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Protection of global climate for present and future generations of mankind

The General Assembly,

Welcoming with appreciation the initiative taken by the Government of Malta in proposing for consideration by the Assembly the item entitled "Conservation of climate as part of the common heritage of mankind",

Concerned that certain human activities could change global climate patterns, **threatening present and future generations** with potentially severe economic and social consequences,

Noting with concern that the emerging evidence indicates that **continued growth in atmospheric concentrations of "greenhouse" gases could produce global warming with an eventual rise in sea levels, the effects of which could be disastrous for mankind if timely steps are not taken at all levels,**

Recognizing the need for additional research and scientific studies into all sources and causes of climate change,

Concerned also that emissions of certain substances are depleting the ozone layer and thereby exposing the earth's surface to increased ultra-violet radiation, which may pose a threat to, inter alia, human health, agricultural productivity and animal and marine life, and reaffirming in this context the appeal, contained in its resolution 42/182 of 11 December 1987, to all States that have not yet done so to consider becoming parties to the Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer, adopted on 22 March 1985, and the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer, adopted on 16 September 1987, as soon as possible,

Recalling its resolutions 42/186 and 42/187 of 11 December 1987 on the Environmental Perspective to the Year 2000 and Beyond and on the report of the World Commission on Environment and Development, respectively,

Convinced that changes in climate have an impact on development,

Aware that a considerable amount of valuable work, particularly at the scientific level and in the legal field, has already been initiated on climate change, in particular by the United Nations Environment Programme, the World Meteorological Organization and the International Council of Scientific Unions and under the auspices of individual States,

Welcoming the convening in 1990 of a second World Climate Conference,

Recalling also the conclusions of the meeting held at Villach, Austria, in 1985, which, inter alia, recommended a programme on climate change to be promoted by Governments and the scientific community with the collaboration of the World Meteorological Organization, the United Nations Environment Programme and the International Council of Scientific Unions,

Convinced that climate change affects humanity as a whole and should be confronted within a global framework so as to take into account the vital interests of all mankind,

1. Recognizes that climate change is a common concern of mankind, since climate is an essential condition which sustains life on earth;

2. Determines that necessary and timely action should be taken to deal with climate change within a global framework;

3. Reaffirms its resolution 42/184 of 11 December 1987, in which, inter alia, it agreed with the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme that the Programme should attach importance to the problem of global climate change and that the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme should ensure that the Programme co-operates closely with the World Meteorological Organization and the International Council of Scientific Unions and maintains an active, influential role in the World Climate Programme;

4. Considers that activities in support of the World Climate Programme, approved by the Congress and Executive Council of the World Meteorological Organization and elaborated in the system-wide medium-term environment programme for the period 1990-1995, which was approved by the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme, be accorded high priority by the relevant organs and programmes of the United Nations system;

5. Endorses the action of the World Meteorological Organization and the United Nations Environment Programme in jointly establishing an Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change to provide internationally co-ordinated scientific assessments of the magnitude, timing and potential environmental and socio-economic impact of climate change and realistic response strategies, and expresses appreciation for the work already initiated by the Panel;

6. Urges Governments, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and scientific institutions to treat climate change as a priority issue, to undertake and promote specific, co-operative action-oriented programmes and research so as to increase understanding on all sources and causes of climate change, including its regional aspects and specific time-frames as well as the cause and effect relationship of human activities and climate, and to contribute, as appropriate, with human and financial resources to efforts to protect the global climate;

7. Calls upon all relevant organizations and programmes of the United Nations system to support the work of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change;

8. Encourages the convening of conferences on climate change, particularly on global warming, at the national, regional and global levels in order to make the international community better aware of the importance of dealing effectively and in a timely manner with all aspects of climate change resulting from certain human activities;

9. Calls upon Governments and intergovernmental organizations to collaborate in making every effort to prevent detrimental effects on climate and activities which affect the ecological balance, and also calls upon

non-governmental organizations, industry and other productive sectors to play their due role;

10. Requests the Secretary-General of the World Meteorological Organization and the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme, through the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, immediately to initiate action leading, as soon as possible, to a comprehensive review and recommendations with respect to:

(a) The state of knowledge of the science of climate and climatic change;

(b) Programmes and studies on the social and economic impact of climate change, including global warming;

(c) Possible response strategies to delay, limit or mitigate the impact of adverse climate change;

(d) The identification and possible strengthening of relevant existing international legal instruments having a bearing on climate;

(e) Elements for inclusion in a possible future international convention on climate;

11. Also requests the Secretary-General to bring the present resolution to the attention of all Governments, as well as intergovernmental organizations, non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council and well-established scientific institutions with expertise in matters concerning climate;

12. Further requests the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its forty-fourth session on the implementation of the present resolution;

13. Decides to include this question in the provisional agenda of its forty-fourth session, without prejudice to the application of the principle of biennialization.