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PROVISIONAL

For participants only

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First regular session of 1990

PROVISIONAL SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 5th MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Tuesday, 1 May 1990, at 10.30 a.m.

President:

Mr. GHAREKHAN

(India)

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Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters

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The meeting was called to order at 10.45 a.m.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA AND OTHER ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS (E/1990/23, annex V, E/1990/30 and Corr.1, 45, 63 and 64; E/1990/L.18/Rev.1 and L.19)

Mr. KITCHKAILO (Observer for the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic) referred to the letter dated 26 April 1990 from the Permanent Representatives of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic and the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (E/1990/64), in which the three Governments requested the inclusion of an additional item, entitled "International co-operation in the elimination of the consequences of the accident at the Chernobyl nuclear power plant", in the agenda of the first regular session of 1990 of the Economic and Social Council. He hoped that the members of the Council would respond positively to that request.

In the four years since the accident, the State bodies of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, the Byelorussian SSR and the Ukrainian SSR had made considerable efforts to eliminate the consequences of the Chernobyl accident. New and thorough inspections and scientific research had revealed that the scope of those consequences had been underestimated at the national level and that their international social, human, economic, ecological and technological aspects had been greater than expected.

Vast populated areas of the Byelorussian SSR, the Ukrainian SSR and some western regions of the Russian Soviet Federal Socialist Republic, including some 7 million hectares of arable land and more than 2.5 million hectares of forests, had been contaminated. One fifth of the entire population of the Byelorussian SSR, or 2.2 million people, lived in the contaminated areas. The Byelorussian SSR had lost 20 per cent of its farmlands and nearly 15 per cent of its forests. The loss to the Republic's economy had been estimated at 82 billion roubles, and the Republic's six-year State programme for the elimination of the long-term consequences of the Chernobyl accident had been estimated at 18 billion roubles.

(Mr. Kitchkailo, Observer,
Byelorussian SSR)

The Governments of the Byelorussian SSR, the Ukrainian SSR and the Russian Soviet Federal Socialist Republic were continuing urgent and large-scale measures to eliminate the consequences of the accident. By a decision of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, 26 billion roubles had been allocated for that purpose for the years 1990 to 1992. Some of the measures being undertaken included the resettlement of families and whole communities to areas free of radionuclides, the decontamination of affected areas and the prevention of the spread of contamination to contiguous areas.

In appealing for international assistance for the first time in their history, the USSR, the Byelorussian SSR and the Ukrainian SSR did not simply wish to solve their national problems at other countries' expense. International co-operation in overcoming the consequences of the disaster was in the interests of all mankind. Such co-operation should include the creation of reliable safeguards for public health, in particular the health of children. The competent bodies of the Byelorussian SSR, the Ukrainian SSR and the Russian Soviet Federal Socialist Republic were extremely interested in beginning technical co-operation with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the World Health Organization (WHO) and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) to study the ecological and medical aspects of irradiation. They also supported the proposal to launch the "Children of Chernobyl" project with the participation of UNEP, WHO, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC).

Scientific organizations, health service institutions and environmental protection bodies in the Ukrainian SSR and the Byelorussian SSR intended to join the Agreement between the USSR and IAEA on establishing the International Chernobyl Research Centre. The Byelorussian SSR was prepared to establish a branch of the Centre at Mogilev or Gomel, and proposed that an international committee be established to study the effects of the Chernobyl accident on the ecosystem.

Mr. GALAL (Observer for Egypt) said that his delegation was pleased to submit a request for the inclusion under agenda item 1 of the first regular session of the Council of 1990 of the question of the revival of the Library of Alexandria. The Library had been a beacon for science and culture during the Ptolemaic era, and had contained priceless reference works on Egyptian and other