

While there are important positive aspects in the progress to date, we cannot conceal elements of disappointment, especially with respect to the second substantive meeting of the Committee last month. With the advantage of hindsight, we consider that meeting may not, throughout the week, have been conducted with sufficient focus on reaching agreement on the structure of the IDS. We very much appreciated the efforts of the G-77 and the EEC in the final hours to prepare a non-paper which could serve as the basis for wider agreement. We regret that there was not sufficient time to allow possible fine tuning to that text so as to accommodate all groups and delegations. It is a disappointment to find that that non-paper has, in the end, not been appended to the report of the Ad Hoc Committee, as had appeared to have been agreed in the informal discussions. Appended or not, that non-paper remains, in our view, a useful point of departure.

It is important to be realistic on what the outline is. What the Committee was discussing was basically a framework with various headings, without editorial content on what should be said under those headings. The greater challenge will be in filling in the content, but the outline is important because it sends a signal on the basic approach to the IDS. It is thus necessary to ensure that the words used convey the intended message.

The outline prepared by the G-77 and the EEC do reasonable justice to the idea of an IDS focussed on priority themes, which many of us seek. The question of acceleration of growth must be a top priority. In our view, a key determinant of growth prospects is the adoption of sound economic policies. Such national policies need to be reinforced by a supportive international environment. These priorities need to find appropriate reflection in the outline.

A second preoccupation in terms of the outline relates to how to treat the population issues. On this issue, ECOSOC resolution 1989/90 on the role of population in the IDS, adopted by consensus, may point the way to a solution.

Mr. Chairman,

If there is a general disposition to do so, our delegations would work with others during this General Assembly to complete the unfinished business of the last meeting of the Ad Hoc Committee. We believe it would be worth the effort so as to enable the Committee to resume its discussions in January with undivided attention to substantive questions.