UNITED NATIONS

ECONOMIC
AND
SOCIAL COUNCIL

LIMITED

E/CEPAL/L.219
May 1980

ENGLISH
ORIGINAL: SPANISH

C E P A L

Economic Commission for Latin America

INFORMATION NOTE ON THE PROGRESS OF UNITED NATIONS ACTIVITIES IN THE PREPARATION OF THE NEW INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY*

* This document was specially prepared for the Fourth Meeting of the Latin American Council of SELA.

80-5-862

INFORMATION NOTE ON THE PROGRESS OF UNITED NATIONS ACTIVITIES IN THE PREPARATION OF THE NEW INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

1. At its thirty-third session the United Nations General Assembly agreed the preparation of a New International Development Strategy for the 1980s. In resolution 33/193 of January 1979 it established the guidelines on which the Strategy should be based and set up a Preparatory Committee which would be responsible for preparing a draft resolution which the General Assembly will consider at a special session to be held in August 1980.

2. The Economic Commission for Latin America, at its eighteenth session in La Paz (April 1979), adopted resolution 386 (XVIII) on contributions by CEPAL for the formulation of the New International Development Strategy, which requested the secretariat of the Commission to actively support the Latin American Group which would participate in the work of the Preparatory Committee and to prepare a regional action plan aimed at instrumenting the implementation of the New IDS in Latin America.

Pursuant to these mandates, the Commission has collaborated actively with the Latin American Group in New York through documents and notes in which it has put forward the secretariat's ideas as regards the goals and objectives, policies, instruments and machinery of appraisal which the New IDS should contain. Among the contributions prepared were the documents "Latin America and the New International Development Strategy: goals and objectives" (E/CEPAL/L.210) and "Notes for the Latin American Group, New York,

/on the

on the instrumentation, review and appraisal of the New International Development Strategy". These documents were discussed with the members of the Latin American Group in New York on the occasion of the meetings of the Preparatory Committee, both in official meetings of the Latin American Group and in informal working sessions. Also pursuant to the above-mentioned resolutions 33/193 and 386 (XVIII), the Executive Secretary of the Commission, Mr. Enrique V. Iglesias, explained the secretariat's point of view to the Preparatory Committee at its second meeting.

3. The Preparatory Committee has now met on five occassions (2-13 April, 11-22 June and 17-21 September 1979, and 11-29 February and 14-25 April 1980) and has planned a final group of meetings from 2-20 June of this year.

At its first session the Committee considered matters of a general nature connected with the nature and scope of the New IDS. In principle, it was planned that this would consist of a preamble and special chapters on goals and objectives, policies, review and appraisal and mobilization of public opinion.

As regards the nature of the IDS, the Group of 77 mentioned the need of giving the Strategy the nature of an international commitment intended to promote and guarantee the development of the developing countries. The developed market economy countries for their part stressed the difficulties they were facing and observed that this would mean that they would organize their efforts accoding to the possibilities of the conjuncture. They

/therefore considered

therefore considered that at least during the early years of the decade the growth of the developing countries would basically depend on their own efforts.

During the second session, work was concentrated on the statements made to the Committee by the executive secretaries of the regional economic commissions and the directors of United Nations specialized agencies. Communications from non-governmental bodies and United Nations technical studies were also received.

At the third session the preamble was discussed. After a number of sessions a preliminary draft preamble was agreed upon, containing numerous paragraphs the adoption of which is pending subsequent discussions.

At the fourth session the chapter on goals and objectives was reviewed. The Group of 77 formulated a draft as a basis for discussion. Finally document CRP 1 was drawn up on 29 February 1980; this document, which is enclosed, contains the position of the 77 and the counter-proposals by the rest of the countries.

In the discussions great importance was attributed to the subject of the structural change in international economic relations and the possible rate of growth of the process of change. The Group of 77 mentioned the need to speed up substantially the transformation of the world economy by increasing the pace of growth of the developing countries and achieving greater symmetry in world production and trade. The developed countries considered that this structural transformation was difficult to achieve in

/the short

the short term and that in the present circumstances it would be more realistic to limit expectations, at least for the first five years.

At the fifth session the chapter on policy measures was discussed. As in the case of goals and objectives the Group of 77 presented a working document which served as a guide for the discussions. On the basis of this study and the counter-proposals and additions from the rest of the countries the document "Synoptic table on the policy measures of the new international development strategy" was brought out on 24 April 1980, this document is enclosed. Preliminary discussions were also held on the subject of review and appraisal.

Among the subjects most discussed were those connected with the amount of external aid, energy and structural and institutional changes at the national and international levels.

As regards the amount of external aid, the Group of 77 mentioned both aggregate targets (0.7 to 1% of the product of the developed countries) and the creation of financial funds devoted to specific objectives.

Both the developed market economy countries and the countries with centrally planned economies and a higher income level seem unwilling to take on definite commitments, and although they explicitly express their intention of increasing aid, generally speaking they do not wish to name a figure, at least for the moment.

As regards energy, the discussion once again reflected the difficulties which have come to light in the negotiations in other forums. The rationalization of consumption and the search for

/alternative sources

alternative sources of energy and their financing were discussed; however, other polemical aspects were not considered, since the Group of 77 was of the opinion that they should be reviewed in the context of the global negotiations.

The Group of 77 upholds the need for reforms at the international level affecting, inter alia, industrial, agricultural, commercial and monetary policies. The developed market economy countries consider that specific negotiations on these topics, especially as regards reforms of institutions and regulations should take place in other contexts. The developed countries also consider that the implementation of internal economic and social reforms in developing countries should be included. In this regard the Group of 77 considers that an international strategy cannot affect the principle of state sovereignty.

In any case it should be noted in connextion with these matters that at the April meetings a certain level of agreement was achieved in the chapter on social policies.

At the last meeting of the Preparatory Committee it was agreed to request the Chairman of the Committee to prepare a text which, based on the documents on goals and objectives and policy measures, could serve as a basis for the discussions of the last session which will take place from 2-20 June.