

The former inhabitants of the floodplain lands of Iraq utilized the waters of the River Euphrates for at least 6,000 years. By so doing, empires dependent upon irrigated agriculture flourished and then decayed, leaving behind spectacular ruins practically throughout Mesopotamia. Until the time of the Second World War, Iraq was the only country within the Euphrates basin that made large demands on the water resources of the River. Since that time, Iraq's demand has continued to increase, resulting in average water withdrawals of over 16,000 million m³/year during the 1960s. This figure represents about 45% of the average annual discharge of the Euphrates into Iraq.

Since the mid-1960s, both Syria and Turkey have planned major dam schemes to utilize the waters of the Euphrates. The Tabqa Dam in Syria, and the Keban Dam in Turkey, have already been constructed, and Turkey has planned other major hydraulic works along its section of the River. When the irrigation projects associated with these schemes are in full operation towards the end of the century, it seems that the likely demand for water will be in excess of the available flow of the River.

The country which is likely to suffer most as a result of this is Iraq, owing to its situation in the lowest part of the basin. Already, diplomatic relationships between Syria and Iraq have been severely strained as the result of disagreements about the allocation of the water resources of the River Euphrates. In future, it seems possible that such disputes will continue to occur, and perhaps also to become of increasing severity as both Turkey and Syria begin to use large proportions of the available river-flow for irrigation. The only permanent solution to the problem would seem to be the establishment of an international body to supervise the just allocation of the water resources of the Euphrates between Turkey, Syria, and Iraq. At present it seems unlikely that a lasting agreement will be reached between the three countries.*

* A referee comments, however, that there is no need for pessimism in such matters of agreement between countries sharing water resources of river basins. Already there exist examples of successful agreements of this nature, including that between Egypt and Sudan mentioned by the Author in the introduction to the present paper, and also the ones concerning the Niger and Senegal Rivers in West Africa.—Ed.

Towards a Viable International Development Strategy *

There are three basic elements which must be considered essential ingredients of a reshaped global development strategy, and which need to be elaborated and implemented in a mutually-supporting manner. These are, first, the national development strategies of individual countries; secondly, the international measures required to provide

* Some ideas taken from a 1977 report of the Secretary-General of UNCTAD on 'The evolution of a viable international development strategy', TD/B/642, and published with his approval.—Ed.

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adequate support for national development efforts; and, thirdly, the strengthening of the development process on the basis of the collective self-reliance of Third World countries.

National Development Policies

While there is great diversity among developing countries in their styles and strategies of development, they possess in common certain general features which reflect their economic dependence on the developed countries. The

stress given, in the concept of a new international economic order, to the need for measures to reduce excessive economic dependence, implies that developing countries should reorientate policies towards a *development strategy based on the principle of self-reliance*. A self-reliant development strategy would involve a conscious effort by these countries to restructure their economies away from excessive dependence on external factors such as sources of economic growth, towards new, more self-centred, styles of development in which the external sector is adapted to serve the needs of the domestic economy. This does not imply a movement towards autarky in the sense of absolute self-sufficiency, but rather a shift in the pattern and direction of foreign trade.

An effective mobilization and reallocation of domestic resources for productive activities more closely geared to internal needs will result in changes in the patterns of both production and consumption, and hence in changes in the patterns of exports and imports—including more intensive interchange of goods and services among the developing countries themselves. A self-reliant development strategy would be a prerequisite for satisfying the basic needs of the population. The 'basic needs' approach has found its most explicit recognition and endorsement in the Programme of Action adopted by the ILO World Employment Conference in June 1976. However, a 'basic needs' approach to development should not be interpreted as amounting merely to programmes of social welfare and income distribution.

Income redistribution must be associated with appropriate changes in the production structure—including the creation of new productive capacities, designed to meet the new demand-pattern generated by an income redistribution policy—while also maintaining exports at levels that are adequate to finance the changed pattern of imports required. A vast expansion in the total output of food, in agricultural inputs, and in industrial products for mass consumption in the Third World, will be required. The development process should also generate the scientific and technological skills which allow for a meaningful reduction in the present overwhelming technological dependence of the Third World on the developed countries.

International Support for the Development Effort

A restructuring of the existing international economic framework to make it far more conducive to the success of the development effort would need to cover all the main areas of economic interchange between developing and developed countries. In the field of primary commodities, an essential element in a restructured framework would be a comprehensive series of commodity agreements to strengthen and stabilize the markets for developing countries' principal commodity exports. Such agreements, as envisaged in the UNCTAD Integrated Programme for Commodities, would operate to project agreed price minima, in real terms, for the principal commodity exports of developing countries. Commodity stabilization operations will need to be supported by a substantial expansion in scope, and improvement in terms, of existing compensatory financing arrangements to offset residual fluctuations in the real export earnings of individual developing countries.

Such new, or improved, institutional arrangements would promote the longer-term strengthening of the commodity sectors of Third World countries. They would, in addition, constitute a 'safety-net' to protect the development effort from the adverse consequences of short-term instability in the developed world. The concept of a 'safety-net' is already in operation for developed countries, but for developing countries it has not yet been effectively implemented.

Changes are also required in the economic policies of developed countries to support the process of industrialization and technological development of Third World countries. A reorientation in existing industrial and trade policies of developed countries, including adjustment assistance policies, will be required in order to encourage the creation in developing countries of new industrial capacity and additional employment. Trade policy changes should include substantial reductions in existing trade barriers to the manufactured exports of developing countries, and the phasing out of various 'voluntary' export restraint arrangements.

The code of conduct on technology transfer, and the principles and rules for the regulation of restrictive business practices, both of which are currently under negotiation in UNCTAD, will constitute a new and favourable institutional framework for ensuring that the activities of transnational corporations, and of other enterprises of developed countries, support and promote the industrialization objectives of host developing countries.

A thoroughgoing reform of the international monetary system, as well as of the rules governing trade-flows, taking into account the interdependence between trade, money, and development finance, is essential. Moreover a really significant reduction in armaments expenditure, coupled with the diversion of resources to aid the development effort, would appear to be a necessary ingredient of a viable development strategy for the 1980s.

It is evident that the elaboration of new quantitative targets for the growth of gross national product, foreign trade, and industrial and agricultural production, would be of little significance unless, first, they are related to a coherent and viable development strategy designed to achieve specified targets which are set at realistic levels and, secondly, governments place high priority on implementing internationally agreed policy-measures which are central to the success of a new strategy.

Collective Self-reliance

A coherent programme which all countries of the Third World can support would need to be firmly based on the principle that developing countries accord each other a preference which would favour their mutual economic exchanges as compared with their exchanges with the developed countries. The nature of the preference would need to be tailored to the particular flows of trade, finance, and technology, that were being covered, while the preferential margin, or margins, could be the subject of negotiations.

Preferential arrangements might well include a Third World trade-preference scheme, a Third World payments arrangement, a Third World bank, joint productive projects such as multinational enterprises, and joint actions by developing countries to increase their countervailing power in their economic relations with the developed countries, so that home-produced goods have at least an equal chance to imported ones.

Many of the essential elements of a system of collective self-reliance have already been identified by organizations of the developing countries themselves, and in-depth studies of a number of these elements are in progress in UNCTAD. What is needed is agreement on the key arrangements to be pursued on a priority basis, and the institutional mechanisms required to implement them.

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