



SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 32nd MEETING

Chairman: Mr. AL-ASHTAL (Democratic Yemen)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.

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

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1. Mr. TRAORE (Burkina Faso) welcomed the fact that the documentation before the Committee for its consideration of the agenda item was extremely detailed, which would considerably facilitate its work.

2. It was impossible to speak of international peace and security in a world where disease, malnutrition and poverty killed millions of people every year. There was a close link between peace and development, and that link had, moreover, been perceived by the founders of the United Nations in taking it upon themselves to struggle for the progress and economic and social development of peoples. Thus, a full-fledged United Nations development system had been created over the years, making the United Nations the catalyst and driving force of development. It was therefore with deep concern that his delegation noted the attempts made to weaken and restrict the role of the Organization in the development field and the constant erosion of multilateralism. That loss of momentum in international solidarity had been reflected in the diminishing ability of the United Nations to respond to the growing needs of the developing world. Burkina Faso therefore appealed to all States without exception to increase their contributions to the organizations of the United Nations system working for development.

3. In making such an appeal, Burkina Faso, which itself benefited from United Nations assistance, was fully aware of its responsibilities. For that reason it had, in order to tackle the underlying causes of its underdevelopment, taken concrete measures in the fields of health, the environment, education and human settlements with the assistance, in their respective fields, of UNDP, UNICEF, WHO, FAO, WFP and IFAD. Significant results had already been obtained, and the people of Burkina Faso expressed its gratitude and appreciation to those organizations for their positive contribution to the country's development efforts.

(Mr. Traore, Burkina Faso)

4. In order to consolidate those achievements, Burkina Faso had begun to implement its first five-year people's development plan, which had the primary goal of re-laying the foundations of an economy ruined by several years of natural disasters and mismanagement, placing particular emphasis on agriculture and the environment and relying on national resources. In order to succeed, Burkina Faso would, of course, make use of its own resources but also counted on the support of the United Nations system and on bilateral sources.

5. Mr. TUAN (Liberia) said that the operational activities of the United Nations system complemented the development efforts of national governments. In that regard, UNDP played a significant and catalytic role in promoting international economic co-operation and, in particular, in providing technical assistance and development assistance to third world countries. His country firmly believed that, for the developing countries, United Nations operational activities for development were the most positive element of multilateral economic co-operation.

6. The economic and social situation in many developing countries required that a major part of UNDP resources should be earmarked for those developing countries facing the most serious economic hardships. In that connection, the outcome of the recent United Nations Pledging Conference for Development Activities indicated that the financial resources available for the fourth programming cycle should exceed those for the third cycle. The positive results of the Conference clearly demonstrated the political will and commitment of both major donors and recipient countries to engage in multilateral co-operation. With regard to the question of financial contributions, it would be very helpful to UNDP if the States members of CMEA would increase their contributions in a manner commensurate with their ability to give and if they made such contributions in convertible currency. Such a gesture would demonstrate their genuine concern for the economic and social plight of the developing countries.

7. His Government expressed its profound appreciation to UNICEF for its activities for children in Africa. His delegation had welcomed the 20 recommendations contained in the report of the Director-General for Development and International Economic Co-operation (A/41/350), which would enhance the effectiveness of UNDP and strengthen the role of the resident co-ordinators/representatives.

8. The dismal economic and social situation of the countries of sub-Saharan Africa required that UNDP should pay particular attention to the development needs of the region in such areas as agriculture, human resources development and disaster preparedness. His delegation therefore appealed to donor countries and to governmental and non-governmental organizations to support the efforts of UNDP and other United Nations agencies and to provide financial and technical assistance in support of the efforts of the Governments of those countries.

9. His country considered that UNDP could play a useful role by sensitizing donor countries to the crippling effects of debt servicing on the economies of the developing countries, to the need to reduce and even to cancel some debts and, in

(Mr. Tuan, Liberia)

the case of Africa, to the urgent need for concessional financial flows. UNDP could also alert financial institutions and banks to the fact that debt servicing was having a debilitating effect on the economies of the non-oil-producing developing countries. The negative transfer of financial resources from the developing countries to the industrialized country had to be halted if debtor countries were to make economic progress and improve the living conditions of their people. The debt problem was a collective and shared responsibility that could not be ignored. His delegation hoped that the Administrator of UNDP would be able to play an active role in that regard.

10. In conclusion, his country would continue to support the integration of women in development because, in its view, such integration would be a substantial contribution to its growth.

11. Mr. DOMINGUEZ (Mexico), referring to the statement by the Director-General for Development and International Economic Co-operation concerning the major efforts of many developing countries to increase their financial contributions for operational activities, said that the efforts made by countries like Mexico to maintain, and even increase, their contributions demonstrated their political will to support the work of the United Nations in the areas most closely connected to the promotion of international co-operation for development. Thus, during the recent United Nations Pledging Conference for Development Activities, the Mexican Government had, despite its serious economic problems, reaffirmed its decision to maintain its contribution at the 1986 level.

12. On the other hand, the apparent increase in the major donor countries' contributions was largely due to the fact that the major international currencies had recently been revalued in relationship to the dollar. The fact that it was the developing countries' efforts which had partially offset the reduction in contributions from the major donor countries was thus somewhat alarming. The situation was all the more serious in that, just when development activities were facing their greatest obstacles, the gap between countries' development needs and the resources provided to those countries by the international community was widening. Given that situation, it was of great importance that the Secretary-General should provide more specific information about the real effect of such currency fluctuations on the system's operational activities. He particularly wished to know more about the way in which those fluctuations affected the spending and buying power which those currencies afforded developing countries and consequently requested the Secretary-General to include a special section on that subject in his next report.

13. Turning to the three initiatives to mobilize under-utilized resources which the UNDP Administrator had mentioned in his statement, his delegation supported the initiative aimed at ensuring that women played a greater role in development activities; in so far as the other two were concerned, however, the greatest caution must be exercised. In any discussion of the "privatizing" UNDP and extending UNDP collaboration to entities that were independent of Governments, it should be recalled that the Programme's objectives were, in essence, to promote

(Mr. Dominguez, Mexico)

development and international co-operation. However, that involved tasks whose direction, supervision and monitoring were the direct responsibility of the Governments of Member States. Moreover, UNDP was essentially intergovernmental in origin and nature, and care must be taken not to weaken its fundamental structure and characteristics. Thus, while the importance of the private sector should not be overlooked, UNDP must ensure that, whenever it believed that private-sector involvement was warranted, close and ongoing co-ordination was established with the Governments concerned prior to, during and after the execution of activities.

14. His delegation was concerned that, as indicated in Economic and Social Council resolution 1986/74, the developing countries' share of the total volume of materials procured for operational activities continued to decline. That trend should be reversed as soon as possible, since it meant that operational activities were increasingly reliant on goods and services from the industrialized countries, even though the developing countries urgently needed to increase their exports and promote optimum South-South economic and technical co-operation. Horizontal co-operation was an increasingly important factor, in both potential and actual terms, in international development co-operation. His delegation urged the various bodies within the system responsible for operational activities to take appropriate steps to ensure that procurement was made on the basis of a broader geographical distribution and from more sources, and that the developing countries' potential was used in a more systematic fashion.

15. Mr. YEGOROV (Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic) said that there was a cut-throat relationship between operational activities for development and the world economic situation. If the contributions of individual States were to be assessed, the mechanisms of neo-colonialist exploitation must be taken into account. Furthermore, many countries helped finance such activities largely because they were looking for outlets for their products. In some cases, attempts were being made to promote the penetration of private capital into developing countries through UNDP. Some resident co-ordinators were trying to control all assistance provided to developing countries and were revising projects which had been drawn up in collaboration with the Governments concerned. Such practices constituted interference in the internal affairs of recipient States and flouted the principles of equitable economic co-operation laid down by the United Nations. It should be recalled that the Governments directly concerned had a determining role to play in the design and execution of technical assistance projects.

16. UNDP should comply with the decisions of United Nations bodies which recommended fundamental reform in the economic and social spheres and the establishment of a new international economic order. For instance, in its resolution 34/137, the General Assembly had invited UNDP to "give due consideration to technical co-operation for strengthening the role of the public sector and improving the performance of public enterprises".

17. The question of effective utilization of contributions in national currencies was as important as ever. His delegation was prepared to work together with the UNDP Administration on that question. The Byelorussian SSR had increased its

(Mr. Yegorov, Byelorussian SSR)

contribution by 35 per cent and planned to host a United Nations interregional seminar in 1987 on the energy problems of developing countries, the expenses of which would be covered by the country's contribution in roubles.

18. The Byelorussian SSR was engaged in fruitful co-operation with developing countries and placed special emphasis on manpower training and the transfer of technology. His country offered fellowships and sent many experts into the field. Unfortunately, UNDP and UNICEF had failed to take full advantage of those opportunities.

19. The principles governing UNDP activities and the terms of the 1970 consensus which related to universal participation on a voluntary basis should be scrupulously implemented. Proposals that might jeopardize those elements, such as the institution of mandatory contributions, for example, were unacceptable.

20. His country supported the activities of UNICEF. The best way to mark the fortieth anniversary of that organization would be to take effective steps to protect children from the scourges of war, hunger, disease and other afflictions.

21. The report on operational activities of the United Nations system (A/41/350) was useful; however, the information it contained was often too general. In the case of project evaluation, he would have preferred to see more detailed figures drawn from specific examples. Such evaluations might lead to the development of a methodology for all developing countries and for the promotion of technical co-operation among developing countries as well.

22. Generally speaking, the fundamental objectives of operational activities should be to guarantee that all States enjoyed equal economic security, to accelerate the implementation of progressive United Nations decisions and the International Development Strategy for the 1980s, and, finally, to provide support for fundamental socio-economic reforms in developing countries.

23. Mr. WIJEWARDANE (Sri Lanka), recalling that the Secretary-General had expressed concern at the recent pledging conference for operational activities for development about the gap between the current needs of developing countries and the resources available to meet them, noted that, to judge from document A/41/776, there had been an overall decrease in contributions for operational activities in 1986 owing to the drop in contributions to the World Bank Group and to the International Fund for Agricultural Development. However, he was happy to note that voluntary contributions had increased for 1987.

24. While welcoming the attempt, reported in document A/41/424, to cut down administrative costs, his delegation took the view that such reductions should not be made at the expense of the efficiency of field units. It was important, in the interests of development activities, to establish better co-ordination between resident representatives, resident co-ordinators and directors of United Nations Information Centres, whose relationships appeared to be not always cordial. His delegation appreciated the various steps taken by the Administrator of UNDP to

(Mr. Wijewardane, Sri Lanka)

achieve greater coherence, in particular by further developing the planning and evaluation functions and consolidating them into a comprehensive system of analysis and feedback. The Department of Technical Co-operation had a positive role to play and the trend towards increasing collaboration between United Nations organizations and agencies and international financial institutions in the area of technical co-operation ought to enhance its effectiveness.

25. In recent years, Sri Lanka had benefited from important contributions made by UNDP and other United Nations agencies. His Government was giving greater emphasis to increasing agricultural production and to producing more hydroelectricity through the Mahaveli River Development Plan. UNDP was also assisting in the planning of other important projects and trying to respond to the priorities of the country for which they were designed. It had also taken steps to promote the utilization of local professional skills.

26. In 1981, his Government had taken the initiative to work towards economic, scientific and technical co-operation in marine affairs in the Indian Ocean. The Convention on the Law of the Sea had brought large expanses of that ocean under the jurisdiction of developing States in Asia and Africa that bordered on but, without the requisite skills and relevant technologies, they would be deprived of the benefits of the new régime established by the Convention. Meanwhile, there was increasing competition for Indian Ocean resources. It was to be hoped, therefore, that the First Conference on Economic, Scientific and Technical Co-operation in Marine Affairs in the Indian Ocean would permit early implementation of a comprehensive programme of ocean development that would draw on the collective capabilities of the competent entities of the United Nations in order to ensure fulfilment of national aspirations and full integration of the ocean régime into the development strategies of the developing States concerned.

27. His Government, which had participated in the International Conference on Population held at Mexico City in 1984 and had approved its recommendations, was taking action in collaboration with non-governmental organizations to implement some of those recommendations. Being aware of the numerous links between population activities and development, it had launched a wide range of activities throughout the country, including family planning programmes in which UNFPA was closely involved. It had also appreciated the decision to establish an annual United Nations Population Award.

28. UNICEF too had been actively supporting Sri Lanka since the early 1950s in the provision of basic services for women and children.

29. Education had been free in Sri Lanka since 1943. UNESCO had participated in the establishment of a curriculum research centre which had provided vital inputs into the education system. More recently, at the invitation of his Government, UNESCO had provided help in protecting Sri Lanka's ancient monuments under its Mankind's Heritage Programme.

(Mr. Wijewardane, Sri Lanka)

30. The United Nations Volunteer Programme was also assisting Sri Lanka, especially in medicine. His delegation wished to place on record its appreciation and thanks to all such organizations for their valuable contribution to his country's development efforts.

31. Mr. SHARFI (Sudan) said that the clear recommendations in the report of the Director-General for Development and International Economic Co-operation (A/41/350) had been very helpful to the Economic and Social Council, as was shown by its resolution 1986/74. The Director-General should therefore be encouraged to include even bolder and clearer recommendations in his future reports on policy reviews of operational activities for development, exploring new ideas despite the risks involved. That would be fully consonant with the mandate of the Director-General set forth in General Assembly resolution 32/197 and subsequent resolutions.

32. Among the policy issues addressed in the report, one of the most important was that of resource mobilization. The situation in that regard had been disappointing for some years and the search for new ideas on how to ensure the predictability and continuous flow of resources, which had previously formed an important part of the report on policy review, seemed to have been abandoned. His delegation hoped that differences on policy issues would not be used as an excuse for semi-stagnation on the resource front. The resolution of the Council should encourage a revival of the drive to ensure the predictability of resources. One bright aspect in that regard was the increasing share of the developing countries in the resources provided for operational activities.

33. On co-ordination, his delegation was pleased to see the reaffirmation by the Council of the importance of co-ordination by recipient Governments. The call for the specialized agencies to give high priority to strengthening government capacities in co-ordination, planning, implementation and evaluation was therefore especially pertinent. Co-ordination of the operational activities of the United Nations system had received much attention over the previous decade, unfortunately without many results. It was therefore necessary to continue trying, while at the same time devising the type of co-operative arrangements among specialized agencies which had already proved their worth, in the case of UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA and WFP, for example, through their Joint Consultative Group on Policy. At the country level, respect for the role of the resident co-ordinator and utilization of UNDP country programmes together with priority programmes for technical co-operation as a framework for operational activities should enhance both co-ordination between the system's various agencies and harmonization of the activities of bilateral donors.

34. In paragraph 20 of the section of his report (A/41/350) entitled "Integrated approach to development", the Director-General had highlighted the efforts made to add a development dimension to the emergency-related activities of UNICEF, UNHCR and the World Food Programme; in his delegation's view, that was an important point. It was essential that the totality of interventions by the various agencies and programmes of the United Nations system be flexible enough to address the totality of problems presented by the inseparable link between emergency,

(Mr. Sharfi, Sudan)

rehabilitation and development. The response of the United Nations system through the Office for Emergency Operations in Africa offered many useful lessons which should be utilized in future operations. One example of particular importance to the Sudan was integration between developmental and refugee assistance. In co-operation with UNDP and UNHCR, the Sudan had already begun to take integration measures which would be of assistance both to the refugees and to the population of the host regions; the assistance of relevant agencies and the World Bank would be of great importance in preparing such integrated programmes.

35. His Government wished to express its gratitude to the Director-General for Development and International Economic Co-operation, to UNDP, UNICEF and other departments and programmes of the United Nations system for their activities in the Sudan.

36. Mr. McBARNETTE (Trinidad and Tobago), noted that contributions to the various United Nations funds and programmes were expected to increase in 1987. He hoped that the gain reflected a greater commitment by the international community to return contributions to a growth path. The resource question remained central to the development of operational activities. The financial crisis had led to a new allocation of resources in favour of the least developed countries. Trinidad and Tobago supported those decisions but held the view that assistance activities should remain universal.

37. The technical assistance requirements of countries were likely to change at different stages of their development, but were unlikely to be eliminated. Declining IPF allocations to countries like Trinidad and Tobago jeopardized the contribution which the United Nations system could make to development through the country programming approach. He hoped that it would be possible to adopt a flexible approach without completely abandoning old traditions which had been successful in the past. In that connection, efforts should be made to utilize and strengthen such mechanisms as cost-sharing and government execution of projects.

38. Co-ordination had not yet become an automatic function within the United Nations system despite General Assembly resolution 32/197. The Director-General for Development and International Economic Co-operation had said in his report (A/41/350, para. 27) that there was no locus of authority in the United Nations system at either the intergovernmental level or the Secretariat to ensure the coherent functioning of the system and concerted action towards common objectives. A number of solutions could be considered. The report of the Joint Inspection Unit on field representation of the agencies of the United Nations system (A/41/424) contained some very useful recommendations. The Director-General for Development and International Economic Co-operation and his Office had a decisive role to play in co-ordination. That role should be strengthened with the support of Governments. In that connection, Trinidad and Tobago supported the function of the Joint Consultative Group on Policy.

39. Co-ordination at the country level was undoubtedly the responsibility of recipient Governments. Solutions varied with local conditions, but the United

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(Mr. McBarnette, Trinidad and Tobago)

Nations system should assist in strengthening capacity to the extent possible. In the final analysis, co-ordination, despite its obvious benefits, could not be a substitute for greater and more predictable resources.

40. The Director-General had pointed out in his report that the participation of developing countries in procurement by the United Nations agencies had been less than 20 per cent during the preceding three years (A/41/350, para. 89). That situation was of concern to Trinidad and Tobago. The participation of those countries must be increased.

41. His delegation also considered that co-operation among developing countries was an under-utilized component of operational activities. In the current state of the world economy, it was essential that countries should unlock the possibilities offered by TCDC and ECDC. In that field, the United Nations system could play a catalytic role by removing the barriers that currently existed within the system.

42. Mr. REED (United States of America) said that his country attached special importance to agenda item 80, because it was the largest contributor to operational activities. Improved co-ordination at the field level was a key aspect. Resident co-ordinators should have sufficient authority to recommend against yet another pre-feasibility mission or to refrain from subscribing to a project when they deemed it necessary to do so. The United States advocated co-operation - not competition - between the specialized agencies and UNDP. The role of the resident co-ordinator should cover all technical assistance activities within the United Nations system and even, if the host country so requested, outside that system. Moreover, in his recommendations, he should give top priority to development of the host country's co-ordination capacity. The fourth programming cycle would provide UNDP and recipient Governments with an opportunity to test and implement coherence and co-ordination among the development activities financed by host Governments. The United States believed that there should be co-ordination both in the use of resources and in the conditions applicable to their use. There was a need for well-designed strategies and programmes for the effective and co-ordinated use of both the national and external resources of the developing countries.

43. World Bank consultative groups and UNDP round tables had played a central role in aid co-ordination, providing a forum for dialogue between donors and beneficiaries. Appropriate measures had been taken at the national level and had led to stronger donor support. However, certain shortcomings had to be noted. Meetings had sometimes been so large as to impede fruitful discussion on key issues. The consultations had sometimes failed to reach operationally relevant conclusions. Provision had been lacking at times for effective linkages between the consultative group and local co-ordination arrangements. The meetings had not always resulted in a workable framework for co-operation in the selection and execution of projects and programmes; and, lastly, adequate follow-up mechanisms were absent.

44. Those co-ordination mechanisms had been substantially improved. There was now a more active dialogue on basic issues associated with structural adjustment and

(Mr. Reed, United States)

broad policy-oriented lending. Moreover, recipient Governments were willing to discuss their economic policies with the donors, especially with regard to structural adjustments, investment programmes and the strengthening of national management capabilities. Follow-up on the implementation of decisions taken at consultative group and round table meetings was also extremely important at the in-country level, in the context of country programmes and priorities.

45. Where the United Nations Development Programme was concerned, the United States attached great importance to the role of the Committee of the Whole and its Working Group. Thanks to them, the UNDP Governing Council had a better practical understanding of UNDP's activity, and efforts to tighten management and procedures were continuing. Resolutions adopted during the past year had been shorter and much more substantive, which was to be welcomed.

46. An element which had to be taken into consideration was the programme impact of all United Nations activities for development. The agencies of the system should think in programme terms within the framework of the investment priorities established by the host Government. Resources should be concentrated on major priorities rather than on peripheral activities.

47. Firmer control over programme quality at the project design, implementation and evaluation levels was needed, as was a sharper development focus. UNDP's Project Design Facility and Office of Project Execution played an important role in that context. However, programme delivery rates were still rather slow; the agencies of the system should increase their co-operation in order to overcome implementation bottlenecks. It should not be forgotten that the majority of the resources received by the international agencies came from the donor countries' taxpayers. Confidence could be restored only if concrete results were achieved.

48. His delegation was pleased at the progress achieved at the management and co-ordination levels and, in that connection, strongly endorsed Economic and Social Council resolution 86/74.

49. Mr. MAIGA (Mali) expressed satisfaction with the globally positive effects of operational activities. Although financial resources allocated to those activities had increased in volume over the years, they remained modest considering the decline in official development assistance and the steadily growing needs of developing countries, especially the least developed among them.

50. Pursuant to the Substantial New Programme of Action for the 1980s for the Least Developed Countries, Mali had organized two donor round tables in 1982 and 1985. The second meeting had reviewed the macro-economic situation and sectoral policies and had focused essentially on the implementation of Mali's food strategy. It had established five sectoral follow-up groups on, respectively, drought and desertification; food strategy; employment, training, liberalization and institutional reform; primary health care and population control; and non-project aid. All Mali's partners were invited to participate in the work of those groups.

(Mr. Maiga, Mali)

51. The help of the international community and the support of them by the United Nations system through its operational activities were decisive for the implementation of the United Nations Programme of Action for African Recovery and Development in Africa, 1986-1990.

52. During the past decade the United Nations system had taken useful action towards improving the participation of women in operational activities. His delegation was in favour of mobilizing resources in support of the United Nations Trust Fund for African Development Activities.

53. In order to improve co-ordination within the United Nations system, emphasis could be placed on the following elements: co-ordination of programmes and projects, both at agency secretariat level and in the field; strengthening of the role of resident co-ordinators pursuant to resolution 32/197; utilization of national capabilities in project execution; and more extensive co-ordination between the operational activities of the United Nations and other multilateral, bilateral and non-governmental sources. As was indicated in recommendation 7 of document A/41/350, the latter form of co-ordination had yielded valuable results in Mali in connection with the country's programme for restructuring its cereal market.

54. UNDP's fourth programming cycle was about to start under more favourable auspices. It was to be hoped that the trend towards increased resources would be maintained. Mali, for its part, had already identified the priority areas for UNDP intervention; they related to implementation of the food strategy, drought and desertification control; control of water resources, improvement of access both within the country and to and from the outside world, development of human resources and employment, and economic recovery. His delegation wished to thank the United Nations agencies, and especially UNDP, for their assistance.

55. Mr. WILLIS (United Kingdom) said that the second regular session of the Economic and Social Council had provided an opportunity to reaffirm certain fundamental principles which should not be lost sight of. International co-operation was an imperative that needed to be borne in mind at all times and not only in times of crisis. A framework for exploiting its possibilities was provided by General Assembly resolutions 2688 (XXV) (the 1970 consensus) and 32/197. The Council had also stressed the importance of the UNDP country programmes and reaffirmed the central role of resident co-ordinators in operational activities and the need to provide them with the authority to exercise that role. Lastly, it had acknowledged the need to strengthen the capabilities of countries so as to enable them to participate in the preparation of technical co-operation programmes, as was their right, along with the need to rationalize field office representation.

56. The thirty-third session of the UNDP Governing Council had been very useful and the documentation submitted had been of better quality. In view of the probable increase in contributions in 1987, his delegation endorsed the Administrator's proposal for a reasonable rise in expenditure levels while at the same time stressing the need for steady progress. It noted with considerable concern the lack of contingency money in UNDP's special programme resources and stressed the

(Mr. Willis, United Kingdom)

need to abide strictly by agreed rules for fourth-cycle allocations. UNDP was functioning in a sound manner and was capable of co-ordinating technical co-operation within the system. Other members of the United Nations family should associate themselves with that approach. His delegation welcomed the constructive attitude of the Governing Council towards country programmes and the deferral of that decision concerning the future of the Committee of the Whole and its Working Group, which had done much useful work.

57. UNICEF too had lost none of its vigour. The genuine sense of dialogue between the Secretariat of the Organization and the Member States was most heartening. UNICEF had also been closely collaborating with other agencies, particularly in relation to the emergency in Africa. His delegation hoped that it would continue to apply the experience gained by the Office for Emergency Operations in Africa in the area of co-ordination.

58. Although UNFPA faced serious financial constraints, it had been very active in 1986. It had continued to raise global awareness of the problems posed by population growth and had pursued the execution of its programmes, which touched on sensitive issues. His delegation hoped that programmes for Africa would be sufficiently protected from economy measures, and that UNFPA would continue to strengthen the co-ordination of assistance in the area of population.

59. As the Director-General for Development and International Economic Co-operation had said, Member States wanted to maintain the central funding and programming role of UNDP. The issue was not one of monopoly, but rather of finding an appropriate balance. The Director-General had made various suggestions to improve the effectiveness of operational activities. They very often referred back to systems and structures which had already been set up but which had not always been used. His delegation appealed to United Nations agencies to increase their efforts to pursue those objectives through a process of dialogue and in a spirit of partnership.

60. Mr. STARACE JANFOLLA (Italy) noted with satisfaction that the most recent Pledging Conference had shown that both donor and recipient countries had confirmed their confidence in the United Nations system by increasing their contributions beyond all expectations. Italy, for its part, would continue to contribute to the operational activities of the United Nations system; once more, in 1987, it would channel almost 40 per cent of its development assistance through multilateral organizations and agencies, giving priority to those funds and programmes which pursued aims complementary to those of its bilateral co-operation activities.

61. The hard and high-quality work of the specialized agencies dedicated to meeting the needs of the developing countries, particularly in the area of human resources and technical assistance, fully justified the newly reconfirmed confidence in them. The results obtained by the system as a whole in facing the emergency in Africa had shown that the system could work effectively, but most of all highlighted the positive role of co-ordination; together with financial resources, co-ordination was indeed the indispensable ingredient of a

(Mr. Starace Janfolla, Italy)

well-functioning system. The day-by-day operation of such complex and diversified machinery was not, however, without its problems. Experience had admittedly made it possible to establish, little by little, the necessary co-ordinating instruments, but greater efforts were needed at all levels to maximize the use of scarce resources and enhance the effectiveness of operational activities.

62. The Secretary-General's report (A/41/350) underlined the contradictions and obstacles that must be overcome to improve co-ordination and made several useful recommendations to that end. Most of those hurdles were the result of decisions taken by Member States, which, for example, had given particular responsibilities to the resident co-ordinators and then denied them a part of their authority. The Member States must therefore remedy that basic flaw in the system. Economic and Social Council resolution 1986/74, adopted at its second regular session, gave a clear indication of the directions and aims which would be desirable for the United Nations system to pursue; however, the Member States, as members of the governing bodies of the specialized agencies, must take the necessary steps to bring about better co-ordinated policies and more effective actions. Further delay would diminish the role of operational activities in support of the development efforts of the developing countries.

63. Mr. MUTALIK (World Health Organization) said that, since the adoption of resolution WHA 29.48 in 1976, WHO had devoted between 60 and 70 per cent of its resources to technical co-operation and the provision of services at the regional and country level, thereby bringing about a number of changes aimed at enhancing the effectiveness of technical co-operation with Member States, with a view to enhancing their capacity for health management and research and development. Moreover, a collective exercise in monitoring Health for All strategies and in evaluating their progress had made it possible to identify various difficulties in the implementation of those strategies, which had led to a strengthening of the managerial process for health development.

64. In his report (A/41/350), the Director-General for Development and International Economic Co-operation had recommended that the complementary use of United Nations system resources and of the contribution of non-governmental organizations should be more systematically explored. WHO had always attached great importance to its collaboration with non-governmental organizations, especially since the launching of the Health for All movement, and had also sought in recent years to enhance and facilitate collaboration between non-governmental organizations and a number of countries. In addition, WHO was further strengthening its collaboration with various non-governmental organizations and United Nations agencies, including UNDP, UNFPA and, in particular, UNICEF, with which it had co-sponsored the historical Alma Ata Conference and with which it shared a unique co-ordination mechanism. At the country level, the special mandate of the WHO programme co-ordinators and representatives presented no impediment to their collaboration with the resident co-ordinators of other agencies, as had been shown during the recent emergency in Africa. Efforts must be made, however, to streamline current practices and procedures so that all operational agencies would be truly involved from the beginning in the overall development effort.

(Mr. Mutalik, WHO)

65. The United Nations system had never before faced such difficult times, and WHO, like many other organizations, was facing acute financial difficulties. The present difficult economic environment, together with growing unemployment and shrinking resources for social programmes, had given rise, particularly in the developing countries, to serious social problems, and the very existence of the development process based on international co-operation would depend on how successful the Member States and their development partners, including the United Nations system, were in mitigating those problems.

66. Mr. SEBURYAMO (Burundi) said that while it was indeed important, in a context of scarce development resources, to try first to make the best use of available resources it was just as important to mobilize funds commensurate with the tremendous needs of the developing countries and of the least developed countries in particular. Enhancing the effectiveness of development operations was not a substitute for increasing the volume of necessary resources. In that connection, the outcome of the recent Pledging Conference for 1987 was encouraging and Burundi, whose interest in operational activities remained as keen as ever, would communicate the amount of its contribution as soon as possible.

67. Turning to the issue of co-ordination of operational activities, he stressed the crucial role of the assisted country and, in particular, the tremendous importance of the UNDP resident representative chosen to co-ordinate the activities of the United Nations system. The role of Co-ordinator could, if necessary, be assigned to the representative of a specialized agency which was present in the field provided that the plan and priorities of the assisted Government were respected. The programming of technical co-operation activities of the system would become more effective if it were done with the active participation of national officials and if it took duly into account the economic and social development plans and priorities of the assisted country. Unfortunately the immediate entry into force of new guidelines adopted in Copenhagen had left no time for the necessary transition and might therefore result in the interruption of ongoing priority projects. It was particularly regrettable that priority projects submitted by his Government in the context of the next country programme had not been kept owing to certain differences of view; the adoption of the new guidelines was not sufficient justification for those differences. Accordingly, account must be taken of the views of the assisted Governments and a certain degree of flexibility must be demonstrated in the application of the new guidelines.

68. Burundi welcomed the debate, which had started at the most recent session of the UNDP Governing Council, on the role of UNDP in the development of human resources. By using national personnel countries could replace expatriate technical assistance personnel who were often too expensive. In order to cut costs, Burundi also recommended that greater use should be made of technical assistance among developing countries.

69. Mr. KUMARAKUI SINGHE (International Labour Organisation) said that ILO's primary concern was to remain fully responsive to the evolving requirements of the developing countries and to develop cost-effective and qualitatively superior

(Mr. Kumarakulasinghe, ILO)

programmes. Those aims had become especially important in a situation of scarce resources and growing needs.

70. Mobilizing the United Nations system's resources fully in a spirit of constructive competition could lead to a greater degree of coherence and co-ordination. However, co-ordination should not be an end in itself but should be tailored to the situation and needs of each country.

71. Some had expressed concern about the diverse funding sources and the loss of identity that might result from it; however, there was no ground for concern. ILO had always respected national plans and priorities and ILO representatives responded to the requests of the host Government. They kept the resident co-ordinators fully informed of their activities. ILO supported the role of the resident co-ordinators and believed that their effectiveness could be further enhanced by ensuring that they represented the system as a whole. ILO supported the suggestion of the Director-General for Development and International Economic Co-operation that the process for their selection should be broadened, and recognized that the direct relationship between those officials and the Director-General could help ensure that operational activities were placed in the wider context of international economic co-operation.

72. Consistency of action in the various organs of the system must begin at the national level. However, it was necessary to reflect carefully on the legal, constitutional and operational implications of pursuing the concept of a focus of authority in the United Nations system.

73. Mr. PAYTON (New Zealand) recalled that many of the greatest successes of the United Nations over the past 40 years had been achieved in the area of development assistance. However, in order to be effective, operational activities for development must be carefully co-ordinated. There were three points which were especially important in that connection. Firstly, it was necessary not to confuse calls for action with action itself. Secondly, recipient countries and donor countries alike must accept the role of arbiter of the resident co-ordinators who ensured the smooth functioning of the system. It was however clear that, given the responsibilities which devolved upon them, the co-ordinators must be first class and must be chosen - and that was not always true at present - with very great care. Finally, UNDP must remain the central funding source for United Nations programmes of development assistance. Currently UNDP provided little more than half the resources, which meant that the resident representatives had to co-ordinate programmes over which they had little or no direct control and therefore influence and that their recommendations were not always followed. As recommended by the Group of High-Level Intergovernmental Experts to Review the Efficiency of the Administrative and Financial Functioning of the United Nations (A/41/49, recommendation 11), the authority of the resident co-ordinators should, wherever possible, be clarified and confirmed with respect to non-UNDP programmes.

74. With respect to the level of voluntary contribution to the various United Nations development programmes, while the results of the Pledging Conference would

(Mr. Payton, New Zealand)

enable the major funds to have adequate budgets there was no room for complacency; the size of the pledges owed a great deal to the position of the United States dollar in comparison to national currencies. The Conference had also shown that the burden of contributions was unequally shared since a small group of industrialized, market-economy countries provided the lion's share of development funds. New Zealand was aware of that problem and had increased its contributions to UNDP and UNICEF by 90 per cent over 1985, respectively.

75. Mr. PADARATH (Fiji) said that the South Pacific region was already benefiting from activities started more than two years earlier to streamline the operational activities of the United Nations. In July 1984, the United Nations Development Advisory Team (UNDAT) had merged with the ESCAP Pacific Liaison Office. That union had produced the ESCAP Pacific Operation Centre which was based in Port Vila, Vanuatu. That action had increased ESCAP's capacity to respond directly and speedily to requests from island developing countries in the Pacific region. The Centre had helped provide those countries with short-term advisory services in such varied fields as shipping, statistics, public administration and social welfare. Locating the office in the region had also facilitated liaison between ESCAP and the region of bodies such as the South Pacific Commission, the South Pacific Bureau for Economic Co-operation, the University of the South Pacific and the Pacific Islands Development Programme which had recently been established in Hawaii.

76. His delegation fully subscribed to the notion that the success of development assistance depended on the use made of it. Such assistance must bring about real improvements in the people's standard of living. In that context, his country had had encouraging success with its five-year development plans (the current one being the ninth), which had helped motivate the people of Fiji to improve their situation, assisted by the Government and international development agencies.

77. His delegation welcomed the intensive consultations undertaken by the new Administrator of UNDP, Mr. William Draper III, and believed that his pragmatic approach augured well for the future of UNDP and its programmes for the developing world. Fiji was grateful to UNDP, which constantly endeavoured to enhance the quality and effectiveness of its technical assistance. In addition, his delegation fully supported the Programme's new policy of mobilizing income-generating ventures in developing countries.

78. His delegation welcomed the decision to increase women's participation in operational activities for development. The United Nations Decade for Women had made it clear that development needed women as much as women needed development. The decision by UNDP to establish a special division to promote the role of women in development was a step in the right direction. Fiji would be a member of the UNDP Governing Council in 1987 and would follow the progress made in that area with interest.

79. His delegation had the Office of the United Nations Disaster Relief Co-ordinator (UNDRO) in high regard. It noted the recommendation of the Group of 18 to request UNDP to consider the feasibility of taking over the functions

(Mr. Padarath, Fiji)

currently performed by UNDRO (A/41/49, recommendation 24). However, the capacity of UNDRO to respond quickly when disasters struck could well be impaired by such a measure. Any new arrangement should ensure that the Office's capacity for prompt action was maintained.

80. His delegation also wished to pay tribute to the work of the United Nations Fund for Population Activities, whose programmes had helped bring down the birth rate and had enabled children to enjoy a better standard of living with greater educational and vocational training opportunities. Those activities were complemented by the activities of UNICEF, which had helped save many infants' lives by providing oral rehydration salts at rural health centres. The World Food Programme was also assisting Fiji with its development efforts.

81. Unfortunately, the presence of international agencies in developing countries also had some negative effects. Talented professionals, lured by highly lucrative jobs, tended to leave the country; in addition, the lavish life-style enjoyed by some United Nations staff members could be jarring in the comparatively simple social context of a developing country. By exercising a degree of moderation, such staff members could improve their image and establish more positive relationships with the people they were meant to assist.

82. In conclusion, his delegation supported the objectives of the United Nations Volunteers programme because the Volunteers had also contributed significantly towards improving living standards, especially in isolated rural areas. Fiji had official volunteer-service arrangements with Australia, Japan, New Zealand, the United Kingdom and the United States of America. Through their work, the volunteers themselves had gained valuable insight into the special problems of the third world and had helped promote understanding between peoples.

83. By its very nature, development was a co-operative endeavour. The enormous amount of resources available ought to make it possible to alleviate the suffering and hunger in the world. Fiji, which was a beneficiary of development assistance, was prepared to play its part in facilitating that process for other countries.

84. Mr. AYINA (Cameroon) welcomed the priority which the United Nations system accorded to Africa, a continent which had the highest number of least developed countries and experienced endless suffering in the apportionment of operational activities for development.

85. Co-ordination of operational activities was essential in enhancing their impact and effectiveness and ought to be imposed at the national level as well as throughout the United Nations system. As the Director-General for Development and International Economic Co-operation had noted, co-ordination methods should take into account the special circumstances of individual countries, particularly the interplay of economic, institutional and political factors. Primary responsibility in that connection lay with recipient countries, as the Economic and Social Council had recognized in its resolution 1986/74.

(Mr. Ayina, Cameroon)

86. It was unfortunate that operational activities did not make sufficient use of co-operation among developing countries. At a time when the developing countries were finding North-South co-operation, despite its importance, somewhat less than satisfactory and negotiations in that area seemed at a standstill, South-South co-operation was looking more and more like a natural tool which could provide joint solutions to joint problems. From that standpoint, Cameroon was open to all initiatives designed to promote technical co-operation both with African countries and with the other countries of the third world.

87. As food was one of the African countries' greatest concerns, the World Food Programme should not limit itself to providing short term assistance in times of emergency, but should become more deeply involved in agriculture, which was in fact the mother of development. The contribution of the United Nations system should have as its objective the revitalization of agriculture through participation in the preparation and execution of long-term development projects, in collaboration with the States concerned. In that connection, note should be taken of the innovative proposal by FAO to undertake a major agricultural recovery programme for Africa.

88. Cameroon's agricultural policy, which had already led to relative self-sufficiency in food, was currently focused on the development of human resources, largely through support for training and research institutions. In the area of research, the United Nations system might wish to promote the conservation of local nutritional habits by processing, even upgrading the quality of, many foods. The United Nations system could also support research programmes aimed at promoting local foods and replacing imported foods in the long term.

89. In the area of population, Cameroon was primarily concerned with human-resources development. While his delegation welcomed the role played by the United Nations system, and by the United Nations Fund for Population Activities in particular, in the dissemination of information about birth control, Cameroon, which had 10 million inhabitants spread out over a surface area of 475,000 km², did not consider birth control to be its primary objective at its current stage of growth. What mattered now was the actual well-being of the population.

90. In conclusion, he commended the United Nations Development Fund for Women for its work on behalf of women in developing countries, and especially its activities relating to the advancement of women in Cameroon and training for rural women.

91. Mr. CASTELLI (Argentina) said he agreed with the points made by the Director-General for Development and International Economic Co-operation in document A/41/350 concerning the role that the more advanced developing countries could play in multilateral co-operation. It was altogether justified to maintain that countries like Argentina were in a position to set in motion a process of co-operation among developing countries, for the wider benefit of the whole international community.

(Mr. Castelli, Argentina)

92. His delegation was in substantial agreement with the recommendations in that report (A/41/350). It wished to point out, however, that whereas the resident co-ordinator had an essential role to play in the work of the United Nations system, it was for recipient countries to co-ordinate co-operation at the bilateral and national levels, the resident co-ordinator role being confined in that case to offering assistance to enhance the recipient country's capacity in a given area. With regard to the round-table mechanism, Argentina supported the procedures advocated by the UNDP Governing Council in its resolution 86/17 for the implementation of operational activities for development, in the belief that it was necessary to maintain a balance between the improvements needed and the principles to be maintained. Where project selection and design (recommendation 13 of the report in document A/41/350) were concerned, only strict respect for the 1970 consensus embodied in General Assembly resolution 2688 (XXV) would make it possible for responsibility to be shared in a manner acceptable to all parties concerned. On the subject of recommendation 18, equitable geographical distribution of procurement sources was essential, bearing in mind particularly that the capacities of the developing countries had so far seldom been drawn on. Finally, it was regrettable that the Director-General for Development and International Economic Co-operation had not placed sufficient emphasis in his report on the role that the United Nations system could play in technical co-operation among developing countries, in accordance with the Buenos Aires Plan of Action. The High-level Committee on the Review of Technical Co-operation among Developing Countries should consider, at its next meeting, the shortcomings indicated by the Joint Inspection Unit in its excellent report (JIU/REP/85/3).

93. Argentina reiterated its support for the decisions taken by the UNDP Governing Council and UNICEF. The World Food Programme's breakdown of funds allocated by type of activity was consistent with the priorities set by the member countries. However, the amount of resources committed to the Latin America and Caribbean region was lower than in 1984, and it was to be hoped that an upward trend would be maintained in the future.

94. The Argentine delegation regretted that it had been impossible to launch the financing system for science and technology for development and hoped that UNDP would attach due importance to the United Nations Fund for Science and Technology for Development so that science and technology could bridge the gap between developing and developed countries.

95. Mr. CAPRIROLO (Bolivia) recalled that in terms of international and multilateral co-operation, operational activities for development were the best way of fostering progress in the developing countries. Since UNDP was of particular importance in that respect because of its decisive function in financing technical assistance, it was necessary to ensure strict compliance with the principles governing it. Moreover, operational activities for development must be adapted to the national priorities of each recipient country, and priority should be given to the human resources of those countries in the design and execution of technical programmes and projects.

(Mr. Capriolo, Bolivia)

96. The results of the latest UNDP pledging conference were particularly encouraging, constituting as they did a token of renewed confidence in operational activities and a reaffirmation of the merits of multilateralism. It was also gratifying to note that the target annual increase in the total amount of voluntary contributions for the period 1987-1991 (8 per cent) had been exceeded.

97. Since the unfavourable international situation had increased the needs of the developing countries, more resources would still be needed in the future. It was therefore most disturbing that no significant increase in official development assistance was anticipated and that, according to World Bank estimates, it was even expected to remain static during the 1986-1988 biennium. In view of the critical economic situation of the developing countries, that trend must be reversed. It was also a cause for concern that UNDP technical co-operation activities had remained at the same level in 1984-1985 as during the preceding biennium and that UNDP's share in the total expenditure by United Nations organizations on technical co-operation projects had decreased.

98. On the question of the co-ordination of operational activities, Economic and Social Council resolution 1986/74 and the note by the Secretary-General on the information provided by organizations of the United Nations system on policy issues affecting operational activities (A/41/374) provided a sound basis for analysis aimed at improving the effectiveness of technical co-operation. It was primarily for the recipient countries to ensure co-ordination, in accordance with their needs; the United Nations system also had an important role to play in that regard. In Bolivia, the increased co-ordination between UNDP, UNICEF, the United Nations Fund for Population Activities and the other programmes, as well as collaboration between UNDP and the United Nations Fund for Drug Abuse Control, were altogether satisfactory.

99. UNICEF had contributed significantly to improving the situation of children throughout the world and to a substantial reduction in the infant mortality rate. However, the situation of children in the developing countries had worsened in recent years as a result of the deterioration in the economic situation, as evidenced by the increase in child mortality and malnutrition. The Bolivian Government was highly appreciative of the co-operation extended by UNICEF, with which it had undertaken a wide-scale vaccination campaign aimed at immunizing all children by 1990.

100. The United Nations Fund for Population Activities had helped to give rural women a more decisive economic and social role through integrated rural development projects. It was therefore particularly regrettable that one of the main contributors to the Fund had announced that it would not make any contribution in 1986.

101. Mr. BALE (Congo) recalled that, since the adoption of the Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development, assistance provided by the United Nations system had been seen in terms of a different approach, which took into account the development factor with all that it entailed. The same applied to the

(Mr. Bale, Congo)

policies now being applied by UNDP, UNICEF and FAO, the cornerstone of which was the basic infrastructural component designed to prevent predictable crises, respond to emergencies and pave the way for a fresh start. The Congolese Government could but welcome the beginning of such a trend towards a more realistic and ordered expression of the international community's efforts to put an end to under-development and work towards genuine international co-operation.

102. In order to do so, however, the lessons must be drawn from the experience of approximately two decades of multilateral and bilateral co-operation which had failed to promote development or prevent disasters and other social ills most vividly illustrated in the continent of Africa, particularly in recent times. Those lessons centred around three main foci: first, the fact that isolated initiatives did not in themselves promote development, despite the good intentions which might have inspired them; secondly, active participation of the people concerned and the joint efforts of all the parties involved in a particular project; thirdly, the creation or improvement of the conditions that would favour general progress and development. With regard to the first lesson, it should be recalled that to date, in accordance with a rather distorted concept of liberalism, each party seemed to act in his own interest solely with a view to securing the maximum immediate benefit. Since the international organizations themselves failed to function on the basis of long-term guidelines, they ran the risk of finding themselves led astray by special interests, rather than being the locomotives of coherent and integrated development. To begin with, the interests of the country or group of countries whose financial contribution or influence was greatest always took priority; downstream, the recipient country or group of countries, whose interests were generally ill-defined, showed a preference for ad hoc show-piece operations. The tragedy of drought, famine and morbidity of which Africa had been victim had revealed the limitations of that attitude where development was concerned, and the promise which was offered by the approach illustrated in the results of the thirteenth special session of the General Assembly. By giving priority to medium- and long-term action, the United Nations had deliberately chosen a formula whereby the activities of all development partners could be integrated into a reliable mechanism that could be monitored: that was the second lesson. The concept of a new partnership that had emerged had underscored the need for continuous consultation both in the planning stages of a project and in its elaboration and implementation. The special session of the General Assembly on the critical economic situation in Africa was probably the first occasion on which the international community as a whole had reached agreement on co-operation aimed at the attainment of a specific objective. The receptiveness shown by most developed countries had been matched by the will the developing countries had demonstrated, aware of the major role they had to play in promoting development through South-South co-operation. With regard to the conditions necessary for the success of the actions taken to promote development (and that was the third lesson), he regretted that very few formal commitments had been given to contribute the necessary financial support for the implementation of the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development 1986-1990. The fulfilment of a fond hope, the consolidation of the foundations for development in Africa, would depend to a large extent on the capacity of the specialized agencies, donor

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Governments and other organizations to overcome that financial uncertainty. To that concern must be added the ever-present concern over the debt problem of the developing countries, particularly those in Africa. A basic question needed to be asked concerning the complex relationships between under-development, which was an abnormal state of affairs, and a development that was always just out of reach, which was no less abnormal.

103. The efforts made and the commitment demonstrated both within the United Nations system and outside it would certainly help to dissipate the misunderstandings which could arise in the common search for suitable means of achieving progress and well-being for all, with the participation of all. The co-operation established between the Permanent Steering Committee of the Organization of African Unity and the United Nations steering committee which had replaced the United Nations Office for Emergency Operations in Africa provided a good illustration of that. Indeed, the new approach revealed by the development problems that had recently arisen in Africa was that of joint responsibility for development at the global level.

104. Ms. CHALLENGOIR (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) said that, with regard to the triennial review of the thrust of the operational activities for development of the United Nations system, UNESCO had consistently supported the assertion in the introduction of the report of the Director-General for Development and International Economic Co-operation (A/41/350) that the efforts of the United Nations system should be aimed at promoting an integrated approach to development. With respect to autonomous funding arrangements, it was true that in the past 20 years a central funding system, with UNDP at the core, had evolved into one that was polycentric. While that situation undoubtedly presented co-ordination problems, it was dictated by the choices of member States. However, polycentrism did not necessarily impede progress toward closer collaboration in the formulation of coherent development strategies. Country programming could and should move quickly towards greater cohesion within the framework of UNDP programming. Such enlarged programming would be the testing ground for effective measurement of the will to co-ordinate, regardless of the origin of the funds coalesced.

105. On the question of co-ordination, UNESCO appreciated the concern expressed in paragraph 30 of document A/41/350 about the difficulty in reconciling the seemingly different mandates reflected in General Assembly resolutions 32/197 and 34/213 on the implementation of the resident co-ordinator arrangements. However, it appeared that the General Assembly, in its wisdom, had merely sought to clarify that "co-ordination" had not meant "super ordination". In any event, UNESCO firmly supported the pivotal role of the resident co-ordinator. Moreover, the Executive Board had reaffirmed its support for the mandate expressed in General Assembly resolution 32/197 and, at the same time, had called for full use to be made of the technical competence of the specialized agencies.

106. With regard to field representation, the Executive Board of UNESCO would not examine the report on that subject prepared by the Joint Inspection Unit until its

(Ms. Challenoir, UNESCO)

spring session in 1987. Although UNESCO was in substantial agreement with the observations of the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination about the report, the Joint Inspection Unit's call for a stay in new field arrangements appeared to run counter to calls from member States of UNESCO for greater decentralization and the deployment of headquarters staff to the field.

107. UNESCO historically had maintained very close relations of co-operation with non-governmental organizations and currently had official relations with over 500 of them. During the current biennium, UNESCO would provide over \$3,857,500 in direct subsidies to NGOs to assist with the implementation of its regular budget programme.

108. The question of tied procurement was a complex one. It sufficed to say in that regard that beneficiary countries, like United Nations agencies, preferred financial assistance with fewer conditions.

109. With regard to UNESCO's operational activities, it must be stressed that unlike some of the other specialized agencies, UNESCO did not have a line item for technical assistance in its regular budget. Consequently, all funds for such programmes had to come from extrabudgetary resources. In recognition of its technical expertise, a great number of Governments as well as United Nations agencies and international financing institutions assigned projects to UNESCO. As at 30 June 1986, a total of \$83.8 million from various sources had been allocated to UNESCO for specific operational activities. Fifty-four per cent of that amount had come from UNDP. UNESCO expressed its sincere appreciation to the seven countries which were underwriting funds-in-trust projects in the amount of approximately \$17.7 million in 1986.

110. UNESCO was continuing its co-operative programme with the World Bank and was executing, at the request of host Governments, the technical assistance component of Bank-financed loans in 18 countries. Since 1 January 1986, UNESCO had carried out for the World Bank 83 missions in 36 member countries. It also administered the technical assistance component of projects underwritten by the African Development Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank. In addition, it had recently signed agreements with the Governments of Benin, the Central African Republic and Ethiopia for the execution of projects financed by the OPEC Fund for International Development. Lastly, UNESCO co-operated with UNICEF and the World Food Programme as a technical adviser in formulating and following up projects implemented by Governments themselves. Although UNESCO's range of activities was extremely broad, education projects consumed the bulk of its resources (49.6 per cent).

111. She stressed the importance that UNESCO attached to human resources development, because the human being should be both the beneficiary and the agent of economic growth and social change. Consequently, UNESCO had devoted itself to human resources development since its establishment and therefore welcomed the central role accorded thereto by UNDP in setting its priorities for the fourth programming cycle (1987-1991).

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112. The problems which arose in that field derived from the fact that education was a long-term issue, whereas funding sources, and to a certain degree Member States, were obliged to operate on a short-term and medium-term basis. During the first half of 1986, UNESCO had been involved in 455 training courses or seminars in which more than 22,000 specialists had participated. It was pleased to note that, between 1985 and 1986, fellowship recipients from developing countries had risen from 32 to 45 per cent of the total and women beneficiaries had also increased from 25 to 33 per cent. Every effort would be made to sustain those positive trends. All research had demonstrated that literacy was a necessary foundation not only for the transfer of technology but also for the transfer of rudimentary knowledge in health, nutrition, agriculture and a host of other technical fields. Moreover, the newly literate experienced enhanced self-esteem and greater motivation to participate effectively in the development process. The States members of UNESCO had called for the eradication of illiteracy by the year 2000. In so doing, they had recognized that illiteracy statistics gave grounds for both optimism and discouragement. Ninety-eight per cent of the world's illiterates were in developing countries and three quarters of them were in nine States. Historically, UNESCO's role in the campaign against illiteracy had been principally that of a catalyst; UNESCO had provided advice, equipment, training, staff and had tried generally to enhance national capability. In 1980, it had undertaken, in co-operation with member States, a major educational project in Latin America and the Caribbean, the main aim of which had been the eradication of illiteracy before the year 2000. More recently, it had launched a regional programme, in which nearly 40 African States participated, for the eradication of illiteracy in Africa. In 1985, its Executive Board had recommended to the twenty-third General Conference that it should request to the United Nations General Assembly to proclaim an International Literacy Year. The General Conference had responded by inviting the Director-General to incorporate in the third medium-term plan, a plan of action designed to help member States in all regions of the world to eradicate illiteracy by the year 2000.

113. The situation in Africa was a real paradox because, despite its abundant resources and potential, the continent was afflicted by chronic poverty. UNESCO had carefully studied the report submitted by OAU to the General Assembly at its thirteenth special session and the United Nations Plan of Action for the Economic Recovery and Development of Africa and was prepared to assist African countries in any appropriate way.

114. Several speakers had stressed the importance of structural adjustment policies "with a human face". UNESCO shared that concern and considered that, in organizing its operational activities during the current difficult economic period, United Nations bodies should take care to ensure that programmes were implemented that alleviated the negative impact of the present crisis on the social and economic well-being of the individual. H. G. Wells had warned that human history became a race between education and catastrophe. Education and manpower needs must not be sacrificed to immediate economic exigencies.

The meeting rose at 6.25 p.m.