

The United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation, which was set up essentially for the purpose of enquiring into these questions, has done very useful work since it was established four years ago. Following its first comprehensive report, which was considered at the last session of the General Assembly, the Committee has gone on to prepare a programme of work for its forthcoming sessions. This programme appears to my Delegation to be well balanced and practical.

The Committee plans to continue its study of the physical aspects of fallout, the physical and biological problems concerning the transmission of fission products through food chains, and also the relationship between radiation dose and effects. It plans also to study genetic problems and the physical and biological problems concerned with Carbon-14, which remains radioactive for centuries.

In its work the Committee has received co-operation from many governments, from Specialized Agencies, from the International Atomic Energy Agency, from international non-governmental and scientific organizations as well as from individual scientists. It appears that useful arrangements have been worked out for co-operation between this Scientific Committee and the agencies concerned, which is a source of satisfaction to my Delegation.

However, it is clear that, notwithstanding this co-operation and the fact that the Committee has received much useful information on fallout, radiation levels and radiobiological questions from many member states, it requires more information on these questions in order to discharge its full responsibilities, and in order to make the maximum use of the scientific knowledge and skills available to it. Indeed, the Committee itself has found it necessary to invite member states to provide further data of the type already contained in its earlier comprehensive report and to suggest that this collection of information be supplemented in various other ways.

For the purpose of filling the gaps that continue to exist in our knowledge of the phenomenon of radiation, we believe the scientists should have at their disposal the fullest and most reliable information possible. This can be obtained only by the widest co-operation of member states and the international organizations concerned. We consider it important that a greater effort should be made to obtain such information and to enlist the necessary co-operation. We wish to place the authority of the General Assembly squarely behind this effort.

For this purpose my Delegation, in company with the delegations from Argentina, Austria, Czechoslovakia, Ghana, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Mexico, New Zealand and Norway, has presented the draft resolution which is contained in Document A/L 268.