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SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 36th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. BIRIDO (Sudan)

later: Ms. ERIKSSON (Sweden)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.45 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 12: REPORT OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL (continued)  
(A/C.2/40/L.33 and L.41)

Draft resolution A/C.2/40/L.33

1. Mr. KAMARA (Senegal), introducing, on behalf of its sponsors which had been joined by Burkina Faso, Jamaica and Mozambique, the draft resolution on countries stricken by desertification and drought, recalled that at the Economic and Social Council's second regular session, his delegation had underscored the importance of a better understanding of the impact of drought and desertification on the main areas related to the development of the countries affected, and that other delegations had also felt that the focus should be on the problems of those countries.

2. After the first Conference in Dakar for a joint policy to combat desertification in the countries of the Permanent Interstate Committee on Drought Control in the Sahel (CILSS), in the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), in the Maghreb countries and in Egypt and the Sudan, other recent initiatives had been taken to combat those scourges: a second Ministerial Conference on the subject had been convened at the beginning of November 1985; the first African Environmental Conference was to be held in December 1985 at Cairo under UNEP auspices; and the French Government had decided to organize an international forestry conference in Paris in February 1986. While Africa continued to require emergency assistance in certain cases, the affected countries needed above all to improve their infrastructures. The rehabilitation of countries stricken by drought and desertification, as well as the campaign against these scourges, should therefore be part of the general process of medium-term and long-term development. Since the draft resolution was being submitted both by affected countries and by other developing and developed countries, his delegation hoped that it would be easily adopted.

Draft resolution A/C.2/40/L.41

3. Mr. FIELD (United Kingdom), introducing on behalf of its sponsors the draft resolution on co-ordination in the United Nations and the United Nations system, said that its objective was extremely simple: to highlight the importance of effective co-ordination - that essential element in the operation of a large organization - so as to avoid duplication and overlapping efforts by United Nations institutions in the economic and social sectors. The draft resolution was in no way intended to change United Nations institutions; rather, it reaffirmed the pertinent provisions of the Charter and of General Assembly resolutions on co-ordination, in order to make Member States and the relevant United Nations bodies more aware of that necessary principle. The United Kingdom therefore hoped that the draft resolution would be supported by all delegations.

4. The CHAIRMAN announced that China, Liberia and Romania had joined the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.2/40/L.33, and that China and the Federal Republic of Germany had joined those of draft resolution A/C.2/40/L.41.

AGENDA ITEM 84: DEVELOPMENT AND INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC CO-OPERATION (continued)

(c) TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT (continued) (A/C.2/40/L.38)

(e) ECONOMIC AND TECHNICAL CO-OPERATION AMONG DEVELOPING COUNTRIES (continued) (A/C.2/40/L.40)

(f) ENVIRONMENT (continued) (A/C.2/40/L.35)

(i) EFFECTIVE MOBILIZATION AND INTEGRATION OF WOMEN IN DEVELOPMENT: REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (continued) (A/C.2/40/L.23/Rev.1)

Draft resolution A/C.2/40/L.38

5. Mr. JOSSE (Nepal), introducing, on behalf of the sponsors which had been joined by Bangladesh and Botswana, the draft resolution on specific action related to the particular needs and problems of land-locked developing countries, said that the draft resolution's essential purpose was to request UNCTAD to prepare another report on progress in the implementation of specific action related to the particular needs and problems of land-locked developing countries. The text was largely based on General Assembly resolution 39/209, which it updated and largely recapitulated because its sponsors had felt that the resolution expressed very well both the development needs and aspirations of the land-locked developing countries and the need for effective co-operation between land-locked developing countries and their neighbouring transit States. The sponsors therefore hoped that, like resolution 39/209, the draft resolution would be adopted by consensus.

Draft resolution A/C.2/40/L.40

6. Mr. YANE (Botswana), introducing, on behalf of its sponsors, which had been joined by Canada, Denmark, Finland, Kenya, the Netherlands, Norway and Sweden, the draft resolution on co-operation between the United Nations and the Southern African Development Co-ordination Conference, said that in the five years since it had been established, the Conference had formulated a number of multinational projects in agriculture, transport and communications, industry, energy, mining and quarrying and vocational training, which had been funded both bilaterally and through donors' round tables. The member countries of the Conference were particularly grateful to the Nordic and other friendly countries, especially those of the European Economic Community, for their assistance in carrying out those projects. Since 1982, the Conference had also been co-operating with the United Nations system and hoped to expand that co-operation.

7. Draft resolution A/C.2/40/L.40 departed somewhat from previous resolutions on the subject. Attention was drawn, however, to paragraphs 3 and 4, in which the international community and the organizations of the United Nations system were

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asked to increase their support for the programmes of the Conference. The member countries of the Conference were victims not only of the drought in Africa but also of intensified acts of destabilization committed against them by South Africa. The threats of sanctions hanging over the Pretoria régime might induce it to take reprisals against the neighbouring countries, and the situation could only deteriorate further. Some Conference projects had already been jeopardized by acts of sabotage perpetrated at the instigation of South Africa. It was therefore extremely important that the member countries of the Conference should receive increased support so as to resist the effects of sanctions or at least attenuate them. The sponsors of the draft resolution therefore hoped that it would be adopted by consensus.

Draft resolution A/C.2/40/L.35

8. Mr. SOUMAILA (Niger) introduced the draft resolution entitled "Plan of Action to Combat Desertification" on behalf of its sponsors which had been joined by the Netherlands. The purpose of the Plan of Action was to enable the States concerned, particularly in the Sudano-Sahelian region, to tackle the desertification problem as a matter of priority under their national development plans and programmes. In addition, implementation of the Plan of Action would support and encourage the many efforts being made to promote a more coherent form of subregional co-ordination and co-operation. The aim of the draft resolution was to mobilize greater support from the international community for the operation. The draft consisted of two parts: one on the implementation and financing of the Plan of Action in general, and the other on the implementation of the Plan in the Sudano-Sahelian region. It incorporated some of the elements of resolution 13/30, as adopted by the Governing Council of UNDP.

9. The CHAIRMAN announced that the Comoros had joined the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.2/40/L.40, that the Comoros and Liberia had joined the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.2/40/L.35, and that the Congo had joined the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.2/40/L.23/Rev.1.

10. Mr. SEVAN (Secretary of the Committee), commenting on the draft resolutions that were not in line with the Committee's biennial programme of work, referred to General Assembly resolution 39/217, paragraph 3 of which did in fact provide for an exception to the rule that all requests for Secretariat reports to be submitted to the Second Committee should conform to the biennial programme of work, namely in cases where the urgency of the subject-matter required otherwise. Moreover, it also provided that certain questions or reports could be considered under agenda item 12. Although the matter of urgency was left to the discretion of delegations, they must exercise restraint when requesting documents.

11. The practice should end of requesting reports not directly from the Secretary-General but also from departmental and even divisional heads, as was the case, for instance, in part A, paragraph 14, of draft resolution A/C.2/40/L.35. In order to uphold the integrity of the Secretary-General and ensure genuine co-ordination, all delegations should address their requests for reports to the Secretary-General himself and allow him then to decide who was to prepare the reports.

12. The CHAIRMAN said it was his understanding that some of the draft resolutions submitted were not in line with the Committee's biennial programme of work and, supporting the observations made by the Secretary of the Committee, agreed that delegations ought to exercise judgement and restraint in deciding whether a given draft resolution was urgent or not.

AGENDA ITEM 85: OPERATIONAL ACTIVITIES FOR DEVELOPMENT (continued) (A/40/3, 74, 672, 662)

- (a) OPERATIONAL ACTIVITIES OF THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM: REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (continued) (A/40/698)
- (b) UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME (continued) (E/1985/32 and Corr.1)
- (c) UNITED NATIONS CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT FUND (continued) (E/1985/32 and Corr.1)
- (d) UNITED NATIONS VOLUNTEERS PROGRAMME (continued) (E/1985/32 and Corr.1)
- (e) UNITED NATIONS TECHNICAL CO-OPERATION ACTIVITIES: REPORTS OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (A/40/549; DP/1985/43 and Add.1-3)
- (f) LIQUIDATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS EMERGENCY OPERATION TRUST FUND AND ALLOCATION OF THE REMAINING BALANCE: REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (continued) (A/40/740)

13. Mr. RAICHEV (Bulgaria) conveyed his delegation's sympathy to the Colombian Government in connection with the recent tragedy that had befallen Colombia. Turning to the subject of operational activities for development, he said that Bulgaria had always attached major importance to the activities of UNDP, whose role, notably in technical co-operation, had grown significantly with the mounting economic difficulties besetting the developing countries. UNDP had reached an important stage in its work, namely preparations for its fourth programming cycle whose success would to a large extent depend on respect for the principles underlying the Programme and on preserving its universal and voluntary character.

14. Bulgaria was unable to condone certain trends towards discriminating against particular countries or groups of countries. Higher rates of economic growth did not entirely eliminate the need for assistance, and depriving some countries of assistance would weaken interest in UNDP and consequently entail a decline in its activities. For that reason, the existing approach to the distribution of IPFs must be maintained, and preferential treatment should continue to be granted to the least developed and the lowest-income countries. His delegation was also in favour of increasing the IPFs of national liberation movements in the same proportion as those of countries with per capita incomes under \$805. In that connection it supported the resolution adopted on assistance to national liberation movements by the Governing Council at its thirty-second session.

15. Limiting UNDP assistance to the amount of the contributions of participating countries would also have an adverse effect on the voluntary nature of the

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Programme. The "floor" concept should therefore be retained during the fourth programming cycle with a view to avoiding a decline in IPFs and completing the projects under way. Attempts to impose the idea of "usable currencies" were inconsistent with the voluntary character of the Programme.

16. With regard to programming periods, his country shared the view that the interests of recipient countries should be paramount and that programming periods should become a flexible instrument for increasing the effectiveness of development assistance. Attention should also be given to the proposal for the donor countries to provide preliminary information on the approximate amount of their voluntary contributions, but that approach must neither disrupt the existing procedure nor contravene the national legislation of donor countries. His delegation supported the Administrator's proposal to increase the resources for sectoral assistance during the fourth programming cycle. In that connection, he recommended that UNDP's activities should be closely co-ordinated with those of UNIDO.

17. Co-ordination of UNDP assistance was of considerable importance, but responsibility for co-ordinating operational activities for development must be assumed by the recipient countries, and the role of UNDP, especially that of its resident representatives, must be restricted to co-operating with the Governments concerned which retained the sovereign right to determine the ways and means of using the assistance provided. Moreover, UNDP's co-ordinating role in activities carried out by countries in co-operation with other bodies and organizations within the United Nations system must not restrict the independence of those bodies and organizations in their relations with the recipient countries.

18. The development of the human resources of the developing countries was an important aspect of operational activities, but it should be borne in mind that the idea of establishing a human resources body under UNDP did not take all aspects of the problem into account and was primarily intended to meet the developing countries' need for the services of foreign experts. That approach was one-sided and the problem must be addressed in a more comprehensive manner.

19. With regard to the further enhancement of the effectiveness of UNDP activities, the Administrator of the Programme should pursue his efforts with a view to further reducing administrative and non-productive spending and to making more effective use of available resources. The continuing practice of assigning the implementation of projects chiefly to a small number of Western countries was disturbing. The assistance thus provided reflected only the experience of a limited number of market-economy countries, which prevented the developing countries from gaining knowledge of the experience of other States, including the Socialist countries. Moreover, Bulgaria wished to reiterate its reservations about the growing tendency to weaken the role of the Governing Council; the Committee of the Whole, which had been established on an experimental basis, should not arrogate to itself the prerogatives of the Council.

20. Bulgaria, which was participating actively in UNDP technical co-operation activities, had been a net donor for several years now and intended to remain a net

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donor. It saw that co-operation with UNDP as another way in which it could pass on its experience to the developing countries. A number of agricultural research institutes had been established in Bulgaria, in co-operation with UNDP, and many developing countries had already shown an active interest in them; for example, the purpose of the Centre for Foot-and-Mouth Disease Control was to prevent foot-and-mouth disease and other exotic disorders from being introduced into Europe. Furthermore, Bulgaria was co-operating with WHO, in co-operation with which it had held 26 courses, seminars and symposia.

21. In the following programming cycle, Bulgaria planned to use its IPFs exclusively to ensure the completion of projects in which the Bulgarian Government had invested considerable resources and which it had been impossible to complete during the current cycle owing to the reduction in country IPFs.

22. In conclusion, he wished to point out that his country attached great importance to the activities carried out by other funds and programmes, particularly UNICEF. It was through gradual socio-economic transformations ensuring access for the entire population to modern social services that it would be possible to improve the situation of women and children in the developing countries. The Fund should also be commended for its endeavour to reduce infant mortality and provide assistance to developing countries in Africa. Bulgaria supported the efforts made by UNICEF to stabilize its budget and make considerable savings. Moreover, it believed that UNICEF should continue to endeavour to make more effective use of voluntary contributions. The way in which resources in national currencies were currently used was still not fully in keeping with the goals of all countries where the provision of the necessary assistance to developing countries was concerned.

23. Bulgaria had also been co-operating actively with UNFPA, whose activities that were designed to assist developing countries in solving their population problems were extremely useful. That role should be emphasized further, as should the effectiveness of UNFPA programme implementation in developing countries.

24. Ms. Eriksson (Sweden) took the Chair.

25. Mr. ALBORNOZ (Ecuador), after having drawn attention to the importance of and the advantages to be gained from multilateralism, said that UNDP, which facilitated the transfer of the technological know-how of certain countries to others, as well as the promotion of investment, represented the most tangible endeavour to further international progress in the history of co-operation among peoples. The Latin American countries therefore wished to ensure observance of the main principles upon which UNDP was based; for example, the universality and voluntary nature of the Fund, no linkage between contributions to the Programme and the assistance received, and multilateralism, which prevented certain modes of development from being imposed on countries, rather than others. Moreover, the aim of UNDP was, through its assistance, to develop human resources and, in particular, to enable people to increase their mastery over their environment and to enhance their environment. In Latin America, UNDP assistance had a multiplier effect on the

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various sectors of the economies of the recipient countries, whose counterpart contributions represented three times the amount of the UNDP inputs. Another aspect of multilateralism resulting from international co-operation was co-operation among developing countries.

26. World-wide inflation had already reduced the real value of UNDP assistance, and it would therefore be unwarranted to consider making further reductions in the IPF for the Latin American region, where some 100 million people already lived in a state of poverty exacerbated by such natural disasters as those that had struck Mexico and Colombia, not to mention the impact of indebtedness and the world-wide crisis. Furthermore, the indicative planning figures for Latin America were unreliable, since it was insufficient to take per capita GNP and population-size as a basis; account should also be taken of such major factors as the scale of the development endeavour of each individual country, the structural changes made, income distribution, the debt burden, the balance-of-payments deficit, the deterioration in the terms of trade, unemployment and the drop in the volume of exports.<sup>28</sup> It was therefore regrettable that UNDP should consider reducing allocations on the basis of figures that had lost much of their real value. Nevertheless, UNDP remained the most notable manifestation of multilateralism and North-South co-operation.

27. The modernization of economies remained the purpose of multilateral co-operation, and should also be the objective of bilateral co-operation. He believed that progress had been made in that connection since the drafting of the Lima Declaration and Plan of Action, whose main features and objectives he wished to recall.

28. In Latin America, operational activities had facilitated not only speedier implementation of national development plans but also the strengthening of technical and economic co-operation between the Latin American countries and other developing countries. He wished to draw attention to a co-operation project implemented by the Argentine and Ecuadorian Governments, in co-operation with UNDP, whose purpose was to assess the damage caused by flooding in the River Guayas basin and to consider ways of forestalling or minimizing flood-damage in the future.

29. In the case of Ecuador, the purpose of the assistance from UNDP was to provide support in connection with the targets and priorities set in the 1984-1988 national development plan; the assistance in question was being provided in the context of various projects in the areas of agriculture, industry, social development, the environment, education and the promotion of women.

30. Despite the obstacles encountered, the prospects for multilateral co-operation were encouraging. At the recent United Nations Pledging Conference for Development Activities, 110 countries and territories had pledged contributions to UNDP in an amount of \$736.2 million, which was an unprecedented level. That increase in the level of contributions demonstrated the pronounced sense of responsibility of the international community. In that connection, the countries that had raised their contributions by more than 14 per cent, the minimum target that had been set by the

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General Assembly, were particularly to be commended for their efforts. In view of the fluctuations in the rate of exchange, Ecuador had been obliged to pledge an increase of over 50 per cent in its own currency, in order to ensure that the level of its contribution in United States dollars remained the same as the level of the contribution it had pledged for 1985.

31. The report of the Director-General for Development and International Economic Co-operation (A/40/698) was extremely interesting from many points of view, because it made it easier to understand the co-ordinated effort made by the United Nations system as a whole in the area of operational activities and emphasized the importance and the effectiveness of the work carried out by the resident co-ordinators in that connection. Moreover, the report indicated that expenditure for the benefit of sub-Saharan African countries had risen from 30 to 41 per cent and that 41 per cent of the activities undertaken by the system, at both the national and regional levels, had been for the benefit of the least developed countries. Likewise, Ecuador welcomed the increase in the level of contributions pledged, for example, to UNFPA, UNICEF, WFP and emergency relief operations, particularly in Lebanon, Bangladesh, Kampuchea and, more recently, Mexico and Colombia. Unfortunately, the report also indicated that the seventh replenishment of the International Development Association represented a reduction of 40 per cent in real terms over the sixth replenishment level of \$12 billion. It was to be hoped that that trend would be reversed, so that it would be possible to speak of genuine North-South co-operation.

32. Moreover, it could be seen from the report that the United Nations system had a role to play as both a logical and an indispensable co-ordinator of multilateral and bilateral efforts, if effective assistance to the recipient countries was to be ensured. The statistical information submitted was also extremely interesting, since it indicated the contributions paid by the major donors and the cost-sharing contributions paid by the developing countries, as well as the chief countries that had benefited in 1984 from procurement for operational activities, by country of procurement.

33. Ms. BRUSLETTEN (Norway), speaking on behalf of the Nordic countries, said that the important work done by the United Nations in the economic field was known to many only indirectly through its operational activities. Ambitious goals had been set to meet the challenges in different fields and sometimes there had been overconfidence in thinking that another fund or a new agency could solve the problems in one sector or another.

34. The objective was clear: support must be given to the efforts of the developing countries to achieve social development and economic growth. In recent years there had been increasing awareness of the interrelationships between various types of development efforts. Sectoral planning must be seen in the national macro-economic perspective. In similar fashion, the importance of a comprehensive and co-ordinated approach to development assistance had been increasingly recognized.

(Ms. Brusletten, Norway)

35. Operational activities for development were playing a vital role but they must respond to the changing needs of the developing countries. In that connection UNDP had already made important improvements in its procedures for project formulation and examination. The Nordic countries had been pleased to find that improved co-ordination of assistance activities had become a central issue in several United Nations agencies; much, however, remained to be done. UNDP had a central role to play in that connection but donor countries must support its mandate, and that required a strengthened financial commitment on their part. Accordingly, the Nordic countries would like to stress the need for a more equitable pattern of contributions. Donors and recipients alike should make better use of Resident Co-ordinators. The increasing importance of the consultative groups and round-table meetings should make it possible to strengthen aid co-ordination.

36. The special role of UNDP should be fully recognized within the United Nations family. In particular, the different funds and agencies involved in development should strengthen their co-operation and co-ordination activities with the Programme not only at Headquarters but also at the country level. Some executing agencies seemed to lack the will to co-operate with UNDP, and that attitude could discredit the entire system. UNIDO, as a new specialized agency, should also make every effort to co-operate effectively with UNDP.

37. A harmonious transition from emergency assistance to long-term development efforts had also become increasingly important, particularly in Africa, where there was a need to achieve more balanced development and better use of available resources. The Nordic countries had recently taken measures to expand and co-ordinate their efforts in that field.

38. The outcome of the world conference which had marked the end of the United Nations Decade for Women had been positive and she hoped that its results would quickly be reflected in the activities of the United Nations agencies involved in development: the concerns of women must be taken into consideration at all development planning levels. The role of women in production had not yet been sufficiently examined. If more women were employed in the relevant organs and organizations of the United Nations, those aspects would be given more sustained attention. In that context, the Nordic countries reiterated their strong support for the recent decision of the Executive Board of UNICEF on future policies and programming to meet the concerns of women.

39. The Nordic countries reconfirmed their support for the activities of UNICEF, whose multisectoral approach was a challenge to other agencies to improve mutual co-operation and co-ordination. The Nordic countries had also provided political and financial support for UNICEF's strategy on child survival and development which held promise for the future; at the same time they stressed that the relevant activities should be seen in the larger context of child health. They noted with satisfaction the commitment by developing countries to give the strategy high priority in the allocation of national resources. They also welcomed the increased efforts of WHO and UNICEF to achieve the goal of immunizing the world's children by 1990 as an important step in the development of primary health care.

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40. The International Conference on Population in Mexico City and the work of UNFPA had helped to draw attention to the world's population problems and the linkage between development, population growth and environment, and as a consequence, UNFPA was increasing its activities. However, the needs were still far from being satisfied. UNFPA should be supported by all Member States because it was a focal point in the struggle against overpopulation.

41. In the view of the Nordic countries, the decisions taken by the Governing Council of UNDP at its thirty-second session would help to strengthen the agency. The conciliatory spirit shown by delegations had made it possible to find compromise solutions and, in particular, to achieve consensus on the Fourth Programming Cycle. The establishment of a working group of the Committee of the Whole was an important initiative which would ensure wider participation by Member States and more efficient programme planning for the benefit of recipient countries.

42. The Secretary-General had stated in his report on operational activities for development (A/40/698) that an in-depth study of the issue would not be presented until 1986. That study should analyse the major problems arising in connection with operational activities and formulate specific proposals for improvements. There was a particular need for strengthening co-ordination capabilities, national evaluation arrangements and co-operation with multilateral development banks.

43. The results of the 1985 United Nations Pledging Conference for Development Activities had been very encouraging. In that connection, the Nordic countries wished to express their thanks to the Administrator of UNDP, who had recently announced his intention to step down from his position in 1986, for his untiring efforts to improve the situation of millions of people in the developing countries.

44. Mr. NOWORYTA (Poland) said that technical co-operation had become the main feature of operational activities for development, enabling many countries to develop their human potential and to make more rational use of available financial and material resources. In addition, that form of co-operation was often an essential complement to investment financing.

45. The evolution of the operational activities of the United Nations system was a normal and positive process, for such activities must continually adapt themselves to the changing needs of the international community as a whole and the individual countries while remaining faithful to the basic principles of the United Nations Charter, such as the universal and voluntary character of the activities undertaken and respect for the sovereignty of recipient countries. Operational activities should also contribute to the expansion of international economic and social co-operation and the strengthening of confidence between the co-operating partners, and should enhance the capability of individual developing countries to participate in such co-operation so that the goals and principles of the new international economic order could be met.

46. The United Nations Development Programme was the central agency for financing and co-ordinating technical assistance within the United Nations system and

(Mr. Noworyta, Poland)

constituted the most important instrument of multilateral technical co-operation; its activities therefore merited support. During its thirty-second session, the Governing Council of UNDP had adopted a number of decisions, the most important of which concerned the arrangements for the Fourth Programming Cycle. The Governing Council had also devoted considerable attention to the problems of co-ordinating external technical co-operation at the country level and the strengthening of such co-operation, which was indispensable if the effectiveness of co-operation for development was to be increased. In that connection, his delegation was happy to note that the technical co-operation programmes of UNDP continued to be regarded as a key element in the channelling of assistance, making it possible to respond to the evolving needs of developing countries. In addition, it supported UNDP's decision to reorient its efforts with a view to providing assistance to countries which needed it through projects carefully adapted to the special problems of those countries, on condition that such assistance would continue to be provided only at the express request of the interested Governments.

47. UNICEF had a long record of untiring efforts to improve the situation of children throughout the world, but much still remained to be done, for each day many children were dying from malnutrition, famine and disease. An international seminar on the subject of "Children First" had been held in Warsaw in September 1985, with the participation of the Executive Director of UNICEF, for the purpose of reviewing UNICEF's achievements and future activities. He hoped that the draft Convention on the Rights of the Child, initiated by his country, would be adopted by the General Assembly in the near future.

48. The creation of the Department of Technical Co-operation for Development had been an important step in increasing United Nations involvement in technical co-operation activities. The rising demand for the Department's services had demonstrated that it could, and in fact did, play an important role in the transfer of technical expertise to all countries in need. Poland supported the Department's activities, including those concerned with population, and the proposed establishment of a United Nations interregional remote sensing training centre in Warsaw. It also supported the work of the United Nations Fund for Population Activities to which it had been making a voluntary contribution since 1982.

49. The United Nations Volunteers programme had become an important instrument for the recruitment of volunteer technical assistance personnel of high quality and their posting to interested countries. Poland regularly took part in the consultative meetings on international volunteer services and in 1985 its first volunteer had been sent out into the field. It intended to continue to promote that form of co-operation in development activities.

50. The composition and role of the General Assembly made it an appropriate forum for the review of United Nations strategies, policies and priorities in respect of operational activities for development. Poland was ready to co-operate further in a constructive manner in those activities.

51. Mr. BARNETT (Jamaica) reiterated his support for operational activities, the field in which the United Nations had been able to influence most directly the lives of people in the developing world, and particularly for UNDP which continued to play an invaluable role in the funding and delivery of technical assistance to developing countries. Jamaica continued to maintain that the basic principles that underpinned UNDP - universality of participation in the Programme's activities, UNDP's central funding role and the country programming process - should be strengthened not eroded. At the thirty-second session of the Governing Council, Jamaica had participated in the process that had led to decision 85/16 on the fourth programming cycle, and to decision 85/13 on the establishment of a focal point of short-term advisory services to respond to the need for short-term skills in many developing countries. During the current session, the international community had shown its capacity to reach agreement through compromise and a genuine desire to give impetus to the Programme.

52. The results of the recent United Nations Conference for the pledging of contributions to development activities were heartening and it was to be hoped that the anticipated surpassing of the \$700 million target for 1986 would allow preparations for the fourth programming cycle to proceed on a more assured and secure basis. It was also to be hoped that the actual rate of increase of voluntary contributions would be higher than the 8 per cent growth rate for forward planning envisaged for the fourth cycle and that the mid-cycle review would lead to higher indicative planning figures commensurate with the needs of recipient countries.

53. The report of the Director-General for Development and International Economic Co-operation showed that there had been a 2 per cent decline in contributions for operational activities in nominal terms over 1983 and that the real level of resources available to the developing countries had stagnated. In addition, from 1979 to 1984, the grant component of expenditure by the United Nations on operational activities had decreased from almost 44 per cent to less than 30 per cent, while the non-concessional component had increased from 28 per cent to almost 40 per cent. The cost-sharing and self-supporting contributions on the part of recipient countries had increased to \$205 million in 1984, a trend that should be reversed as soon as possible because it seriously jeopardized the situation of developing countries, beset by serious economic problems in recent years.

54. With regard to co-operation among multilateral development institutions as part of the broader effort to improve the effectiveness of international development assistance, Jamaica believed that the emphasis on technical assistance and programme lending by the multilateral financial institutions, such as the World Bank, was a welcome development that would enable such assistance to be strengthened and allow continued co-operation in more traditional areas such as round-tables and consultative group meetings.

55. With regard to strengthening co-ordination capabilities, effective co-ordination was essential in any undertaking, such as operational activities, involving so many participants and of great scope and complexity. In that respect, country programming could make an important contribution by providing a framework

(Mr. Barnett, Jamaica)

for assessing the overall technical assistance needs of recipient countries. However, if such programming was usefully to play such a role, IPF resources must be maintained at some minimum level in relation to technical assistance needs. Furthermore, the procedures established by Governments at the national level to facilitate co-ordination must be fully respected by all donor countries and agencies.

56. Finally, during the preparations for the fourth programming cycle it was essential that, in the allocation of funds and selection of projects under regional programmes, specific attention should be given, as had been done in the third cycle, to subregional priorities and needs, in particular those of the English-speaking Caribbean countries.

57. Mr. Birido (Sudan) resumed the Chair.

58. Mr. CHEKAY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that his country consistently advocated strengthening the role of the United Nations and its associated agencies as important instruments for co-operation among States, and thus for consolidating peace and international security and solving the principal problems of economic and social development. UNDP's future activities would be successful only if they facilitated the restructuring of international economic relations on a fair and democratic basis.

59. The Soviet Union was providing large-scale and varied economic assistance to developing countries (1.4 per cent of its GNP in 1984) and in that capacity was a participant in United Nations operational activities which, it considered, should be further improved and linked more closely to national development plans.

60. The Soviet Union assisted in the training within the United Nations system of national personnel for developing countries. Over the past 20 years about 12,000 fellowship-holders from some 100 countries had received training. In 1983, 34 international seminars, symposia and training courses had been held for holders of fellowships from UNIDO, ESCAP, UNCTAD, ECA and other bodies. In addition, the Soviet Union regularly collaborated with UNFPA in training specialists at Moscow State University. Nevertheless, United Nations bodies did not always take full advantage of the opportunities offered by the Soviet Union, for example, with regard to courses organized in the Soviet Union, the number of its experts assigned to UNDP projects and the awarding of contracts to Soviet enterprises.

61. Operational activities should encourage the restructuring of international economic relations on a just and democratic basis, further the objectives of the International Development Strategy for the Third United Nations Development Decade and promote social and economic reforms in the developing countries in order to enable them to strengthen their economic independence. The fact that there were attempts to use UNDP and the Department of Technical Co-operation for Development to facilitate the penetration of foreign private capital into the developing countries and to promote the policies of international financial institutions controlled by capitalist countries was cause for concern, because those investments

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were essentially based on profit. Moreover, UNDP and various other technical assistance agencies continued to recruit consultants who were very costly and helped to further the above-mentioned policies. The recent proposal of several Western countries, whereby the co-ordinating function of UNDP would be expanded at the programming, implementation and evaluation level of technical assistance projects, including projects involving bilateral aid, could lead to inadmissible interference in bilateral relations. The same was true for mechanisms aimed at unilaterally "strengthening" co-ordination with the active participation of the World Bank.

62. The Soviet Union had already pointed out that UNDP's activities had shown serious gaps in the planning and implementation of projects, and that operational activities must be adapted to national development plans, but its criticisms had not been taken fully into account. In some cases, UNDP was attempting to impose projects which served mainly the interests of Western monopolies and, conversely, UNDP blocked some projects related to strengthening the public sector. In recent years, when operational activities were considered in the Governing Council of UNDP and in the Economic and Social Council, attention had been called to unjustified delays in the launching of certain projects and the unwarranted tendency to call upon a small number of executing agencies. Moreover, the personnel recruited were still not sufficiently qualified, the problem of training national personnel had not been given proper attention, and there were no well-defined criteria of remuneration for services rendered. There were other shortcomings, not to mention certain actions motivated by purely political considerations. With regard to the Working Group of the Committee of the Whole concerned with programming questions, the Soviet Union's position had already been presented in the joint declaration of the socialist countries at the thirty-second session of the Governing Council.

63. For the past several years, operational activities for development had been assigning an increasing role to TCDC, and the developing countries were becoming more and more aware of the possibilities which that offered, but they would be able to develop that form of co-operation and to co-ordinate their national efforts only if they undertook major economic and social reforms, in particular so as to consolidate their national sovereignty and remove the constraints preventing them from developing their productive forces. The experience acquired by the socialist countries as a result of their co-operation in CMEA and with developing countries could be very useful. That experience was based on respect for the sovereignty of States and for their national interests, non-interference, complete equality and the principle of mutual advantage.

64. Providing assistance for human resources development was an important aspect of operational activities. In that respect, the new tasks defined by the Administrator of UNDP in his note to the Governing Council at its thirty-second session (DP/1985/22) were, in general, satisfactory. That being the case, the creation of a "human resources facility" within UNDP would not be compatible with the approach formulated by the non-aligned countries in Nicaragua in May 1984 because that body would provide only for services rendered by foreign experts. In fact, certain States were hostile to a global approach to the question of human

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resources because they did not wish to contemplate the problem of a "brain drain" into the developing countries and did not want newly independent States to become less dependent on Western experts. For its part, the Soviet Union was in favour of a global approach, in accordance with the relevant United Nations decisions.

65. Soviet organizations consistently supported the activities of the Department of Technical Co-operation for Development. Nevertheless, during the biennium 1983-1984, the Department had drastically cut down resources for operational activities, which had led to major changes in structures and personnel. Of particular concern was the fact that it was increasing the ratio of short-term consultants to experts for technical assistance projects. The central services of the bodies which financed and implemented projects within the system played an increasingly important role in the recruitment of personnel for field projects, and private enterprises exerted pressure on those bodies. All that tended to limit the room for manoeuvre of recipient countries and of national services responsible for recruiting experts. Furthermore, the principle of equitable geographic distribution was not strictly respected when bids were invited for UNDP projects [see the ACABQ report to the General Assembly at its fortieth session (A/40/7)].

66. His delegation reaffirmed its position of principle that all the technical assistance activities of the United Nations system should be financed solely on the basis of voluntary contributions.

67. Since UNICEF was an entirely unique agency, the USSR would continue to support its operational activities in so far as it respected the principles set forth by the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council, in particular the right of all recipient States independently to plan the implementation of programmes and to determine priorities. The volume of UNICEF's assistance should provide for the real needs of the recipient countries and take into account their infant mortality rates, and not just their national resources. The USSR supported the new strategy of UNICEF and the resolution of its Executive Board which called upon States to reaffirm their commitment to improving the situation of children in the world and to implementing the programme for the universal immunization of children by 1990, but the traditional sectors of UNICEF's activities (food, water supply, primary health care, etc.) should not be neglected. That agency should continue to apply the principles of the Declaration entitled "Health for all by the year 2000", adopted at Alma Ata in 1978.

68. The problems relating to the development of the world economy could be solved only in a climate of peace, and all United Nations agencies had the duty of contributing towards strengthening peace and security. To do so, they should formulate specific measures for implementing General Assembly resolution 38/188 J, in which the Assembly invited the United Nations system to broaden further its contribution to the cause of disarmament.

The meeting rose at 6.15 p.m.