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Environment and sustainable development: protection of global climate for present and future generations of mankind

Report of the Second Committee*

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I. Introduction

1. The Second Committee held a substantive debate on agenda item 87 (see A/57/532, para. 2). Action on sub-item (c) was taken at the 38th and 44th meetings, on 20 November and 11 December 2002. An account of the Committee's consideration of the sub-item is contained in the relevant summary records (A/C.2/57/SR.38 and 44).

II. Consideration of proposals

A. Draft resolutions A/C.2/57/L.43 and A/C.2/57/L.90

2. At the 38th meeting, on 20 November, the representative of Venezuela, on behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the Group of 77 and China, introduced a draft resolution entitled "Protection of global climate for present and future generations of mankind" (A/C.2/57/L.43), which read:

"The General Assembly,

"Recalling its resolution 54/222 of 22 December 1999, its decision 55/443 of 20 December 2000 and its resolution 56/199 of 21 December 2001 and other resolutions relating to the protection of the global climate for present and future generations of mankind,

* The report of the Committee on this item will be issued in eight parts, under the symbol A/57/532 and Add.1-7.

“Noting that most States and one regional economic integration organization have acceded to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change,

“Reaffirming that economic and social development and poverty eradication are the first and foremost overriding priorities of developing countries,

“Remaining deeply concerned that all countries, in particular developing countries, including the least developed countries and small island developing States, face increased risk from the adverse impacts of climate change,

“Noting that, to date, the Kyoto Protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change has attracted 97 ratifications,

“Taking into account the Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development and the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development,

“Expressing its deep appreciation to the Government of India for hosting the eighth session of the Conference of Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change at New Delhi from 23 October to 1 November 2002,

“Taking note of the report of the Executive Secretary of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change,

“1. Recalls the United Nations Millennium Declaration, in which heads of State and Government resolved to make every effort to ensure the entry into force of the Kyoto Protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, preferably by the tenth anniversary of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in 2002, and to embark on the required reduction of emissions of greenhouse gases in accordance with the provisions of the Convention and the Kyoto Protocol thereto;

“2. Urges Parties that have not already done so to ratify the Kyoto Protocol in a timely manner;

“3. Takes note of the Delhi Ministerial Declaration on Climate Change and Sustainable Development, adopted by the Conference of the Parties at its eighth session;

“4. Calls upon all States parties to continue to take effective steps to implement their commitments under the Convention, in accordance with the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities;

“5. Stresses the importance of providing technical and financial assistance and capacity-building to developing countries and countries with economies in transition in accordance with commitments under the Convention, including the Marrakesh Accords;

“6. Emphasizes that technology transfer should be strengthened, including through concrete projects and capacity-building in all relevant sectors, such as energy, transport, industry, health, agriculture, biodiversity, forestry and waste management. Technological advances should be promoted through research and development, economic diversification and strengthening

of relevant regional, national and local institutions for sustainable development;

“7. *Emphasizes also* that adaptation to the adverse effects of climate change is of high priority for all countries. Developing countries are particularly vulnerable, especially the least developed countries and small island developing States. Adaptation requires urgent attention and action on the part of all countries. Effective and results-based measures should be supported for the development of approaches at all levels on vulnerability and adaptation, as well as capacity-building for the integration of adaptation concerns into sustainable development strategies. The measures should include full implementation of existing commitments under the Convention and the Marrakesh Accords;

“8. *Requests* the Secretary-General to make provision for the session of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention and its subsidiary bodies in his proposal for the programme budget for the biennium 2004-2005;

“9. *Invites* the Executive Secretary of the Convention to report in a timely manner to the General Assembly at its fifty-eighth session on the work of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention;

“10. *Invites also* the conferences of the parties to the multilateral environmental conventions, when setting the dates of their meetings, to take into consideration the schedule of meetings of the General Assembly and the Commission on Sustainable Development so as to ensure the adequate representation of developing countries at those meetings;

“11. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its fifty-eighth session the sub-item entitled ‘Protection of global climate for present and future generations of mankind’.”

3. At the same meeting, the representative of the United States of America made a statement (see A/C.2/57/SR.38).

4. At its 44th meeting, on 11 December, the Committee had before it a statement on the programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.2/57/L.43, submitted by the Secretary-General in accordance with rule 153 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly (A/C.2/57/L.56).

5. At the same meeting, the Vice-Chairman of the Committee, Jan Kára (Czech Republic), introduced a draft resolution entitled “Protection of global climate for present and future generations of mankind” (A/C.2/57/L.90), which he submitted on the basis of informal consultations held on draft resolution A/C.2/57/L.43.

6. Also at its 44th meeting, the Committee was informed that the statement of programme budget implications contained in document A/C.2/57/L.56 did not apply to draft resolution A/C.2/57/L.90.

7. At the same meeting, the Committee adopted draft resolution A/C.2/57/L.90 (see para. 16, draft resolution I).

8. After the adoption of the draft resolution, statements were made by the representatives of the United States of America, Japan, Denmark (on behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the European Union) and Canada (see A/C.2/57/SR.44).

9. In the light of the adoption of draft resolution A/C.2/57/L.90, draft resolution A/C.2/57/L.43 was withdrawn by its sponsors.

B. Draft resolutions A/C.2/57/L.47 and A/C.2/57/L.91

10. At the 38th meeting, on 20 November, the representative of the Russian Federation, on behalf of Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Canada, the Czech Republic, Georgia, Iceland, India, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Malta, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, the Republic of Moldova, Romania, the Russian Federation, Switzerland, Tajikistan, Thailand, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, the United States of America, Uzbekistan and Yugoslavia, introduced a draft resolution entitled “World Climate Change Conference” (A/C.2/57/L.47). Subsequently, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Indonesia, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Mongolia, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland joined in sponsoring the draft resolution, which read:

“The General Assembly,

“Acknowledging that change in the earth’s climate and its adverse effects are a common concern of humankind,

“Noting that the global nature of climate change calls for the widest possible cooperation,

“Welcoming the ongoing work in the United Nations system on climate change, in particular within the framework of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change which is the key instrument for addressing this global concern,

“Referring to relevant decisions of the World Summit on Sustainable Development and to the Delhi Ministerial Declaration on Climate Change and Sustainable Development, adopted by the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change at its eighth session, held at New Delhi from 23 October to 1 November 2002,

“Recognizing with concern the findings of the third assessment report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change which confirms that significant cuts in global emissions will be necessary to meet the ultimate objective of the Framework Convention, and recognizing the ongoing consideration by the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice of the implications of the report,

“Reaffirming the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, in which States that have ratified the Kyoto Protocol strongly urge States that have not yet done so to ratify it in a timely manner,

“Recognizing the need for strengthening scientific and technological capabilities and networks for the exchange of scientific data and information,

“Stressing that the World Climate Change Conference will be supportive of the Framework Convention process,

“*Noting* the importance of broad participation in this process by Governments, parliaments, international and national organizations, the scientific community, the private sector and other representatives of civil society,

“1. *Welcomes* the initiative of the Russian Federation to convene the World Climate Change Conference at Moscow from 29 September to 3 October 2003 as a forum aimed at exchanging views among the scientific community, Governments, parliaments, international and national organizations, the private sector and other representatives of civil society and at facilitating the implementation of existing policies related to climate change;

“2. *Encourages* Member States and relevant organizations and institutions of the United Nations system, as well as other international and national organizations, parliaments, the scientific community, the private sector and other representatives of civil society to participate actively in the Conference;

“3. *Invites* Member States, the United Nations system and all other actors to take advantage of the Conference in order to increase awareness of the importance of international efforts to address climate change.”

11. At the same meeting, statements were made by the representatives of Denmark (on behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the European Union, Bulgaria, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia and Turkey) and Norway (see A/C.2/57/SR.38).

12. At the 44th meeting, on 11 December, the Vice-Chairman of the Committee, Jan Kára (Czech Republic), introduced a draft resolution entitled “World Climate Change Conference” (A/C.2/57/L.91), which he submitted on the basis of informal consultations held on draft resolution A/C.2/57/L.47.

13. At the same meeting, the Committee adopted draft resolution A/C.2/57/L.91 (see para. 16, draft resolution II).

14. After the adoption of the draft resolution, statements were made by the representatives of China, the Russian Federation and Japan (see A/C.2/57/SR.44).

15. In the light of the adoption of draft resolution A/C.2/57/L.91, draft resolution A/C.2/57/L.47 was withdrawn by its sponsors.

III. Recommendations of the Second Committee

16. The Second Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft resolutions:

Draft resolution I
Protection of global climate for present and future generations of mankind

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 54/222 of 22 December 1999, its decision 55/443 of 20 December 2000 and its resolution 56/199 of 21 December 2001 and other resolutions relating to the protection of the global climate for present and future generations of mankind,

Noting that most States and one regional economic integration organization have acceded to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change,¹

Recalling the provisions of the Convention, including the acknowledgement that the global nature of climate change calls for the widest possible cooperation by all countries and their participation in an effective and appropriate international response, in accordance with their common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities and their social and economic conditions,

Recalling also the Delhi Ministerial Declaration on Climate Change and Sustainable Development, adopted by the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change at its eighth session, held at New Delhi from 23 October to 1 November 2002,

Remaining deeply concerned that all countries, particularly developing countries, including the least developed countries and small island developing States, face increased risks of negative impacts of climate change,

Noting that, to date, the Kyoto Protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change² has attracted ninety-seven ratifications,

Taking into account the Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development³ and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation,⁴

Expressing its deep appreciation to the Government of India for hosting the eighth session of the Conference of the Parties at New Delhi from 23 October to 1 November 2002,

Taking note of the report of the Executive Secretary of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change,⁵

Recalling the United Nations Millennium Declaration,⁶ in which heads of State and Government resolved to make every effort to ensure the entry into force of the Kyoto Protocol, preferably by the tenth anniversary of the United Nations

¹ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1771, No. 30822.

² FCCC/CP/1977/7/Add.1, decision 1/CP.3, annex.

³ *Report of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg, South Africa, 26 August-4 September 2002* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.03.II.A.1), chap. I, resolution 1, annex.

⁴ *Ibid.*, resolution 2, annex.

⁵ See A/57/350.

⁶ See resolution 55/2.

Conference on Environment and Development in 2002, and to embark on the required reduction in emissions of greenhouse gases,⁷

1. *Calls upon* States to work cooperatively towards achieving the ultimate objective of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change;¹

2. *Notes* that States that have ratified the Kyoto Protocol¹ to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change² strongly urge the States that have not yet done so to ratify it in a timely manner;

3. *Takes note* of the Delhi Ministerial Declaration on Climate Change and Sustainable Development, adopted by the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change at its eighth session;

4. *Notes* the ongoing work of the liaison group of the secretariats and officers of the relevant subsidiary bodies of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, particularly in Africa,⁸ and the Convention on Biological Diversity,⁹ and encourages cooperation to promote complementarities among the three secretariats while respecting their independent legal status;

5. *Invites* the Executive Secretary of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change to report in a timely manner to the General Assembly at its fifty-eighth session on the work of the Conference of the Parties;

6. *Invites* the conferences of the parties to the multilateral environmental conventions, when setting the dates of their meetings, to take into consideration the schedule of meetings of the General Assembly and the Commission on Sustainable Development so as to ensure the adequate representation of developing countries at those meetings;

7. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its fifty-eighth session the sub-item entitled "Protection of global climate for present and future generations of mankind".

Draft resolution II **World Climate Change Conference**

The General Assembly,

Acknowledging that change in the earth's climate and its adverse effects are a common concern of humankind,

Acknowledging also that the global nature of climate change calls for the widest possible cooperation, consistent with the provisions of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change,¹⁰

⁷ Ibid., para. 23.

⁸ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1954, No. 33480.

⁹ See United Nations Environment Programme, *Convention on Biological Diversity* (Environmental Law and Institution Programme Activity Centre), June 1992.

¹⁰ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1771, No. 30822.

Welcoming the ongoing work in the United Nations system on climate change, in particular within the framework of the Convention which is the key instrument for addressing this global concern,

Recalling the Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development¹¹ and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation,¹²

Recalling also the Delhi Ministerial Declaration on Climate Change and Sustainable Development, adopted by the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change at its eighth session, held at New Delhi from 23 October to 1 November 2002,

Recognizing with concern the findings of the third assessment report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change,¹³ which confirm that significant cuts in global emissions will be necessary to meet the ultimate objective of the Convention, and recognizing the ongoing consideration by the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice of the implications of the report,

Reaffirming the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, in which States that have ratified the Kyoto Protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change¹⁴ strongly urge States that have not yet done so to ratify it in a timely manner,¹⁵

Recognizing the need for strengthening scientific and technological capabilities and networks for the exchange of scientific data and information,

Stressing that the World Climate Change Conference will be supportive of the Convention process,

Noting the importance of broad participation in this process by Governments, parliaments, international and national organizations, the scientific community, the private sector and other representatives of civil society,

1. *Welcomes* the initiative of the Government of the Russian Federation to convene the World Climate Change Conference at Moscow from 29 September to 3 October 2003 as a forum for the exchange of views among the scientific community, Governments, parliaments, international and national organizations, the private sector and other representatives of civil society and for facilitating the implementation of existing policies related to climate change;

2. *Encourages* Member States and relevant organizations and bodies of the United Nations system, as well as other international and national organizations, parliaments, the scientific community, the private sector and other representatives of civil society, to participate actively in the Conference;

¹¹ *Report of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg, South Africa, 26 August-4 September 2002* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.03.II.A.1), chap. I, resolution 1, annex.

¹² *Ibid.*, resolution 2, annex.

¹³ *Climate Change, 2001* (Cambridge, United Kingdom, Cambridge University Press, July 2001 and March 2002), four volumes.

¹⁴ FCCC/CP/1997/7/Add.1, decision 1/CP.3, annex.

¹⁵ *Report of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg, South Africa, 26 August-4 September 2002* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.03.II.A.1), chap. I, resolution 2, annex, para. 38.

3. *Invites* Member States, the United Nations system and all other actors to take advantage of the Conference in order to increase awareness of the importance of international efforts to address climate change.
