

There is one specific aspect of the resolution's preamble which I would like to emphasize. This is the close relationship between shortages of foodstuffs and economic development programmes. I make these comments on the basis of Canada's experience with such problems under the Colombo Plan. On many occasions in the last ten years, governments in South and Southeast Asia have been obliged to curtail and in some instances even stop major projects in their economic development programmes because of a lack of foreign exchange and even of domestic financial resources. One of the main causes for some of these sudden changes of plan has been the unexpected foreign exchange expenditures that governments in the area have had to make for the purchase of foodstuffs in order to avoid serious famine conditions. Much work has of course already been done under bilateral programmes and under the various multilateral programmes to alleviate and to assist in preventing recurring crises of these kinds.

Turning now to the operative paragraphs, I hope there will be unanimous support of the Freedom from Hunger Campaign launched by the FAO. Similarly, I assume that an appeal of the kind contained in operative paragraph 2 is one which should receive broad support. Operative paragraphs 3 and 4 do not seem to call for specific comment at this stage.

Paragraph 5 is the first of the two main operative paragraphs of the resolution. The observations which follow represent the Canadian interpretation of the purposes and objectives which these paragraphs are designed to reflect.

In the first place, as the distinguished representative of FAO has already told us, any action by the FAO which would involve the expenditure of substantial funds would have to be the subject of detailed decisions by the appropriate organs of the FAO. This Assembly may, as indeed we have already done in this Committee, question the representative of FAO about FAO's procedures and practices but we should, I think, keep in mind that these procedures and practices are not subject to control by this Assembly. However, it seems clear that, without in any way pre-judging what the properly constituted authorities of the FAO may decide, the FAO could take some early action designed to carry out the objectives of this resolution.

The passage at the end of operative paragraph 5, which, I might say, applies equally to operative paragraph 6 and which refers to the FAO principles for the disposal of surplus agricultural commodities, is of major importance to my Delegation. This section provides the kind of protection which the distinguished representative of Argentina has stated must be available at all stages during consideration of this subject. These principles, which have been worked out in cooperation with representatives of all the different interests involved, clearly involve a protection of normal commercial trade in agricultural commodities and also provide that agricultural surpluses should not be disposed of in such a way as to damage agricultural development in the less developed countries.

Operative paragraph 6 is perhaps more closely related to the Canadian position than any other part of this resolution. My Government, as I have indicated, has views which are clearly on the record which it intends to press vigorously in the FAO.