Twenty-eighth session
Items 35 and 50 of the provisional agenda*

URGENT NEED FOR SUSPENSION OF NUCLEAR AND THERMONUCLEAR TESTS

UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME

Note by the Secretary-General

The Secretary-General has the honour to transmit to the members of the General Assembly the attached communication, which he has received from the Director-General of the World Health Organization.

* A/9100.
LETTER DATED 3 JULY 1973 FROM THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL OF THE WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE UNITED NATIONS

I have the honour to communicate to you the text of resolution WHA26.57 entitled "Problems of the Human Environment: Urgent need for suspension of testing of nuclear weapons", adopted by the twenty-sixth World Health Assembly, on 23 May 1973.

In accordance with the request in operative paragraph 3 it would be appreciated if you could bring this resolution to the attention of all Member States of the United Nations.

(Signed) M. G. CANDAU
Director-General
The Twenty-sixth World Health Assembly,

Conscious of the potentially harmful consequences for the health of present and succeeding generations from any contamination of the environment resulting from nuclear weapons testing,

Recognizing that fall-out from nuclear weapons tests is an uncontrolled and unjustified addition to the radiation hazards to which mankind is exposed,

Expressing serious concern that nuclear weapons testing in the atmosphere has continued in disregard of the spirit of the Treaty banning nuclear weapons tests in the atmosphere, in outer space and under water,

Recalling the Constitution of the World Health Organization and in particular the following principles:

(1) that the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health is one of the fundamental rights of every human being without distinction of race, religion, political belief, economic and social conditions, and

(2) that the health of all peoples is fundamental to the attainment of peace and security and is dependent upon the fullest cooperation of individuals and States,

Conscious also of the special responsibility of members of the United Nations family of organizations to express their concern, in the areas coming within their respective competences, about the implications for present and future generations of mankind of continued nuclear weapons testing,

Further recalling that the World Health Assembly in resolution WHA19.39 of May 1966 called upon all countries to cooperate in preventing an increase in the level of background radiation in the interests of the health of the present and future generations of mankind,

Noting with regret that all States have not yet adhered to the Treaty banning nuclear weapons tests in the atmosphere, in outer space and under water, signed in Moscow on 5 August 1963,

Further recalling Resolution 2934 A-C (XXVII) of the United Nations General Assembly of 29 November 1972 and Principle No. 26 of the Declaration of the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment that man and his environment must be spared the effects of nuclear weapons and all other means of mass destruction,

Further noting that certain Member States of the World Health Organization have in several fora expressed their overwhelming opposition to nuclear weapons testing, and especially to testing which exposed their peoples to radioactive fall-out,

Further noting and endorsing the views expressed by such bodies as UNSCEAR and the ICRP that any avoidable increase in the level of ionizing radiation in the atmosphere is unjustifiable and constitutes a potential long-term danger to health,
1. EXPRESSES its deep concern at the threat to the health of present and future generations and at the damage to the human environment which might be expected from any increase in the level of ionizing radiation in the atmosphere,

2. DEPLORES therefore all nuclear weapons testing which results in such an increase in the level of ionizing radiation in the atmosphere and urges its immediate cessation,

3. INVITES the Director-General of the World Health Organization to bring this resolution to the attention of the Secretary-General of the United Nations with a request that he inform all member states of the United Nations of its contents.

Sixteenth plenary meeting, 23 May 1973
A26/VR/16