

wanted to achieve in the global negotiations, namely, that the international financial institutions should accept changes that would give them favoured treatment. It was recognized, however, that without an agreement on the mandate for the global negotiations conference on that very point, it was not possible to define what changes should take place through commitments in the international development strategy. Consequently, vague formulations were selected to cover these issues. On the question of energy, the industrialized countries wanted a commitment on the security of supplies from the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries countries. However, those countries were not prepared to concede anything. After much probing, it became evident that energy questions could not be discussed usefully in the context of the international development strategy, and industrialized countries, albeit reluctantly, accepted language that did not meet their wishes.

### Procedures

The procedures followed in the negotiations for the international development strategy were along the same broad lines as those adopted for the global negotiations. There was, however, a very important difference. While most of the crucial meetings in the global negotiations were restricted to a very small number of participants, the meetings for the international development strategy were opened to all countries. Since the points of contention in each set of negotiations were quite different, it is difficult to say whether the negotiating method used was a factor in the results achieved. The fact remains that for the international development strategy, the spokesman for the Group of 77 was surrounded by many representatives of his group who generously gave him advice. This enabled him to obtain continuous support from this group in the evolving discussions. In the restricted meetings of the global negotiations, the Group of 77 spokesman was very often the only one of his group that was present and this may have led him to take more rigid positions that would have otherwise been the case.

The role played by the countries of Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union at the Special Session was virtually nil. They maintained the position they have developed over the years for their lack of involvement in the North-South dialogue and for the extremely low percentage of GNP going to ODA which they explain along the following lines: The main responsibility for the provision of ODA lies with the Western industrialized countries as colonial powers; (b) they continue to exploit them through the brain drain, the repatriation of profits accruing to companies investing there, etc; (c) they are their main trading partners and profit from it. These arguments no longer impress the developing countries and they try, albeit to no avail, to have the socialist countries change their posture. As the North-South dialogue goes on, it can be expected that devel-

oping countries will become increasingly dissatisfied with the passive role played by the socialist countries in the dialogue. It is also expected that pressure will mount to obtain a change in their position. China does not belong to the Group of 77 and therefore has a distinct voice. During the Special Session it was generally supportive of the Group of 77 and critical of the Soviet Union.

The United States was once a major provider of development assistance but is now very close to the bottom of the list of the 17 Western industrialized countries of the OECD Development Assistance Committee. Prospects for an improved performance are promising. This is unfortunate as the consequences that record affect not only the United States but the Western world generally. Even with a low percentage of its GNP going to Official Development Assistance the United States remains the main aid donor in absolute terms and this, coupled with its superpower status gives it a very important role amongst the Western industrialized countries.

This role is not, however, as positive as it could be. Many industrialized countries would like to move faster in the North-South dialogue and, for instance, would accept more meaningful changes in the international financial institutions. The United States, however, has a virtual veto power on what these countries would like to do. In using that veto and in taking a generally hard line in the North-South dialogue, the United States has become one of the least responsive countries of the Western world to the demands of the developing countries. By the same token, they do not provide the type of leadership that other Western countries would like it to play in the dialogue.

### Stagnant economies

The Special Session proved that rapid progress in the North-South dialogue cannot be expected. At a time of stagnant economic activity in the countries of the Western world it is very difficult for these countries to make the extra efforts required to solve problems that are nevertheless enormous in their magnitude. However, even when economic conditions start improving, the process of change will continue to be slow because the methods used to negotiate are not conducive to rapid results. New methods are required and the forthcoming North-South mini-Summit, due to take place early this summer, may provide the beginning of a solution. Much goodwill shall be required from all sides, though, to make any meaningful breakthrough.

As will have been noted, the difficulties encountered at the Special Session were mostly of a procedural nature. When the substance of the subjects is addressed and important interests are at stake, the discussions promise to be very long and arduous indeed.