

ecuting the principles and guidelines to be formulated. The second part of the sentence had been added to make it clear that the operational activities could not start before the report by the Secretary-General and the

Administrator of UNDP had been adopted by the Governing Council of UNDP at its eighteenth session.

The meeting rose at 5.50 p.m.

1554th meeting

Monday, 12 November 1973, at 10.50 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. Zewde GABRE-SELLASSIE (Ethiopia).

A/C.2/SR.1554

AGENDA ITEM 49

Operational activities for development (A/9003 and Corr.1, chap. VI):

- (a) United Nations Development Programme (E/5256 and Corr.1, E/5365/Rev.1);
- (b) United Nations Capital Development Fund;
- (c) Technical co-operation activities undertaken by the Secretary-General;
- (d) United Nations Volunteers programme (E/5342);
- (e) United Nations Fund for Population Activities;
- (f) United Nations Children's Fund;
- (g) World Food Programme (A/9003/Add.1 (part IV); A/9031, A/C.2/L.1298)

1. Mr. PETERSON (Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme) said that, according to the conclusions which had been drawn from the first review and appraisal of the Second United Nations Development Decade, the cause of development appeared to have lost its momentum and had become a low priority issue in many developed countries.

2. Parallel with that evolution, it appeared that the growth rate of military expenditures throughout the world was tending to decrease because of the increasingly insupportable burden which such expenditures represented for many countries. Even though it was unrealistic to expect rapid progress towards disarmament, it was not excluded that development assistance would benefit from some reduction in military appropriations. If the six developed countries which were the most powerful militarily decided to allocate 5 per cent of their military budget to development assistance, the resources available for such assistance would be more than doubled. If that hope were realized, UNDP would use the additional resources to expand and intensify its global, regional and country programmes.

3. With regard to country programmes, recipient Governments were required to identify key problem areas and determine which development efforts should be emphasized to accelerate their economic growth and maximize benefits. The Governments of the countries concerned had the exclusive responsibility for the formulation of their national development plans. However, it was on the basis of the objectives and priorities set out in those plans that Governments, in co-operation with UNDP, formulated the programmes for the countries concerned. Country programming also encouraged closer co-ordination between bilateral and multilateral technical assistance. But UNDP could assist Governments in strengthening their aid co-

ordination capacity only at their request and it was up to the Governments to determine the form and the function of the co-ordinating machinery. The country programming procedures had required UNDP to shift responsibility away from Headquarters to the resident representatives and had led to the establishment of 100 professional staffs in as many different countries.

4. Country programming had also required UNDP to develop effective procedures for monitoring, reporting and evaluating field activities. The system of tripartite review enabled government officials, the resident representative and the specialist staff of the executing agency to identify implementation problems and to agree on solutions. The experience gained from those systematic reviews led to an improvement in future project formulation and implementation. But country programming could not be an end in itself; if it was to be effective, it must be accompanied, at the national level, by measures designed to strengthen economic independence.

5. Given increased resources, UNDP would also be able to strengthen regional, interregional and global projects. It was in those areas that UNDP could provide assistance of the greatest benefit to low-income countries, particularly to the least developed among them. UNDP's global projects were concerned mainly with agricultural research. Research centres had been established, for example, in Mexico and India, to develop new varieties of higher yielding seeds, and efforts were currently being made to transmit the results of that research to the developing countries. However, agricultural research was also not an end in-itself. Unless farmers were provided with an adequate water supply, as well as fertilizer, pesticides, credit facilities and the necessary infrastructure, they would never be able to realize the potential of the new varieties of rice, wheat and corn. In many countries, for example, rice yields had increased only very slowly.

6. Parallel with those agricultural research efforts, UNDP should also help to establish research centres to develop new uses for existing products, create new products and locate new markets for familiar commodities. Cotton, for example, was of cardinal importance to many low-income countries. So far, cotton had been cheaper than synthetic fibres, but that advantage was now tending to disappear gradually and research should therefore be undertaken with a view to finding new uses and new markets for cotton. The whole international community should contribute to such research by providing financial support and technical guidance,

since the countries concerned were not in general able to undertake such a task alone.

7. UNDP should not hesitate to pioneer in global and inter-country projects, even at the risk of erring. There were several new areas which were of growing interest to the developing countries where UNDP might consider investing a greater part of its energies and resources. For example, UNDP might consider developing the capability to help low-income countries to exploit the vital resources of the sea's subsoil. As the members of the Committee knew, the Governing Council and the Administrator of UNDP had already taken steps to devise and implement special measures in favour of the least developed countries. A major effort had been begun, in co-operation with the Governments of those countries, to identify their special needs and to mobilize the resources to meet those needs. In January 1973, at its fifteenth session (see E/5256 and Corr.1, para. 129), the Governing Council had decided to earmark an additional amount of \$35 million in order to begin to work out those special measures and had authorized UNDP to co-operate with the Governments of the least developed countries with a view to programming new activities. UNDP had therefore asked Governments to propose projects and their response had been very encouraging. On the basis of the work already done, UNDP would be able, before the end of 1973, to commit a good portion of the resources available to it for that purpose. It was undeniable that the least developed among the developing countries faced special difficulties and needed assistance specifically designed to deal with their problems. For that reason, with the commencement of the Second United Nations Development Co-operation Cycle in 1976, the special needs of the least developed countries would be met within the revised indicative planning figure (IPF) structure. For the implementation of those special measures, UNDP had obtained the co-operation of other organizations within the United Nations system and of bilateral sources of assistance. Moreover, it had assigned its best qualified staff, both at Headquarters and in the field, to work on the problems of those countries. In that connexion, it was important to confront the issue of their rural productivity. Since very little had been done over the past two decades to improve it, very little was known about the problem. The few precedents which did exist must be carefully analysed before any lessons for general application could be drawn. While knowledge about subsistence agriculture was limited, even less was known about the programmes and policies required to make the transition from subsistence to commercial farming. The problem was therefore an extremely complex and difficult one.

8. The United Nations Capital Development Fund, in its new form, was an important instrument for assisting the least developed among the developing countries. Since its establishment in December 1966, the Fund had been unable to expand its activities because of its limited resources. Until now, its main task had been to identify small, self-contained industrial development projects which were too large for pre-investment assistance but too small or too specialized to be of interest to the traditional financial institutions. If, as might be expected, it obtained increased resources, the Fund would have a much wider scope and UNDP was therefore currently engaged in a reconsideration of the uses

of the Fund's resources, although it was understood that the Fund must not compete with or replace other sources of financing such as international or regional development banks.

9. At the fifty-fifth session of the Economic and Social Council (1864th meeting), he had expressed reservations regarding the establishment of new trust funds, in particular a fund for natural resources exploration, because such an action might not be in keeping with the criteria of efficiency, economy and integrated approach to development which governed UNDP activities. Nevertheless, the proposal had some positive features. Should the General Assembly decide to establish the revolving fund recommended by the Council in its resolution 1762 (LIV), it would be his responsibility to manage the fund and to make it a success. However, it should be borne in mind that the Economic and Social Council's resolution had recommended that the assistance provided by the fund should be additional to that provided under UNDP's indicative planning figures, which would be possible only if the contributions of member Governments were supplemental to those needed for UNDP to reach its agreed rate of expansion.

10. He would like to emphasize the need for a certain level of resources and for the participation of a certain number of member Governments before the fund became operational. In addition, in accordance with the Economic and Social Council's resolution, there was a need to ensure the achievement of the revolving feature of the fund. Beyond that, it would be desirable to draw upon the experience of IBRD and other competent institutions in formulating the operating principles for the fund, which would then be submitted to the Governing Council.

11. In the years and decades ahead, UNDP would have to face the need to ameliorate urban conditions in the low-income countries. In the past 25 years, the unprecedented migration from rural to urban areas had created entirely new problems, had required massive shifts in the allocation of public resources and had led to the development of new institutions which demanded expert services and new forms of technical assistance.

12. There was every reason to believe that the movement to the cities had not slowed down but that it would continue and, perhaps, even accelerate. If present trends continued, one out of two of all Asian people from Karachi to Tokyo would be urban dwellers before the end of the century. The people living in rural areas, who experienced extreme poverty, were drawn to the major metropolitan areas by the hope of a better life.

13. Many Governments of developing countries were now showing willingness to face the realities of the urban conditions and to allocate a growing share of public resources to improve those conditions. After the adoption of Economic and Social Council resolution 1224 (XLII) on 6 June 1967, on the work programme of the Committee on Housing, Building and Planning, a number of UNDP-assisted projects had been initiated with a view to improving the quality of urban life, but it was obvious that the knowledge and tools for providing the necessary technical assistance did not yet exist. UNDP was more aware than ever before of the constraint which different value systems imposed upon the transferability of technical assistance. One could not simply lift plans or schemes that might have worked in Paris, London, Moscow or New York, impose them

upon the burgeoning cities of the developing countries and expect them to produce similar results.

14. Similarly, the importation of technologies designed for use in advanced economies was not always beneficial to the developing countries. The transfer of technology, though necessary, was not an alternative to the development of local science. It was difficult for a developing country without a science and technology capacity of its own, and particularly without the trained people involved, to know technology existed elsewhere, to understand it, to select it and to use it. UNDP therefore made it a fundamental principle to build up an indigenous scientific capability in the developing countries. But the resources of the advanced countries were essential in the short and medium term. Moreover, UNDP must upgrade its own expertise in that area if it was to play its proper role in the formulation of appropriate policies and programmes with the Governments of the developing countries.

15. In addition, UNDP had recognized the need to foster increased technical co-operation among developing countries themselves; to that end, it was making greater use of experts from developing countries, who were more aware of local conditions and were usually more familiar with suitable technologies. But achieving that co-operation was not an easy matter; besides the lack of foreign exchange and of adequate mechanisms, there was also an "attitudinal" barrier which favoured the use of experts and the purchase of equipment from developed countries. However, the difficulties involved in such co-operation were more than outweighed by the benefits of increased self-reliance and the advantages of greater economic independence for developing countries.

16. While the first two years of the Second Decade had been a disappointment, the outlook for the years ahead appeared less grim. For example, at the 1973 Pledging Conference on UNDP (30 October 1973), the United Nations technical assistance efforts had received a massive vote of confidence, and he estimated a total increase of at least 18 per cent in UNDP's resources for 1974 as compared with 1973. In addition, most of the developing countries had reaffirmed their conviction that development was a matter of the highest priority. The cadres trained during the 1960s were becoming available in significant numbers. At the same time, there was increased government emphasis on land reform and rural development, and the educational systems in low-income countries were gradually turning towards development priorities. There were signs that the despair of the 1960s had been replaced by a calm determination and a greater sense of solidarity than ever before. It was the responsibility of UNDP to find effective methods for meeting the changing requirements. It had to replace those tools that had outlived their usefulness with new instruments for providing assistance, while at the same time avoiding proliferation of efforts, multiplicity of purpose and diffusion of resources.

17. The United Nations Volunteers programme could make a substantial contribution to development. The programme had been expanded during 1973 and UNDP intended to move ahead vigorously with it.

18. There was a general recognition of the inadequacies in the development process despite the unparalleled economic growth rates of the 1960s. Technical

assistance in the future must be concerned not merely with growth but with the equitable distribution of the resulting benefits. Social equity need not deter, and in fact could accelerate, economic growth. UNDP's restructured mechanism was prepared to meet the challenge and to make its contribution towards improving the standard of living and the quality of life for the peoples in the developing countries.

19. Mr. LABOUISSSE (Executive Director of the United Nations Children's Fund) said he found it encouraging that there was now a better understanding of the all-embracing nature of development and that Governments and others concerned increasingly accepted the need for increased emphasis on the human factor, and in particular on the younger generations. UNICEF had had a role in bringing about that comprehension.

20. There now existed, particularly on the operational level, co-operation between Governments, the United Nations specialized agencies and UNICEF; the decisive role, of course, was played by the Governments and their peoples. UNICEF's major objective was to help Governments to develop comprehensive programmes for meeting the needs of children in their countries; those needs were enormous, because the world's population constantly increased, with the result that in spite of all efforts the level of living was still pitifully low for the 800 million children who benefited from UNICEF assistance. Yet, some progress was being made; there was a new realization that the tragic problem of poverty should be dealt with as a top priority; in addition, the human infrastructure for development—mainly in the form of trained people—was steadily improving. The investment in human resources, if accompanied by an increase in financial resources, should make tremendous advance possible in the future.

21. In recent years the Executive Board of UNICEF had stressed that particular attention should be given to the least developed countries and to the disadvantaged areas of poor and very populous countries. Thus in countries whose gross national product (GNP) per inhabitant was less than \$100, the amount of UNICEF assistance per child was twice that delivered to countries where the GNP per inhabitant was \$100-\$500. UNICEF was also trying to adapt its aid to the needs of poorer countries, as illustrated by the type of institution assisted and the kind of personnel trained.

22. With regard to the training of national staff, emphasis was placed on the training of auxiliary and middle-level workers and on refresher and reorientation courses. Those categories of personnel were essential for the extension of services benefiting children in both rural areas and slums. Aid for training constituted about 30 per cent of all UNICEF assistance.

23. The provision of drinking-water was one of the highest priorities because it helped to reduce enteric diseases among children. Thanks to the relatively simple technology of the tube-well and the hand-pump, and with the co-operation of the inhabitants of the villages, it had been possible to carry out clean-water programmes in many areas, which also meant that the women no longer had to carry water over long distances and thus had more time to devote to their families. In 1973 UNICEF expected to spend some \$8.5 million in helping to establish village drinking-water programmes

in 68 countries. However, that represented only a small fraction of the existing need, for 88 per cent of the rural population in developing countries lacked access to clean drinking-water.

24. Among the most important of those programmes was one in India, where UNICEF was assisting in the hard-rock drilling programmes of 13 States. The goal was to drill a total of 11,000 wells to serve a population of about 5 million. Also, because of the drought which had afflicted certain areas, India had requested additional assistance; the Executive Board had approved a further expenditure of \$1,250,000, which had been financed by special contributions. An even more extensive drinking-water programme was being undertaken with UNICEF assistance in Bangladesh. The target was to rehabilitate 60,000 wells and sink another 100,000; UNICEF's commitment was \$9 million.

25. He stressed the importance of balanced nutrition, noting that almost one quarter of the children under five years of age in developing countries were suffering from malnutrition. UNICEF aid in that field was both direct—the provision of food-stuffs—and indirect—maternal and child health programmes, nutrition education in schools, and so forth. In 1972 funds had been spent primarily on organizing applied nutrition programmes in rural areas in 41 countries with a view to helping families produce and use foods required for balanced nutrition. Part of the funds had been used to support the production of weaning foods and the processing of milk; UNICEF had also been the channel for the distribution of some \$19 million worth of donated food.

26. A conference of the Andean countries had been held in 1973 and two more were in preparation with the assistance of UNICEF and other bodies, the objective being to find nutrition policies and programmes which could be applied by Governments as part of their development plans.

27. UNICEF naturally had a keen interest in the world food conference proposed for 1974 and hoped that attention would be directed not only to cereals but also to more protein-rich legumes, as well as to the means of making available to children foods that were adequate in both calories and protein.

28. To illustrate the usefulness of certain well-chosen initiatives, he cited the programme undertaken to prevent blindness among young children by distributing large doses of vitamin A. The programme had been initiated late in 1972 in Bangladesh; by using the network of malaria field workers to distribute the vitamin capsules, it would be possible to reach the greater part of the 15 million children under five years of age in the whole country by the end of 1973. India, Indonesia and the Philippines had also begun programmes of that type.

29. Maternal and child health continued to absorb the largest share of UNICEF expenditures. The primary concern was the search for ways of extending basic health services to the areas where they were lacking, in a manner which would enable Governments to afford the expenditure involved. WHO, in co-operation with UNICEF, had begun a study on the subject which would be presented to the Executive Board at its 1975 session after being considered by the UNICEF/WHO Joint Committee on Health Policy.

30. Twenty-seven of the countries where UNICEF had assisted maternal and child health services in 1972 had an official policy in family planning. WHO had wisely recommended that family planning services should be closely integrated with maternal and child health services; during 1972, four more countries had prepared for that step through their health planning projects. In 1972 the United Nations Fund for Population Activities (UNFPA) had allotted \$1.8 million for that purpose, channelling it through UNICEF. In addition, UNICEF was working closely with the secretariat of the World Population Conference scheduled for August 1974.

31. In the field of primary and secondary education, UNICEF had provided assistance in 1972 to 80 countries, in amounts representing 20 per cent of all programme expenditures. In that same year, the Executive Board had adopted new guidelines for UNICEF assistance recommended by the Director General of UNESCO and by him (Mr. Labrousse). In future, projects would be increasingly concentrated on reaching children and adolescents in deprived areas, removing the lag in girls' education, and bringing educational programmes closer to children's needs. A number of countries had begun preparations for receiving assistance along those lines.

32. In 1973 the Executive Board had considered a report entitled "Non-formal education for rural development", sponsored and largely financed by UNICEF but prepared by the International Council for Educational Development. The authors viewed education as a continuing process that was not limited to schooling and recommended that all children in rural areas should be provided with a minimum "package" of basic essential learning. Non-formal educational methods might also be used to give a "second chance" to children who had never been to school or had dropped out before acquiring minimal knowledge. The Executive Board had decided that UNICEF should be prepared to provide assistance to countries wishing to take steps as recommended in the report on non-formal education. That would involve making an inventory of current activities in the countries in question and of the resources for expansion, and the preparation of personnel. That assistance would be given in co-operation with the specialized agencies concerned, especially UNESCO, FAO and the ILO.

33. He would not go into the details of activities in the fields of emergency relief and reconstruction, but wished only to state that, within certain limits and thanks to additional contributions, UNICEF was able to respond to emergency situations without endangering long-range programmes.

34. UNICEF sought primarily to support projects which involved the active participation of the local population; that participation was, indeed, the very essence of development and was an absolute prerequisite for success. He himself had seen evidence of the willingness of the inhabitants of villages and shanty towns to give some of their time to the community.

35. However, UNICEF programmes also depended on the goodwill, interest and support of the people of the industrialized countries, since UNICEF's resources came entirely from voluntary contributions, from Governments and from the private sector—75 per cent and 25 per cent respectively in 1972. In 1972

UNICEF's revenue had been \$81 million, an increase of 27 per cent over 1971. However, that figure included \$12 million for emergency relief following natural and other disasters. What UNICEF really needed, therefore, was a substantial increase in annual government contributions, which were currently about \$50 million and should be \$80 million if UNICEF was to meet its target. A pledging conference would certainly be very helpful; he and his staff, for their part, would continue their efforts to raise funds. In fact, the \$100 million goal set by the General Assembly for 1975 in its resolution 3015 (XXVII) would have to be exceeded, for the effects of inflation must be taken into account; moreover, programme extensions which had been approved by the Executive Board could not be carried out owing to lack of funds.

36. In his view, it was imperative that UNICEF should move vigorously ahead, because it played a crucial and indispensable role on the development scene. It concentrated its pragmatic and practical work on children, who were both the instruments and the future beneficiaries of development. He therefore appealed to Governments to increase their contributions to UNICEF, not only to meet the demands of the present but also to provide the basis on which the future could be built.

Mr. Arvesen (Norway) took the Chair.

37. Mr. SALAS (Executive Director of the United Nations Fund for Population Activities) said he was pleased to be able to report that considerable progress had been made in the implementation of General Assembly resolution 3019 (XXVII), in which it had been decided that UNDP should be the governing body of UNFPA.

38. Since the fifteenth session of the Governing Council of UNDP, in January 1973, UNFPA had drafted, in consultation with UNDP, its own financial regulations and rules. They had been discussed by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions and reviewed by the Office of Financial Services, and he hoped that they might be approved by the Governing Council at its seventeenth session.

39. At the sixteenth session of the Governing Council of UNDP (see E/5365/Rev.1, chap. VI), UNFPA had submitted a report on its activities for the period from 1969 to 1972. The Governing Council had approved a four-year rolling plan, to be revised annually by dropping the first year and adding a new year, authorizing funding ceilings for new programmes. The ceilings approved were \$52 million for 1973, \$53 million for 1974, \$21 million for 1975 and \$8 million for 1976. They were based on estimates of anticipated resources and expected demand made in the work plan. The latter would be revised each year to incorporate changes in demand and the further elaboration of UNFPA funding principles.

40. The 1973 UNFPA administrative budget had been \$2.3 million and the 1974 estimate was \$2.5 million. Given the fact that as at 30 September 1973 UNFPA

had approved over \$83 million in project budgets, the administrative costs seemed quite reasonable.

41. He was gratified by the increasing financial support given to UNFPA. By the end of 1972, 56 Governments had donated a total of \$79 million. The present situation was that the number of donor Governments had risen to 65 and cumulative pledges were close to \$120 million. At the same time, there had been a sharp rise in the number of countries asking for UNFPA-financed programmes. Ninety-two countries and developing areas were now receiving UNFPA support. Despite the rapid increase in resources, the demand far exceeded the supply.

42. At the sixteenth session of the Governing Council, it had been decided that the Council should approve all UNFPA projects amounting to \$1 million or above, major country agreements, and projects which because of their innovative character or policy implications were worthy of the Council's attention. In addition, it had been decided that UNFPA would consult the Administrator before approving projects in the \$250,000 to \$1,000,000 range. UNFPA and UNDP had developed procedures for implementing those decisions, and the first projects would be submitted to the Council for approval at its seventeenth session, in January 1974.

43. At its fifty-fourth session, in May 1973, the Economic and Social Council had adopted resolution 1763 (LIV) so as to provide policy guidance to UNFPA in accordance with the instructions of the General Assembly. Pursuant to that resolution, UNFPA was seeking to give recipient Governments increased authority to choose their programmes of assistance. In that connexion, it was working closely with the various bodies concerned, especially UNDP. UNFPA co-ordinators had been placed on the staff of the UNDP resident representatives in over 20 countries or regions where there were substantial UNFPA-financed programmes. That should facilitate the incorporation of population programmes into general economic and social development plans.

44. Plans for the World Population Year, the responsibility for which had been entrusted to UNFPA by the Economic and Social Council, were proceeding very well. With the co-operation of the Office of Public Information and the Centre for Economic and Social Information, the World Population Year had received substantial publicity. In addition, over 40 countries had established national commissions to stimulate a variety of activities. UNFPA had been greatly encouraged by the extensive interest in the World Population Year shown by countries and United Nations organizations. Finally, UNFPA had been helping to support and working closely with the Secretariat for the World Population Conference. The Conference was expected to be very successful.

45. The CHAIRMAN said that, as Vice-Chairman, he had been asked by the Chairman of the Committee to co-ordinate consultations on draft resolutions and amendments, in accordance with past practice.

The meeting rose at 12.25 p.m.