



SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 49th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. HARLAND (New Zealand)

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STATEMENT BY THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE UNITED NATIONS CHILDREN'S FUND

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The meeting was called to order at 3.20 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 81: OPERATIONAL ACTIVITIES FOR DEVELOPMENT (continued)
(A/39/3 (Part II), A/39/118, 131 and Corr.1, 133, 236, 590 and Corr.1))

- (a) OPERATIONAL ACTIVITIES OF THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM: REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (continued)
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STATEMENT BY THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE UNITED NATIONS FUND FOR POPULATION ACTIVITIES

1. Mr. SALAS (Executive Director, United Nations Fund for Population Activities), reporting on the work of UNFPA, said that the final income figure for 1983 had been \$134.7 million, an increase of almost \$4 million over 1982. Project allocations had risen from \$115.3 million in 1982 to \$117.4 million in 1983 while expenditures had remained at about the same level as in 1982 (\$122.6 million in 1983 as compared to \$123.7 million in 1982). The implementation rate had decreased slightly (86.2 per cent as compared with 88.3 per cent in 1982). That was due to the financial constraints which UNFPA had had during the previous two years, to the fact that UNFPA did not know the exact amount of its income until the end of the year in which allocations were made and therefore had to make allocations on a cautious basis, and to delays in the submission of financial reports by executing agencies. For the second year in a row, funds allocated to family planning programmes had increased; they currently accounted for 46.1 per cent of total allocations. In terms of geographic areas, there had been increases in allocations to Africa and to the Asia and Pacific region and slight decreases in allocations to

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the Latin America and the Caribbean, Middle East, Mediterranean and Europe regions. While allocations to inter-country activities had decreased they still exceeded the target level of no more than 25 per cent of total new programmable resources. Reductions in the areas of research and information exchange (amounting to about \$4 million) had been offset by an increase in the area of technical assistance and backstopping, which was necessary in order to ensure the continued quality of country projects backstopped at the global level.

2. In 1983, UNFPA had again exceeded the goal approved by the UNDP Governing Council that two thirds of country programme resources should be made available to priority countries. In 1983 the number of donors had totalled 93; 219 new country projects had been approved, the number of projects directly executed by Governments had numbered 429 and UNFPA had undertaken needs assessment missions to three countries - two in Africa (Zaire and the Ivory Coast) and one in Asia and the Pacific (China). In addition, six major evaluations, 302 tripartite project reviews and 24 annual country reviews had been carried out. Administrative expenditures had fallen slightly from 11.7 per cent of total income in 1982 to 11.5 per cent in 1983. The number of staff at Headquarters had remained relatively constant as had the percentage of women Professional staff at Headquarters and in the field (36 per cent), one of the highest percentages among the United Nations agencies and organizations.

3. The results of the Pledging Conference for Development Activities had been very gratifying, for 72 Governments had announced pledges amounting to some \$US 102 million. He paid special tribute to the 27 countries which had announced increases in the amount of their pledges to UNFPA for 1985. Taking into account the contributions that had yet to be pledged, it was estimated that the Fund's financial resources for 1985 would total approximately \$143.1 million, an increase of 8 per cent over 1984.

4. During the past year the Fund had concentrated on the International Conference on Population and had also continued its efforts to involve women in population and development issues. It had organized several regional and international forums for women leaders in order to update the UNFPA strategy for integrating women in population programmes. In addition, various intergovernmental groups, including the United Nations regional commissions, had met to review population developments in their regions since the Bucharest Conference. The commissions had all recognized the need to strengthen UNFPA so that it could increase population assistance to the developing countries and the need for UNFPA to work closely with the regional commissions and other relevant organizations of the United Nations to support population policies and programmes at the national level and to increase public awareness of population questions in the overall context of development. The strengthening of UNFPA to enable it to fulfil its responsibilities more effectively had also been the subject of discussions at the thirty-first session of the UNDP Governing Council (decision 84/21, paras. 1 and 2). Participants in the International Conference on Population, held at Mexico City, had urged, in recommendation 83 (E/CONF.76/19) that the Fund should be strengthened further, so as to ensure the more effective delivery of population assistance, taking into

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account the growing needs in that field. UNFPA was greatly encouraged by those events which would generate additional momentum for UNFPA-assisted programmes designed to help the developing countries solve their population problems effectively and humanely.

STATEMENT BY THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE UNITED NATIONS CHILDREN'S FUND

5. Mr. GRANT (Executive Director, United Nations Children's Fund) said that although resources for the disadvantaged sectors of the population in the rich world had been reduced, the safety nets established since the crisis of the 1930s were still relatively effective; in the poor countries, however, such protection did not exist or was just beginning to take shape. As the World Bank had predicted in 1980, the majority of countries had had to cut back their social development programmes during the austerity period that had followed 1980, and those cuts had affected mothers and children the most. The human consequences of the economic crisis had been made worse by the nature of the adjustment policies which those countries had adopted in order to deal with the recession. Nutritional programmes had been abandoned, resources allocated to social sectors had been cut and assistance to the most vulnerable had been reduced, leading some people to conclude that the goals of the Third United Nations Development Decade were unrealistic and should be abandoned.

6. There was, however, increased understanding that human resources were more important than physical capital in ensuring sustainable economic growth in developing countries. The future quality of the human resources of those countries depended on the health, welfare and development of today's youngest children, failing which education, training and productivity were inconceivable. There was an urgent need for the United Nations to mobilize the international community to reassert the human goals established for the Third United Nations Development Decade and to address the situation of the poor and their children. The world must also reverse the tendency towards a policy that placed mothers and children last in times of economic crisis.

7. As the Director-General for Development and International Economic Co-operation had just stated, it was not only desirable but also feasible to base adjustment policies on human and social and not merely economic concerns and to identify specific priorities for action by the different parts of the United Nations system. Without waiting for the recession to ease, low-cost, high-impact measures could be taken which could sustain and even accelerate development. If that was done, some of the goals of the Third United Nations Development Decade could still be attained.

8. Half the 40,000 children that died each day from the consequences of poverty and under-development could easily be saved. Half the 40,000 children a day disabled by malnutrition and disease could also be spared their dismal fate. It would be enough if they were given simple solutions of salt and sugar or an inexpensive dose of vaccine. It would sometimes be enough if their mothers were to breast-feed them and avoid the bottle, or monitor the weight and growth of each

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child. The world, in short, must have the will to help parents learn how to save their children. It was unfortunately the case that the great majority of parents still had no knowledge of those simple techniques. For every day the birthright of survival and health was denied to hundreds of millions of children, nations lost so many future thinkers and builders and, thus deprived, took on the burden of still more citizens so weakened by malnutrition and disease that they could not assume their share of responsibility for development.

9. While, for a majority of countries, it would not be possible in the next 5 to 10 years to bring back the growth rates and levels of official development assistance of the 1960s and 1970s, both industrial and developing countries must make more effective use of the limited resources now available. It was that kind of thinking that had led UNICEF to launch the child survival revolution which, making use of the latest advances in biological science and social organization, had made available to all countries, within the framework of the primary health care and basic service activities of UNICEF, WHO, UNDP and other development assistance agencies, four simple low-cost techniques: growth monitoring, oral rehydration therapy, breast-feeding and immunization. Those techniques made it possible to protect children against malnutrition and communicable diseases and would, in time, help to slow down population growth. That revolution was also based on the implementation of three other programme priorities, namely food supplements, family spacing and female education, which would significantly reduce infant and early childhood mortality and morbidity, even if they were more difficult and more expensive than the four techniques mentioned.

10. That revolution had now been under way for a year in a number of countries in spite of the difficulties caused by the recession, as shown in The State of the World's Children 1985. In the last two years, oral rehydration therapy had spread considerably although it was still used by less than 15 per cent of mothers in the developing countries. In 1984, more than 150 million packets of oral rehydration salts had been produced, as against 20 million in 1980. It was estimated that that therapy alone had saved some 500,000 children in the past year.

11. Early in 1984, a conference had been held at Bellagio, Italy, sponsored by UNICEF, WHO, the World Bank, UNDP and the Rockefeller Foundation, to launch a drive for the immunization of all children against preventable communicable diseases by 1990. A commendable initiative had been taken subsequent to that conference by the President of Colombia, who had launched an extraordinary national immunization campaign to protect almost a million children under four years of age from measles, tetanus, diphtheria, whooping cough and poliomyelitis, which should make it possible to reduce infant and child mortality by half over a five-year period. That campaign, personally led by President Betancur, had shown the critical role that could be played by the mass media, the Red Cross and other non-health sector institutions. It had been a stirring example of what could happen when health sciences and social organization were combined with energy, creativity and determination. It was therefore a pity to note that, among the great daily newspapers, only Le Monde had reported that historic campaign.

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12. During his recent visit to Central America, he had been able to learn that Nicaragua had not had a single case of poliomyelitis since large-scale immunization of children had begun in 1981-1982. El Salvador, in spite of civil war, was stepping up immunization against the six principal childhood diseases, and a major oral rehydration therapy campaign was already showing significant results in Honduras. There was therefore ample evidence that the goal of universal immunization proclaimed by the World Health Assembly in the mid-1970s could still be achieved by 1990 if the international community was to generate renewed commitment to prevent the 10 million deaths and disabilities each year from those six diseases.

13. Nowhere was the contrast between the needs of children and the collective capacity of Governments and international and private agencies to respond greater than it was in Africa. The recent meeting on the particularly difficult situation of mothers and children in Africa, convened by UNICEF, had provided an opportunity to demonstrate that when people were weakened by hunger and forced to move in search of food and water, the control of diarrhoeal diseases, immunization, breast-feeding and growth monitoring were even more important than ever.

14. In order to deal with the emergency situation in Africa, UNICEF had released \$12.4 million and, together with the Governments concerned, initiated reprogramming of a substantial amount of funds already committed. It had taken steps to strengthen its Africa offices by accelerating the recruitment of staff, temporarily redeploying staff from Headquarters, Geneva and the Asia region, strengthening the training of staff for the UNICEF offices in West Africa, providing additional staff to the UNICEF regional offices and calling on the services of consultants for those offices. It had also authorized its field representatives, in close co-operation with WFP, to procure locally produced foods in food-surplus areas and to transfer them to areas where there were deficits. He wished to point out, in that connection, that in Ethiopia there was food available in areas that were in immediate proximity to the starvation zones. The steps taken by local representatives were designed to cover the most urgent needs, pending the arrival of shipments sent by WFP and other agencies. UNICEF had also appealed for a total of \$67 million to support its emergency relief activities. It had so far been able to raise \$15 million and hoped that in the following two months it would be able to obtain most of the remaining \$52 million. It must be borne in mind that all the emergency measures in question were only beginning and must be seen in the light of longer-term programmes to strengthen the capacity of the African field offices, which would be included in the budget proposal for the 1986-1987 biennium. The Executive Board had already decided that new budget decisions affecting Africa should take effect immediately after the Board's April 1985 session, rather than at the beginning of the following biennium, in January 1986.

15. Naturally, the child survival revolution was so far-reaching that it exceeded the capabilities of UNICEF and called for the mobilization of urgent and sustained international action for children with a view to strengthening the activities carried out by the various relevant United Nations agencies. He was gratified at the co-operation between UNICEF and WHO, both at the level of their respective governing bodies and in the execution of joint programmes representing an amount of

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over \$100 million, focused on long-term nutrition and health action and support for essential drugs. Ten of the 15 countries supported by that programme were in Africa. The Director of the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) and senior UNICEF officers were accompanying six Central American ministers of health on a tour of European capitals to discuss the financial support that Europe might provide for a child survival revolution in Central America to reduce by half over the following five years the number of small children in Central America who died or were permanently disabled. Moreover, much initial research on oral rehydration therapy had been funded through bilateral aid programmes and by UNDP. The UNICEF/UNESCO joint programme on literacy and primary education had made significant progress, as had the activities carried out by UNICEF jointly with FAO, WFP, IFAD, UNFPA and many other agencies. The revolution had also benefited from co-operation with the Resident Co-ordinators at the country level, the sister agencies of UNICEF and the Office of the Director-General for Development and International Economic Co-operation. The efforts made by UNDP to strengthen and enlarge the scope of the round-table meetings were an extremely valuable mechanism for assisting a recipient country in co-ordinating assistance from all external sources.

16. Recently, the joint consultative group on policy, comprised of UNDP, UNFPA, WFP and UNICEF had decided to focus on the health/nutrition nexus and sponsor missions of senior officials from the four agencies in question to selected countries to carry out a "zero-base" analysis of new opportunities for increased co-ordination among those agencies with a view to enhancing the effectiveness of their programmes, particularly in Africa.

17. The entire international community and the United Nations system must ensure that the successes achieved at the local level in the context of the child survival revolution became more widespread in order to make the revolution reality. There were, in fact, few bodies in the world that could give a project greater international legitimacy than the United Nations system could, through the General Assembly. He hoped that the members of the Committee would give the following two proposals the attention they deserved: firstly, that international and national adjustment processes should not actively discriminate against mothers and children, as had all too often been the case recently, even though it might be unintentional; secondly, that the Committee should identify or re-endorse some attainable international goals, such as universal immunization by 1990 and implementation of a child survival revolution before the year 2000, and consider, at the fortieth session of the General Assembly, what had been accomplished in that area, which would make the celebration of the fortieth anniversary of the United Nations into an occasion for a reaffirmation of the commitment undertaken to "succeeding generations" by the peoples of the United Nations in 1945.

18. Mr. MANN (Canada) said that, despite the diversity of their mandates, administrative procedures and funding mechanisms, the departments of the United Nations, the special funds and the specialized agencies had a common purpose, namely, to promote development with a view to relieving human suffering and establishing the foundations for long-term self-reliance. It was with that

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ultimate objective in mind that the international community must consider the operational activities of the United Nations system and seek ways of maximizing their impact. His delegation was aware of the fact that that was not an easy task and believed that the following four basic guiding principles would provide a useful framework: first, the central bodies, mainly UNDP, must have adequate financial resources and the full co-operation of other parts of the system in order to fulfil their mandates; second, there must be a recognized programming system that was truly responsive to the needs and priorities of the recipient countries; third, the various United Nations departments and executing agencies must be devoted to the system's common goal and ensure maximum efficiency and transparency in their administration; fourth, the Office of the Director-General for Development and International Economic Co-operation must provide effective leadership for the various components of the United Nations system in the economic and social fields, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 32/197. While Canada recognized that there had been real progress in some of the areas in question, it believed that the need for further improvement in co-ordination and efficiency could not be over-emphasized, particularly at a time when financial resources were scarce and in the face of ever-increasing development challenges.

19. His delegation was pleased to see that the erosion of UNDP resources appeared to have stopped but considered it regrettable that the share of UNDP common funds in system-wide grant-financed technical co-operation had declined from 45 per cent to 40 per cent the previous year. That was a further sign of erosion of the central funding policy, which best served the goal of achieving coherence in the system. More generally, it was a matter of concern that aggregate contributions for operational activities had declined in 1982 and 1983. His delegation welcomed the fact that, in paragraph 46 of his report (A/39/417), the Office of the Director-General for Development and International Economic Co-operation had stressed that there was a substantial link between improved co-ordination and donor confidence in the effectiveness of the United Nations development system. In that connection, it was regrettable that the contributions made by the Eastern bloc countries to the financing of operational activities for development remained marginal.

20. His country appreciated the response of the Director-General for Development and International Economic Co-operation to General Assembly resolution 38/171 which had requested him to report on coherence of action and co-ordination of the operational systems at the country level. The report pointed out some encouraging signs, namely, co-ordinated programming by UNDP, the United Nations Fund for Population Activities, WFP and UNICEF, the preparation of annual reviews by the resident co-ordinators, the increasing use of UNDP's country programming process, and more regular inter-agency meetings. On the other hand, Canada wished to reiterate its now annual concern that some organizations were more hesitant than others to pursue possibilities for co-operation. Organizations which did not report to the General Assembly had indeed a long way to go in implementing resolutions on the orientation of operational activities for development. In that respect his delegation had questions about the effectiveness of the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination and its subsidiary bodies in harmonizing the interests

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of individual specialized agencies and organs with the common objectives of the United Nations development system. It was clearly in the mutual interest of donors and recipients to minimize duplication and competition among agencies, so as to maximize the impact of their operational activities on development.

21. Still in the interests of harmonization, there was a need for formal recognition of the emerging co-ordination process at the country level, through the institutionalization of inter-agency meetings under the leadership of the resident co-ordinators; that would enable them, as they had requested, to clarify their responsibilities and relationships vis-à-vis organizations of the United Nations system and their representatives (A/39/417, para. 66). More systematic inter-agency meetings would be a logical complement to the co-ordination measures at Headquarters and would reflect in practice the provisions of General Assembly resolution 32/197.

22. In response to the concerns expressed by many developing countries with respect to that proposal, he wished to make it clear that the arrangements would have to be adapted to local conditions and that such an initiative would in no way jeopardize but, on the contrary, would reinforce the central role of the recipient Governments in the co-ordination process. His delegation asked the Director-General to respond to that proposal in his report to the General Assembly at its fortieth session.

23. With regard to the role of UNDP, there had been a consensus at recent sessions of the Governing Council and of the General Assembly on the value of the expertise of UNDP in assessing human resources development needs and the consequent technical assistance requirements at the country level. The best way to make optimal use of that capacity was to extend the country programming system of UNDP as a framework for all operational activities of the United Nations system in technical co-operation. That would improve overall efficiency while keeping decision-making on priorities for the use of available funds in the hands of the recipient countries themselves. In that context, and with particular respect to the Fund for Population Activities, his delegation trusted that the objective of strengthening the Fund so as to ensure the more effective delivery of population assistance would be achieved within the Fund's existing mandate and in close co-operation with UNDP in the context of its country programming system. His delegation, reiterating the importance of human resources development and desirous of seeing its crucial role recognized more clearly in the operational activities of the United Nations, welcomed the recent initiative taken by UNDP to establish a human resources task force, and trusted that all parts of the United Nations system would co-operate in that exercise. A comprehensive review was required of what the entire system, including the World Bank and the specialized agencies, had done to date and might do more effectively in the future in that field.

24. Another co-ordination mechanism which his country wished to see reinforced was the round-table approach for the least developed countries. It supported the recent proposal by UNDP whereby round tables would follow a two-phase approach: in the first phase the recipient Governments would meet with the major donors, both

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bilateral and multilateral, in order to identify the basic programming priorities and resource requirements. The resident co-ordinators would participate in those limited meetings as representatives of the United Nations development system. In the second phase, all bodies of the system would define an integrated plan of action which was consistent with those priorities. In that respect, Canada was pleased with the continuing efforts to improve co-operation between UNDP and the World Bank with a view to furthering overall aid co-ordination at the country level.

25. Where the question of harmonization was concerned, his delegation welcomed the diversity and flexibility of the United Nations system in its present form, but believed that greater harmonization of procedures would have numerous benefits. First, it would reduce the burden on the limited administrative resources of recipient Governments, which were already under considerable domestic pressures. Secondly, it would allow for greater efficiency, reduced administrative costs, greater coherence of action in the field, and more transparency for the system as a whole. In practical terms, the purpose was not to achieve total uniformity, but rather to ensure that procedural differences among the agencies did not become an obstacle to co-ordinated programming. In that connection, his country looked forward to the forthcoming report of the Joint Inspection Unit on the operational field structures of organizations.

26. His delegation had noted with satisfaction chapter IV of the report of the Director-General for Development and International Economic Co-operation (A/39/417), entitled "Follow-up to the comprehensive policy review of operational activities" and had been interested in the information on the relationship between costs and delivery. However, preoccupied by the lack of transparency in accounting procedures, his delegation reiterated its serious concern about the situation described in paragraphs 96 and 102, and encouraged the Director-General to pursue his study along the lines proposed in paragraphs 105 to 107. His delegation welcomed the review of issues relating to conditional contributions contained in the chapter. While it agreed with the UNDP Administrator that additional assistance could be channelled through such a mechanism without distorting the basic principles of multilateralism, it also shared the views of many other delegations on the need to safeguard the integrity of the system by ensuring that adequate levels of core funding were maintained. The decline in UNICEF core funding in 1983 was of particular concern, and raised questions about the growth of conditional contributions at the expense of core funding beyond what was addressed in the report of the Director-General. There was a danger of undermining certain fundamental principles of multilateralism through excessive reliance on supplementary funding.

27. His delegation was encouraged by the heightened concern of Governments with respect to evaluation. With regard to the United Nations system, it found the recent progress in UNDP regarding evaluation encouraging, but saw considerable room for improvement in other parts of the United Nations development system, particularly in many of the specialized agencies. Evaluation efforts must focus on the actual impact of United Nations operational activities, and that would require increasing pressure from Governments in the governing bodies of a number of

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organizations. In conclusion, his delegation reiterated its commitment to the United Nations development system. It was certain that when the accomplishments of the United Nations as a whole were evaluated on the occasion of its fortieth anniversary, operational activities for development would stand out as a major contribution to peace and human dignity.

28. Furthermore, he announced that Canada had established a special fund for Africa and had taken other initiatives to assist in alleviating the crisis in that continent, particularly in Ethiopia.

29. Mr. DIECKMANN (Federal Republic of Germany) said that development aid, whether bilateral or multilateral, was of special importance in North-South relations. It was a manifestation of solidarity between peoples and Governments and evidence of awareness that, in an interdependent world, peace, security and prosperity could in the long run only be safeguarded if the gap between rich and poor was closed: development policies were, accordingly peace policies. The Federal Republic of Germany, which was committed to peace through co-operation, had insured an above-average increase in its development aid; in 1983, its official development assistance (ODA) had reached its highest level - 0.49 per cent of the gross national product (GNP). Total official and private assistance, at 1.07 per cent of GNP, exceeded the internationally established target of 1 per cent of GNP. In all its activities, the Government attached special importance to assisting the least developed countries: the aid it provided, which was 0.12 per cent of GNP, came close to the target of 0.15 per cent set by the Paris Conference.

30. It was common knowledge, however, that the problems of the development countries could not be solved from outside. Development policies must be founded on a partnership between the developing and developed countries, and development assistance must primarily reinforce the self-help capacity of the developing countries. Full mobilization of development potential presupposed co-operation from individuals. Since promoting private initiative and the creativity of human beings was of paramount importance, high priority should be given to the development of human resources.

31. In order to assess the role of multilateral assistance channelled through the United Nations system, which accounted for 12 per cent of all ODA, it must be viewed side by side with bilateral co-operation. His Government was committed to both approaches, and well over 30 per cent of its ODA was provided through multilateral channels. According to the report of the Director-General for Development and International Economic Co-operation, the Federal Republic of Germany had been the third-ranking contributor to operational activities in 1982-1983.

32. To be successful, economic co-operation policies must be based on internationally consistent targets and priorities. Good progress had been made in that respect. The priorities established by his country for its bilateral economic co-operation with third world countries were nearly identical with the goals for operational activities of the United Nations system. In both cases, agriculture was being promoted so that the populations of the developing countries could

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produce a sufficient food supply through their own efforts. In that context his Government was of the view that human resource development should receive a larger share of operational activities than the 17 per cent currently allocated to it. More attention should also be paid to regional and interregional programmes.

33. Since the adoption of the Consensus defining the general principles of UNDP (General Assembly resolution 2688 (XXV)), his Government had fully supported the Programme's central co-ordination and financing role. Member States were called upon to strengthen and support that role, but beyond that, improvements must be made in several fields. Intensive use of the Committee of the Whole, a structural innovation introduced by the Governing Council of UNDP, would be in the general interest. During the elaboration in 1985 of the fourth UNDP programming cycle, programme quality must be improved. Programme delivery must be better appraised, while not relying exclusively on the volume of contributions: the Governing Council should focus more on qualitative aspects such as improved programming, evaluation and monitoring; utilization of the results of co-ordination; and strengthening of the position of the resident co-ordinators or resident representatives. In that context, tied contributions were hardly compatible with the principle of multilateral co-operation. Given the experience acquired over 20 years of co-operation with the developing countries, it seemed, moreover, important that UNDP should modify the modalities of distribution of its aid-in-grant, without compromising the principle of universality.

34. The results of the Pledging Conference held on 7 and 8 November 1984 had been positive, but it was disappointing that, except for the traditional group of donor countries, the industrial countries had again made relatively minimal pledges. In that context, he recalled the comments made at the Summit Conference of Heads of State and Government of the Non-Aligned Countries, held at New Delhi, concerning increased participation by the Eastern industrialized countries in development aid efforts. His delegation welcomed the activities of the World Bank in the field of technical co-operation, and felt that considerable intensification of its co-operation with UNDP was both logical and desirable.

35. The Federal Republic of Germany was extremely interested in the United Nations Fund for Population Activities, which it saw as the most important multilateral aid organization in the population field. The problem of population growth was now being assessed world-wide in its proper dimensions, and Governments were increasingly taking demographic problems into account in their development plans. Over the years, the Fund had grown into an important and respected United Nations agency, particularly owing to the active support of the Governing Council of UNDP. The Governing Council should devote more time to UNFPA in its deliberations so that it could assess its programmes more thoroughly.

36. His Government also attached high priority to co-operation with UNICEF. It welcomed the adoption of the well-defined concept of basic services, the efficient and decentralized work in the field and the concentration on primary health care, nourishment, social services and education in the poorest and least developed

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countries. It greatly appreciated the efforts of UNICEF to enhance its efficiency through consolidation and reclassification of posts and to strengthen its capacity at the grass-roots level by further decentralization and improved co-operation at the regional and local levels. It fully supported the strategy designed to improve child survival. UNICEF was justified in concentrating more and more on the sub-Saharan countries, which were hampered by weak development structures and stricken at the same time by drought. Only by strengthening capacity at the grass-roots level and by emphasizing programme execution could UNICEF release the necessary staff and resources to achieve its ambitious global targets.

37. With regard to the annual report for 1984 of the Director-General for Development and International Economic Co-operation on operational activities for development of the United Nations system (A/39/417), he said that his delegation welcomed the fact that, for the first time, it included data on procurement for equipment and sub-contracts of organizations engaged in operational activities for development. It was particularly gratifying that increased consideration was being given to purchasing from developing countries in respect of procurement.

38. His delegation attached particular importance to enhanced co-ordination and evaluation: the first steps in that direction had been the co-operation agreement concluded between UNDP, UNICEF, the Fund for Population Activities and WFP, and others must follow. The recipient countries themselves, however, bore the overriding responsibility for improved co-ordination. Effective evaluation was also a prerequisite for enhanced efficiency: in that area, unfortunately, there still existed a methodological deficiency in the United Nations system. Improved transparency of the relationship between administrative costs and programme delivery would also be in the interests of the developing countries.

39. Mr. SCHILLER (Sweden), speaking on behalf of the five Nordic countries, said that although many of the issues dealt with to date had been marked by deadlock in the North-South dialogue, operational activities offered grounds for a much more positive mood. The United Nations system had recorded major achievements in that area. Indeed, operational activities provided the only contact which many millions of people around the world had with the Organization.

40. The Nordic countries firmly supported efforts to improve the effectiveness of multilateral assistance and to strengthen development co-operation. Such efforts should go hand in hand with an increase in the total flow of resources to the developing countries. It was therefore gratifying to note that the trend towards the erosion of contributions seemed to have been halted, even if it had not yet proved possible to return to steady growth. In any event, the downward trend noted could be partly explained by exchange rate fluctuations, in particular the marked appreciation of the dollar. Many donor countries, including the Nordic countries, had done their utmost to increase their contributions, and their efforts seemed to have paid off.

41. At the United Nations Pledging Conference for Development Activities, held on 7 and 8 November 1984, the Secretary-General had underlined the enormous value to

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the developing countries of economic and technical assistance. The results of the Conference had been quite encouraging as it seemed that UNICEF and the Fund for Population Activities would be able to continue their activities in accordance with their programmes. Nevertheless, as needs naturally tended to outweigh available resources, continued growth in contributions was imperative. In that connection, the pool of donor countries, currently very small, should be expanded and contributions should be distributed among donor countries on a more equitable basis. Several developing countries had recently pledged substantial contributions, but the overall objective had still not been attained. A particular effort should be made by countries whose contributions were not commensurate with their capacities.

42. A major part of the report on the operational activities of the United Nations system (A/39/417) was devoted to co-ordination at the country level. External assistance should be introduced as an integral part of the economic and social programmes of the developing countries, and, where possible, should be concerted among the various donors. The many sources used and the increased complexity of funding arrangements created problems, increasing the need for the co-ordination of bilateral and multilateral initiatives at the country level. The useful role played by resident co-ordinators should be noted. With limited resources available, it was important, both for donors and recipients, to promote complementarity of programmes and intersectoral linkage and to avoid waste, for example, by cutting down on the number of long missions. In that connection, all efforts to improve aid co-ordination were welcome. The overriding objective should be to achieve optimum use of resources in accordance with the priorities and objectives of the recipient countries. Co-ordination was, after all, primarily the responsibility of the recipients.

43. The Nordic countries welcomed the arrangements for annual reporting by resident co-ordinators, and found the preliminary findings described in the Director-General's report (A/39/417) interesting. It was regrettable that a proper exchange of information between United Nations agencies and donors was lacking. The latter had an interest in facilitating co-ordination. In that connection, a flexible approach should be adopted to meet different situations. The Nordic countries were looking forward to the results of the study on the field structure of organizations to be submitted by the Joint Inspection Unit. They hoped that the important work on the harmonization of procedures by UNDP and WHO would result in practical and action-oriented proposals.

44. The Nordic countries believed that the central role of UNDP within the United Nations system should be strengthened. An important prerequisite for that was adequate resources, and the progress made in that regard was encouraging.

45. It was essential to improve the administrative and institutional infrastructure of the developing countries. To that end, it was necessary to strengthen the technical capacities of developing countries and consequently to increase the emphasis on the development of their human resources. Without sufficient human resource potential, they would face problems in achieving

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self-sustaining development. UNDP could provide valuable help in that connection by playing a catalytic role. For many developing nations UNDP had become a close partner in development. The Nordic countries had noted the growing recognition of the role of human resources development, which they would like to see better reflected in the delivery of international development assistance.

46. The Nordic countries had participated in the informal consultations recently held on the fourth programming cycle of UNDP, and would present detailed comments at the special session of the Governing Council to be held in February 1985. Realistic growth objectives should be determined for UNDP if its credibility was not to be undermined. It was also imperative to safeguard its universal character while focusing on assistance to the poorest countries.

47. The Nordic countries attached great importance to the various measures taken to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of UNDP. They therefore welcomed the Governing Council's decision to staff the central evaluation unit fully with effect from 1985.

48. The World Bank had recently become more and more active in the field of technical assistance. That was a welcome development, and would, it was to be hoped, promote still closer co-operation between the Bank and UNDP, with emphasis on the complementarity of assistance. The system of round-table conferences and consultative group meetings could be improved to ensure a more rational use of the scarce resources available for ODA.

49. The financial situation of the Fund for Population Activities had been reasonably satisfactory in 1984, in that its income had increased by some 5.7 per cent compared to 1983. The importance of population policies, particularly in family planning and population education, had been underlined in the 1984 report of the World Bank, while the Mexico Conference had formulated important recommendations in that respect. The Nordic countries would take an active part in the follow-up of those recommendations in the Economic and Social Council and other forums.

50. The Nordic countries reaffirmed their full support for the activities of UNICEF. They had contributed to UNICEF general resources as well as to various programmes supporting the implementation, on a priority basis, of its child survival strategy, and noted with satisfaction that many developing countries had responded very positively to that strategy. The goals set by UNICEF were challenging, but they could be attained if Governments showed the necessary political will and if the international community provided appropriate support. The Nordic countries welcomed the prompt action which UNICEF had taken to improve its activities in Africa. In order to achieve the best results possible, UNICEF should work in very close co-operation with the other United Nations bodies, particularly UNDP, the Fund for Population Activities and WFP.

51. The Nordic countries had encouraged WFP to take a more development-oriented approach. The work under way on the further definition of criteria for emergency

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food aid was also useful. WFP had grown from a small experimental programme to one of the largest sources of food aid in the United Nations system. That expansion had created new operational and administrative demands. The Nordic countries had therefore supported the creation of a task force to review the managerial problems within WFP. In their view, the task force should bear in mind the Joint Inspection Unit report on WFP personnel problems (WFP/CFA 18/4), the report of the Committee on Food Aid Policies and Programmes on the work of its eighteenth session (WFP/CFA 18/18 and Add.1, 2 and 3), as well as all the documents relating to the accounts of WFP for the biennium 1982-1983, including the reports of the external auditor (see WFP/CFA 18/14) and of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ) (WFP/CFA 18/14/Add.3), and the comments of the WFP Executive Director (WFP/CFA 18/14/Add.1). In addition, the Executive Director should be fully involved at every stage in the work of the task force, which should proceed with all due dispatch so that the report of the task force could be submitted to the Committee on Food Aid Policies and Programmes at its nineteenth session.

52. In conclusion, the Nordic countries wished to emphasize that technical assistance was the base on which all other forms of assistance was built. The United Nations system constituted an ideal framework for providing such assistance in a neutral and universal way, and in that context, operational activities for development played a crucial role.

53. Miss FRANKINET (Belgium) said that the results of the 1984 Pledging Conference for Development Activities had confirmed that contributions to the Conference's funds and programmes had remained relatively stable, at least in terms of dollar amounts. However, that obscured several phenomena; for example, some contributions in national currency had increased, while contributions were unevenly distributed among the various donors. But one conclusion seemed quite clear: that contributions to development activities would not soon recover their previous rate of growth.

54. The review of the technical assistance activities of the United Nations system, primarily those financed by UNDP, which had been undertaken under the pressure of decreased resources had not yet reached conclusive results. In the opinion of her delegation, the review should lead to the better coherence and greater efficiency of those activities.

55. Coherence should be achieved both by the increased transparency of the activities of all bodies concerned and by better co-ordination, particularly in the field. Too often, information was fragmentary and scattered and lacked uniformity. It would therefore be particularly useful, for the organizations as well as for donors and recipients, to make information more accessible on a uniform basis at all stages of project execution. The establishment of a central registry, beginning in 1986, would be a step forward in that direction. In addition to transparency of activities, such a registry would promote improved co-ordination.

56. At the country level, a more rational and integrated use of country programmes should help transform them into instruments for planning external aid. In that respect, her delegation welcomed the detailed study of means to improve the system of round-table meetings for the least developed countries.

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57. Ideally, field co-ordination should be ensured by the recipient Government, with the support of the appropriate bodies. When that was not possible, interorganization co-ordination was necessary. It therefore did not seem right that the role of resident co-ordinator was not universally recognized and that some organizations were "more hesitant than others to pursue possibilities for collaboration (A/39/417, para. 65). Approaches to the co-ordination problem should remain flexible; however, it was not possible to rely entirely on interpersonal relationships in order to solve that problem. Her Government took due account of the comments of the UNDP Administrator on improving co-ordination, particularly with respect to the Secretary-General's initiative for Africa and emergency aid to Ethiopia.

58. It had also been out of a concern for cohesion that her Government had decided to entrust the execution of projects financed from the resources of the Belgian Fonds de survie to United Nations bodies (the International Fund for Agricultural Development, WHO, UNDP, UNICEF and FAO. The Fonds would have available \$65 million for the period 1985-1986, which would be allocated to projects in Kenya, Somalia and Uganda.

59. Systematic project evaluation was an essential component of the coherence and the effectiveness of the activities of the system as a whole. The recent discussions which had taken place had shown that such evaluation had been neglected in the past. The discussions had been valuable in contributing to the establishment of evaluation units in various organizations. Obviously, their task was not easy: project results were often hard to quantify, and their impact on development was difficult to measure. However, experiments, whether successful or not, could be useful. In some cases, moreover, a systematic evaluation would make it possible to avoid prolonging projects unnecessarily, and thus incurring inordinate expenditure.

60. Instead of a bureaucratic post facto evaluation exercise, her Government would prefer to see the development within organizations of an ability to look critically at their own achievements. In addition, timely outside evaluations of individual projects could bring new and constructive insights.

61. In anticipation of the fourth UNDP programming cycle, the Administrator had submitted concrete proposals for improving the cost/effectiveness ratio. Those proposals related in particular to the reduction of expert services costs and to the role that could be played by non-governmental organizations. Her delegation welcomed the steps already taken by UNDP with a view to providing quality services at reduced cost (with more frequent recourse to national project directors and to expatriate experts).

62. With regard to support costs, she emphasized the disparity which existed between the various organs and the unduly high level of support costs by some of them. It would be useful if unified data on support costs could be used for reference purposes, particularly by the recipient countries.

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63. Data concerning the purchasing of goods and services by the United Nations for development activities showed an uneven geographical distribution in the award of contracts. A clearer procurement policy and more scrupulous adherence to the established rules for procurement would be desirable.

64. Her delegation had noted the decisions taken with respect to the Office for Projects Execution on the basis of the Joint Inspection Unit report (A/39/80). Without casting doubt on the dynamism and efficiency of that office, she expressed her agreement with one of the views put forward by the Inspectors to the effect that they were not convinced "that the best way for UNDP to help redress the operational shortcomings of the United Nations system is by curtailing the role of the agencies through direct assumption of operations. It is preferable to confront the system squarely with its shortcomings in order to press through corrective measures". Her delegation hoped that the work methods of the Office for Projects Execution which had proved to be efficient could be recommended to other agencies.

65. Assuming that training was at the centre of development problems, her delegation followed with interest the measures taken by the UNDP Administrator in that regard, which included the establishment of a special team on human resources within UNDP.

66. Mr. CHAGULA (United Republic of Tanzania) emphasized that United Nations operational activities provided the main source of development finance for a large number of developing countries, particularly the least developed. His delegation therefore fervently hoped that contributions to UNDP and WFP and to development trust funds would soon be restored to their former levels, and expressed its gratitude to all those countries which had managed to maintain or even increase the funds of the specialized agencies, UNDP and UNICEF devoted to operational activities.

67. His delegation fully subscribed to the view that acceptance of the principle of tied procurement in the United Nations system posed a threat to the political and commercial neutrality of multilateral technical co-operation. However, taking into account the constraints in the United Nations system on resources for operational activities for development, it supported the UNDP Governing Council's decision to authorize the Administrator to continue to accept tied contributions until April 1986 for the activities of the United Nations Sudano-Sahelian Office, the United Nations Capital Development Fund and the United Nations Financing System for Science and Technology for Development, subject to the conditions laid down by the Governing Council at its thirty-first session.

68. There was no doubt that, as administrative costs increased, expenditure on programme delivery decreased. Therefore, since a growing number of United Nations agencies maintained high expenditure relative to their programme-delivery costs, United Nations operational activities for development would remain static even if the annual budget for the entire system appeared to be rising. Table 9 of document A/39/417 showed that UNDP, the World Bank, WHO, FAO and ECWA had managed to keep administrative costs reasonably low, but it was disturbing to note that in several

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organizations the percentage ratio between support costs and total expenditure was over 30 per cent. It would be interesting to examine the reasons for that phenomenon, as well as ways of remedying it.

69. With regard to co-ordination at the country level, it had to be acknowledged that there were still co-ordination problems among bilateral and multilateral donors as well as in the United Nations system itself. His Government subscribed to the statement made by the ECA Conference of Ministers in May 1984 welcoming the awareness on the part of bilateral and multilateral donors of the need to co-ordinate their activities at the national level. Lastly, given that the resident co-ordinators played a central role in co-ordinating multilateral aid at the national level, and would be likely to play an increasing role in bilateral aid, they should be very carefully selected, to ensure that they possessed the qualities required to deal with the representatives of recipient Governments and of donor Governments and agencies, since otherwise effective co-ordination of both bilateral and multilateral aid at the national level would be impossible.

70. Since UNDP played a central role in United Nations operational activities for development, his delegation fully supported Governing Council decision 84/4, in particular paragraphs 3, 13 and 14. It therefore hoped that the international community would provide UNDP with increased resources for operational activities, to cover 100 per cent of the IPFs of net recipient countries instead of 55 per cent, as in the current programming cycle. As to the implementation of the Substantial New Programme of Action, he deeply regretted that UNDP had been unable to organize round tables or country-review meetings for some of the least-developed countries which had requested them. Those countries therefore would not have an opportunity for dialogue with the donor community before the mid-term global meeting to review progress in the implementation of the Substantial New Programme of Action, to take place during the second half of 1985, and it would therefore be doubtful whether that meeting would be of any use to those countries.

71. Since the United Nations Capital Development Fund was an important source of additional concessional assistance, particularly to the least-developed countries, he welcomed Governing Council decision 81/2, which stated that the Fund should play a direct role in the implementation of the Substantial New Programme of Action, with support costs being met as agreed in General Assembly resolution 36/196.

72. With regard to technical co-operation activities undertaken by the Secretary-General, although the Department of Technical Co-operation for Development had streamlined its organizational structure and reduced its administrative costs, it was nevertheless regrettable that its resources for programmes and projects of vital interest to developing countries had declined. It was therefore to be hoped that the restructuring indicated in General Assembly resolution 32/197 would soon be completed, with a view to strengthening the role of that Department in the area of technical co-operation and to eliminating duplication.

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73. Lastly, the Secretary-General had indicated in document A/39/284/Add.1 that the United Nations Emergency Operation Trust Fund had been officially liquidated on 31 December 1983 and that the remaining balance had been allocated in accordance with paragraph 1 of General Assembly resolution 38/201. With regard to the utilization of the balance (\$5.8 million), he was glad to note that UNDP had identified and evaluated a project of \$1.94 million for the provision of technical support for negotiations on a global system of trade preferences among developing countries, the execution of which had been approved by UNCTAD. It was to be hoped that other projects for technical co-operation among developing countries could be funded also by using the remaining balance.

74. In conclusion, he wished to state that the reason why his delegation had not participated in the recent Pledging Conference for Development Activities was not lack of interest in United Nations operational activities, but because his Government was currently reviewing its voluntary contributions to various funds. It would inform the Secretariat of the amount of its contribution for 1985 as soon as a final decision had been taken.

75. Mr. ABBAS (Bahrain) said that the Secretary-General's note on the operational activities of the United Nations system (A/39/417) stressed the urgent need to accelerate the development process in developing countries and to make the most effective use of available resources. That could only be done by increasing the flow of resources for operational activities on a predictable, continuous and assured basis, so as to enable the organizations of the system to maintain and, where possible, increase the level of their operational programmes, curb the decline in mobilized resources and accord greater importance to aid co-ordination. To that end, the developed countries, whose overall performance was not commensurate with their capacities, should rapidly increase their voluntary contributions for operational activities for development, taking into account the targets that had been set by relevant intergovernmental bodies. At the same time those operational activities should be in accordance with the national plans, priorities and objectives of the recipient countries in order to enhance their impact on and relevance to the national development process of those countries; those activities should also become more responsive to the needs and requirements of all developing countries and should be the focus of an integrated process of programming of available resources. Evaluation was an important element in that process which should improve the coherence of action and co-ordination of the operational systems at the country level in order to avoid waste and duplication of work, halt the increase in the cost of the services of United Nations experts, consultants and officials, minimize administrative and other support costs without affecting the field programmes and facilitate the task of the host country in co-ordinating external assistance. In addition, the organs, organizations and bodies of the United Nations system receiving extrabudgetary resources should include information on those resources and their utilization in their budgets and reports and should make that information available to the Governments concerned and to the resident co-ordinator in the recipient country.

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76. His delegation had taken note with satisfaction of the report of the Governing Council of the United Nations Development Programme on its organizational meeting for 1984 and its thirty-first session (E/1984/20). In that connection, his delegation believed that the best way to implement General Assembly resolutions 2688 (XXV), on the capacity of the United Nations development system, and 3405 (XXX) on new dimensions in technical co-operation, was to adopt the following principles: country programming must be viewed as a positive instrument for meeting the various technical co-operation needs of the developing countries; the Joint Inspection Unit must study the system of local representation of United Nations bodies and organizations, particularly with regard to the functions of co-ordinators; the provisions of paragraph 7 of decision 84/16 of the Governing Council, concerning the revision of indicative planning figures, must be applied to the island developing countries - whose economic situation had definitely deteriorated - in implementing the provisions of section VI of Governing Council decision 83/14 concerning the programme levels of countries with low IPFs during the third cycle; specific action related to the particular needs and problems of island developing countries must be taken as a matter of urgency; for those countries, UNDP should increase the IPF floor below which it maintained an 80 per cent programming level from \$1.5 million to \$2.5 million, since, like the developing countries generally, their share had decreased by 5 per cent. The scenarios prepared for the fourth programming cycle must be realistic, particularly with regard to the size of resources to be taken into account, and adapted to the priority needs of the developing countries. The Programme Administrator's enhancement of the effectiveness of the field offices must lead to a strengthening of the role of the resident co-ordinators increasing their effectiveness as well as co-ordination with the host country and evaluation. With regard to Government contributions to local office costs (Governing Council decision 84/9), the provisions of paragraph 3, which stipulated that the Administrator might waive in part host Government contributions to local office costs to be made by them, should be applied to Governments which provided office facilities and housing for their staff members free of charge, as was the case in Bahrain, which continued to cover 55 per cent of local office costs and assumed the full cost of inflation, which sometimes was as high as 75 per cent. The ratio between per capita income and gross national product did not accurately reflect a country's economic situation or level of development and thus could not be used as a criterion for determining economic assistance. Bahrain was co-operating with the United Nations Fund for Population Activities in the implementation of two projects dealing with the development of the Central Statistical Service and with social development respectively. He hoped that that co-operation would be extended to other areas, particularly demographic training and research. His delegation urged the international community to continue to support UNFPA.

77. Bahrain welcomed the accomplishments of the United Nations Volunteers programme, particularly in Africa, in accordance with the recommendations of the Sana'a Declaration, and believed that that programme was an effective instrument of multilateral technical co-operation suited to the needs of developing countries, despite the youth and inexperience of its members.

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(Mr. Abbas, Bahrain)

78. At the last UNDP Governing Council meeting at Geneva, Bahrain had expressed its desire to co-operate with the Department of Technical Co-operation for Development. He hoped that a relationship would soon be established with that Department, whose skills and advice with regard to project financing and execution were extremely useful. Moreover, the Department's role had been confirmed in General Assembly resolution 38/171, which recommended that the regular programme should be used more flexibly and should serve as a new dimension for pilot projects, which would in turn lead to the development of more appropriate projects financed from other sources. In that connection, his delegation supported the programme of interregional advisory activities which the Department had set up for island developing countries.

79. Bahrain welcomed the current policy of UNICEF and the development of its activities; Bahrain had established firm ties of co-operation with that agency since becoming a member of its Executive Board and since UNICEF offices had been opened in the Gulf countries. That co-operation took the form of assistance to UNICEF through the Arab Gulf Programme for the United Nations Development Organizations to give the most disadvantaged children a better chance for survival, development and health, in keeping with the principles and guidelines of UNICEF activities. Bahrain, which had been elected Chairman of the Committee on Administration and Finance in 1984 and Vice-Chairman of the Executive Board for 1985, hoped that, given the importance of primary activities for children, co-operation with UNICEF would continue to be strengthened and that the Executive Director would continue his work in the social sciences and biology in order to bring about a real revolution in child survival and development.

80. His delegation believed that the size of the various funds should be determined by their effectiveness in carrying out the activities entrusted to them; consequently, directors should be appointed to the funds still managed by UNDP in order to lighten the Programme's work-load and prevent delays in the collection of contributions from Member States.

81. The CHAIRMAN announced that the following countries had become sponsors of the draft resolutions listed below: A/C.2/39/L.39, L.41, L.43 and L.45: Pakistan; A/C.2/39/L.46: Kenya and Pakistan; A/C.2/39/L.47, L.51 and L.56: Pakistan; A/C.2/39/L.57: Colombia and Pakistan; A/C.2/39/L.59: Pakistan; A/C.2/39/L.60: Italy; A/C.2/39/L.61 and L.62: Pakistan; A/C.2/39/L.64: Italy and Pakistan; A/C.2/39/L.65: Pakistan; A/C.2/39/L.70: Bolivia, Guinea and Malaysia; A/C.2/39/L.71: Algeria and Pakistan; and A/C.2/39/L.73: the Gambia and Pakistan.

The meeting rose at 6.25 p.m.