



SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 29th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. AL-ASH'AL (Democratic Yemen)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 82: SPECIAL ECONOMIC AND DISASTER RELIEF ASSISTANCE (continued)

- (a) OFFICE OF THE UNITED NATIONS DISASTER RELIEF CO-ORDINATOR: REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (continued)

Draft resolution A/C.2/41/L.22

1. The CHAIRMAN announced that Afghanistan, Angola, Cyprus, Dominica, Egypt, Iran and Saint Christopher and Nevis had joined the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.2/41/L.22.

- (b) SPECIAL PROGRAMMES OF ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE: REPORTS OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (continued)

Draft resolution on special assistance to front-line States (A/C.2/41/L.52)

2. Mr. CHABALA (Zambia), introducing the draft resolution, which Algeria, Cuba, Ethiopia, Yugoslavia and Zaire had joined his own delegation in sponsoring, said that it sought to express their deep concern at the deteriorating situation in southern Africa resulting from the intensification of the inhuman and immoral apartheid policy of the Government of South Africa, which had exacerbated the already serious economic and social problems facing the front-line States. The situation constituted a serious threat to the maintenance of international peace and security.

3. The international community must encourage the individual and collective efforts of the front-line and other independent African States in the region to achieve self-reliant development, strengthen their mutual economic co-operation and reduce their dependence on South Africa, particularly in the areas of transport, communications and related sectors. Such assistance would enhance the capacity of the front-line States to render essential support to the nationalist movements in South Africa and Namibia, to aid the thousands of refugees fleeing from worsening repression in those territories and to withstand the effects of the economic restrictions taken by or against South Africa.

4. After reviewing the contents of the second and third operative paragraphs of the draft resolution, he expressed the hope that it would be adopted by consensus.

Introduction of draft resolution on special economic assistance to Chad (A/C.2/41/L.54)

5. Mr. SHAABAN (Egypt), introducing the draft resolution which Egypt and France had joined in sponsoring, said that the already precarious situation of Chad, burdened by war and drought, had been made worse by locust infestation. He therefore hoped that it would be adopted by consensus.

Draft resolution on assistance to El Salvador (A/C.2/41/L.27/Rev.1)

6. The CHAIRMAN announced that Niger had joined the sponsors of the draft resolution.

Draft resolution on assistance to Uganda (A/C.2/41/L.38)

7. The CHAIRMAN announced that Niger had joined the sponsors of the draft resolution.

Draft resolution on assistance for the reconstruction and development of Lebanon (A/C.2/41/L.40)

8. The CHAIRMAN announced that Niger had joined the sponsors of the draft resolution.

Draft resolution on assistance to Mozambique (A/C.2/41/L.41)

9. The CHAIRMAN announced that Czechoslovakia, Niger and Romania had joined the sponsors of the draft resolution.

AGENDA ITEM 80: OPERATIONAL ACTIVITIES FOR DEVELOPMENT (A/41/3, 185, 254, 341 and Corr.1, L/41/356, 461 and Corr.1, A/41/667, 674)

- (a) OPERATIONAL ACTIVITIES OF THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM: REPORTS OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (A/41/350 and Add.1, A/41/374 and Add.1-3, A/41/424, 776 and Corr.1)
- (b) UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME (A/41/600; E/1986/29)
- (c) UNITED NATIONS FUND FOR POPULATION ACTIVITIES (A/41/503 and Corr.1; E/1986/29, chap. VI, sect. B)
- (d) UNITED NATIONS CHILDREN'S FUND
- (e) WORLD FOOD PROGRAMME

10. Mr. RIPERT (Director-General for Development and International Economic Co-operation), introducing the item, said that the triennial policy review of operational activities for development might usefully be based on the debate in the Economic and Social Council in July 1986, which had led to the adoption of resolution 86/74. In that resolution, the Council had highlighted the most important issues raised during the review, and made specific recommendations to Member States and to the organizations of the United Nations system. Four of the issues it dealt with appeared to be of particular importance to Member States.

(Mr. Ripert)

11. Where the necessary financial resources for operational activities were concerned, there had been in recent years an increase in the number of contributors, which now included many developing countries. The report contained in document A/41/776 and Corr.1 showed that there had been a growth in contributions in 1985, and the 1986 Pledging Conference had also indicated an upward trend. While favourable exchange rates against the dollar in those two years had accounted for a large part of the increase, many Governments, including Governments of developing countries, had made a substantial effort to increase their contributions; the impact had however been attenuated by the reduction of the contributions of the main donor to operational activities. There remained therefore a serious gap between the needs of developing countries and available external assistance, on which a large number of poorer countries still depended for their development. Better utilization of existing resources could not be a substitute for a much needed increase in their amount.

12. The second issue of major importance was how to increase the participation of developing countries in the conduct of operational activities. There was a particular need to increase government execution of projects and to employ more local consultants and national experts, as well as to ensure that a fair share of the procurement of equipment for operational activities was from developing countries. Recent experience, such as the food production workshop organized under the auspices of the World Food Council between Asian and African Governments, had demonstrated that the United Nations system could play an important and useful role in South-South co-operation. He intended to deal in greater depth with those aspects of operational activities in his next annual report, and in that connection he would be aided by the results of the relevant work of the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination (ACC).

13. The debate in the Council had also clearly shown the benefits to be gained by establishing a direct dialogue between governing bodies in order to ensure the coherence of decisions taken on the same issues by the representatives of the same countries in different forums. The Council resolution had identified specific areas for an exchange of views in the Council in 1987, including the role of the Resident Co-ordinator and the co-location of field offices. To facilitate a useful debate at that time, he would consult the organizations of the system on the issue.

14. The co-ordination of activities at the field level represented the fourth important area for action. It was at that level that donors and international organizations could make a useful contribution to the optimal utilization of available resources, particularly in the poorer countries which generally did not have an adequate administrative infrastructure. The recent action to deal with the drought-induced emergency in Africa had shown that co-ordination was possible, and excellent co-operation was developing within the system under the aegis of the United Nations for the implementation of the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development. He was particularly pleased to note that agreement had been reached concerning the role of the Resident Co-ordinator in the collection and dissemination of information related to development assistance. He would consult interested Member States concerning the case studies on the

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(Mr. Ripert)

functioning of operational activities which the Economic and Social Council resolution had requested him to undertake. Those studies should help him in particular to assess the extent to which the action of the Resident Co-ordinator, as well as local arrangements for co-ordination, could improve the efficiency of external assistance. His office would co-operate closely with UNDP in carrying out those studies.

15. Mr. DRAPER (Administrator, United Nations Development Programme), said that, since his appointment in May 1986, he had travelled extensively to look at UNDP-funded activities on the ground. In particular, he had met with eight African Heads of State and all UNDP Resident Representatives in Africa to see how UNDP could best support the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development. He had reviewed with United Nations agency heads ways of strengthening co-operative ties, and had also visited major donor capitals to renew communication links with the Programme's traditional backers. Total pledges for 1987, actual and estimated, were expected to exceed \$800 million; if achieved, that would be the largest amount ever pledged to UNDP, and he wished to express his profound thanks to all donor countries, developed and developing alike.

16. A key concern in the fourth cycle would be how UNDP could support Governments in implementing the new Programme of Action for Africa. UNDP's assistance would go primarily to agriculture, human resources and institution building; through the associated funds, it was focusing on other major priorities such as drought and desertification, small- and medium-scale capital assistance, women's role in development, science and technology, and programmes of volunteer assistance.

17. For the short term, UNDP had recently channelled over \$1.5 million from the Trust Fund to Combat Famine and Malnutrition in Developing Countries into new locust control and aerial spray operations in the six countries most affected by the return of the locust plague. Further projects were being readied for UNDP funding by national authorities working with FAO.

18. Through country programmes and the United Nations Sudano-Sahelian Office, UNDP was focusing on reforestation and dune stabilization schemes to help arrest the alarming advance of desertification in Africa. Along with more than 900 UNDP-supported environmental projects around the world, the Programme was also taking global initiatives, including the new five-year plan of action calling for \$8 million to accelerate tropical forest rehabilitation launched by the World Resources Institute, the World Bank and UNDP.

19. True development called for integrated solutions. The Economic and Social Council had emphasized in its resolution 86/74 the need for resident co-ordinators to be given the authority which went with their important responsibilities, and he urged the Committee to recommend the endorsement of that resolution by the General Assembly. In the meantime, UNDP staff at headquarters were working to improve its administrative and technical backstopping functions, increase the flexibility of management systems, reduce unnecessary reporting demands on field offices and decentralize operational decision making. UNDP's partners could also help by being

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(Mr. Draper)

more alert to the existence of bottlenecks which they themselves could remove. The Working Group of the Governing Council's Committee of the Whole had recently identified practical measures which could enhance technical assistance delivery.

20. In partnership with the International Finance Corporation and regional banking institutions, UNDP was now funding pre-investment activities specifically aimed at mobilizing the private sector in developing countries; it was also responding to the growing demand from developing countries for short-term technological expertise which could usually only be found in that sector.

21. The contribution which women could make to development and the impact of development efforts on their lives should be taken into account in all UNDP assistance. A new division was to be established within UNDP which would look at projects in that light, and another new division was being set up to promote co-operative ties with non-governmental organizations.

22. Technical co-operation among developing countries was a vital means of unlocking hidden capacities. A new world-wide project planning exercise had been launched with UNDP assistance in order to stimulate further co-operative links. A few weeks earlier, over 230 projects had been arranged between the Governments of Peru and 21 other developing countries in Latin America and the Caribbean. Similar project trades would take place in India, Egypt, Tunisia and Turkey in 1987, all under the auspices of UNDP.

23. UNDP was engaged throughout the world in a vast number of projects designed to build for the future, ranging from rice farms near Timbuktu to a fisheries refrigeration and boat-building projects in Nouakchott; the purpose of both was to alleviate near-starvation. UNDP was also involved in mobilizing assistance for disaster relief as in the cases of the earthquakes in Mexico City and El Salvador and the Nevada del Ruiz volcano disaster in Mexico. The commitment of the staff involved in such projects was matched by that of people in the capitals of Member States; it was his hope that by working together with them, with the support of the Second Committee, UNDP could ensure that its accomplishments were more widely perceived, so that a new momentum could be given to development.

24. Mr. GRANT (Executive Director of the United Nations Children's Fund) said that the international community was faced with the challenge of how to maintain the progress made in the 1960s and 1970s towards achieving the basic human needs of children in developing countries. The economic upheavals of the last few years had cost the lives of many children and had dashed many hopes. There was a growing recognition that strategies for adjustment needed to be rethought, and fresh approaches need to be developed. The adjustment process must be broadened to include a minimum of basic human needs. The health, education and social sectors must be restructured to meet such needs, and the economy reorganized to emphasize employment policies and action which provided increased output as well as more income for the disadvantaged. The new approaches would require the systematic linkage of policy advice with operational support, and support for them must be mobilized at the UNDP round tables and the World Bank consultative groups so as to

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(Mr. Grant)

replicate in other sectors the low-cost/high-impact measures characteristic of the Child Survival and Development Revolution and to mobilize yet untapped human and other resources.

25. Forty per cent of the resources of UNICEF were directed to Africa, and one third of its core field staff and 44 per cent of all project staff were posted in Africa. UNICEF had been particularly active in the establishment of the Office for Emergency Operations in Africa, and had endeavoured to give its full support to the Programme of Action formulated at the special session on the critical situation in Africa.

26. Much had been said and far too little had been done about the need not only to incorporate women into the development process but to turn that process into development with women and for women. In support of the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women, the UNICEF Executive Board would examine, at its 1987 session, a strategy for responding to women's concerns with verifiable objectives and a time-frame for implementation.

27. In the last few years, UNICEF's child-survival activities had achieved startling results. Moreover, since those activities were selected partly because of their low cost, UNICEF had been able to maintain its support for the numerous other areas to which it remained deeply committed. One of the principal challenges facing UNICEF was to link the outstanding advances in immunization and oral rehydration therapy in a manner which would promote similar acceleration in other areas of basic needs.

28. Ambitious goals required ambitious actions, as well as significant increases in efficiency and effectiveness. Thanks to the generosity and support of the Member States and of the public at large, UNICEF was not faced with a financial crisis. Nevertheless, there was an increasing demand for UNICEF assistance, and UNICEF had to or was planning measures which included: the consolidation of its widely scattered Headquarters supply operation, begun in 1983; the reduction of core personnel in all categories at Headquarters locations in New York, Geneva and Copenhagen, and a major reallocation of UNICEF personnel within the field; the doubling of professional staff in West Africa and a 40 per cent increase in staff in East Africa and southern Africa; and the continued increase in the percentage of women in the UNICEF international core professional staff.

29. The times called for great constraint, and different members of the United Nations family needed to show that they could work together effectively, especially in operational activities. UNICEF was firmly committed to doing more to promote co-operation with other United Nations bodies and agencies, as well as with intergovernmental organizations and the public at large.

30. Mr. ULLERUP-PETERSEN (Denmark), speaking on behalf of Iceland, Finland, Norway, Sweden and Denmark said that there was a need to co-ordinate the delivery of development assistance and to eliminate the complicated bureaucratic practices and unnecessarily heavy administrative burdens placed on the recipient countries.

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(Mr. Ullerup-Petersen, Denmark)

The obstacles to efficiency could be attributed in part to the institutional structure and in part to the Member countries themselves.

31. With regard to institutional arrangement, the Nordic countries had noted with satisfaction that the establishment of the Joint Consultative Group on Policy had provided a mechanism for co-ordinating the activities of UNDP, the United Nations Fund for Population Activities (UNFPA), UNICEF and the World Food Programme (WFP). At the field level, the representation of UNDP, WFP and UNFPA was vested in the same person, and it was of paramount importance that it should remain so.

32. The Nordic countries welcomed the fact that the Economic and Social Council had reaffirmed the authority and responsibility of the Director-General in ensuring effective leadership of the United Nations system. The Council should exercise policy and co-ordinating functions for the operational activities on an annual basis. The Nordic countries had doubts as to whether ACC could respond adequately to the needs of the system, and therefore looked forward to the study of current mechanisms and procedures the Secretary-General was preparing in accordance with General Assembly resolution 40/177.

33. In an attempt to engage the governing bodies of the organizations of the United Nations system in a substantial policy dialogue on matters relating to the functioning of operational activities, the General Assembly at its fortieth session had invited those bodies to present their views to the Economic and Social Council. While many of the replies indicated an understanding of the issues and willingness to solve them, others seemed irrelevant or without focus and displayed a lack of willingness to co-operate. If co-ordination between organizations was to be taken seriously, the governing bodies must engage in a continued and substantial dialogue.

34. At the country level, the crucial role in improving co-ordination lay with the recipient Government. An aid co-ordination system must be based on a strong central unit in the government which had a complete overview of the aid process. The Nordic countries welcomed the recommendation by the Director-General on support for the recipient countries' efforts in the area of human resource development and institution-building. The United Nations system, and especially UNDP, was very well placed to assist recipients in their co-ordination efforts. Coherence and co-ordination of the United Nations response at the field level was one of the keys to success. The Nordic countries were concerned about the increasing number of field representatives of the agencies, and strongly urged that new offices should not be established unless it was clearly demonstrated that the required services could not be provided in any other way. There was no satisfactory substitute for an active and leading role of the resident co-ordinators in efforts to improve co-ordination. If they received full backing from the Director-General and UNDP, and if the agencies were similarly instructed by their governing bodies, there should be no serious co-ordination problems in the field.

35. It was of crucial importance for the co-ordination process that Member Governments should act consistently. At the national level, there was a need to maximize the advantages and minimize the disadvantages of competition between

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(Mr. Ullerup-Petersen, Denmark)

sectoral interests. If donor countries increased their contributions to UNDP, co-ordination problems would be very considerably reduced. However, political realities must be recognized. Although donors might wish to follow special priorities, they should give increasing priority to organizations which showed a real willingness to participate fully in co-ordination within the United Nations system and to ensure that activities funded by those contributions were appropriately integrated into the UNDP country-programming framework. It should also be realized that new, special-purpose funds rarely led to additional aid volume. The Nordic countries were therefore pleased that the tendency towards further fragmentation seemed to have ended.

36. Mr. GAJENTAAN (Netherlands) said that his delegation welcomed the steps which the Economic and Social Council had taken regarding a discussion on the strengthening of capabilities of recipient countries. Co-ordination, co-operation and coherence among all partners in the United Nations system were essential for both recipient and donor countries at a time when the need for greater accountability had become extremely urgent.

37. The Netherlands reiterated its support for the increased use of joint needs assessment for technical co-operation to achieve joint programming. Likewise, it strongly commended the strengthening of the activities of the Joint Consultative Group on Policy as an example of active co-operation among United Nations agencies. The United Nations Fund for Women should be included in the Group. In the field of co-ordination, there should be a closer link between the development activities of WFP and UNDP country programming.

38. In the years ahead, the Netherlands would place increasing emphasis on the need for better co-ordination of activities in recipient countries with the Governments of those countries and all donors, including multilateral organizations. Enhanced planning by recipient Governments and increased aid co-ordination should improve the quality of the assistance rendered in the interest of the developing countries. In that respect, all donors should provide information on their current and planned bilateral development efforts to the UNDP resident representative throughout the year.

39. The measures taken to improve the quality of UNDP activities were timely and merited full support. However, further improvements in the delivery rate were essential. While there was a need to streamline and harmonize the activities of the smaller funds administered by or under the auspices of UNDP, and it was important that those funds should be more closely related to country-programming, too much centralization could adversely affect their ability to implement policies in conformity with their mandates and, therefore, to generate additional funds for development.

40. The Netherlands welcomed the efforts which had been made to strengthen the round table process, and considered that it could be made more effective if donor countries indicated the level of their assistance in support of agreed policies. Further improvement in procedures relating to pledging of such assistance and the advance availability of documentation should be sought. At the same time, improved follow-up

(Mr. Gajentaan, Netherlands)

procedures through an annual in-country review of the performance of both the recipient Government and the donors might be desirable.

41. The United Nations Development Fund for Women was small and should therefore be aware of its limitations. Its limited resources should not be spread too thinly over a large number of countries; priority should be given to activities with a high catalytic value, and the Consultative Committee for the Fund should focus on specific areas in which it could make a useful contribution. Moreover, the Fund should co-operate closely with other United Nations funds and programmes.

42. The Netherlands' continued support for UNFPA was an expression of its confidence in UNFPA activities in developing countries. As the special session on the critical economic situation in Africa had shown, African Governments had an increasing interest in and awareness of their population problems, and it was of great importance that UNFPA should respond adequately.

43. The Netherlands supported the activities of UNICEF for women and children in developing countries. In its general programme, UNICEF should pay more attention to the improvement of the position of women in development, focusing not only on the role of women as mothers and housewives but recognizing the diverse roles women played in society. The Netherlands continued to support UNICEF in its search for the implementation of what was generally recognized as "structural adjustment with a human face". Efforts to anticipate and offset negative effects on children and other vulnerable groups in structural adjustment policies deserved strong support. Further, his delegation welcomed the interest UNICEF took in the plight of street children, and it looked forward to a report on that subject.

44. The Netherlands, with its continued commitment to providing 1.5 per cent of its net national income for development co-operation purposes looked on the United Nations development system as an important instrument in its relations with developing countries. Improved co-ordination, better performance and greater coherence in policies and programmes would continue to be the criteria on which it based its contributions in the years ahead.

45. Mr. STEBP'SKI (Poland) said that the operational activities of the United Nations played an exceptionally important role in accelerating the economic and social development of the developing countries. In day-to-day operational activities, attention should be paid to such principles as respect for the sovereignty of recipient countries and universality of participation. Development could take place only in peaceful conditions, and that was why Poland supported the joint statement of the socialist countries on the contribution of United Nations multilateral technical assistance to the International Year of Peace.

46. The problems of ensuring coherent assistance and co-ordination required that particular attention should be paid to strengthening Governments' co-ordinating capacities, and to the role of the resident co-ordinators. The system did not require radical institutional changes; rather, possible pragmatic changes and reforms should be pursued within the existing institutional framework and

(Mr. Stebeliski, Poland)

legislative mandates. Such changes, however, should not downgrade activities which participating Governments considered important. The artificial exclusion of any region from international technical co-operation would be detrimental both to the region in question and such co-operation as a whole.

47. The diversity of experience accumulated in the United Nations system could be better tapped through the further development of technical co-operation among developing countries. Co-operation between donor and recipient countries should also be strengthened. In that regard, acceptance and implementation of the principle of the unrestricted and free flow of experience, technologies and know-how could play an important role.

48. Of all the United Nations bodies and agencies involved in operational activities, UNDP deserved particular support as the central funding and co-ordinating body of technical co-operation. It had not been by chance that the policy review item at the thirty-third session of the Governing Council had been dedicated to the unique role of UNDP in human resources development and development co-operation in the 1990s. Human resources development must be looked upon not merely as a pre-condition for economic growth but also as the development objective per se. The human factor was both the instrument and the ultimate aim of development.

49. Poland supported the UNDP Administrator's efforts to streamline the operations of the Programme, and hoped that he would be guided at least as much by views of the interested Governments and an understanding of the broader political circumstances as by the fully commendable desire to run the Programme more efficiently.

50. UNFPA projects provided an excellent opportunity for co-operation among countries at different levels of economic development. Poland had more than 40 years of experience in solving population problems and was ready to share it through co-operation with UNFPA. Unfortunately, that readiness had not yet been met with an adequate response from the Fund. There should be a better balance of UNFPA activities among the various regions including Europe.

51. As a founding member of UNICEF, Poland had always supported its activities, and was particularly happy to be a member of its Executive Board as UNICEF marked its fortieth anniversary. His delegation endorsed the objectives of UNICEF as set out in the report on the state of the world's children and welcomed the support shown for the GOBI programme throughout the world. It was to be hoped that the child survival revolution would bring about a drastic reduction in infant and child mortality rates, which were still deplorably high. The child immunization programme should also be accelerated so that the goal of universal immunization might be achieved by 1990. UNICEF was to be commended for undertaking additional responsibilities on behalf of children in specially difficult circumstances and for actively participating in the open-ended working group of the Commission on Human Rights which was negotiating a set of draft articles on the implementation of the future Convention on the rights of the child.

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52. Miss FRANKINET (Belgium) recalled that Economic and Social Council resolution 1986/74, had reaffirmed the mandate of the Director-General for Development and International Economic Co-operation for ensuring the co-ordination of United Nations development activities. The preliminary report on co-ordination which had been submitted to the Council at its second regular session of 1986 in accordance with General Assembly resolution 40/177 had been a step in the right direction, and it was unfortunate that a follow-up report had not been submitted to the General Assembly at its current session.

53. In her delegation's view, paragraph 32 of the Economic and Social Council resolution made the Director-General responsible for reporting any disparities which might arise among the decisions taken by various governing bodies of United Nations organizations so that the Council and the General Assembly might provide the necessary co-ordination. The Director-General should also report more frequently to the main governing bodies on important general policy decisions adopted in other forums and draw their attention to the need for coherence among the decisions adopted throughout the system. Inter-sectoral co-ordination was often difficult to maintain within Governments; consequently, if the Director-General furnished delegations with "uniform" information, Governments might be better able to harmonize their efforts in the various governing bodies. She urged that a representative of the Director-General should participate in meetings of the governing bodies of organizations involved in operational activities.

54. The resolution also reaffirmed the fundamental role of recipient Governments with regard to co-ordination in the field, as well as the need to enable them to play that role effectively. The United Nations must facilitate their task by ensuring the co-ordination of its own activities in the field. The role and responsibilities of resident co-ordinators were also confirmed in the resolution; among those responsibilities was the holding of consultations with representatives of agencies and Governments regarding areas where greater coherence of action was required. Such consultations should be held as and when appropriate and should be supported by all the organizations concerned.

55. With regard to joint programming, joint evaluations of technical assistance needs of recipient countries were useful as long as all partners felt involved and the exercise yielded practical conclusions. The complementarity of the activities carried out by different agencies must be studied to prevent any duplication of effort. Her delegation wished to see a tighter restructuring of the system's development activities, even though it was cognizant of the obstacles which lay in the way of such an undertaking.

56. She welcomed the constructive atmosphere that had prevailed during the meetings of the Working Group of the Committee of the Whole of the UNDP Governing Council. The presence of representatives of various agencies at the Working Group's most recent meeting had provided an opportunity for a more focused discussion of the respective roles of the partners in the tripartite system. In future, however, the Working Group should exercise care in selecting themes for discussion to prevent any overloading of the programme of work.

(Miss Frankinet, Belgium)

57. Finally, the work of the UNICEF Executive Board and the recent discussion on that subject in the Fifth Committee had highlighted the need for more rational management and for adherence to Executive Board decisions. It was to be hoped that the contacts recently developed between delegations and the UNICEF administration would lead to further progress in that area.

58. Mrs. GLYNN (Honduras) said the fact that direct contributions to UNDP had continued to stagnate through 1985, while those earmarked for trust and other funds had decreased, was a matter for concern, particularly since it was projected that official development assistance would continue to stagnate during the period 1986-1988. Those countries which had succeeded in contributing 0.7 per cent of GNP for development were to be congratulated and should continue their efforts. Those industrialized countries which had not yet done so should join in that effort with the urgency the circumstances required.

59. The social and economic progress achieved by the developing countries since 1950 was, in significant measure, the result of programmes and projects executed by United Nations and other programmes of assistance. The accomplishments of UNDP were a particular source of satisfaction. With regard to activities for the fourth programming cycle, she welcomed the allocation of 80 per cent of country IPFs for low-income countries. Equally noteworthy was the application of UNDP assistance in some Latin American countries to debt strategies and programmes relating to general management and the public and production sectors. It was important that new forms of assistance using IPFs that would help countries reactivate their economies should be identified.

60. She expressed support for UNDP collaboration with other institutions, particularly the World Bank, and for the revised round-table process, which strengthened co-ordination with the national operational systems, thereby making optimum use of available resources. With a view to maintaining and improving the operational capacity of UNDP, her delegation had put forward to the mechanism for further consultations on the recommendations of the Group of 18 a proposal to the effect that any effort to merge the functions of other bodies with those of UNDP should be done only if UNDP already possessed the manpower to carry out those new functions. The transfer of additional staff to UNDP would strain the Programme's budget and diminish the effectiveness of its assistance programmes to developing countries.

61. Bordered by three Central American countries whose internal problems had led to armed conflict, Honduras currently sheltered some 45,000 persons classified as refugees by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). Nearly 55,000 more persons had entered the country illegally in search of protection and peace. Honduras was prepared to accept the responsibility posed by that influx, but would only be able to do so with international assistance. The slight increase in funds for disaster relief and special economic assistance during 1985 was due largely to the critical situation in Africa, and aid to Honduras had been limited. She thanked 11 donors who had provided assistance through UNHCR and appealed to the international community to support that organization.

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(Mrs. Glynn, Honduras)

62. Although the second replenishment of the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) had taken place, the Fund's continued operation remained uncertain. Honduras attached great importance to IFAD, whose integrated rural development projects had helped thousands of farmers in that country. With regard to the integration of women in development, steps must be taken to ensure that the implementation of the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies was not delayed, given that women were powerful agents for development.

63. Mr. HARAN (Israel) said that his delegation supported the according of priority in development activities to the needs of least developed and other low-income countries. However, table 4 in document A/41/776 indicated that the share of resources allocated to least developed countries and to sub-Saharan Africa had not increased from 1984 to 1985; he therefore urged that greater amounts of official development assistance should be channelled towards those two groups of countries. He also expressed support for the notion that United Nations operational activities should continue to be approached on the basis of the principle of universality, which did not contradict the expectation that the more advanced developing countries should assume greater responsibilities in connection with development programmes. For its part, Israel had become a net contributor to development.

64. While he welcomed the results of the recent United Nations Pledging Conference for Development Activities, the breakdown of funds currently available for development activities contained in the report of the Director-General for Development and International Economic Co-operation (A/41/350, para. 3) indicated that 83 per cent was provided by members of the Development Assistance Committee of OECD and 15 per cent from developing countries - including 7 per cent from countries members of OPEC - while only 2 per cent was contributed by countries members of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA). The latter amount totalled \$2.6 billion, a particularly disappointing figure when compared with the \$29.6 billion provided by the OECD countries. It might be argued that those figures reflected some bias, since they had in fact been provided by OECD. He therefore urged the United Nations to develop a system that would make it possible to compare data for the two groups of States in an equitable manner.

65. Israel was particularly interested in activities in the area of technical co-operation among developing countries because it believed that developing countries should also bear their share of the burden in promoting development. Over 30 years, some 55,000 persons from developing countries had received training in Israel, while some 10,000 Israeli technical advisers had been dispatched to developing countries to work in such areas as agriculture, health and social services.

66. Mr. BARNETT (Jamaica) said that Economic and Social Council resolution 1986/74 provided a sound conceptual and policy framework for a review of the operational activities of the United Nations system and thus constituted a good basis for enhanced co-operation in the delivery of technical assistance. However, the documents before the Committee clearly indicated that the quantity of resources being contributed for operational activities was still a cause for concern. In

(Mr. Barnett, Jamaica)

Assessing the adequacy of resources, it was important not only to focus on real growth but to bear in mind the escalation in needs. Population growth in the developing countries inexorably diminished the per capita benefit they derived from operational activities, and their economies had, moreover, been in a state of sustained crisis for nearly a decade. The prolonged stagnation in UNDP funding could only undermine the Programme's central funding role. The results of the recent pledging conference were therefore welcome. At the same time, however, delegations should bear in mind that the voluntary nature of contributions to operational activities should not be used by any country or group of countries as an excuse for ignoring its responsibilities in the area of development.

67. His delegation was prepared to support measures that would enhance the effectiveness of technical co-operation through improved co-ordination. However, such measures should complement, rather than replace, an increase in resources. UNDP and its resident co-ordinators had a vital role to play in ensuring the cost-effective use of resources by the United Nations system, while recipient Governments bore responsibility for the co-ordination of external assistance at the national and sectoral levels. Such factors as formal and informal expansion of mandates, bureaucratic competition, lack of information and poor communication between funding and executing agencies were currently undermining optimal resource use, and must be minimized. The Joint Consultative Group on Policy was an example of an institutional mechanism that could, if emulated by other bodies, increase co-ordination and communication and enhance effectiveness.

68. In the field, the role of the resident co-ordinator should be enhanced, and executing agencies must also recognize its legitimacy and importance. In practical terms, however, given that the resident co-ordinator in a country was generally the UNDP resident representative, the decrease in the Programme's share of technical co-operation activities could constitute a drawback.

69. His delegation supported the use of UNDP country programmes as a framework for identifying and co-ordinating external technical assistance needs. However, that potentially cost-effective approach might, with the decrease in IPF allocations, particularly to the middle-level developing countries, be undermined by a marginalization of UNDP technical assistance delivery in some cases.

70. The evaluation capacities of Governments should be strengthened, and evaluation procedures within the United Nations system should be streamlined and co-ordinated in order to arrive at a standardized format for evaluation which would facilitate the comparison of results. Evaluation was a pointless exercise if the results did not make their way back to the field and unless solutions to the problems identified were found.

71. The potential of technical co-operation among developing countries remained largely untapped. While the developing countries themselves had to take action in that regard, attitudinal problems and misperceptions also existed within the United Nations system, which diminished the role the Organization could play in catalyzing such action. He therefore called for a renewed co-operative effort on the part of Governments and United Nations agencies to promote such co-operation as a viable

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(Mr. Barnett, Jamaica)

and cost-effective method of project implementation, and for an intensification of trend towards the recruitment of project personnel from developing countries. Given that the gap between developing and developed countries in terms of ability to make use of the factors of production was widening each year, much less effort should be spent on redistributing existing resources from technical assistance and much more on increasing resources in order to meet the traditional and changing needs of recipient countries.

72. Mr. LABERGE (Canada) said that operational activities were important as practical and continuing expressions of the ideal of international solidarity through economic and technical co-operation. He hoped that the discussions in the Second Committee would lead to the early adoption and application of the measures necessary to strengthen those vital programmes.

73. Steadily increasing financial commitments were necessary to ensure that programmes achieved their objectives. In view of the stagnation in commitment levels, he urged traditional donors to do what they could and members of CMEA to participate at a level more commensurate with their economic capabilities.

74. The triennial review process was a thought-provoking step forward in the analysis of the priorities of the United Nations development system and the problems that confronted it. He therefore hoped that the completion of the triennial review did not mean that work would stop on filling in the important gaps which remained, one of which was a rigorous assessment of the steps taken by United Nations organizations to promote the integration of women in development. The intentions of Governments in that regard had been made clear in the adoption by consensus of the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies, and his delegation now looked to the Director-General to provide focus and impetus to the task of implementation. The analysis presented in the addendum to the comprehensive policy review fell far short of his delegation's expectations, and the recommendations made represented the bare minimum of what was required to be done.

75. His delegation would welcome further analyses of programme delivery and support costs, a further review of actions taken to improve programme effectiveness, and proposals for strengthening existing mechanisms within the system with a view to enhancing the coherence of operational activities. To the latter end, he urged implementation of recommendations 8 and 9, which called for a joint assessment of technical assistance needs, and recommendation 4, which was important in order to reduce logistical and other burdens on host authorities and to improve the productivity of field staff.

76. The role of the resident co-ordinator seemed to be central to the permanent efforts which the Director-General asserted were needed for greater coherence. He would be grateful for an insight as to what permanent efforts the Director-General had in mind. Could gaps in the mandates of the resident co-ordinators be filled, and what mechanisms could be put in place to formalize the obligation of United Nations bodies to work together more effectively? To achieve that end, a process of dialogue and engagement on substantive issues by components of the system were required. The participation of the organs of the system in the current policy

(Mr. Laberge, Canada)

review suggested a mechanism that could be further developed for substantive discussion on key issues. One such was field representation, which had expanded rapidly since the adopting of General Assembly resolution 32/197 on the restructuring of the economic and social sectors of the United Nations system. He would be interested to learn what measures could be taken to make such representation less costly and more efficient. In that regard, the observations of the Joint Inspection Unit concerning staff selection and the appropriate delegation of authority needed to be properly taken into account. His delegation would welcome an initiative by the Director-General to discuss with agencies how field representation could be made more complementary.

77. On many of the issues before the Committee, effective leadership by the Director-General remained central to progress. His delegation wished to outline elements of a strategy which could help the Director-General if they were broadly endorsed by the Committee. Firstly, in view of the fact that 1987 marked the tenth anniversary of resolution 32/197, an assessment of the degree of its implementation would be desirable. Secondly, the Director-General could usefully develop a set of broad objectives to provide a framework for more coherent and co-ordinated approach to operational activities. Thirdly, Canada had offered to provide extrabudgetary resources to the Director-General to assist in the study to appraise the entirety of United Nations operational activities in one or more countries in an effort to help assess the functioning of the system as a whole. If implemented, those steps would go a long way towards meeting the objective of coherent and effective United Nations programmes to bolster the efforts of beneficiary Governments.

78. Mr. SCHLEGEL (German Democratic Republic) said that the voluntary assistance programmes of the United Nations should be judged by the extent to which they were capable of promoting the efforts of developing countries to achieve economic independence and by how far they contributed to the establishment of a more democratic and just international economic order.

79. The principle that the operational activities of the United Nations system should serve the needs, interests and development priorities of the recipient countries was an indispensable one which precluded the possible misuse of voluntary assistance programmes as a means of political blackmail or economic pressure. While his country supported measures aimed at enhancing the effectiveness of voluntary assistance programmes, it resolutely opposed attempts to use greater effectiveness, as a pretext for undermining such fundamental principles of the work of UNDP as the principle of the freedom of recipient countries to make their own decisions. UNDP should be maintained as an intergovernmental institution, and attempts to bring in more funds from private institutions and the World Bank could not be justified. His delegation fully supported the recommendations of the Director-General aimed at enhancing the control authority of recipient countries, and the demand for more just regulations with regard to the assignment of experts, the delivery of equipment and the provision of services within the framework of UNDP. However, the preferential treatment of some main donor countries gave rise to certain questions.

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(Mr. Schlegel, German Democratic Republic)

80. In its coverage of the activities of OECD countries, the report of the Director-General should also have dealt with the reverse transfer of resources from the developing to the OECD countries, which in 1985 that transfer had exceeded \$US 30 billion and had grave adverse consequences for the living standards of the people of the developing countries.

81. Human resources were a major factor in the economic and technological progress of developing countries and attention should be focused on the development of those resources. His country had provided training for experts from developing countries, under various assistance programmes of the United Nations system. That was an example of how ways could be found, through reasonable and rational co-operation, for the beneficial use of voluntary contributions. Unfortunately, with respect to UNDP, that objective had not yet been reached. His delegation did not understand why the voluntary contributions of its Government to UNDP had accumulated to the amount of 12 million marks, when they should have been used to promote economic progress in developing countries, for example through the Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development. In the past year, the assistance rendered by the German Democratic Republic to developing countries and national liberation movements had been equivalent to 0.86 per cent of the country's national income in 1985, and, in line with the acknowledged importance of human resources development, much of it had been spent on training.

82. UNICEF ranked high among the voluntary assistance programmes of the United Nations system. His country highly appreciated UNICEF's work, particularly its wide-ranging activities to promote the well-being of children. The German Democratic Republic had increased its annual contribution to UNICEF to 750,000 marks. In addition, medicaments and vaccines worth 1.26 million marks had been provided to African and Asian countries in 1986.

83. Mr. MULLER (Australia) said that, taken collectively, the proposals for action contained in Economic and Social Council resolution 1986/74 represented a realistic attempt to enhance the effectiveness of operational activities, and should be endorsed by the General Assembly.

84. Where co-ordination of the activities of the United Nations system was concerned, donor Governments had difficulty in articulating and implementing a consistent policy across the range of multilateral funds and bodies whose multiplicity gave rise to overlapping mandates, institutional in-fighting and jurisdictional battles. It was thus not surprising that recipient Governments faced problems in co-ordinating the external assistance provided. His delegation hoped that the study by the Director-General called for in paragraph 20 of resolution 1986/74 would provide both recipient and donor Governments with practical examples of measures that could be adopted to ensure consistency and coherence in national policy positions in the area of operational activities for development.

85. Inconsistency and overlapping among bodies of the United Nations system could not be blamed simply on their secretariats. While there was scope in some bodies

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(Mr. Muller, Australia)

for improved secretariat responsiveness to the wishes of their governing structure, the co-ordination of policies and programmes required Member States to maintain consistent policies across the range of those governing structures. Paragraph 32 of the Council's resolution was therefore particularly important. By bringing to the attention of the Council and the General Assembly, on an annual basis, situations in which inconsistent decisions of the various governing bodies of the system affected the coherence and functioning of system-wide activities, the Director-General could strengthen the leadership role entrusted to him by the General Assembly in its resolution 32/197.

86. However, the failure of Member States to ensure that their own actions worked in support of co-ordination could not be advanced as justification for inaction by the United Nations system. He was therefore pleased to see that paragraphs 15 and 16 of the Council's resolution addressed that issue through the function of the resident co-ordinator, and indirectly raised the question of the responsiveness of the organizations of the United Nations system to policy and directives from the General Assembly. He hoped that in the annual report to the Council and to the General Assembly, the Director-General would not confine himself merely to defining the problems which flowed from decisions adopted by governing bodies. The failure to adopt decisions or to undertake action urged by the General Assembly could have an equally negative impact on the coherence and functioning of system-wide activities and could affect the credibility of the multilateral system as a whole.

87. Mr. SAAB (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations) said that in its operational activities, FAO sought to implement a combination of activities within a carefully structured technical and economic framework which derived from its status and capacities as a specialized agency that closely linked substantive regular programmes with technical assistance and investment support operations in the field. Document A/41/350 presented a balanced picture of the main issues and challenges which faced the system's operational activities and emphasized their multi-sectoral nature, which had allowed the system to respond flexibly to a wide range of development needs. FAO intended to co-operate fully in future exercises by the Council and of the Second Committee to set an overall policy framework for operational activities.

88. Useful practical arrangements that involved FAO representatives and resident co-ordinators had been established for co-operation at the country level. FAO supported the report's stress on the overriding responsibility of Governments for development co-ordination and recognized the key role that the system could play in supporting them in the discharge of that responsibility. FAO had always been concerned with the effectiveness of operations and would continue to focus on that vital aspect in close co-operation with Governments, UNDP, and other development partners. Efficient methods still needed to be worked out to secure the participation of specialized agencies in programming and co-ordination exercises at the country level, particularly in the context of the follow-up to the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development 1986-1990. The FAO Action Plan for African Agriculture gave a clear example of the kind of contribution specialized agencies could make to such exercises.

(Mr. Saah, FAO)

89. FAO had had invaluable practical interchanges with non-governmental organizations, from both developed and developing countries, for almost 20 years. It supported hundreds of small-scale activities with local non-governmental organizations, aimed at the development of small farm credit, co-operatives, and marketing associations, which met essential development needs and often involved a wide degree of peoples' participation. FAO was willing to share its experience with other Members of the system interested in fostering links with non-governmental organizations.

90. Women played an important role in the food production chain in the developing world, particularly in Africa. The traditional focus on the role of women in FAO's technical assistance and investment support activities had recently been accentuated, and an increasing number of projects had been mounted specifically to promote the role of women in developing food and agriculture, including forestry and fisheries. Elements which supported women's development should be fully integrated into all relevant operational activities, since the further recognition of women's contributions to development could only enhance the impact of the system's operational activities in future.

AGENDA ITEM 12: REPORT OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL (continued)

Draft resolution on assistance to the drought-stricken areas of Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, the Sudan and Uganda (A/C.2/41/L.51)

91. The CHAIRMAN announced that Niger had joined the sponsors of the draft resolution.

The meeting rose at 1.20 p.m.