Mexico for their hospitality and said the authorities of his country were satisfied with the ECLAC document on sustainable development, which fitted in perfectly with the work embarked upon in Caracas as reflected in the document on changing production patterns with social equity. In the framework of the priority given to the environment by the Government of France and the support it had provided from the beginning to the organization of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, he said his delegation recognized the excellence of the work performed by the ECLAC secretariat in that regard.

77. His Government felt that environment and development were permanently linked and that such a close relationship made it necessary to formulate appropriate economic policies and for ministers of economic affairs, supported by experts on the environment, to use suitable economic instruments. He congratulated ECLAC on the special attention it had given to population problems, population being both the object of development and an essential resource for bringing it about.

78. Since the level and standard of scientific and technological research in Latin America and the Caribbean were notably high, he urged the region to put into operation a system for the diffusion of existing knowledge in order to increase its productivity.

79. He warned that, in the financing of environmental projects, an effort should be made to avoid creating new conditionalities. Moreover, in view of the palpable responsibility of the industrialized countries for the generation of global environmental problems, it would be advisable to make provision for additional financing for such projects. In that connection, France had proposed the creation of a Global Environment Fund within the World Bank, to which it was willing to contribute 900 million francs over a period of three years.

80. He ended his statement by expressing his delegation's hopes for the success of the negotiations under way, and drew special attention to the importance of drafting a concrete framework

convention on global climate change, which would avoid the duplications of institutions and agreements already in existence.

81. The representative of UNDP recalled that the objective of the Programme's activities had been defined as human development, which had permitted it to focus its efforts on all activities that gave human beings more options for a better life. In that regard, the environment had been identified as one of the priority areas for the Programme's activities during the 1992-1996 quinquennium.

82. The commitment of UNDP to the environment had already been demonstrated in the preparation of the document Our Own Agenda in collaboration with IDB. Moreover, Resident Representatives had been instructed to cooperate with governments preparing for their participation in the United Nations Conference. During that process of preparation, the documents prepared by ECLAC and UNEP could be studied at the national level so that their contents might be reflected in the national contributions. He offered the cooperation of UNDP in that effort.

83. He recalled finally that UNDP, together with the World Bank and UNEP, participated in the selection and preparation of projects and programmes financed by the Global Environment Facility.

84. The FAO representative referred to the appropriate balance that needed to be maintained between economic development and environmental sustainability, a question which bore directly on what was happening in the agricultural, forestry and fishery sector. He noted that, although the Latin American and Caribbean region was perceived as an area of great potential with a tremendous endowment in natural resources, territorial waters and genetic resources, its heavy external debt and consequent structural difficulties created a difficult context for the sound use of natural resources.

85. The factors he mentioned as having the most serious adverse effect on sustainable development in the agricultural sector included the uncontrolled expansion of crops and of livestock-raising activities in tropical forest zones, the salinization of soils due to the deterioration of infrastructure and to the operation of irrigation systems, and soil erosion.

86. He drew attention to the link between rural poverty and the degradation of resources, which showed that the challenge faced by sustainable agriculture in the region was one of raising the income obtained in rural areas through the use of appropriate technologies which conserved water and soil resources and increased the number of non-agricultural jobs available. He also noted that the adoption of technologies designed for other ecosystems had resulted in the degradation of resources.

87. Lastly, he felt that in order to pursue agricultural development on a sustainable basis, maximum efficiency in the use of resources, capital investments and inputs would be required, and that there was also need for full utilization and valuation of primary commodities and their derivatives, in addition to giving priority to the development, transfer and appropriate application of the technologies needed to attain those goals. Greater importance must be attached to the pursuit of sustainable development through the use of technological innovations of demonstrated value.

88. He announced that FAO, in cooperation with the Government of the Netherlands, had convened an international Conference on Agriculture and the Environment, which would be held in the Netherlands from 15 to 19 April 1991. At that conference an assessment would be made of the various strategies and mechanisms designed to ensure sustained agricultural development throughout the world.

89. The representative of Guyana said that, with other Latin American and Caribbean countries, it shared common environmental problems like water pollution, solid waste management, depletion of biodiversity and the environmental impacts of gold mining and climate change. The issue of poverty was again intruding itself as a major environmental problem on the national, regional and global consciousness.

90. In that respect, there was a tremendous reservoir of poor in Latin America and the Caribbean. The indicators of poverty were pervasive: a substantial percentage of poor in the population of the region, a high infant mortality rate, an unacceptable high percentage of malnutrition in children five years and under, a large proportion of homes not receiving the minimum daily number of calories, severe unemployment and underemployment of the labour force, and considerably more than half the housing classified as inadequate (a situation which had led to an increase in social marginality). In addition, many poor communities were without drinking water, drainage and sanitation services and solid waste management facilities. It was important to bear in mind that the discussions at the Meeting should not ignore the fact that development basically was for the benefit of people and communities.

91. In relation to development, it was necessary to learn from past mistakes and develop new tools and mechanisms for sustainability. In that regard, Guyana had taken a step towards sustainable use of its forests through the offer of the President to set aside 900 000 acres of Guayana's Amazonian tropical forest for a pilot project to study utilization of the forests on a sustainable basis and the conservation of species. Guyana commended that project for the attention of the Meeting and of the world.

92. In concluding, he expressed the hope that not only would there be collaboration between the countries in developing a common position for the region for the United Nations Conference in 1992 (a process which was proceeding magnificently), but also among the agencies serving the region. The people of the region expected no less.

93. The representative of UNFPA said that the population dimension was an intrinsic part of development policies and programmes. Growth and the unequal distribution of population created serious obstacles to sustainable development and thwarted efforts to improve the quality of life. The pressures thus generated were the reflection of two basic demographic factors: the population growth rate and population increase in absolute numbers. While the first rate had been declining over the past few decades, growth in absolute numbers would continue to increase in the future.

94. In his view, the greater share of the responsibility for the utilization of resources and the production of wastes lay with the industrialized countries. However, in the developing countries, the combined effects of poverty and of population growth were, in turn, destroying the environment. In the rural areas deforestation and soil degradation were taking place, while in the urban areas, population growth aggravated the problems caused by the lack of services. It was important to remember that for any given type of technology, for any given level of consumption, of poverty or of inequality, the greater the number of human beings, the greater would be their impact on the environment.

95. The problem was particularly severe among the poorest groups, who, because of their poverty, were obliged to deplete natural resources in order to survive. Those were also the groups with the highest fertility rates, and which in many cases had neither information about nor access to maternal and child health services or family planning. Women were among the most disadvantaged groups. Specific plans needed to be elaborated in order to make their participation more effective and improve their status.

96. UNFPA would continue to work in the field of population and environment, since it wished to strengthen and expand its cooperation with governments and international organizations so that their joint efforts in the areas of population and the environment could lead to the desired goal of sustainable development.

97. The representative of IICA said that, within the framework of its programme for international technical cooperation, the Institute had laid the foundations for providing support to countries in connection with modernizing their agricultural sector in a context of social equity. IICA agreed with the proposals made in studies at the regional and world levels, such as Our Common Future, Our Own Agenda and Sustainable Development: Changing

Production Patterns, Social Equity and the Environment, in which the conservation of the environment, sound management of natural resources and long-term agricultural sustainability were depicted as critical challenges on the international agenda for the 1990s.

98. The topic of strategies for sustained agricultural development would be given special consideration by the ministers attending the Inter-American Conference of Ministers of Agriculture (CIMA) to be held in September 1991. Prior to that, at the special Hispano-American celebration to be held at San José, Costa Rica in April 1991, a preliminary discussion would be held in preparation for CIMA on the topic of agricultural sustainability and the conservation of natural resources. Those events would make it possible to reach important conclusions and to formulate proposals for action as contributions to the regional position at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development.

99. In the academic world and some international cooperation and financial agencies, a consensus existed on the need for sustained agricultural development, and proposals on how to bring it about had been formulated. It was now necessary to proceed immediately into the realm of action. IICA proposed the following eight items for a strategy designed to put into operation a process of agricultural modernization with social equity and conservation of natural resources: i) reconsideration of the future as a starting point for a new paradigm; ii) the need to take a systematic view of and to rethink interdependence at all levels; iii) a consistent policy framework, in which conservation of resources was promoted; iv) an institutional framework in which the objectives and needs of sustained development were reflected; v) obtaining information and producing indicators needed for decision-making; vi) the design of a new technological pattern; vii) a new profile for human resources; viii) consideration of sustainability seen as a set of opportunities.

100. One of the most important developments where problems specific to the region were concerned was the recent creation of a cooperative programme for technology research and transfer in the South American tropics (PROCITROPICOS), which would enter into operation in mid-1991. That programme, which included eight countries in the Amazon Basin (Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Guyana, Peru, Suriname and Venezuela) was designed to strengthen the process of technological change with account being taken of conservation of resources through reciprocal horizontal cooperation to generate and transfer knowledge with regard to the main ecosystems involved (wet Amazonian tropics, plains and valleys and the Amazonian plateau). The national technology research and transfer institutions of the Amazon Basin countries and IICA had signed a convention to that effect, and the support of the Treaty for Amazonian Cooperation had been secured through the pro tempore secretariat.

101. Ms. Margarita M. de Botero, a member of the World Commission on Environment and Development and special guest, said that her statement took an environmentalist approach. She recalled the contributions made by ECLAC since 1976, particularly through the Joint ECLAC/UNEP Development and Environment Unit and its pioneering studies which provided a greater understanding of the relationship between styles of development and the environment.

102. At the substantive level, she first noted the relationship between globality and the limits to nature and drew attention to the grave problems of environmental degradation that needed to be faced and the obstacles in the path of their solution. She advanced a set of criteria and principles which should be taken into account not only in developing a bioeconomy in which production patterns are consonant with the natural patrimony, but also in the distribution of its goods and benefits.

103. The intensification of environmental deterioration had aggravated global problems, thereby reducing the natural wealth of the developing countries and dramatically increasing the gap between rich and poor. The growing scarcity of natural resources caused by that deterioration had resulted in a greater need for efficient technologies, which could call into question the technological patterns of the countries of the region. With regard to mechanisms, she proposed the establishment of subregional financial funds to seek solutions to environmental problems that existed in specific areas. It was also necessary to improve on or create innovative instruments for the transfer of technology and finance. The question of the environment was also a crucial one for the world's security.

104. She adverted to the enormous wealth that existed in Latin America and the Caribbean in terms of biodiversity, energy, and human and natural resources, and expressed the hope that the preparatory process for the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development would lead to progress in the negotiations for a constructive dialogue and to a change from the current flawed styles of development towards sustainable development. She stressed the need for popular participation and for a broadening of the debate to include all sectors of the society in order to bring about an understanding of the link between the solution to environmental problems and a better quality of life, thereby generating a new dialogue on international cooperation.

105. Mr. Pablo Nogueira-Neto, a special guest at the Meeting, said that particular importance should be attached to the basic documents prepared for the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (Our Common Future, Our Own Agenda, the ECLAC document entitled Sustainable Development: Changing Production Patterns, Social Equity and the Environment and the contribution of UNEP, all of which clearly showed the degree of profundity with

which the Commission had tackled the topic of environment in relation to development). He also drew attention to the brilliance and constructiveness displayed by Mr. Maurice Strong in connection with the preparation of Our Common Future, which boded well for an efficient performance by him as Secretary-General of the Conference to be held in 1992. He also noted the importance of the work done by Mr. Arnaldo Gabaldón as rapporteur of Our Own Agenda, in which it was made clear that high priority should be given to the conservation of forests and other natural resources.

106. He drew attention to the importance of physical planning as a fundamental tool in the achievement of sustainable development. It was used to introduce both environmental and economic rationality into the exploitation of natural resources. In the region there were innumerable examples of success and failure in that area of activity, and full advantage should be taken of all those experiences; the use of tax incentives in the past to foster extensive livestock-raising in the Amazonian region of Brazil (with no prior physical planning) was a classic example of real waste of financial resources in association with environmental destruction.

107. Consequently, the physical planning exercise should be integrated into any development planning process and closely associated with financial policy. For that purpose, substantial economic resources would be needed, which would have to be supplemented by additional resources to be mobilized by international funds administered by the World Bank, and also by regional banks, such as the Inter-American Development Bank. Physical planning was essential for environmental sustainability, and it was therefore the responsibility of all countries to cooperate in implementing it.

108. The representative of UNIDO drew attention to the relationship between economic development and environmental sustainability, the main regional environmental problems and the link between environment and development within the context of international cooperation. She remained the participants of the pioneer work done by UNIDO in connection with energy, and noted her organization's present commitment to the principle of giving technical assistance to provide institutional support for the formulation of environmental and energy policies, the transfer of clean and efficient technologies and the management of contamination through technologies for controlling and recycling energy. She drew attention to the commitment of UNIDO to the effort to ensure that developing countries had sufficient access to existing technologies.

109. At regional level, UNIDO had participated in the consultative meetings organized by UNEP, ECLAC and UNDP. She said that if industrialization continued at its present rate, it would be necessary to strive for a new strategical model based on lower consumption of resources and reduced waste production. For those

reasons, UNIDO agreed with ECLAC that technological change would play a leading role in the achievement of sustainable development, once the defects in the industrial, scientific and financial infrastructure were overcome.

110. Lastly, she drew attention to the world conference to be held at Copenhagen in October 1991, in which specific topics relating to environmentally sustainable industrial development and its impact on the developing countries would be debated.

111. The representative of the United States of America stated that the United States sought to integrate environmental policy with its foreign policy objectives of democracy, economic prosperity, global security and international cooperation. Since democracy and environmental protection were mutually supportive, his country felt that ECLAC should promote citizen involvement by encouraging proposals from networking groups and journalists working in the area of environment.

112. Only through sustainable development could the desired levels of prosperity be reached. Since environmental problems transcended material boundaries, international cooperation was essential. The Regional Preparatory Meeting illustrated the growing international cooperation in this area.

113. The United States gave high priority to the problem of climate change, and hoped that negotiations on an international framework convention could be completed in time for signing at the 1992 Conference and that ECLAC would make a positive contribution to that dialogue. His country also believed that deforestation was another serious world problem. He urged members of the International Tropical Timber Organization to promote sustainable development and noted that the global forest convention called for by the Group of Seven at the Houston Summit would be an ideal mechanism. He also expressed his hope that the Geneva Meeting of the Preparatory Committee would provide guidelines for combating the loss of forests.

114. Finally, he noted that the United States supported the OAS's growing involvement in environmental matters and suggested that ECLAC should coordinate closely with it.

115. The representative of Peru stressed that the Action Plan for the Environment in Latin America and the Caribbean should be an essential mechanism for determining the resources which could be allocated to specific programmes.

116. In Peru the following proposals were considered as having priority:

- a) In relation to the heavy external debt burden faced by the countries of the region and the proposal for

debt-for-nature swaps, a more effective variant was suggested: the direct swap of external debt for amounts which each country would invest from its budget in projects and actions for conservation and development.

- b) With regard to the utilization and indiscriminate trade in pesticides, which were causing such great damage in some countries of the region, it was proposed that the International Code of Conduct on the Distribution and Use of Pesticides, elaborated by FAO, should be elevated to the status of an international convention.
- c) In respect of transnational corporations, the negotiation of an international code on environmental ethics was proposed—based on the principle under which what was not permitted in their countries of origin could not be done in other countries—in relation to the environmental impacts and pollution problems created by their activities.
- d) Appropriate attention should be given to the great importance of the sea, a vital resource for the development and sustenance of Peru, in addition to being of crucial importance as a regulator of the world's environment.

117. Another essential aspect for the Government of Peru was to set out new postulates for negotiations with the North, particularly in the area of the fight against poverty and drug trafficking. Efforts should be made to eliminate consumption in the North and offer incentives to peasants to grow other crops.

118. He stressed, in conclusion, that the purpose of bringing the subject of drug trafficking to the current forum was to create international awareness that that scourge was closely linked to the theme of the Meeting, because of its negative effects firstly on human life, and secondly on the economies of the societies concerned and on the environment.

119. He said, finally, that all countries should realize that the huge sums spent on arming and then disarming the parties to the conflict in the Gulf could have been used to support the causes that were the subject of the current forum. His country felt that an appeal should be made to ethics, not only for the participants in the war to assume their moral responsibility for the environmental damage caused to the world community as a whole, but also to ensure that the forthcoming generation did not suffer, years later, from the grave consequences that could befall the region's ecosystems.

120. The representative of Argentina said that the proposal on sustainable development prepared by ECLAC offered a suitable analytic framework for growth-related and economic development policies. In the process of international discussion within the

United Nations, and in the specific regional forum currently being held, there was no further doubt that economic growth and changes in production patterns should be compatible with environmental conservation. The political will of governments, and the international community as a whole, would be called upon to implement that concept.

121. Such implementation was not easy. It was first necessary to change the global macroeconomic context which determined the growth-related policies of the developing countries, as expressed mainly by the net outward transfer of financial resources from South to North, the existence of protectionist policies, and constraints on technological development imposed by the developed countries.

122. Along the same line of thinking, the solution to the environmental problem would require a determination of different degrees of responsibility. Those who had contributed to environmental deterioration should contribute financial and technical resources to the quest for solutions.

123. The Government of Argentina was guided by those ideas, so easy to express but so difficult to apply, in its general position in the negotiations which would culminate in Brazil in 1992.

124. On the basis of its endowment of resources and the appraisal of its national needs, his country intended to establish an environmental policy that would ensure sustainable economic growth and the use of appropriate technologies to exploit, conserve and restore Argentina's natural resources.

125. Argentina was preparing to participate in the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development by inviting non-governmental organizations, trade unions and academic sectors to contribute to the elaboration of the national report and Argentina's position on the topics under discussion.

126. The representative of the World Bank described the Bank's activities with regard to the development/environment issue, which were based on the view that promoting development and conserving the environment were compatible and necessary objectives. Its activities in that connection were conducted at the national and international levels. In recent years its capacity to carry out such tasks had been systematically strengthened.

127. With regard to the Bank's activities at national level, he said the project-by-project approach had been modified by including environmental issues in macro- and micro-economic policies at all levels. The expansion of the Bank's analytical capacity made it possible gradually to integrate adjustment programmes with environmental policies. With regard to global problems, he said an agreement had been reached to establish the Global Environment

Fund, whose initial resources would be US\$1.5 million for three years to be used primarily for the protection of the ozone layer, the reduction of gases responsible for climate change, and the protection of biodiversity and international marine resources. The 1992 World Development Report would be dedicated to the topic of environment and development.

128. The representative of Cuba said that environmental problems were becoming socially and economically intolerable and that in Latin America and the Caribbean a prerequisite for putting an end to environmental degradation was to improve the economic and social conditions of the population; for that reason, economic development planning and environmental problems should be closely linked. While the region could contribute to mitigating or resolving some of the most severe global environmental problems, additional financial and technological resources were required for it to be able to make full and rational use of its natural patrimony.

129. During the previous 17 years, Cuba had gradually been putting environmental problems into perspective, looking at them in the context of the expansion of production and the use of its natural wealth to improve the quality of life and well-being of future generations. Steps had been taken to turn the waste products of some crops into cattle feed. Waste water from sugar mills was also being used to fertilize cane fields. That had made it possible to put waste products to economic use, thereby generating new resources which contributed to the economic development of the country.

130. He reiterated his country's support for United Nations efforts to incorporate environmental problems into considerations relating to the economy and development planning. His Government hoped that, within the framework of the current forum, Latin America and the Caribbean would agree on common positions when dealing with third-party countries, in which the following three aspects of the issue would be stressed: urging the countries of the region to change their production patterns using the criteria of social equity and environmental sustainability; intersectoral action linking development, social equity, environmental sustainability and international cooperation; and specific issues that might arise during the Conference.

131. He requested that the following three paragraphs, taken textually from his statement, should be included at the end of the current summary:

"We have all witnessed recently the tragic experience of the war in the Arabian/Persian Gulf, with its fearful toll in death, destruction and irreparable ecological damage.

"From the inception of the conflict, Cuba adopted a correct and principled position and, while it condemned the invasion

and annexation of Kuwait by Iraq and called for the restoration of the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of that country, it also sought to ensure that that goal should be achieved without the painful recourse to war.

"If we eliminate points of tension and the causes that give rise to it, if we establish a new world order based, not on the hegemony of any Power or group of Powers, but on friendly cooperation among sovereign States, both great and small, if the philosophies of war and plunder are abandoned, if we apply the great wisdom of Don Benito Juárez, who said that peace is achieved through respect for the rights of others, then humanity will have set forth on the common road of caring for our beautiful planet and providing equitable sustenance on it for all its children, guided by the principles enshrined in the United Nations Charter."

132. The delegation of the Netherlands said that threats to the global environment must be dealt with by effective policies which would result in a sustainable and just society in the first half of the twenty-first century. That formidable challenge required that far-reaching national policy changes should be complemented and supported by international cooperation of an intensity that the world had not yet known. Large financial efforts would be necessary to put capital and technical know-how at the disposal of the other members of the international community.

133. Parallel to that, the industrialized countries would have to reduce their share of the utilization of resources to a globally sustainable level. Improved commodity agreements and trade and investment regulations were needed to make sustainable development possible.

134. Environmental issues were paramount in the new policy for development cooperation, and the Government of his country shared the concerns of the Latin American and Caribbean region in the environmental field. The Netherlands was interested in promoting technologies which required low external inputs and sustainable agriculture, and in sharing its experience in pollution abatement.

135. The Netherlands would support the strengthening of multilateral institutions by co-financing global facilities—including the Global Environment Fund and the financing mechanism established under the Montreal Protocol—designed for developing countries and by co-financing contributions of those countries unable to pay their full share. The Netherlands contribution would be based on the principle of burden-sharing, and its Government stood ready to take its share of responsibility in global problems and to assist the countries of the ECLAC region in both their national and regional endeavours to strive for environmentally sound development. The vicious circle of poverty and environmental degradation must be broken: that was the focus of the Netherlands

bilateral development effort. Its cornerstones would be institutional strengthening, both of government institutions and non-governmental organizations, promotion of the conservation and management of the natural environment, particularly in the field of sustainable land use, forestry, low-input agriculture and water treatment, conservation of biological diversity and prevention of negative environmental effects in all development projects supported by his country.

136. The representative of Trinidad and Tobago emphasized the importance of taking positive action immediately in accordance with the terms of the Action Plan for the Environment to which ministers of the environment of Latin America and the Caribbean pledged themselves at the Seventh Ministerial Conference on the Environment in Latin America and the Caribbean, held in Trinidad and Tobago in October 1990. He underscored the pressing need for the coordination and integration of the contributions of various United Nations agencies such as ECLAC, UNDP and UNEP to the international debate on environment and to the process of formulating a solution addressed to the problem of environmental degradation. He also emphasized the need for action rather than rhetoric.

137. He highlighted the special concerns of the island countries of the Caribbean subregion for the protection of the Caribbean Sea and with regard to the effects of climate change. Those islands depended for their survival on the resources of the Caribbean Sea and would be especially vulnerable to the catastrophic effects of sea-level rise resulting from global warming.

138. He also called for a new approach to national accounting which would reflect a realistic evaluation of the environment and natural resources in the development process.

139. He also gave his support to the participation of non-governmental organizations in international conferences on the environment.

140. The representative of Canada said that environmental relations had become a centerpiece of Canadian foreign policy, and that a substantial part of Canadian overseas development finance now related directly to environmental concerns. Canada also supported international cooperation and thus felt that the United Nations Conference was the most important United Nations undertaking in decades. Canada was actively supporting the Conference and was particularly interested in achieving a global instrument on forests; international cooperation to conserve marine life and control pollution; a strengthening of the United Nations' capacity to deal with integration of environmental and development policies and an agreement on how best to channel international environmental funding. As a new full member of OAS, Canada encouraged OAS to continue its vital work in the promotion of human rights and democracy and in environmental matters.

141. Finally, he listed 10 key challenges for the Conference: i) recognition of shared responsibility by developing and developed countries for resolving environmental problems; ii) explicit commitments by participating countries to meet the objectives of global agreements; iii) respect for the development priorities of the countries in the region; iv) recognition of the importance of global conventions and protocols and coordination among them; v) provision of adequate financial, technical and human resources support; vi) integration of macroeconomic and sectoral decision-making with environmental concerns; vii) recognition that poverty eradication and environmental protection were compatible objectives; viii) involvement of all levels of society; ix) improvement of decision-making through better information and education and x) exploration of the linkages between trade, transfer of technology, debt and the environment.

142. The representative of Spain said that his country was greatly concerned about environmental degradation and its impact on the economic development process, and drew attention to the environmental aspects which formed part of Spain's management policy and were designed to incorporate the principle of sustainable development into all sectoral policies.

143. The basic principles underlying his country's environmental policy were, first, to provide a suitable framework for solving the most urgent problems of degradation caused by the intensive use of natural resources; second, to lay the foundations for future actions to control environmental deterioration; and, lastly, to coordinate such actions within the country and at the international level.

144. He especially stressed that differing degrees of development, different environmental problems and certain specific realities also entailed varying repercussions on the economic obligations and costs stemming from environmental measures.

145. More extensive use should be made of fiscal instruments in relation to environmentally detrimental activities and products, and subsidies supporting activities which degraded or depleted natural resources should be reduced. He drew attention, inter alia, to the need to establish support systems for the transfer of capital and technology to allow for a more rational use of resources; to take appropriate, economically feasible steps concerning energy use; and to reduce, control and prevent industrial pollution, all of which would require new dimensions of political will and cooperation with institutions.

146. The representative of Chile said that his Government offered its unconditional support and political good will to the preparatory activities for the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development. Those activities represented a process which, while unique, was diversified during the negotiation stages,

taking as a fundamental basis the implementation of the Action Plan on the Environment promoted by the United Nations Environment Programme, together with the strengthening of existing environmental programmes. Chile also firmly supported the initiative aimed at elaborating an agreed plan of action within the framework of OAS to give added impetus to common regional efforts.

147. Chile was in the process of becoming reincorporated into the concert of democratic nations, with a renewed spirit of cooperation and with the aim of improving the quality of life of the peoples of the region, placing priority importance on the environment. The President of Chile had strongly reaffirmed that Latin America and the Caribbean could rely on the active and meaningful participation of Chile in all international, regional and subregional initiatives that were in the common interest.

148. The representative of UNCHS (Habitat) stressed that improving the living and working environments of the two billion people presently existing in extreme poverty was the most crucial global environmental problem. Environmental issues should be addressed by linking them to the alleviation of poverty, and the provision of adequate shelter and infrastructure was a very important aspect of that effort. Socially responsive and environmentally aware settlements management was the way to establish a crucial link between environment and development.

149. For the protection of human health and for the improvement of living and working conditions, adequate and affordable access to safe drinking water, waste and refuse management services, energy and transportation must be made available to people. Achieving such goals at the intergovernmental level was the direct mandate of the Commission on Human Settlements. At its thirteenth session, to be held in Zimbabwe from 29 April to 8 May 1991, the Commission would consider the theme of the "Significance of human settlements and the Global Strategy for Shelter to the Year 2000 to the concept of sustainable development, improving the living condition of the poor, and the management and planning of settlements". The result of the session would be an important contribution to the preparatory process for the 1992 Conference. UNCHS (Habitat) had organized an Intergovernmental Meeting on Human Settlements and Sustainable Development, which had been held in the Netherlands in November 1990. The Chairman's statement, adopted at that meeting, and a report entitled "People, Settlements, Environment and Development" had been transmitted to the secretariat of the United Nations Conference. He read out several points of the Chairman's statement.

150. He also reported that UNCHS (Habitat) was working closely with a number of NGOs; and that an NGO network, Habitat International Coalition (HIC), was holding a forum at the same time as the present ECLAC Meeting in Mexico City. HIC's position would be

transmitted to an appropriate authority for the next meeting of the Preparatory Committee.

151. The representative of UNESCO said it was of great importance for the Latin American and Caribbean region to define its own position concerning the issue of environment, in which quality of life was conceived as being based on technologies compatible with its ecosystems and economic and sociocultural conditions.

152. Sustained development posed many challenges for the region, among which the development of endogenous capacity in science and technology was crucial in order to keep the distance between the region and the more advanced countries from widening. For that reason, priority should be given to the disciplines in which it was possible to reach levels of excellence; impetus should be given to the creation of science and technology units in large enterprises; and the use of local engineering firms should be favoured.

153. In order to strengthen scientific and technological systems, more resources were needed. The Director General of UNESCO had suggested that countries should devote 2% of their gross domestic product to that purpose. He mentioned the role which UNESCO had played in examining and publicizing environmental problems and said that the experience of the Regional Office for Education in Latin America and the Caribbean could be drawn upon in order to strengthen the political action and programmes agreed on by Governments.

154. The representative of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines said that his country recognized the indivisible connection between environmental preservation and sustainable development and that such integration guided its policies. His Government also realized, however, that development which improved the human condition could not take place without utilization of the environment. Both were important aspects of the key issues that must be faced.

155. Poverty and development imperatives were paramount in the degradation of the environment, as manifest in deforestation, coastal erosion, marine resource depletion, improper solid and liquid waste disposal, unplanned settlements and uncontrolled population growth. His Government's response to those problems had been three-pronged: i) information and education; ii) legislation and regulation; and iii) specific environmental projects and activities.

156. The Government felt that the environmental challenge required the following: i) human resource development; ii) improvement of living conditions of the poor; iii) more physical infrastructure; iv) population control; v) projects for waste management and simple technologies for recycling; vi) a regional approach to the problem of beach destruction; vii) mobilization of external financing; and

viii) limitation of the spread of bureaucratic activities related to the environment.

157. The representative of Barbados said that the United Nations Conference held great significance for the international community. It represented an opportunity to reappraise the way governments and societies attempted to raise standards of living in an environmentally sustainable context. However, to achieve that objective, countries must adopt a more appropriate model of development.

158. Thus an inescapable task was for the region to define an environmental and developmental agenda, which in turn required an evaluation of the problems and opportunities of the region's natural heritage. It was within that context that the preparation of the United Nations Conference must be viewed. Moreover, of course, if the region's concerns were to be properly reflected in the Conference, it strengthen its negotiating capacity.

159. International cooperation was needed to confront environmental problems, and hence the region must help define how cooperative action would be implemented, over what period of time, at what cost and where finance would be raised. Regional cooperation also was needed, and the Action Plan for the Environment in Latin America and the Caribbean, adopted in Trinidad and Tobago last year, was a valuable instrument to achieve that goal and an integral part of the effort to define a regional position for the Conference.

160. Some of the key issues which must be advanced in the preparatory process were protection and sustainable utilization of the Caribbean Sea; the impact of climate change on small island economies and achievement of a global convention which reflected the region's concerns; compensation and access to environmentally clean technologies, and new and additional sources of concessional financing for environmentally sound projects, the access to which should not be restricted by per capita income criteria.

161. The representative of Venezuela said that since the Stockholm Conference awareness had been increasing of the problems of development and the environment throughout the world as well as in Latin America and the Caribbean, and that the region was willing to accept the commitments entailed in that awareness. It was therefore necessary to be able to rely on fresh, additional financial resources with no strings attached, and to take an environmentally sound approach to technology transfer.

162. Responsibility for environmental degradation should accord with the part played by the country or countries implicated, and the cost of that responsibility should be assumed with an eye to social equity.

163. In the case of the region, the objectives of environmentally sustainable development presupposed the eradication of poverty and required human resources training and development. In order to achieve the last-mentioned objective, the President of Venezuela had proposed the Bolívar Project to link the production sector with scientific and technological activities being carried out in the countries of the region.

164. Four problems should be regarded as being of crucial importance to the sustainable development of the region --the drug problem and its links to environment, physical planning problems, the high rates of population growth and the channelling of global resources resulting from disarmament to sustainable development. Finally, in order to attain the objective of sustainable development, the international community needed to view it as a shared problem towards which all countries should bend their efforts.

165. The representative of Costa Rica, speaking on behalf of the members of the Central American Commission on Environment and Development, said that in Central America underdevelopment, together with the impact of war, which in the past decade had dramatically heightened social and environmental problems, were the main causes of environmental deterioration. He stressed the importance of Central America as a continental bridge where the biodiversity of the Americas was concentrated, noting the fragility of its ecosystems, and reiterated that the Presidents of the Central American countries were determined to promote sustainable development.

166. The Central American region had three key assets to address the environmental problem in a concrete manner: considerable experience in regional integration, institutional experience with respect to the multinational management of natural resources and a gradual process of democratization which had been heightening the awareness of the society at large. He also stressed the considerable financial and technological efforts that would be required to take advantage of those assets.

167. At the last summit of Central American Presidents held at Puntarenas, the Costa Rican President had called for a new international ecological order and that suggestion had been fully endorsed by the Central American Presidents. In order to stop the destruction of the planet, a balance should be sought between conservation and development, promoting full national sovereignty in the formulation of environmental policies for the common good, giving priority to eradicating extreme poverty, incorporating the natural heritage into the System of National Accounts, coordinating action on the conservation of shared resources, mobilizing resources by the international community, managing forest resources with a high yield potential in a sustainable way, conserving forest

resources with an extraordinary biological diversity and ensuring that man did not exert further pressure on the environment.

168. He called on the developed countries to participate actively in that process. As far as Central America was concerned, the priority topics of the United Nations Conference should include the sustainable management of forests and the implementation of a system of national heritage accounts. He expressed the hope that the 1992 Conference would not be merely another forum for negotiations but would mark the beginning of a coordinated response by mankind to the problem of environmental deterioration and social inequality.

169. After thanking the people and Government of Mexico for their warm reception, expressing recognition of the noble effort of ECLAC and ensuring the Government of Brazil of his Government's support in the challenge Brazil had assumed with regard to the Conference in 1992, the representative of Uruguay made a strong appeal to the countries of the region for their action and common commitment with regard to matters relating to the environment.

170. He referred first to the awareness which had taken shape in Uruguay with regard to ecological problems. In that connection, he noted the recent creation of the Ministry of Housing, Physical Planning and Environment as a result of legislative support for the balanced development of the country and of its more sensitive areas, in particular. An effort was being made to turn Uruguay into a "natural country". To that end, an "environmental profile of Uruguay" was being designed with the participation of OAS and with IDB financing.

171. He then stressed the need to coordinate efforts at national, subregional and regional levels and for international bodies to draw up common positions with a view to strengthening agreements and planning environmental action for the region as a whole. Such an effort would result in a feeling of solidarity and the development of export-oriented technologies by individual countries.

172. The Secretary-General of the Permanent South Pacific Commission (CPPS) explained the objectives and tasks carried out by his organization. He referred, in particular, to the establishment jointly with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) of the regional Action Plan for the Protection of the Marine Environment and Coastal Areas of the South-East Pacific, the results of which included a protocol for the protection of the South-East Pacific against pollution from land-based sources, protocols to prohibit the dumping or burial of radioactive wastes in the water, soil and subsoil of the marine environment within the 200-mile limit and a convention for the protection of biological diversity.

173. He also mentioned the results of the meeting of experts from the South-East Pacific held in Santiago, Chile, in December 1990. He stressed the considerations that should be taken into account at the international level with regard to climate change and its effects on the rise in the average sea level in order to assist governments of the region in combating its effects and in studying unusual phenomena such as the El Niño Current. A regional body on maritime coordination needed to be established to promote a joint approach to maritime issues among regional cooperation mechanisms. He offered the full cooperation of his organization in that effort.

174. The representative of Puerto Rico said that the success of environmental policies depended on a public policy and development strategy whose objectives were to eradicate poverty and channel the process of growth and transformation so as to minimize any adverse effects. Development models which integrated environmental, economic, social and cultural objectives should be implemented in order to harmonize development and environmental objectives. He stressed, in that regard, the importance of the Action Plan for the Environment in Latin America and the Caribbean, adopted in Port of Spain, and indicated his Government's willingness to enhance its participation in regional activities relating to environmental management.

175. The vigorous development of his country had been achieved within the context of regulations on the conservation of the environment which had been enshrined in the constitution since the 1950s. That had resulted in a considerable growth in the country's forest area, the establishment of a system of natural reserves, programmes for protecting the coastal zones and national heritage as well as adequate institutional infrastructure and a significant store of information and technical resources.

176. He offered to share that wealth of information with the countries of the region and said that his country planned to join the Regional Information Exchange Service as a first step towards establishing links with other nations of the region in the common objective of attaining sustainable development and improving standards of living.

177. The representative of the Latin American Economic System (SELA) said that the Latin American and Caribbean countries were currently aware of the danger that the environmental crisis posed to the planet and of the importance of coordinated global action to deal with the problem. The Brazil Conference of 1992 would offer the international community the opportunity to take a comprehensive look at the environmental issue and agree on a set of principles to guide and promote sustainable development.

178. Instead of blaming each other for the world's ecological problems, the developed and developing countries should try to

reach broad agreements on global cooperation that recognized that because of differences in technological and economic capabilities countries could contribute in different ways to finding global solutions to the problems. Also as a result of such differences, the prosperous developed countries could afford to devote financial and technological resources to protecting the environment, whereas in Latin America and the Caribbean, as a result of the enormous prevailing economic and social problems, the majority of the population could not meet their basic requirements.

179. Finally, he added that regional efforts had been stepped up to promote projects, strategies and legal instruments devoted to conserving the environment. Examples of those efforts were the Brasilia Declaration adopted at the Sixth Ministerial Meeting on the Environment in Latin America and the Caribbean, held in March 1989, and the Action Plan for the Environment in Latin America and the Caribbean adopted in 1990 at the Seventh Ministerial Meeting; they constituted the highest and fullest political and philosophical expressions of the region on the multifaceted dimensions of environment, sustainable development and the link between environmental degradation and the international economic climate. In those major environmental tasks, SELA would use its experience to help to solve problems and to promote economic and social development in the region.

180. The representative of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland said that his country welcomed the Regional Preparatory Meeting and held the view that the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development was of vital importance to the world's future. It also hoped that the Conference would develop an action programme and an Earth Charter of environmental rights and obligations, and that it would make progress on financial and technological resources for developing countries.

181. The global nature of the environmental problem demonstrated the need for closer cooperation between industrialized and developing countries, in addition to the essential mutual understanding among governments. Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) also had a significant role to play. Thus the delegate was pleased to see involvement of NGOs in the present Meeting.

182. The United Kingdom subscribed wholeheartedly to the principle of sustainable development, and in the case of many countries in Latin America and the Caribbean, the sustainable use of tropical forests. Aid donors had an important role to play in supporting national environmental protection efforts through financial and technical assistance. The United Kingdom had provided such assistance both bilaterally and through participation in the new Global Environmental Facility and the special fund established under the Montreal Protocol to fight ozone depletion.

183. The representative of Aruba said that the Caribbean Sea had been of decisive importance to the development of the islands which bordered it and whose economies depended largely, if not solely, on income from tourism. Short on primary resources and industrial experience, the islands also lacked the means to achieve sustained development and access to financial markets. The pressure on the environment was therefore intensified in view of the need to create new tourist centres at the expense of ecological balance. The problem was more complex in those islands in which tourism existed side by side with petroleum installations in a manner that was hardly harmonious.

184. He drew attention to the need to protect the vulnerable ecosystem of the Caribbean islands, which had been affected by oil spills from another member country of ECLAC. He recalled existing international treaties on marine pollution, and said that they were open to adoption by the island countries, although they did not secure those countries from damage inflicted on the environment. In addition, national legislation could be established to protect island ecosystems.

185. He referred to the rise in the sea level, which would not only affect prospects for sustained development by island countries, but would also threaten their very existence, and proposed, accordingly, that the island countries of the Caribbean should be considered as a distinctive group within ECLAC, taking into account their needs and characteristics.

186. The representative of Bolivia said that his country shared international concern over the threat to the sustainability of natural capital and the flawed development models which mankind had adopted, and was well aware of existing environmental deterioration, which should be analysed from a worldwide perspective. In view of that concern, the Bolivian Government had decreed a "Historical Ecological Pause", as an expression of its conviction that the natural resources of the country did not necessarily have to be destroyed any longer as the only way of improving the quality of life of its inhabitants. The Bolivian proposals coincided with those contained in the ECLAC document on sustainable development, as well as in the document Our Own Agenda, prepared under the auspices of IDB and UNDP.

187. The Historical Ecological Pause sought to put an end to the previous irrational management of natural resources and to introduce the concept of sustainable management of those resources as a proposal for integrated alternative development, thus reflecting Bolivia's sharing of the concern showed and its support for the actions taken in that area by the international community. His country supported the principle of international co-responsibility in the face of the worldwide deterioration of the environment, which would permit the development of more creative

and just international relations, thereby making it possible to face the future with hope.

188. He then referred to the institutional situation, legal provisions and environmental policies of his country. He drew attention to the establishment of the General Secretariat for the Environment, the study of an eventual environment act, the elaboration of the Act concerning the Indigenous Peoples of the Oriente, Amazonian and Chacao regions of Bolivia, within the framework of the National Plan for the Protection and Development of Indigenous Peoples, the legal provisions for the protection of wildlife, and the establishment of the National Commission on the Vicuña. With regard to policies, he mentioned those that had been implemented in cooperation with IDB, FAO and the International Tropical Timber Organization, as well as the formulation of proposals for setting up an updated national ecological charter.

189. The representative of UNICEF said that in the implementation of its action plans, the Fund was always cognizant of the dimensions of the problem of the environment and its consequences, among which he mentioned diarrhoeal diseases, respiratory infections and the prevalence of diseases preventable through immunization, which were responsible for the majority of deaths among children and for retarding the normal development of children. Moreover, the degradation and impoverishment of soils were basic causes of the nutritional deficiencies of children and pregnant women.

190. He recalled that on World Environment Day, the Executive Director of UNEP and the Executive Director of UNICEF had agreed that environmental resources and children were two key elements in the conception of sustainable human progress, a principle which had served as the common thread in the document Children and the Environment. Subsequently, the Plan of Action elaborated by the Presidents and Heads of Government at the World Summit for Children had set aims and objectives related to drinking water supply and basic sanitation. He expressed the hope that the national plans derived from the World Summit would pay particular attention to the environmental dimension.

191. He concluded by making three suggestions related to the regional position at the 1992 United Nations Conference: i) to include as a strategic criterion the prevention of the intergenerational transfer of environmental deterioration; ii) to promote renewed ecological culture, and iii) during the 1990s, to attach priority to and strengthen those activities aimed at expanding the coverage of water supply and basic sanitation systems.

192. The representative of Jamaica said that, in view of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, the history-making movement towards the establishment of a new

environmental development order, in which the concepts of the environment and development were integrated, should be further consolidated. In that respect he noted the magnitude of the problem of poverty in the countries of the region, and of the need for the two thirds of the population that lived in conditions of poverty to enjoy the benefits of such environmental development, which constituted a tremendous challenge for the region and underscored the importance of the current meeting.

193. In order to achieve sustainable development, there was need for a complex interweaving of cross-sectoral and multidisciplinary efforts, in which international organizations would have to play an important part. ECLAC's role was to integrate the subjects of the economy and the environment, an area in which little progress had been made thus far. It was very important to improve coordination between the agencies of the United Nations system, with a view to the United Nations Conference and to the years following that Conference.

194. He concluded by saying that the Meeting had been a source of inspiration, since it had made it possible to take note of the activity of organizations and persons involved in the subject, to learn of country activities related to the environment, to formulate suggestions for a better organization of efforts, to postulate -as the representative of Costa Rica had done- a new ecological order of international cooperation, and to recognize the considerable capacity existing in the region for achieving its objectives.

195. Mr. Guillermo Cano, Executive Director of the Environment and Natural Resources Foundation (FARN), and a special guest at the Meeting, said that the Foundation, under working agreements with IDB, ECLAC and UNEP/ORPALC, was currently organizing an Andean Encounter, scheduled to take place in Argentina in April 1991. In fulfilment of its task of promoting the expression of the opinions of independent sectors on the implementation in Latin America of the Brundtland Report, as a contribution to the United Nations Conference of 1992, that Encounter would bring together not only representatives of non-governmental ecological organizations but also institutions involved in economic, technological and cultural development.

196. In preparation for the Encounter, the Foundation had already organized three subregional workshops, in Quito, San José, Costa Rica, and São Paulo. In those workshops documents had been produced which had been presented at the current Meeting and which identified subregional environmental problems such as those created by drug trafficking.

197. The Foundation, whose activities were mainly in the institutional and legal field, was of the view that due attention to the responsibilities of local governments and municipalities had

not been paid at the Meeting, nor indeed throughout the entire preparatory process for the 1992 United Nations Conference. He recalled that while the Brundtland Report had proclaimed the need for thinking globally and acting locally, the latter had not been achieved and that the Rio de Janeiro Conference should make recommendations in that regard. He stressed the serious proportions which the problem had assumed in federative countries. With regard to the importance of municipal action, he noted the Declaration of San Martín de los Andes of 1988, in which the rights and duties of municipal authorities in the environmental field were defined, and he concluded by expressing the hope that that dimension would be given due consideration in thinking on the environment, both at the current Meeting and at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development.

Other matters

198. At the request of the Peruvian delegation, which was supported by many other delegations, the following text was included in the report:

"(The countries) reaffirm their satisfaction for the cease-fire solution agreed upon in connection with the conflict in the Persian Gulf. Also express their concern for the ecological and environmental problems which might result as a direct or indirect consequence of the massive deployment of conventional weapons and in that connection, appeal to the parties involved in the conflict to assume moral and economic responsibility for any damage they may have done to humanity as a whole, which may also prejudice the sustainable development of the world's population."

199. It was also agreed to include the following paragraphs in the report:

"The Ministers expressed their gratitude for the extensive work done by the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) in preparing and conducting the Regional Preparatory Meeting. They noted the need to integrate the results of the valuable inter-agency and regional consultative processes, which had already been set in motion and were reflected in the main documents and in the conclusions reached at the Regional Preparatory Meeting for the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development. Integration in those areas did much to further the activities carried out by each country in the region to strengthen its environmentally sustainable social and economic development plans and programmes.

"They stressed the need for greater cooperation and coordination among relevant global, hemispheric, regional,

subregional and national organizations, in compliance with resolution 44/228, in their continued efforts to support the region in its preparations for the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, with a view to making the best possible use of the time and resources available to the region in its efforts to produce a coherent conceptual position and a negotiating strategy ensuring its effective participation in the Conference."

200. A number of Central American countries called on the international community to create a new ecological order of international cooperation as a focus for the worldwide effort to protect the environment, as a way of expressing the existing universal awareness of the seriousness of global environmental threats, as a way of seeking solutions in order to be able to enjoy a safe and sound environment and as a point of harmony and solidarity in the attempt to save the Earth from the ecological crisis.

201. The basic objective of that call was to encourage joint regional and international efforts to raise the level and quality of life in Latin America and the Caribbean in the context of the commitment to achieve environmentally sustainable development.

C. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Tlatelolco Platform

202. The Chairman of the Meeting of Government Experts of Developing Countries Members of ECLAC introduced the Tlatelolco Platform, a declaration adopted by the Meeting, which took place at Tlatelolco from 1 to 7 March. He summarized its most important aspects and noted that it had been adopted as a contribution from Latin America and the Caribbean to the preparations for the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development. (The text of the Platform is annexed to this report.)

203. The representative of France, speaking also on behalf of the delegations of Canada, the United Kingdom and the United States of America, said those four countries felt that the Platform had much to contribute, that it represented a supreme effort on the part of the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean to go beyond rhetoric and enter into an operational phase of the preparatory process and that it would provide a reference point for the discussions being held as part of the process upon which the Meeting had embarked.

204. The representative of Brazil reminded the participants that his country would host the forthcoming United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, which was expected to be a time of

decision-making and to mark the beginning of a new phase in international relations. Although in the Brasilia Declaration the region had already made progress with regard to its position, that Declaration embodied a reaffirmation of known principles. In the Preparatory Committee's negotiations, what was needed was to coordinate the positions of the countries of the region more closely. The Platform adopted was immensely useful in that connection in that, beginning with the next meeting in Geneva, it would be used to coordinate and present a clear, unified position vis-à-vis the other groups. Finally, he thanked the delegation of France for its support of the document, the host country for the leadership role it had played in the negotiations and the ECLAC secretariat for its effective cooperation.

Annex

TLATELOLCO PLATFORM ON ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT

The ministers and representatives of the Latin American and Caribbean countries members of ECLAC assembled at the Regional Preparatory Meeting for the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in Mexico City from 4 to 7 March 1991:

1. Reaffirm the scope of United Nations General Assembly resolution 44/228 on environment and development in the quest for a new, just and equitable international order, and General Assembly resolutions 45/211 and 45/212; also reaffirm the Brasilia Declaration and the Call to Action issued by the Seventh Ministerial Meeting on the Environment in Latin America and the Caribbean and request the countries of the region, the developed countries and international organizations to give their unwavering support for the implementation of the Action Plan for the Environment in Latin America and the Caribbean. Welcome the document Sustainable Development: Changing Production Patterns, Social Equity and the Environment prepared by ECLAC and the report of the Latin American and Caribbean Commission on Development and Environment entitled Our Own Agenda.
2. Express their deep concern that 20 years after the adoption of the Stockholm Declaration, there has been a severe deterioration of the state of the environment and a serious degradation of global ecosystems. Such degradation is closely linked to the unsustainable models of development that have prevailed mainly in developed countries.
3. Stress that significant achievements have been made in the region in consolidating its democratic processes, preserving peace and promoting respect for human rights.
4. Recognize that, in spite of the great efforts made to overcome the economic crisis, the causes that have given rise to the economic and social problems in the region, inclusive of the external debt problem, still persist, leading to a disturbing lag in the level of well-being of the majority of the population, and an increase in the number of inhabitants living below the poverty threshold, as well as a deterioration in environmental quality. Hold that without a just and lasting solution to the external debt problem the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean will be unable to achieve lasting and environmentally sustainable economic and social development.
5. Recognize further the peculiarities and vulnerability derived from the size of small island States, which are exposed to the vagaries of the global economic and environmental climate.

6. Emphasize that the sustainability of development, necessary to reverse environmental degradation, calls for an effort on the part of the whole international community. The fundamental contribution to this international effort should be made by the most highly developed and affluent regions, in view of their greater responsibility for the global process of environmental degradation.
7. Stress that, in this global effort, the region has a contribution to make in protecting and enhancing the environment, in view of its resource potential. Express their commitment to avoid continued environmental degradation in the interests of present and future generations.
8. Recognize the need to strengthen horizontal technical co-operation to support the adoption of regional agreements with the view to reaching greater participation by the region in the solution of global and regional environmental problems.
9. Stress also that the environmental dimension is an integral part of the process of development and therefore should not be treated separately. Emphasize that in addition to the domestic efforts a favourable international context is essential for development to be environmentally sustainable.
10. Hold that the promotion of sustainable development is incompatible with the imposition of environmental and economic conditionalities and with restricted access to technology. The international commitment to the protection and enhancement of the environment requires access to environmentally sound technologies on a non-commercial basis. Also stress that the largest part of the cost of transferring environmentally sound technology must be borne by the developed countries.
11. Affirm that environmental issues should not serve as unjustified barriers to international trade.
12. Affirm that the international, regional and subregional legal instruments for solving global environmental problems should include provisions for the effective transfer of technology, institutional arrangements to strengthen mechanisms to integrate the environmental dimension into development and specific funding mechanisms and financial resources on concessional terms to enable developing countries to meet their commitments.
13. Affirm their conviction that the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development provides a unique opportunity to adopt relevant agreements to ensure the transfer of environmentally sound technologies and the flow of fresh, additional financial resources so that the developing countries may duly incorporate the environmental dimension into their development objectives and plans.

14. Express the need to promote scientific and technological research and development aimed at strengthening national and regional management capacities of technologies for sustainable development. Reaffirm the usefulness of undertaking global and sectoral research projects, aimed at clearly identifying the obstacles which impede the development and access to these technologies. Consider further that the institutional and organizational foundations and scientific and technological information systems in this area should be improved. Consider that a special international fund should be set up to ensure that the developing countries receive access to and transfer of environmentally sound technologies and to strengthen their capacity to generate their own technologies.
15. Consider that it is essential to strengthen the capacity to train human resources, with emphasis in specific areas related to the management of the natural resources of the region, in terms of their potential, use and conservation.
16. Stress that the solution of environmental problems and the promotion of sustainable development at the national level depend largely on international co-operation, including financing. Affirm, in this connection, that a special fund should be established in order to provide the developing countries with new, additional and concessional resources to enable them to implement environmentally sound development programmes and projects according to their national development objectives, priorities and plans. Contributions to this fund should not be diverted from resources presently allocated to international co-operation in the field of economic development. Emphasize that eligibility criteria for funding to implement such programmes and projects should not be exclusively based on the per capita income criteria currently utilized by multilateral financial institutions.
17. Agree that the current patterns of production, distribution and consumption, which prevail mainly in the developed economies, should be redesigned in order to permit the countries of the region to improve the standard and quality of life, and to match greater efficiency in production with the principles of environmental improvement and social equity.
18. Stress that the joint fight against poverty, especially extreme poverty, requires profound changes in economic and social policies. Stress further that efforts to link environmental improvement and development should take into account both local and global responsibilities and the close interrelationship between poverty and environmental deterioration. These efforts will be successful in so far as they are the result of, inter alia, access to decent living conditions, adequate levels of social organization, political representation and genuine participation of the population in the determination of their own development paths.

19. Recognize that the sound management of the natural patrimony is essential for economic growth and sustainable development, and affirm that retrospective and prospective methods should therefore be devised for quantifying the value and depreciation of this natural patrimony.
20. Agree on the need to complement the existing national instruments for environmental control and regulation in the region with economic and financial measures, policies and incentives of broader scope, which incorporate into the decisions of all sectors the social and environmental costs of the activities of each one of them, and which help to satisfy the economic, social and environmental objectives of development.
21. Recognize that, in view of the urgent need for active commitments on the part of all sectors of society in promoting environmental protection and enhancement and sustainable development, opportunities must be given to the co-ordinated participation of non-governmental organizations and other sectors of society in the preparation of and during the Conference and in the execution of its mandates.
22. Express the view that current models of development have failed to take account of the importance of cultures which have evolved outside the framework of such models. The achievement of sustainable development requires the full recognition of the importance of these cultures, since they have accumulated extensive knowledge of the natural world and have developed modalities for its sustainable use and management.
23. Affirm that in the entire preparatory process for the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development and in the international negotiations related to it, in particular those aimed at solving global environmental problems, an effort should be made to ensure, inter alia, the observance of the following postulates: principle 21 of the Stockholm Declaration of 1972 on respect for the sovereignty of countries over their natural resources and all economic activities conducted in them; the integration of the environmental dimension as an inherent part of the sustainable and equitable development process; the interdependence of global and local problems, in particular those of a social, economic and environmental nature; refusal of imposition of economic and environmental conditionalities; equity in responsibility; and the precautionary principle.
24. Declare that, bearing in mind decision 1/25 of the Preparatory Committee of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, in addition to the matters stated above, the following environmental issues are of paramount importance for the Latin American and Caribbean region, and should accordingly be dealt with in the Preparatory Committee as well as at the Conference.

a) Protection of the atmosphere and climate change

The Latin American and Caribbean countries base their participation in the search for a solution to the global environmental problems affecting the atmosphere on the fact that these countries bear little responsibility for the emergence of these problems. Their participation in any agreed solution should be consonant with the economic and technical resources available to the developing countries.

The negotiation of a framework convention on climate change for subsequent adoption by the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, on the basis of the best scientific evidence available, should be aimed at minimizing the anthropogenic causes of climate change and its possible adverse effects. Although the consequences of climate change could be far-reaching in global terms, the Latin American and Caribbean archipelagos, islands and low-lying countries would be particularly vulnerable to them.

In this joint approach, consideration should be given to the specific role of sources and sinks of greenhouse gases, and obligations under the agreement should be determined in accordance with the contribution each of them makes to the problem or to its solution.

The agreement should recognize the main responsibility of the developed countries for the net concentrations and emissions of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere and for the effects deriving from transboundary pollution. It should also recognize the need of the developing countries to benefit from their natural resources in an environmentally sustainable way, in order to improve the standard of living and the quality of life of their peoples.

Under the Vienna Convention and the Montreal Protocol and its amendments, the region should implement the objectives of these agreements with the primary aim of replacing substances which deplete the ozone layer, and it should therefore benefit from all the financial and technical assistance needed to undertake scientific and technological programmes, without being required to contract additional external debt.

b) Biodiversity and biotechnology

The region of Latin America and the Caribbean attaches great importance to the conservation and sustainable management of its ecosystems in order to protect its biological diversity, which constitutes a fundamental and sovereign part of the national patrimony of those countries endowed with such diversity.

Knowledge on biodiversity, at both the scientific and popular levels, is part of the scientific and cultural patrimony of each nation; its use at the international level should therefore be duly regulated and controlled by the country of origin. The region should promote in international forums the adoption of legal instruments for the protection of its genetic patrimony and of its population and ecosystem resources as well as for the proper regulation of the trade deriving therefrom.

Advances in biotechnology and the economic potential for the exploitation of biodiversity make it necessary to have an international agreement which establishes transparent mechanisms, subject to the express consent of the country endowed with the original genetic resources, for controlled access to the commercial exploitation or scientific use of such resources. These mechanisms should also include explicit provisions for the equitable sharing of benefits deriving from such exploitation or use. Moreover, the developing countries should have access to advances in biotechnology on concessional terms, and to information concerning the biological and ecological safety of technologies already developed.

A convention on the conservation of biological diversity should include obligations for the conservation of biodiversity and should cover the benefits and obligations deriving from biotechnology.

c) Protection and management of land-based resources

The problem of protection and management of land-based resources should focus on integral, forward-looking and long-term environmental planning and management, based on the principles of environmental and developmental integration and public utility.

Plans for specific resources, areas or activities should be focused on and adjusted to the main lines of national environmental management and economic plans, and should thus serve as a guideline for the harmonious occupation of the national territory.

Problems relating to deforestation, desertification and drought require comprehensive measures which, while respecting the countries' sovereignty over their natural resources, reverse these processes and ensure the conservation and proper management of ecosystems.

i) Forests

The economic and ecological potential of austral, temperate, tropical and boreal forest ecosystems should be a central item of consideration in discussions aimed at reaching agreements on multilateral measures for environmental protection and support of sustainable management by the countries in which these natural ecosystems are located.

These measures, which do not necessarily have to be of a mandatory nature, should complement international instruments referring to the forest/climate and forest/biodiversity interrelationships on which specific legal instruments are being negotiated.

The measures should provide for the economic valuation of forest resources, for the needs of the populations who depend on them and for the formulation of strategies for rational use, protection and restoration of these ecosystems, with consideration given to support for the participation of local communities. To this end, international co-operation arrangements, including financial and technology transfer mechanisms, must be established as a support for these activities.

Forest management should be a primary objective of actions aimed at preventing deforestation, to be taken into account in negotiations and in the establishment of financial agreements concerning the use and conservation of forest ecosystems. Trade in timber and non-timber commodities should be based on products obtained from forests under sustainable management in accordance with the criteria of each country.

ii) Soil degradation: acidification, erosion and salinization

The serious problem of soil degradation, to a greater or lesser extent, affects all the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean. Soil degradation is the consequence of inappropriate styles of rural and agricultural development, characterized mainly by the overexploitation of soils in order to maximize income in the short term and, where the peasant sectors are concerned, in order to ensure survival. The process of degradation is clearly favoured by the predominant technologies applied, both in the agricultural systems that seek to promote more intensive use of the land, and in the processes of expansion of the agricultural frontier. A greater effort in support of the developing countries to prevent and combat soil degradation should be a priority aim of international action, through technical

co-operation, the generation and transfer of indigenous and environmentally sound technologies, as well as through scientific research, human resources training and financing.

d) Protection and management of oceans, seas and coastal zones

The region is characterized by great diversity in terms of marine, coastal and ocean resources which can be developed to the benefit of its population. The degradation of marine and coastal resources as a result of irrational exploitation and of marine and land-based contamination constitutes a grave problem for the countries which depend on these resources to reach their socio-economic goals and development targets. Programmes relating to regional seas (the Caribbean and the South-east Pacific) and other regional co-operation programmes, such as that relating to the South Atlantic, and the instruments provided for in legal agreements which already exist must therefore be strengthened.

In order to optimize the benefits from the use of the region's resources for its development, while at the same time minimizing the abuse of these resources, it is necessary to:

- Prepare an inventory of the region's living and non-living resources in order to assess their potential and their rate of extraction;
- Establish "special areas" on the basis of the characteristics of the resources they contain, the dynamics and sensitivity of those resources, the uses to which they can be put and the degree of the economies' dependence on them;
- Carry out a regional and international exchange of data obtained from national systematic monitoring stations on changes in the coastal dynamic;
- Elaborate and improve appropriate technologies between developed and developing countries in areas such as aquaculture, desalinization, sea-bed mining and others, including application of the precautionary principle and clean technologies approach;
- Increase the links and relations between regional and subregional bodies and programmes and develop sufficient scientific, technical and financial capacity to conduct research, monitoring, information exchange and technical assistance activities in order to ensure sound management of marine and coastal resources;

- Support the establishment of regional marine technology centres for the joint development of environmentally compatible technologies to ensure sustainable development in the region;

- Promote the use of integrated management approaches to marine and coastal areas and resources;

- Ban the discharge of toxic wastes into seas and oceans and provide mechanisms for the protection of these resources against exploitation by third party States;

- Urge the international community to create co-operation mechanisms for the conservation and optimal use of the marine resources found within the zone of sovereignty or jurisdiction of two or more riparian States, or on the high seas;

- Promote awareness of the need for an international agreement on the protection of the marine environment against land-based contamination, bearing in mind, in particular, the responsibility assigned to the regional economic commissions by, inter alia, General Assembly resolution 44/228.

e) Protection of fresh-water quality and supply

The need to protect the quality and supply of fresh water is vital to the countries of the region. It is thus essential to take steps to protect and conserve water resources and their development sites. The following proposals are therefore made:

- Financing and implementation of plans for administering and managing basins to promote the rational use of natural resources and the improvement of the living conditions of the populations settled in these areas.

- Establishment of regional strategies and programmes for the conservation and integral development of water resources which ensure that a balance is maintained between economic growth, environmental conservation and the management of national and international basins as a guarantee of sustainable development.

- Identification of availabilities and potentialities of water resources and appraisal of the environmental impacts of their use.

- Establishment of research and monitoring programmes aimed at reducing or eliminating fresh-water pollution.

f) Eradication of poverty in human settlements

In dealing with critical poverty and its links with environmental degradation at the national level, it will be indispensable to restore the growth rate, embark upon structural reforms and reformulate economic and social policy. The expeditious provision of adequate health and education services and the improvement of housing and related services in urban and rural areas are of priority importance.

In addition to the endogenous effort to eradicate poverty, there is need for international concertation and co-operation in the various interrelated aspects of commerce, external debt, additionality of financial resources and technology transfer.

g) Urban development and the environment

The cities of Latin America and the Caribbean generally suffer from a lack of resources, which is reflected in inadequate basic services, a high incidence of marginality and a deterioration of the urban environment. On the basis of land-use planning and management, the financial mechanisms for sustainable development should be aimed at improving the level and quality of life in both urban and rural settlements.

In this regard, the new mechanisms for the financing of sustainable development should give due priority to housing, sanitary conditions (provision of drinking water, sewage systems), elimination of solid and liquid wastes and air pollution.

h) Environmental management of waste, especially of hazardous and toxic wastes

The regional agreements supplementary to the Basel Convention should receive preferential attention concerning mechanisms for the monitoring and control of the illicit traffic in toxic and hazardous products and wastes, which represents a potential threat to the environment of the region and to the developing countries in general.

In order to reach a satisfactory solution to the problem, a protocol to the Basel Convention should be adopted as soon as possible, which would set forth appropriate procedures for the determination of liability and compensation for damage resulting from the transboundary movement and management of hazardous waste.

Since the developed countries continue to export to developing countries harmful or hazardous substances, products, processes and technologies which are banned in the countries of origin, a mechanism should be established to prohibit the marketing of such substances.

25. Reiterate their willingness to pursue their efforts to achieve concrete and positive results in the negotiations in the Preparatory Committee, and request the Secretary-General of the Conference to take into account the proposals contained in this Platform in the preparation of the documentation for the Conference and its preparatory process.

26. Thank the Government and people of Mexico for their generous hospitality and the excellent facilities provided, which contributed to the success of the Meeting.