

and forests. Interestingly, the State Department modeled its conference on its 1978 Strategy Conference on Tropical Deforestation, which led to more substantive outcomes, in terms of programmes and projects, than might have been expected.

This writer believes that we shall be hearing much more of the disappearing-species problem as an international political issue—and we shall be hearing about it from the Third Worlders, who now realize that they are sitting on abundant stocks of exceptional-value natural resources in the form of their wildlife communities (wildlife in its properly broad sense, not just a few glamorous cats and primates, but thousands of plants and millions of insects). Ironically, the nations with the technological capacity to exploit the genetic diversity inherent among species (and within species) are the technologically-advanced nations of the developed world. Thus the disappearing-species challenge needs to be confronted within a context of the North–South dialogue. What a prospect for international conflict—or cooperation!

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CONFERENCE OF (DIRECTORS OF) RESEARCH INSTITUTES ON DISARMAMENT, HELD IN THE PALAIS DES NATIONS, GENEVA, SWITZERLAND, DURING 16–18 NOVEMBER 1981

The United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR), which has been in existence only since October 1980, organized the above three-days' Conference as its first important public manifestation. The Conference also constituted the first occasion on which a real global exchange of information and views on disarmament research had been held at an international level.

Participants included more than 50 representatives of research institutes from all over the world, of some 15 international organizations, and of other parts of the UN system, as well as a number of members of the diplomatic disarmament community in Geneva and non-governmental organizations as observers.

The Conference was opened by the Director-General of the United Nations Office in Geneva, Luigi Cottafavi, who read a message addressed to the participants by the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

After recalling the background from which UNIDIR had convened this Conference—*inter alia* the need that had been repeatedly-stressed in the UN General Assembly for the international community to be provided with more diversified and complete information on problems related to the armaments race and disarmament—the Director of UNIDIR, Liviu Bota, proposed the development of wide and profound cooperation between the different members of the disarmament research community. This should enable improved use to be made of the

*Dr Myers's participation in this Conference was made possible through travel support from the Spirit of Stockholm Foundation. His address, since we went to press, has changed to: Upper Meadow, Old Road, Headington, Oxford, UK.—Ed.

resources available, avoid unnecessary parallelism and duplication, and strengthen the impact of disarmament research on governmental policies, deliberations, and negotiations in the disarmament field.

The agenda of the Conference included the following items:

—Review of current disarmament research activities and programmes, and of new projects;

—Strengthening of cooperation among disarmament research institutes;

—Data documentation and statistics on the armaments race and on disarmament, and measures to facilitate access to them;

—Contribution of disarmament research to the Second Special Session of the UN General Assembly devoted to disarmament.*

Of the rich exchange of information and suggestions during the session, only a broad outline can be given here.

It was felt that the world-wide participation characterizing this Conference was an encouraging feature, and it was agreed that UNIDIR would organize such meetings periodically. Many called upon UNIDIR to be the focal point for collection and re-dissemination of information of interest to pertinent research institutes. There was also general recognition of the crucial importance of promoting autonomous disarmament research in the developing countries, as a necessary step towards obtaining more valid perspectives than were currently available on the issues concerned. The presence of research institutes coming from the developing countries was in this respect very encouraging. The establishment of a Disarmament Data Base, on which UNIDIR had submitted a preliminary study, was one of the main points on the agenda, and was extensively discussed by the participants, who enthusiastically supported the proposal to establish such a Base.

As regards substance and approach, the point most persistently stressed was the need to consider disarmament problems in the context of security. The key to disarmament, it was felt, resides in finding approaches which can reconcile the quest for global and regional security through disarmament, with the legitimate and primordial concern of States for their immediate security. R & D, the armaments race, and the disarmament/development nexus, were also frequently mentioned as essential subjects for study. There was a consensus among the participants that disarmament research should be a topic of the next Special Session of the UN General Assembly devoted to disarmament*, and it was agreed that the Director of UNIDIR would submit a report of the Conference to the preparatory committee of that session.

It was also repeatedly stressed that, if one essential function of disarmament research is to provide facts, insight, and options for negotiating and deliberating bodies, another no less important function is to contribute to an enlightened public opinion, conveying a realistic understanding of the urgency of disarmament, of the possibility of disarmament given the political will, and also of the real difficulties which are likely to be encountered.

*Scheduled to be held in New York from 7 June to 9 July 1982.—Ed.

Research and analysis, the actions of States, and an enlightened and committed public opinion, are all essential if disarmament is to progress.

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INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM ON MAN'S IMPACT ON ECOSYSTEM DYNAMICS WITH EMPHASIS ON THE INFLUENCE OF ENVIRONMENTAL POLLUTION, HELD IN TOKYO, JAPAN, DURING 15–17 DECEMBER 1981

This Symposium was related to the MAB decennium, a Cooperative Research Project on 'Basic Approaches to the Environment in Relation to Human Survival' having been conducted from 1971 to 1977 with the aid of a grant-in-aid from the Ministry of Education, Culture, and Science. After that, a new Special Research Project on 'Environmental Science', was established in 1978 and is now proceeding with the help of physicians, agriculturists, chemists, biologists, and economists. Some of their results are included in *Researches Related to UNESCO's Man and the Biosphere Programme in Japan* (1977–78, 1978–79, 1979–80, 1980–81, and 1981–82).

The Symposium was organized by the Organizing Committee of Tohoku University, under the sponsorship of the MAB National Committee of Japan and the MAB Coordinating Committee of the Special Research Project on Environmental Science.

The delegates came from Australia, New Zealand, Thailand, Malaysia, China, Indonesia, and Korea, as well as Japan—also from West Germany for the Coordinating Committee of MAB. Besides these, members of the United Nations University (Tokyo) and some visiting scientists in Japanese universities and institutes, joined the Japanese participants (who numbered about 100).

During the three days of the Symposium, 32 papers were presented on various aspects of atmospheric, water, and soil, pollution, and on eutrophication, landfills, watersheds, development, and conservation—also, environmental monitoring, urban ecosystems, pest control, and other topics, were discussed.

The Symposium proved an effective step for further development of MAB-related and MAB-minded researches, and on the evening of December 16th there was a round-table discussion on 'International and Regional Cooperation on the MAB programme'.

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INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION, HELD AT THE VIGYAN BHAWAN, NEW DELHI, INDIA, DURING 16–20 DECEMBER 1981

This, the largest-ever Conference held on the subject in India, was organized by the Indian Environmental Society and the Department of Environment, Govern-

ment of India, with active institutional and individual participation of many governmental and non-governmental organizations both national and international. The participants were 271 Indian scientists, environmentalists, sociologists, and representatives of religious establishments, besides 52 foreign nationals drawn from 25 countries.

The Conference was structured on eight thematic sessions at which 70 papers were presented, including keynote and other addresses, besides 5 special lectures, 2 working groups, film- and slide-shows, music-cum-demonstration of the working of the Chipko movement,* an exhibition of books and posters, and a mid-conference whole-day excursion to Bharatpur Bird sanctuary. It ended with the adoption of a set of recommendations—the Delhi Declaration on Environmental Education—and a decision to set up an Indian Environmental Congress Association for the holding of biennial sessions beginning with the end of the Stockholm conference decade in 1982.

The Conference was inaugurated by Dr B. P. Pal, FRS, formerly Chairman of the National Committee on Environmental Planning, and was presided over by C.P.N. Singh, Minister of State for Environment, both of whom emphasized the role of environmental education in development on sound ecological principles. Dr M. S. Swaminathan, FRS, a Member of the Indian Planning Commission, and Dr Desh Bandhu, President of the Indian Environmental Society, explained the structure of the Conference and the need of education for environmental awareness and action. Dr N. L. Ramanathan, Director of the Department of Environment, and Dr Jun Ui, President of the Asian Environmental Society, highlighted the genesis, aims, and goals, of the Conference. All these speakers emphasized the importance of developing meaningful educational programmes for the sustenance of a healthy Biosphere and happy life—for which the co-operation of the Government, the public, and the media, was sought.

The keynote addresses were delivered by Dr (Mrs) Madhuri R. Shah, Chairman of the University Grants Commission, on the Significance of Environmental Education, by Mrs Margaret Biswas & Dr Asit K. Biswas, now resident in Oxford, England, on the Major Requirements for Environmental Education,† by Professor R. Misra, of Varanasi, on Ecological Systems as a Guide to Value-Oriented Environmental Education, and by Mrs Julia Martin Lefevre, of IUCN, on Environmental Education in the Perspective of IUCN.

Special lectures were delivered on Agriculture and Environment by Dr H. K. Jain, Director of the Indian Agricultural Research Institute; Save the Soil—Save the Nation, by Dr J. S. Kanwar, Director of ICRISAT, Hyderabad; The UNEP Programme in Environmental Education, by Peter Thacher, Deputy Executive Director of UNEP; Infoterra—UNEP Information System, by Ashok Khosla, Acting Director; and The Role of Mass Media in Environmental Education, by M. Y. Sharada Prasad, Information Adviser to the Prime Minister, New Delhi.

*Involving the hugging of trees to save them from being cut down—see the account by Gopa Joshi published in *Environmental Conservation*, 8 (1), pp. 3–4 with fig., 1981, and that by Richard St Barbe Baker in our Vol. 8, No. 3, pp. 226–7, 1981.—Ed.

†Published in substance on pp. 125–30 of this issue.—Ed.