

United Nations
**GENERAL
ASSEMBLY**

THIRTY-FOURTH SESSION

Official Records *



SECOND COMMITTEE
35th meeting
held on
Friday, 9 November 1979
at 10.30 a.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 35th MEETING

UN LIBRARY

NOV 19 1979

Chairman: Mr. MURGESCU (Romania)

UN/SA COLLECTION

CONTENTS

AGENDA ITEM 59: OPERATIONAL ACTIVITIES FOR DEVELOPMENT (continued)

AGENDA ITEM 68: TECHNICAL CO-OPERATION AMONG DEVELOPING COUNTRIES (continued)

ORGANIZATION OF WORK

* This record is subject to correction. Corrections should be sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned *within one week of the date of publication* to the Chief of the Official Records Editing Section, room A-3550, 866 United Nations Plaza (Alcoa Building), and incorporated in a copy of the record.

Corrections will be issued after the end of the session, in a separate fascicle for each Committee.

79-58241 5477E (E)

Distr. GENERAL
A/C.2/34/SR.35
14 November 1979

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

/...

The meeting was called to order at 10.40 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 59: OPERATIONAL ACTIVITIES FOR DEVELOPMENT (continued) (A/34/430 and 463; A/C.2/34/6)

AGENDA ITEM 68: TECHNICAL CO-OPERATION AMONG DEVELOPING COUNTRIES (continued) (A/34/415)

1. Mr. KHAN (Pakistan) said that the discussion of operational activities at the current session was of special significance because of the imminence of the third programming cycle of UNDP. His delegation was gratified that UNDP, having weathered the financial crisis of 1976, had made progress towards sound financial management and much higher field expenditures. It should be noted, however, that if inflationary factors were taken into account, the delivery of expert services, equipment, fellowships and subcontracts under the Programme in 1978 had not matched the level attained in 1975. Nevertheless, the Administrator had brought about recovery in a short period, and his delegation hoped that that trend would be continued and strengthened with a view to achieving real growth in all aspects of programme delivery. Moreover, prudent financial management also implied maintaining only the essential minimum level of operational reserves.

2. His delegation was happy to note that there had been an increase of 15 per cent in the voluntary contributions pledged for 1978 and that the level of those contributions had been substantially on target. Despite its limited resources, his Government had consistently achieved the targeted growth of 14 per cent in its annual contributions to UNDP. He hoped that all major donor countries would make further efforts to achieve and maintain the 14 per cent growth rate in their contributions, as that would be the minimum required to achieve real growth in UNDP programme delivery during the forthcoming programming cycle.

3. His delegation was concerned at the continuing rise in programme support and agency overhead costs in recent years. The Intergovernmental Working Group on Support Costs had unfortunately not been able to accomplish the task assigned to it by the Governing Council and a further study by a group of eminent experts had been called for; a solution had therefore been further delayed. His delegation hoped that a definite solution would have been found by the following session of the Governing Council.

4. While the over-all picture of the performance of UNDP augured well for the launching of the third IPF cycle, progress on a number of key issues had not been altogether satisfactory. The most important of those issues was the implementation of the "new dimensions" concept at the operational and field levels of UNDP activities. There was broad consensus on the need to change the orientation of UNDP technical assistance with a view to directing it towards the national and collective self-reliance of developing countries by translating the "new dimensions" concept into practical operational programmes and changing the component mix of the technical assistance. Effective action was therefore needed to enhance the flexibility and dynamism of UNDP's technical assistance and to make the scope of its activities and working methods responsive to the changing needs

/...

(Mr. Khan, Pakistan)

and priorities of the developing countries, and compatible with the need to establish a new international economic order.

5. To that end, a number of practical steps could be considered. It might be possible to specify in each country's programme, taking into account its particular economic situation and development needs, the proportion of experts, equipment, contracts and subcontracts that could be procured from the recipient country itself. Similarly, the country and regional programmes could include specific shares of the inputs to be procured from other developing countries in the region and elsewhere. In addition, in view of the need to transfer the highest possible technology content in UNDP technical assistance to developing countries, evaluations of country programmes should make specific provision for that aspect. In general, his delegation wished to see UNDP regularly evaluate the rate of implementation of the "new dimensions" concept in over-all programme delivery, possibly by requiring its field offices to carry out periodic evaluations, with comprehensive reports being submitted to the Governing Council each year.

6. His delegation was encouraged by the progress achieved at the twenty-sixth session of the Governing Council in evolving an equitable basis for the IPF allocations for the third cycle. The discussions held on the proposals that were put forward, especially by the Group of 77, could form a good basis for reaching satisfactory agreement on that question at the special session of the Governing Council in February 1980.

7. If the United Nations Capital Development Fund was to become really effective and operational, it would need much greater financial support from developed countries. It was notable that out of the total of 67 countries contributing to the Fund, only 18 were developed countries. In 1978 only 30 countries, 20 of which had been recipients, had achieved the target of 14 per cent increase in the Fund resources. His delegation urged the donor countries to increase their contributions substantially with a view to making the Fund operational on a meaningful scale.

8. The technical co-operation activities of the United Nations needed to be brought into line with the new concepts of technical co-operation emerging in the context of UNDP operational activities. Indeed, the "new dimensions" concept should permeate all United Nations technical assistance activities systematically. With regard to sectoral priorities in United Nations technical co-operation activities, his delegation wished to see greater emphasis on food and agriculture, industrialization, and transport and communications.

9. His delegation was gratified by the expansion of the resources of the United Nations Fund for Population Activities as a result of growing contributions. Despite that increase, however, the gap between the demand for assistance from UNFPA and its available resources had been widening. He hoped that UNFPA's resources would continue to increase at a rate commensurate with the needs of the developing countries.

10. His delegation fully supported the objective of providing technical and financial assistance to enable both land-locked and transit developing countries

/...

(Mr. Khan, Pakistan)

to address the problems of transport and communication bottle-necks in transit trade. It accordingly urged donor countries to contribute generously to the United Nations Special Fund for Land-locked Developing Countries. Those countries' problems could not be tackled, however, without taking into account the structural constraints arising from under-development and paucity of resources in transit countries.

11. His delegation supported the global target proposed in the report of the UNICEF Executive Board and the proposed medium-term plan. It welcomed the recommendations of the Joint Inspection Unit on the programming and budgeting aspects of UNICEF activities, and it endorsed the Board's conclusions on priorities for primary health care, water supply, sanitation, expanded immunization and child mental health programme.

12. His delegation urged the General Assembly to endorse the Economic and Social Council resolution concerning the World Food Programme minimum target of \$1 billion. His country had benefited greatly from WFP assistance and contributed regularly to it according to its capacity.

13. His delegation attached great importance to the High-Level Meeting on technical co-operation among developing countries to be organized in 1980, pursuant to the Buenos Aires Plan of Action, and to the preparations being made by the Administrator of UNDP. It commended the action taken by UNDP to strengthen the institutional framework for the implementation of TCDC projects. There should, however, be a wide range of activity throughout the United Nations system with a view to strengthening its capacity to assist the TCDC activities of developing countries effectively, and he hoped that the High-Level Meeting would accelerate the implementation of the Buenos Aires Plan of Action.

14. Mr. HYNNINEN (Finland) said that the operational activities of the United Nations system offered both donors and recipients of assistance some unique advantages not available under any other system of assistance. However, the United Nations system was not known for its efficiency or result orientation. In many cases, the causes of inefficiency were attributable to lack of coherence and co-ordination among the agencies and organizations concerned. One reason often advanced for the lack of coherence was that the system was originally designed to be a polycentric one and that any attempt to increase co-ordination would be contrary to the aims of the United Nations Charter. However, the Charter also contained numerous provisions aimed at an efficient and co-ordinated United Nations system, and the polycentricity embodied in it should not become an excuse for circumventing those provisions. Similarly, proponents of efficiency through interagency co-operation were accused of advocating "centralism" to serve their political objectives; it was claimed, for example, that donor countries' insistence on more efficiency was just a way of camouflaging their aspiration to dictate to the recipients the purposes for which aid from the United Nations system could be used. Advocates of that theory, however, consistently failed to explain why those Governments, including his, that were most eager to promote efficiency were among those which most emphatically defended the right of recipient countries to determine their own priorities in the use of development

(Mr. Hynninen, Finland)

assistance. There was therefore no sinister motive - only the difficulty of explaining to national decision-makers why continuously increasing support should go to a system which was known to be generally inefficient.

15. Another argument often heard, particularly from within the system itself, was that the more special-purpose funds there were, the more donors were enticed to contribute. The truth of that argument could not be proven one way or the other. What was indisputable, however, was that inefficiency, resulting from overlapping, duplication and bureaucratic rivalry, tended to lessen the confidence of both donor and recipient Governments in the United Nations system. Consequently, a very strong argument for increasing contributions to multilateral technical assistance would be a co-ordinated, multidisciplinary approach to its financing. The large number of special-purpose funds, trust funds and special accounts of all kinds which were languishing for lack of money provided eloquent proof of that assertion. After all, the chief advantage of the United Nations system's operational activities was that aid channelled through United Nations agencies and organizations was likely to be fully in accordance with the priorities of the recipient countries. That principle was, however, seriously eroded by lack of co-ordination and rivalry between agencies. Improved co-operation within the system, particularly at the field level, was the best guarantee for the recipient Governments that their views and objectives would prevail. His delegation hoped that the report requested in General Assembly resolution 33/201 would provide a solid basis for eliciting the views of Member countries on the basic improvements needed in the system of development activities of the United Nations.

16. His delegation believed that UNDP was the keystone of the operational activities of the United Nations system. At its most recent session the Governing Council had begun a negotiation process on what was perhaps its most important task, the allocation of IPFs for the recipient countries during the third programming cycle. His delegation was in favour of orienting UNDP and the rest of the United Nations development system more towards the needs of the poorest countries, in line with UNCTAD resolution 122 (V). Apart from considerations of equity and justice, that view was also based on a realistic assessment of the system's resource base in the foreseeable future. That did not mean that his delegation was in favour of the exclusion of any country or group of countries from UNDP assistance; what it advocated was new modalities for financing assistance to those developing countries which were at the upper end of the GNP per capita scale.

17. The February 1980 meeting of the intergovernmental study group on multiyear financing of UNDP would have far-reaching implications for the entire system. The Government of Finland had consistently taken a favourable view of that approach which, apart from securing a more stable financial base for UNDP, also presented an opportunity to adjust the burden of financing its operations, which, as matter stood, was borne predominantly by a small group of industrialized countries. His delegation saw no compelling reason why UNDP could not be financed in basically the same manner as, for instance, the International Development Association.

/...

(Mr. Hynninen, Finland)

18. The United Nations Fund for Population Activities was one of the authentic success stories of the United Nations development system. Its position as a sister agency to UNDP had also proven to be a good combination of separate funding for that crucial sector of economic development and adequate integration with the central funding and co-ordinating agency.

19. UNICEF, with its approach to basic services to children through co-operation with WHO, was a pertinent example of the kind of interagency co-operation which the system should strive for. His country's confidence in UNICEF's ability to carry out its task was reflected by the considerable increase of its contribution to that body.

20. With regard to the responsibilities of the resident co-ordinator for the United Nations system's operational activities, his delegation believed that each recipient country had the right to co-ordinate aid inputs and confine the role of the resident co-ordinator strictly to operational activities. Such a solution to the problem of co-operation and co-ordination would be a practical step towards increasing the efficiency of the system at the field level. The question of efficiency and effectiveness was intimately linked to the larger aim of the United Nations development system: the provision of a steady and adequate flow of resources, free of political or economic ties of any kind, to those developing countries in greatest need.

21. Mr. LAZAREVIC (Yugoslavia) said that UNDP was continuing to play its successful role of helping the developing countries to meet their pressing economic and social needs. It was shouldering its share of assistance and support to the extent that financial resources at its disposal permitted. The results of the 1979 Pledging Conference for Development Activities had not met expectations with respect to an increase in resources, a fact that gave cause for serious concern and would undoubtedly have an adverse impact on technical assistance co-operation activities in general. That situation, in conjunction with inflation, which reduced the real value of resources for both official development assistance and technical assistance through UNDP and other funds, meant that the real value of all forms of assistance was stagnating or declining at a time when developing countries, especially the least developed and most seriously affected nations, were confronted with an ever-deteriorating general economic environment in their development efforts. Against that background, UNDP had done everything possible to meet the growing needs of developing countries. Its improved management and over-all efficiency had manifested themselves in positive results in recent years, as evidenced by a number of projects approved or in the preparatory stages.

22. His delegation was gratified that the preparations for the third development cycle, 1982-1986, had started well in advance. The issues tackled in the Governing Council's discussions were very important for technical assistance co-operation in general and for the proper functioning of UNDP. While it was imperative to maintain the universality of UNDP, there should be an increase in the allocation of resources to the least developed and most seriously affected countries; in that respect, the second and third development cycles would differ

/...

Mr. Lazarević, Yugoslavia)

in the mode of allocating the total resources available for country indicative planning figures. While there had been and still were different views on that issue, further studies and the experience gained at the most recent session of the Governing Council should provide a satisfactory solution. While the main elements of the Consensus approved at the twenty-fifth session of the Assembly should be preserved, the Consensus should be updated in order better to reflect the current situation and requirements of individual countries. The issue was to be the subject of a special session of the Governing Council, and it was very important that a just and equitable solution be found which would lead to the further strengthening of UNDP and expansion of its financial base.

23. His delegation looked forward to the High-Level Meeting to be held in 1980 to review the implementation of the Buenos Aires Plan of Action. TCDC would increase even further each year with the accelerated development of developing countries. His delegation appreciated the role played by UNDP in initiating and developing that new dimension of international co-operation.

24. Mr. OLZVOY (Mongolia) said that his delegation shared the Administrator's view that the existing system of international economic relations no longer served the interests of either developing or developed countries. Developing countries were striving for economic independence and for a restructuring of international economic relations on a just and democratic basis. Organizations such as UNDP, UNICEF, and UNFPA therefore had the heavy responsibility of supplementing the developing countries' efforts to overcome their economic dependence. The criterion for evaluating the activities of those organizations should be how far they corresponded to the decisions of the sixth special session of the General Assembly and the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States and whether they were aimed at strengthening peace and achieving disarmament.

25. Some of UNDP's achievements included having overcome the consequences of its financial difficulties, its efforts to make effective use of all its resources, including accumulated non-convertible currencies, and its recognition of the needs of national liberation movements recognized by OAU and of the PLO. UNDP's technical assistance had become an important factor in eradicating the effects of colonialism in developing countries. Its technological assistance for the purpose of creating and strengthening industrial inputs was to be commended. Consistent support from UNDP for measures to strengthen the public sector and to increase control over the activities of transnational corporations would be welcomed in developing countries.

26. His country was especially grateful to UNDP for acting as "lead agency" in preparing the study on the role of qualified national personnel in the social and economic development of developing countries. In accordance with General Assembly resolution 33/135, the study should contain specific recommendations on the training of qualified national personnel in newly independent States. The recommendations should be aimed at co-ordinating the activities of all organizations in the United Nations system dealing with the subject, and should take account of all countries' experience. The experience of the socialist countries, which possessed a viable and harmonious system of education based on

/...

(Mr. Olzvoy, Mongolia)

the democratic principles of free education, non-discrimination on national, religious, sexual and other grounds, the provision to all graduates of work in their field and a systematic and consistent approach to learning, could be useful in that connexion. He hoped that the study would be submitted to the General Assembly at its thirty-fifth session, as provided in the relevant resolutions of the Economic and Social Council and the Governing Council.

27. His delegation believed that IPFs for the third UNDP programming cycle should be determined on the basis of the 1970 Consensus and the resolutions on "new dimensions". Recognition of the special needs of the least developed countries should not exclude other countries from receiving UNDP aid or reduce their IPFs, and the voluntary basis of UNDP funding should be preserved. His delegation had always had doubts about the use of population size as a major criterion for distributing UNDP resources, because development did not necessarily suffer as a result of population size. Other criteria should also be taken into account, such as a country's access to the sea and difficult climatic conditions. His delegation hoped that the Governing Council would reach a satisfactory solution of all questions relating to the third programming cycle.

28. His Government had welcomed the visit of the Administrator to the People's Republic of Mongolia in September 1979 as an opportunity for him to become acquainted with its use of UNDP aid and its views on future expansion of its co-operation with UNDP. In recent years the effectiveness of UNDP's technical assistance to his country had been growing owing to his Government's policy of using UNDP resources to carry out large-scale projects and concentrating it on the productive sectors of the economy. His Government's planning bodies had already begun to consider how best to use its IPF for the third cycle.

29. Children were a central concern of his Government. For that reason, his delegation attached great importance to co-operation with UNICEF. It was pleased to report that Mongolia's co-operation with UNFPA was growing, and believed that UNFPA assistance provided would successfully complement its own population policies.

30. Mr. BIKOUTA (Congo) said that his delegation, as a member of the UNDP Governing Council, had had an opportunity at the three most recent sessions to appreciate UNDP's effective action on behalf of the development of the developing countries. With a new programming cycle about to start, his delegation hoped that the negotiations begun at the twenty-sixth session and to be continued in February 1980 would be objective and based on genuine acceptance of the moral principles underlying UNDP's activities. In that connexion, his delegation attached particular importance to the question of the recruitment and utilization of experts from the developing countries.

31. UNICEF was to be congratulated on its sustained efforts on behalf of children everywhere, as reflected in the introductory statement to the Committee by the Deputy Executive Director (A/C.2/34/SR.32) and the report of the Executive Board. The International Year of the Child had been particularly important to the Congo. His Government had always done its best to provide children with decent conditions in which to develop, but, unfortunately, the efforts of the

/...

(Mr. Bikouta, Congo)

people and the Government were hampered by international economic conditions that frustrated all their hopes. Nevertheless, the problems of children would continue to receive priority consideration. That national policy towards children had met with sympathy abroad, as witnessed by the gift of 600 scholarships recently offered to Congolese young people by the people of Cuba. Although the Congo had one of the best rates of school enrolment in Africa, its soaring population growth rate was accompanied by structural and infrastructural difficulties, and it was therefore grateful for the assistance of the Cuban Government and people.

32. The United Nations Fund for Population Activities, in the 10 years of its existence, had become one of the most dynamic entities in the United Nations system. The population explosion since the Second World War demanded urgent attention in the context of the new international economic order. Since advanced economic development seemed to go hand in hand with a low rate of population growth it was clearly disquieting that rates of growth of up to 3 per cent were being recorded in the developing countries as against under 1 per cent in the industrialized countries. Only high mortality rates, particularly among children, restrained runaway growth in the developing countries. Unfortunately, few of the countries most directly affected were in a position to cope with the pressing problems of fertility, mortality, and internal and external migration. Some, if not most, African countries had special difficulty in that family planning was incompatible with the population's traditional belief that large families were a desirable asset. The Executive Director had warned of the danger of uncontrolled population growth, and his delegation firmly supported the various suggestions he had put forward, which were entirely in keeping with the major objective of the new international development strategy, namely, a new world economic order.

33. Mr. HOHWÜ-CHRISTENSEN (Sweden) said that the United Nations had a major and unique role in the development process. Multilateral assistance, while neutral and universal, gave the developing countries an opportunity to shape the development effort according to their own priorities, and it was for that reason that Sweden attached great importance to it. About one third of all Swedish development assistance was channelled through international organizations, chiefly the International Development Association and UNDP. At the recent Pledging Conference, Sweden had made a three-year pledge of 1 billion Swedish crowns, or approximately a quarter of a billion United States dollars to UNDP.

34. Several sources for technical assistance offering an alternative to UNDP had gained importance recently and had an important role to play. Some, such as the International Fund for Agricultural Development, had attracted additional funds that would not otherwise have been made available to the developing countries. The World Bank and the regional development banks had to have their own technical assistance programmes to supplement their capital input, and the specialized agencies needed both voluntary contributions and regular budgetary resources for innovative supplementary activities. It was important, however, that the UNDP country programming process should be utilized as a frame of reference for all United Nations operational activities, but that would be impossible unless UNDP was given a stronger financial base.

/...

(Mr. Hohwü-Christensen, Sweden)

35. His Government believed that UNDP was and should remain the centrepiece of the United Nations development system. That system could be made more efficient only by strengthening UNDP's central funding and co-ordinating role. Its ability to respond effectively to the demands of the developing countries in an ever-changing political and economic environment must be maintained, and disintegrating tendencies within the United Nations development system were to be resisted. UNDP's own resources should match the total of all other resources for technical assistance within the United Nations. That did not mean that contributions would have to be redirected from other United Nations organizations to UNDP, but that it should receive substantially larger resources. The increases pledged by some industrial countries at the Pledging Conference were therefore to be welcomed.

36. UNDP's main problem was that it was too small. Although it was the largest multilateral programme for technical assistance, it amounted to only about \$500 million, about the same as Sweden's bilateral assistance programme, most of which was concentrated in only 20 countries. Clearly, with such limited resources, UNDP was bound to have difficulty in making an impact. The Programme was too small for the needs it had to answer, too small for its own administrative apparatus, and too small to warrant fully the administrative effort made by the recipient countries.

37. It was essential, therefore, that UNDP's resources should be increased. A yearly increase of 14 per cent in the total programme was the minimum requirement, but that over-all target could be attained only if certain major countries increased their contributions by a much larger percentage. The outcome of the Pledging Conference was therefore not promising for the forthcoming third development cycle. Obviously, his country could not increase its own, already substantial, contribution by 14 per cent every year. It was already one of the few countries which had reached the official development assistance target of 1 per cent of GNP. Its current share of all voluntary contributions - 8 per cent of total contributions to UNFPA, 10 per cent in the case of UNDP, and 25 per cent in the case of the Capital Development Fund - was too heavy and clearly not sustainable in the long run. Other donor countries which were making only marginal contributions to UNDP should reconsider their policies. Three countries, of which Sweden was one, contributed 40 per cent of UNDP's total resources, and eight or nine countries accounted for 75 per cent of the total. In view of that lack of balance among donor countries, there was considerable scope for increasing UNDP's resources, and seen in that light the 14 per cent target was realistic and attainable.

38. Since UNDP commitments to developing countries were made on a long-term basis, donors should be required to provide their assistance in a more predictable and continuous form. The experience of other bodies had shown that there was no major practical obstacle to pledging assistance on a long-term basis, provided donor countries had the political will. His delegation therefore welcomed the Governing Council's decision to organize an intergovernmental study on the question of multiyear pledges and long-term financing. It hoped that the major economic Powers would make a substantial and constructive contribution towards multiyear pledging.

/...

(Mr. Hohwü-Christensen, Sweden)

39. Sweden believed that the greater part of UNDP's resources should go to the poorest countries; it was the low-income countries that needed UNDP the most. Their development was hampered more than that of other developing countries by institutional, managerial and organizational weaknesses, the sort of problems that UNDP had been set up to solve. It was clearly unsatisfactory, therefore, that their share of UNDP resources should be below the average percentage of total international assistance to them. His delegation would be guided by that consideration in the discussion of the allocations for the third development cycle. At the same time, it was not unappreciative of the role of UNDP for the middle-income developing countries.

40. The effect of the International Year of the Child would be an increasing number of requests from developing countries for UNICEF assistance. In order to enable it to support those countries' efforts to meet the urgent needs of their children, the industrialized countries must provide UNICEF with the necessary resources; the additional contributions should come from those donor countries which currently made only marginal contributions. His delegation accordingly welcomed the decision of the Executive Board of UNICEF to explore ways of securing a multiyear financial basis and looked forward to the secretariat's report on that issue. It also felt that the medium-term work plan adopted by the Executive Board at its most recent session would help UNICEF in its planning.

41. Mr. NISHIDA (Japan) expressed his delegation's satisfaction at the outstanding work of the many United Nations operational programmes and funds connected with technical co-operation, in particular the valuable activities of UNDP, UNICEF and UNFPA.

42. In his introductory statement (A/C.2/34/SR.29), the Administrator of UNDP had touched on such issues affecting technical co-operation programmes as the constraints imposed by inequitable international economic relationships, imbalances in the flow of official development assistance and the lack of a substantial real increase in such assistance, and the probable flow of resources over the forthcoming decade. The Governing Council of UNDP had discussed at its twenty-sixth session such important issues as the third programming cycle, the distribution of UNDP resources and multiyear pledging, all of which had a bearing on the future of UNDP activities. Instead of recapitulating those detailed and technical discussions, however, his delegation would raise some basic issues relating to medium- and long-term United Nations programmes of technical co-operation.

43. Looking at the prospects for world economic growth in the 1980s, it had to be recognized that there were many constraints, such as rising unemployment and inflation, that would not be easy to overcome. Many developed countries would face serious difficulty in expanding their programmes substantially in the 1980s, although it was to be hoped that every Government would do its utmost to increase its official development assistance. It was important, therefore, to make the best possible use of what was available, and UNDP, too, would have to order its priorities and try to use its limited resources as effectively as possible.

/...

(Mr. Nishida, Japan)

44. The order of UNDP priorities and the distribution of its resources should be determined through analysis of the economic situation of the developing countries and with an understanding of the broad function of the United Nations. The current pattern of economic growth was such that while, in relative terms, the income gap between the developed and developing countries was widening, there was an income gap also among the developing countries themselves. Disparity in terms of economic activity and of income among the developing countries was reflected in the diversity of their needs for technical co-operation.

45. A fundamental issue calling for consideration was the function of the United Nations. The Organization's efforts were all directed towards the maintenance of world peace and stability. In the economic context, those efforts could be translated into the unified goals of eradicating poverty and bringing about equality within and between countries. UNDP technical co-operation projects likewise should be directed towards solving those problems. The implementation of individual technical co-operation programmes was often discussed in the Governing Council and the Economic and Social Council, but his delegation believed that in the General Assembly itself it was important to discuss the ultimate aim of the technical co-operation extended by the United Nations system.

46. Although the United Nations technical co-operation programmes were implemented by many specialized agencies, UNDP should be the central body for channelling financial resources. At the same time, it should function as the central co-ordinating body for all programmes at the country and regional levels. It was, of course, essential that the technical programmes of each country should reflect its individual needs, but given the limited resources of UNDP, those resources should also be allocated to the programmes that would have the greatest impact on poverty and inequality.

47. His delegation endorsed the principle of universality, whereby all developing countries should enjoy the services of UNDP. However, in view of the limited resources available and the widening income gap among the developing countries, his delegation felt that a larger portion of those resources should be allocated to the poorer developing countries.

48. It was also important that the most efficient use possible should be made of the available resources. In particular, keeping overhead costs as low as possible must be a prime concern. While it was not possible to make a strict comparison between the support costs of technical co-operation projects of multilateral agencies and those of bilateral agencies, it might be enlightening to examine the size of UNDP support staff compared with that of bilateral aid agencies. In Japan's economic co-operation, which disbursed more than \$2 billion a year, increases in programmes were met by the rationalization of work procedures, not by increases in support staff. Similarly, by utilizing the support structures of recipient Governments, UNDP could reduce the cost of field offices and consultants, thereby rationalizing its overhead costs. He hoped that the Administrator of UNDP and all the specialized agencies would give earnest consideration to such possibilities.

/...

49. Mr. KUSMIERKIEWICZ (Poland) said that United Nations technical assistance activities played an increasingly important role in the common effort to accelerate the economic and social development of all countries, and of the developing countries in particular. Technical co-operation not only had a direct positive impact on the economic and social development of the world community but was also valuable in promoting co-operation among all countries, regardless of their economic and social systems, and thus contributing to the consolidation of détente and to international security, which was a prerequisite for development in all countries.

50. Among the operational activities of the United Nations, UNDP deserved particular attention and support, because of its role as the central funding organ for United Nations operational activities and of the task assigned to it in the resolution on the restructuring of the economic and social sectors of the United Nations system: to co-ordinate all operational activities within the United Nations system in order to achieve greater efficiency, to avoid duplication of work and reduce administrative costs, and thus to increase the proportion of resources available to meet recipient countries' requirements for assistance. His delegation was therefore gratified by the recent improvement in the rate of delivery of UNDP-financed field assistance activities, and it hoped that the trend would continue throughout the remaining years of the second programming cycle.

51. The strength and effectiveness of UNDP depended to a great extent on maintaining the basic principles outlined in the 1970 Consensus, namely, universal and voluntary participation in the rendering and receiving of technical assistance, without discrimination in regard to any particular group of countries. At the twenty-sixth session of the Governing Council, there had been a preliminary discussion of the criteria to be applied in calculating the indicative planning figures for the third programming cycle. Some delegations had stressed the need to shift more resources to assistance programmes in the least developed among the developing countries. His delegation supported that approach, but believed that it should be implemented by increasing the amounts allocated to those countries as a result of the over-all growth in UNDP resources rather than by eliminating some recipients of UNDP technical assistance at the middle or upper income levels, a step that would be detrimental to a significant number of developing countries.

52. His delegation shared the views expressed by a number of delegations about the need to improve the quality of technical assistance programmes and to continue the search for new forms of multilateral technical co-operation. The Administrator of UNDP had recently put forward the very interesting idea of "twinning" technical co-operation projects in the least developed countries with relevant institutions and technical assistance programmes in countries at a higher level of development. His Government was prepared to participate in such UNDP-co-ordinated activities and believed that such co-operation could be partially financed in future from the indicative planning figures allocated to the countries at a higher level of development; that form of multilateral technical co-operation would be a practical step towards implementing the Buenos Aires Plan of Action for technical co-operation among developing countries. It would mean a voluntary forgoing of indicative planning figures by some countries,

/...

(Mr. Kusmierkiewicz, Poland)

without having the undesirable effect of limiting participation in multilateral technical co-operation within the United Nations system. It would also improve the quality and effectiveness of the exchange of accumulated experience and skill to the benefit of the least developed countries.

53. A careful study of all the reports submitted on operational activities led to the conclusion that the effective utilization of available resources needed to be constantly pursued. More emphasis should be placed on reducing administrative and support costs and bringing programme activities closer to the field, so as to provide a better response to the needs of developing countries. One area requiring further improvement was the system of evaluating project effectiveness. In that context, his delegation believed that more intensive use should be made of the Joint Inspection Unit and greater attention should be paid to its findings. UNDP had made commendable efforts to utilize more effectively the financial resources made available to it, but there was still a need for better co-ordination with the executing agencies and more constructive and innovative co-operation on the part of those agencies.

54. His delegation continued to believe that multilateral technical co-operation activities within the United Nations system should be financed through voluntary funds, which should, as far as practicable, be consolidated with UNDP. That had been the position taken by the great majority of delegations during the discussions on the restructuring of the United Nations economic and social sectors. The trend towards multiplication of technical co-operation regular programmes and new voluntary funds was therefore a source of concern to his delegation, as was the trend towards charging technical assistance programmes to regular budgets in some of the specialized agencies, which would in the long run adversely affect their financial stability. His delegation was not and never had been opposed to the expansion of technical co-operation in the framework of the United Nations system, provided it was based on sound budgetary and financial practices and was consistent with existing regulations.

55. Poland had developed particularly close and fruitful relations with the United Nations Children's Fund. The retiring Executive Director, Mr. Labouisse, was to be commended on his able and far-sighted leadership of UNICEF for some 14 years. In that time UNICEF had consolidated its position within the United Nations system and been highly successful in promoting programmes for the benefit of children. He assured the new Executive Director of Poland's continued support for UNICEF's activities and its readiness to expand its active participation in them. The question of child and family care and welfare received much attention in Poland, and a Council for Family Affairs had recently been established at the governmental level to promote programmes in that field.

56. His Government was also interested in broadening its co-operation with the United Nations Fund for Population Activities, which in the 10 years of its existence had proved to be one of the most efficient and action-oriented of United Nations operational ventures. It was willing to organize in co-operation with UNFPA seminars and training programmes for participants from developing countries on population problems and on maternal and child care.

/...

57. Mr. WAPENYI (Uganda) said that UNDP'S response to Uganda's call for assistance soon after the fall of Idi Amin had been and was still very much appreciated by the Ugandan people, and they were counting on UNDP's expertise to mobilize financial resources for the country's shattered economy. His Government looked forward to increasing its co-operation with UNDP and hoped that its IPF would be augmented, in order to enable it to finance projects oriented towards establishing the new international economic order.

58. With regard to the report of the Governing Council (E/1979/40), his delegation subscribed to the proposal that the United Nations Revolving Fund for Natural Resources Exploration should become involved in geothermal exploration in developing countries, especially in the least developed countries. Such exploration, if successful, would enhance the economies of both developing and developed countries. His delegation also supported the setting up of an intergovernmental working group of experts to prepare for the review of the Fund's activities.

59. The Capital Development Fund was emerging as a major technical assistance agency, and his delegation would like to see more of its funds used in rurally oriented projects. The co-operation between UNCDF and UNDP was a positive aspect of co-ordination in the United Nations system and should be encouraged. His delegation hoped that UNCDF's activities in the least developed countries would be expanded.

60. His delegation had noted with satisfaction the role that UNICEF had played in the implementation of General Assembly resolution 31/169, and appreciated the assistance provided to Uganda in the preparations for the International Year of the Child. His Government was grateful for UNICEF's commitment to rehabilitate some boreholes in rural areas so as to provide the people with access to clean drinking water. It hoped that the UNICEF regional office would soon resume its functions in Kampala.

61. His delegation was gratified that, owing to increased contributions, UNFPA had been able to expand its activities in many developing countries. UNFPA had given valuable assistance to Uganda in its preparations for the census. The increase in its family planning programmes and population research and training programmes was to be welcomed.

62. With regard to the World Food Programme, his delegation was disquieted by the rapidly mounting food imports of developing countries. That trend was likely to continue for a long time unless developed countries took action to invest in agricultural projects in developing countries, many of which had ideal land and adequate rainfall for such purposes.

63. Technical co-operation among developing countries was one of the major means of strengthening their collective self-reliance and accelerating their development. It required the full support of all countries and of the United Nations system. The implementation of the Buenos Aires Plan of Action would constitute a major contribution to the establishment of the new international economic order, and technical co-operation among developing countries should form an important element of the new international development strategy. His delegation

/...

(Mr. Wapenyi, Uganda)

welcomed action to strengthen the Special Unit for TCDC and the utilization of the programme reserves for promoting technical co-operation among developing countries as steps towards more dynamic implementation of the Buenos Aires Plan of Action. It hoped that all organizations of the United Nations system would intensify their efforts to promote technical co-operation among developing countries in their respective fields of competence.

64. Mr. MANAZARY (Madagascar) said that technical co-operation among developing countries was destined to play a leading role in the development process of third world countries by enabling them to rely increasingly, individually and collectively, on their own capacities. It was also one of the most important instruments for eliminating the developing countries' dependence on the affluent countries.

65. The Buenos Aires Conference had been an important event in the evolution of the concept of self-reliance. The concept had gained further strength during the international economic negotiations. The Arusha Conference had enabled developing countries to explore many opportunities for co-operation, and at the fifth session of UNCTAD, they had urged that the concept of self-reliance should be an important component of the new international development strategy, and of the plans for restructuring the world economic system. The Sixth Summit Conference of Heads of State or Government of the Non-Aligned Countries had also reaffirmed its support for the principle of self-reliance. Accordingly, the promotion of technical co-operation among developing countries was a matter of growing importance.

66. The Buenos Aires Plan of Action provided an integrated framework for organizing the promotion of technical co-operation among developing countries. At the national level, it was for the Governments of developing countries to take decisions on the matter, and they had demonstrated through their actions their firm will to co-operate. His country, for example, was co-operating with other developing countries in the following fields: education, rural development, the civil service, postal and telecommunications services, transport, the economy and trade, and its national policy was to become even more active in technical co-operation among developing countries.

67. At the international level, there was consensus on the need to institutionalize TCDC. The relevant United Nations bodies and organizations had an important role to play by mobilizing additional resources. The entire United Nations development system should readjust its internal policies and procedures in accordance with the principles laid down in the Buenos Aires Plan of Action. His delegation therefore welcomed the General Assembly's decision at the thirty-third session to entrust the over-all intergovernmental review of technical co-operation among developing countries to a high-level meeting, and had taken note with interest of the proposals made on that matter by the Administrator in document A/34/415. The intergovernmental review should ensure the continuity of the efforts of the United Nations system to strengthen technical co-operation among developing countries. His delegation welcomed the strengthening of UNDP's capacity to promote technical co-operation among developing countries, and urged that the efforts of the entire United Nations system to that end should be fully

/...

(Mr. Manazary, Madagascar)

co-ordinated, with the full involvement of the regional commissions and all the organizations concerned.

68. With regard to the allocation of UNDP resources for the third programming cycle, while his delegation endorsed the principle of the universality of UNDP services, it believed that the proportion of all IPFs going to developing countries should be increased. It would continue to support all measures to reduce UNDP's non-operational expenditures; UNDP's goal should be to expand and ensure the financing of all activities embodied in country programmes and to strike a better balance between technical assistance and financial assistance.

69. Mr. RAMBISSOON (Trinidad and Tobago) said that UNDP had played a vital role in helping to bridge the enormous gap in the economic relationships between the rich and the poor countries, and its performance during the second programming cycle had been impressive. At its twenty-sixth session the Governing Council had begun intensive deliberations on the over-all shape and scale of the third programming cycle, and it was to meet again in February 1980 to continue the discussions. The outcome would largely determine the scope and impact of UNDP technical co-operation efforts in the development decade ahead.

70. The provision of substantial multilateral technical assistance to developing countries would be a vital part of the implementation of the new international development strategy, and increased official development assistance, especially through UNDP, was almost a sine qua non for the achievement of the development targets of those countries. His country therefore attached the greatest importance to the UNDP assistance it had received and hoped that it would continue at a level no lower than in the past.

71. The allocation of UNDP resources for the third programming cycle was a matter of considerable importance, and in that connexion he drew attention to paragraph 25 of the annex to General Assembly resolution 2688 (XXV), which clearly stated the proportions of the net resources to be made available for country and intercountry programming. His delegation urged that those proportions should be maintained.

72. The Governing Council was also considering the criteria for establishing individual country IPFs for the third cycle. His delegation believed that excessive importance was being attached to population and per capita GNP factors, the result being undue discrimination against small countries. There was no direct relationship between per capita GNP and population and a country's ability to participate in technical assistance schemes: while the two factors did provide useful guidelines, they were not totally adequate and did not always succeed in bringing assistance where it was needed. Small countries, and in particular island developing countries, faced specific problems which should qualify them for special assistance. The supplementary criteria proposed did, to some extent, alleviate the problem, but they had only a limited financial effect in relation to the basic criteria of population and income. He supported the proposal for a floor value for third-cycle IPFs; in particular, no country should receive less in the third cycle than it had in the second, allowing for the effects of inflation. His delegation was somewhat disturbed by the proposal that countries above a particular economic level should receive no real increase in their new IPFs; it had even been suggested

/...

(Mr. Rambissoon, Trinidad and Tobago)

that countries whose per capita income exceeded a certain level should have their IPFs frozen at 20 per cent above their second-cycle level. In his delegation's view, participation in the Programme should not be limited to certain countries on the basis of criteria which were not themselves the subject of total agreement. He was confident, however, that the Council would arrive at a solution acceptable to all.

73. It was gratifying that after the financial crisis of the mid-1970s, the operational activities of UNDP had shown welcome progress in numerous areas. For example, the recent United Nations Conference on Science and Technology for Development, which had entrusted to UNDP management responsibility for the Interim Fund for Science and Technology and Development, was a reflection of the wide range and effectiveness of UNDP's efforts. He looked forward to the Programme's continued role in helping to change the existing international economic order.

74. Referring to the activities of UNICEF, he said that the annual session of the Executive Board held in May 1979 at Mexico City had been preceded by a special meeting on children in Latin America and the Caribbean. His country had participated in that meeting, which had concentrated on three main themes: development of the young child, programmes benefiting children in urban areas, and programmes on behalf of children in marginal rural areas. The International Year of the Child had also been a success, and UNICEF would continue to be responsible for co-ordinating the development aspects of the follow-up activities of the Year. He expressed his Government's continuing support for UNICEF in that and all other aspects of its work.

75. Mr. LABBAN (Kuwait) said that the state of the world economy and the meagre results of recent international negotiations on establishing the new international economic order had dampened hopes for an early solution to many problems plaguing the developing countries. He noted with satisfaction that the UNDP leadership was aware of those problems and had begun to concentrate an increasing proportion of its resources on projects designed to advance the new order. Special attention should be given to matters related to trade, transfer of technology, expanding assistance in research and development, the adaptation of modern technologies to meet the economic needs of the developing countries, and the creation of suitable conditions for economic integration among developing countries in order to achieve collective self-reliance. He also welcomed the active participation of UNDP in the work on the new international development strategy. Country programming should be used more efficiently in the context of the new strategy, and efforts in that direction required the full integration of UNDP programmes and activities with those of the United Nations agencies and the regional economic commissions.

76. With regard to UNDP activities in the Arab region, he was pleased to note that the Regional Bureau for Arab States was making an assessment of major regional and national priorities in order to be in a better position to advise Governments and Resident Representatives on various issues. The complementary nature of the Arab economies had not yet been exploited, and his delegation was therefore taking a keen interest in the efforts of the Bureau to organize in 1980 a regional symposium of planners, development economists and others to discuss development needs, priorities and trends in the Arab world. He was gratified to note that TCDC would

/...

(Mr. Labban, Kuwait)

be a priority item and that emphasis would be placed on matters related to agricultural production, including anti-desertification measures, to regional economic integration and to the development of basic economic infrastructures. It was to be hoped that the symposium would result in more co-ordinated regional programmes.

77. The Programme would undoubtedly have to expand in order to meet the ever-increasing technical needs of the developing countries. His delegation saw UNDP as a means of communication between the technologically poor and the technologically rich, rather than between the rich and poor countries per se. It was in agreement with the general guidelines used in calculating a country's IPF, and could see merit in directing an increasing proportion of UNDP resources towards the most disadvantaged developing countries, but the practical method used in establishing IPFs, based primarily on per capita GNP and population size, was probably no longer adequate. UNDP dealt principally with technical assistance for development, and there was therefore no justification for ignoring, when calculating IPFs, the relative technical levels which countries had attained.

78. With the growing complexity of development issues, population became an important factor in solving the crucial long-term problems facing developing countries. The United Nations Fund for Population Activities had been offering a valuable service to developing countries in many spheres, enabling them to respond to national, regional, interregional and global needs. It was also responsible for promoting awareness in both developed and developing countries of the social, economic and environmental implications of national and international population problems. UNFPA was a pioneer in issuing publications and audio-visual aids in Arabic, an effort which was appreciated and which would certainly help Governments and news media in Arabic-speaking countries to increase public awareness of population and development issues.

79. On the subject of the Governing Council's decision 79/18, entitled "Implementation of General Assembly resolution 33/147 on assistance to the Palestinian people", he said that he was confident that the consultations called for in the decision would be finalized so that the implementation of the project proposals identified in annex III of the report of the Administrator (DP/410) could begin. The \$3.5 million allocated from the programme reserve was scarcely sufficient to accomplish the enormous task ahead. He hoped that all specialized agencies and organizations of the United Nations which were in a position to do so would consider financing through their own regular programmes or any available trust funds other selected projects or parts of projects which could help to improve the economic and social conditions of the Palestinian people. The funds-in-trust arrangements to assist the Palestinian people should in no way affect the assistance already directed to the Palestinians through UNDP or from other sources.

/...

ORGANIZATION OF WORK

80. Mr. BA-ISSA (Democratic Yemen) referred to the questions which he, together with the representatives of Qatar, Jordan and Libya, had asked at an earlier meeting with regard to the availability of documentation in Arabic. He had been grateful for the Secretariat's explanation in connexion with the non-appearance of the Arabic version of the report of the Governing Council of UNDP, but had still received no satisfactory reply on the situation affecting summary records. He pointed out that some summary records of the Fifth Committee were available in Arabic, but that not one had appeared in that language for the Second Committee. That situation could not be allowed to continue indefinitely.

81. Mr. MULLER (Secretary of the Committee) said that he had been informed by the Translation Division that the problem was one that affected all the Main Committees. He had been asked to inform members that the Fifth Committee would receive a written reply from the Secretary-General on the matter early the following week. He understood that the reply would draw distinctions between the various Committees and would comment specifically on the situation affecting the Second Committee.

The meeting rose at 1.10 p.m.