



Resolution 686 (1979)¹

United Nations Conference on Science and Technology for Development

Parliamentary Assembly

The Assembly,

1. Recalling its [Resolution 662 \(1977\)](#), of 6 October 1977, and taking into account the report on the United Nations Conference on Science and Technology for Development ([Doc. 4269](#)) ;
2. Welcoming the United Nations General Assembly decision at its 31st session "to convene the United Nations Conference on Science and Technology for Development (UNCSTD) during 1979" (General Assembly [Resolution 31/184](#)) ;
3. Noting with satisfaction paragraph 13 of General Assembly [Resolution 31/184](#), in which the Secretary General of the Conference is requested to seek the co-operation of intergovernmental organisations which may be in a position to contribute constructively to the preparation of the Conference, and the letter to this effect from the Secretary General of the Conference to the Secretary General of the Council of Europe (Appendix I to the report, [Doc. 4269](#)) ;
4. Taking into account the agenda for the UN Conference on Science and Technology for Development, as proposed in operative paragraph 3 of [Resolution 2028 \(LXI\)](#) of the Economic and Social Council ;
5. Noting with satisfaction that the UNCSTD aims at assuring that the whole complex web of policy considerations associated with the application of science and technology to development is thoroughly understood by governments, industry, the scientific community, international organisations and all concerned ;
6. Hoping that from such an understanding will emerge, on the part of the developing countries, the political will to move from perception to action in ordering their affairs to achieve the ends they seek ; on the part of the industrial countries, so to direct their resources and their programmes as to render their aid and co-operation efforts more responsive to the needs of the developing countries ; and on the part of the world community, to ensure that the institutions of the UN system are effectively harnessed to this common purpose ;
7. Noting with satisfaction that, through consultations and work within a large number of organisations, nations and the scientific community, all concerned have been forced to take stock of what they have been and are doing for the developing countries, thereby becoming more conscious of the problems facing developing countries in the field of science and technology, but regretting that most of the national and regional papers prepared for the Conference are vague and noncommittal ;
8. Noting that four of the five UN Regional Commissions- namely, for Africa, for Asia and the Pacific, for Latin America and for Western Asia- have put forward proposals for an action programme in science and technology for development, but that none of these is sufficiently action-oriented ;
9. Deploring that the fifth UN Regional Commission, the UN Economic Commission for Europe, has not put forward proposals for an action programme to assist the developing countries, but has, in its Declaration, almost exclusively concentrated on East-West scientific-technological cooperation ;

1. Assembly debate on 30 January 1979 (20th Sitting) (see [Doc. 4269](#), report of the Committee on Science and Technology). Text adopted by the Assembly on 30 January 1979 (20th Sitting).



10. Regretting the feeble efforts made so far by member countries of OECD to contribute through this Organisation to UNCSTD and the proposed UN action programme ;
11. Hoping that the preparatory work currently under way in the European Communities will lead to a positive and action-oriented contribution on behalf of the "Europe of the Nine" ;
12. Convinced that, for UNCSTD to be a success, it should point to areas in which problems of the developing countries can be solved by the application of science and technology, and agree on ways in which the world community can put the proposed action programme into operation,
13. Resolves, in accordance with UN General Assembly [Resolution 31/184](#) :
 - a. to invite member governments and the UNCSTD preparatory committee to make the remaining preparatory period far more policy-oriented and the proposals for the action programme far more action-oriented ;
 - b. to invite member governments, the UNCSTD preparatory committee and the Conference itself :
 1. to give priority to the transfer and diffusion of civilian technologies designed to improve the social and economic welfare of the developing countries, as opposed to the transfer and diffusion of military technologies ;
 2. to grant preferential treatment to the industries and firms of developing countries in the field of patent rights and know-how ;
 - c. to invite member governments, the UNCSTD preparatory committee and the Conference itself to take the following guidelines into account when drawing up a UN action programme on science and technology for development :
 1. all members of the world community should share with one another knowledge and experiences in harnessing science and technology to social and economic development ;
 2. nations and international organisations should increase their capacity for policy-making science and technology in the framework of general development planning ;
 3. the establishment of research infrastructures, the training of manpower and the establishment of information networks should go hand in hand with the development of conditions necessary for technological innovation and the creation of demand for and use of scientific and technological capabilities ;
 4. increased efforts should be made to find ways and means for the efficient transfer of appropriate technology to the developing countries ;
 5. the developing countries should enhance their capacity for the generation of indigenous technology based on the country's natural resources and for the development of special skills aiming at promoting self-reliance ;
 6. information transfer and the establishment of effective information-handling capabilities should be developed in parallel with a strengthening of the system of scientific and technological public services in agriculture, natural resources, environment standards, norms and measures, industrial expansion, etc. ;
 7. the UN system should be shaped in such a way as to make it more efficient in assisting the developing countries to put to better use science and technology on a co-operative and co-ordinated basis, possibly by extending the functions of the five UN Regional Commissions ;
 - d. to invite the UNCSTD Secretary General and the preparatory committee of the Conference to regard as a contribution to UNCSTD the findings of the scientific conferences organised by the European Joint Committee on Scientific Cooperation on :
 - the management of groundwater resources ;*
 - exploiting the energy of residual bio-mass ;*
 - space techniques in the management of natural resources.*