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Chairman: Mr. BURKE (Ireland)

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

**NATURAL DISASTER IN THE PHILIPPINES**

1. On behalf of the Committee, the CHAIRMAN expressed sympathy to the Government of the Philippines in connection with the most recent disaster to strike that country. Torrential rains had caused great loss of life and considerable damage. He assured the Government and people of the Philippines that, as they underwent their latest ordeal, they could count on the full support of the United Nations, which would spare no effort to alleviate the suffering of the population.

**AGENDA ITEM 82: OPERATIONAL ACTIVITIES FOR DEVELOPMENT (A/46/3, 344, 501/Rev.1 and 520; A/C.2/46/7)**

- (a) OPERATIONAL ACTIVITIES OF THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM (A/46/186 and Add.1, A/46/206-E/1991/93 and Add.1-4)
- (b) UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME (E/1991/34 and Add.1; A/46/491)
- (c) UNITED NATIONS CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT FUND (E/1991/34 and Add.1)
- (d) UNITED NATIONS TECHNICAL COOPERATION ACTIVITIES (E/1991/34 and Add.1)
- (e) UNITED NATIONS VOLUNTEERS PROGRAMME (E/1991/34 and Add.1)
- (f) WORLD FOOD PROGRAMME (A/46/265-E/1991/105)

**AGENDA ITEM 88: HUMAN RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT (A/46/336, 344, 461, 501/Rev.1, A/46/520 and 579)**

Introductory statements

2. Mr. BLANCA (Director-General for Development and International Economic Cooperation), introducing his report on the operational activities for development of the United Nations system (A/46/206 and Add.1-4), said that the major challenges of the day - eliminating absolute poverty, relieving despair and reducing mortality, particularly among children and mothers - called for solidarity from the international community. Faced with a worsening situation, the United Nations system must play a major role in reversing that trend, utilizing its best research and analytical method, and full technical resources to address those challenges.

3. International cooperation must contribute to social and political progress in the developing countries, and the operational activities of the United Nations provided an excellent way for the international community to participate in that global effort. That was why the United Nations system, seeking to translate the intentions of Member States into concrete action, was

(Mr. Blanca)

undertaking fundamental reforms of its operational activities. The steps taken by various entities in that regard were in line with General Assembly resolution 44/211.

4. The operational activities of the United Nations system were confronted by a growing number of challenges, one of the most important of which concerned refugees, displaced persons and returnees. Whether such flows of people were caused by conflicts and civil strife or by economic hardship, it was essential to mitigate their economic and social consequences and plan an effective and coordinated response with the countries concerned. To deal with that problem, there was only one solution: to promote growth and development in the countries of the East and the South.

5. Other major problems were alarming population growth (more than 250,000 each day) and acute hunger and malnutrition (180 million African children, for example, suffered from serious malnutrition). The operational activities of the United Nations system were increasingly designed to address those vital concerns in a coordinated and effective manner. They focused on human development, inspired by the international strategies adopted in 1990. United Nations organizations were working closely with many countries in those fields, where resident coordinators played an increasingly important role. It was clearer than ever before that human development called for the harnessing of the full range of human and financial resources of Governments, non-governmental organizations and the private sector in a broad-based, multidisciplinary effort. Accordingly, the United Nations system was promoting an approach involving all segments of countries in a participatory development process.

6. In keeping with the spirit of General Assembly resolution 44/211, current reforms were designed essentially to achieve a greater focus on recipient countries and involve them more closely in programming and implementation and in choosing how best to utilize the capacities of the United Nations in meeting their needs. Increased decentralization and adaptation to local requirements could only enhance the relevance and impact of operational activities.

7. In response to those changes, United Nations organizations were increasingly focusing their technical competence on upstream services through integrated and multidisciplinary programming, leaving implementation more to Governments and national institutions. Decentralization was being accompanied by delegation of authority and, in an effort to adapt to that new trend, various organizations had engaged in a systematic review of their functions and structures, including the composition of their field establishments. It was from that perspective that the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) were implementing decisions on support costs. A new spirit of cooperation existed, and a sense of tripartite partnership was emerging. Programme guidelines and training activities were being elaborated jointly to give effect to those decisions; that initiative should bring improvements in programme delivery and contribute further to the creation of national capacities.

(Mr. Blanca)

8. The report on operational activities for development referred to constraints in the extension of national execution. Nevertheless, the replies received from resident coordinators suggested that that method, which had become the norm for the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the World Food Programme (WFP), would be expanded, and it was expected that at least 50 per cent of UNDP-supported projects in about half of the countries would be executed by national bodies.

9. In addition, significant steps had been taken to enhance programming collaboration. Progress in joint programming was being monitored through a newly established system of country profiles and more extensive communication with resident coordinators.

10. As the issue of coordination, i.e. the role of the resident coordinators, was particularly important, the report contained a specific proposal to provide the resident coordinators with the consultancy funds and support staff that were deemed essential in order to cope with the additional workload involved in coordinating the activities of the United Nations system.

11. The demand for assistance through the United Nations system continued to be far in excess of the available resources. Moreover, resources were not keeping pace with needs. Between 1989 and 1990, the volume of official development assistance (ODA) had increased from \$US 53.1 billion to \$US 62.1 billion (about 17 per cent) while the percentage of the United Nations share in ODA had risen from \$US 7.5 billion to \$US 8.5 billion. While the nominal increase in resources represented evidence of continued confidence by donors and recipients in the United Nations operational activities, it should nevertheless be noted that the rate of increase in real terms remained clearly inadequate and had even been slowing down.

12. Much still remained to be done to adapt the United Nations system to the changing circumstances of the 1990s. Above all, a more responsive and integrated field structure was essential, as was an improvement in the coherence and relevance of the substantive support and communication between field offices and Headquarters. The scope of the field offices had evolved over the past decade. It would be necessary to study the impact of the reforms on a country-by-country basis and, in the context of the 1992 triennial comprehensive review, to appraise the effectiveness of the present functions and structures. Means must be found of ensuring full interaction between the operational requirements at the field level and the analytic and research network available to the United Nations system. Such interaction was particularly important in view of the current trend to decentralize activities.

13. The report under consideration was a factual analysis of the measures taken by the United Nations system in the second year of a three-year programme of implementation of resolution 44/211. It did not contain

(Mr. Blanca)

recommendations for action, as those were to be submitted to the General Assembly at its forty-seventh session, in the context of the triennial policy review. The review was a task of considerable scope and it was essential that the General Assembly should give clear directives at the current session. It was clear that the review should be carried out in a well-defined policy context by bringing out the essential linkages between the substantive policy issues set forth in the mandates of the United Nations system and the specific national objectives which operational activities helped to achieve. A central concern of the review must be an assessment of the role of the United Nations system in the building up of national capacity. The review should also look at decentralization to the field level; that would involve a review of such questions as delegation of authority coupled with the technical and financial means to respond adequately and flexibly to the needs and expectations of each developing country. It would also involve looking into the effectiveness of linking national resources with programmes and projects supported by the United Nations. Attention should also be given to steps taken to remove constraints to fuller government involvement in the operational activities of the system.

14. Since decentralization was the underlying philosophy of the reforms initiated by resolution 44/211, the degree to which that goal had been accomplished should be a principal concern of the comprehensive review of 1992. The functioning of the resident coordinator system should be examined within the context of the review; resident coordinators were called upon to play an increasingly active role at the country level.

15. Regarding the resolution on operational activities to be adopted by the General Assembly during the current session, he emphasized the importance of achieving consensus on a number of key points which called for new measures. The terms of resolution 44/211 were fairly broad, and it was therefore essential that Member States should identify the course to be followed with regard to future operational activities.

16. Mr. DRAPER (Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme), speaking of the enormous progress made in democracy, freedom and human rights, said that such progress did not automatically translate into a better quality of life. Undoubtedly, freedom and justice were the foundations of economic growth; but they must be underpinned by good governance, effective policies, appropriate technologies and wide-ranging skills.

17. As the cold war receded and democracy was being reborn, mankind was facing problems which threatened his very survival. On the one hand, there was expansion of the deprived populations in the South and, on the other, relentless consumption in the North; those twin phenomena, were placing an intolerable strain on the planet's natural resources, even the most essential, such as air, land and water. Moreover, armed conflicts and deteriorating social and economic conditions only increased migration and the displacement of populations. Crime and drug abuse - often closely related - now posed a

(Mr. Drapex, UNDP)

problem in all types of society, whatever their stage of development. Equally tragic was the AIDS epidemic, which was now reaching catastrophic proportions in some countries. In addition, external debt and trade barriers were inhibiting the efforts of the developing countries to promote economic growth and human development. Finally, there was the challenge of truly integrating women into the development process.

18. It was now well-known that economic growth was the sole means of alleviating the dire poverty in which one fifth of humanity lived. Bridging the gap between rich and poor, without affecting the durability of the planet's resources, would undoubtedly prove as difficult a challenge as putting an end to confrontation between the super-Powers. Clearly no progress could be made without the active help of the United Nations system. It was also clear that the Organization must be restructured, particularly those parts that dealt with economic and social affairs. UNDP had been doing just that for several years, and it could be said to have accomplished considerable progress on all fronts.

19. When speaking of the United Nations system, especially in the context of operational activities for development, it should be remembered that the system was a grouping of often autonomous organizations with their own governing bodies. In some instances, the division of labour between such organizations seemed neither rational nor clear. Coordinating their activities was, therefore, neither simple nor easy. UNDP was aware of that fact and it supported any initiative designed to improve the ability of the system to discharge the tasks assigned or that might be assigned to it. Nevertheless, reforms would bear fruit only if they were comprehensive and bold. The study carried out by the Nordic countries was a great step forward in that direction.

20. To retain its central position, UNDP had revised its mandate in light of the provisions of General Assembly resolution 44/211. It had reaffirmed that its assistance must correspond to the priorities and goals set by Governments and must be intended primarily to strengthen national capacities for human development. In 1991, as in 1990, the Governing Council had emphasized that the development process must be determined and managed at the national level if it was to be sustainable. External cooperation could contribute to that process, but it must not take over.

21. A number of initiatives had emerged from that consensus. First, emphasis had been placed on national management of development programmes, including their external components. That was the meaning of the phrase "national execution". At the same time, new modalities had been established for the reimbursement of agency support costs, which would give Governments greater choice in implementing programmes. Agreements had already been concluded to that end. Finally, it was planned to adopt an integrated programming approach, which would be more broadly supportive of the priorities established in national programmes and less narrowly focused on often unrelated UNDP-funded projects. That would permit better results and strengthened coordination.

(Mr. Draper, UNDP)

22. One of the most significant elements of the reform process was UNDP's increased commitment to the promotion of human development. That initiative had been welcomed both by donor and by developing countries and had placed UNDP at the centre of the development debate. The third Human Development Report was in preparation, and efforts were being made to give that concept specific content at the national level with the aim of obtaining tangible results. That necessitated a more active dialogue with the Governments of developing countries, not to impose conditions but to define the available options so that countries could make informed decisions. Through its political neutrality, its multisectoral approach and its permanent presence in 113 countries, UNDP had been able to forge bonds of confidence which made such dialogue possible. That was its comparative advantage.
23. The role played by UNDP resident representatives as resident coordinators of all United Nations development activities was of key importance for the smooth operation of the system as a whole. That required development partners to support the efforts of UNDP in that area. Significant progress had been achieved at country level through the Joint Consultative Group on Policy, which UNDP was currently chairing.
24. UNDP had also taken a close look at its structure and had decided on a certain number of changes, pertaining primarily to the decentralization of decision-making, which would be shifted as far as possible to the country level. At the same time, UNDP was working on ways to pressure central policy-making and accountability.
25. At the operational level, UNDP was making efforts to meet the growing challenges it faced in the developing countries, and particularly in the least developed countries, to which it directed 55 per cent of its resources. It was chalking up a record of accomplishments and was increasing its impact by working both at grass-roots and at national planning policy levels. It realized that the developing countries had a deep well of experience and would continue to promote technical cooperation among those countries.
26. The integration of women in all UNDP activities was a key objective and the benefits were becoming apparent, thanks to steps taken in the areas of education, credit access, extension services and management training. At the same time, UNDP was helping the authorities in several countries to bring women more fully into national development planning.
27. Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) were participating increasingly in UNDP programmes. Since 1988, NGOs and local groups in 65 countries had been awarded grants in excess of \$4 million, through the Partners in Development Programme, which promoted cooperation between NGOs and Governments.
28. UNDP was also working to stimulate the private sector. Over the previous five years, resident representatives had organized several hundred meetings around the world, enabling senior government officials to meet local

(Mr. Draper, UNDP)

entrepreneurs - both men and women - and to learn their needs. Credit access programmes had been implemented, prominent among which was the Grameen Bank programme. In Latin America, UNDP was helping to develop similar programmes in a number of countries. It was also promoting small and medium-sized businesses in all regions - from Madagascar to Mongolia, from Bolivia to Yemen - and, most particularly, in Africa, through the African Project Development Facility.

29. UNDP's most important contribution was in the area of the environment. There too its strategy was aimed at reaching all development agents: farmers, NGOs, universities and policy makers in the South and donors and research institutes in the North. The primary objective was the training both of men and of women. Only such an approach would ensure environmentally sound development after UNDP had ended its work. One of the most important initiatives in recent years was the participation of UNDP, together with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the World Bank, in the Global Environment Facility, set up to fight depletion of the ozone layer, loss of biological diversity, global warming and pollution of international waters. Finally, UNDP was actively involved in preparations for the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, and was helping Governments and NGOs to draw up appropriate regional and national strategies.

30. UNDP was also assisting the countries of Eastern Europe to carry out their economic reforms. The Baltic States had recently requested recipient status and had asked the Secretary-General to set up a special fund to finance technical cooperation, which would be managed by UNDP. The Soviet Union and its republics had similarly asked for their status to be reviewed, so that they too could benefit from UNDP's expertise.

31. The resident coordinators had been drawn increasingly into emergencies, caused by natural or man-made disasters, in Thailand with its Cambodian refugee problem, in the Horn of Africa, in the Philippines, in Iraq, in the Gulf countries and elsewhere.

32. It was sad that, at a time when needs were growing and ever greater demands were being placed on UNDP, its core resources were not growing as quickly as it had anticipated. As he had recalled at the Pledging Conference, the international community had given a commitment to achieve an 8 per cent annual growth rate in contributions to UNDP. While pledges for 1992 exceeded \$1 billion, that represented only a 3.5 per cent increase in resources over the previous year, which was not sufficient to meet planned needs.

33. In conclusion, he said that UNDP was a lively organization and he reaffirmed his determination to implement structural reforms which would enable the Programme to meet the current and future challenges of human development around the world. He reiterated his hope that it would have the necessary financial resources to fulfil its mission.

34. Mr. Ji Chaozhu (Under-Secretary-General for Technical Cooperation for Development) said that with the ending of the cold war, the United Nations was at last in a position to play the full role envisaged for it in the Charter and, in particular, to promote "higher standards of living, full employment and conditions of economic and social progress and development". The achievement of those ends called for a shared commitment on the part of the international community to expanding and deepening international cooperation.

35. The gap between North and South was continually growing. As the representative of Ghana, speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 had said, the world was witnessing a crisis of development which might lead to a new situation of political instability, war and chaos. The United Nations, being impartial and capable of providing politically neutral and commercially disinterested assistance, could and should play a key role in ending that crisis. Strengthening the technical capabilities of the United Nations system in order to provide developing countries with the support they needed to steer their own course was therefore of tremendous importance.

36. Technical cooperation activities had always been a vital aspect of the work of the Secretariat. The term referred, in the larger sense, to work of the Department of Technical Cooperation for Development, HABITAT, UNCTAD, the United Nations Centre on Transnational Corporations, the United Nations Office in Vienna, the five regional commissions and other units under the authority of the Secretary-General. Technical cooperation financing was administered by UNDP and UNFPA. In terms of expenditures, the Department of Technical Cooperation for Development undertook almost three quarters of the work and was thus the largest of the technical cooperation bodies under the authority of the Secretary-General.

37. The Department had been created in 1978, drawing together several pre-existing units, and served as the main operational arm of the United Nations Secretariat for technical cooperation. It was responsible for substantive and managerial support to technical cooperation and operational research activities; it provided technical advisory services to developing countries upon request and at no cost, organized workshops, seminars and fellowship programmes in various sectors, and gave substantive support to various intergovernmental United Nations bodies. The Department obtained about half of its core support from the regular budget of the United Nations and the remainder through overhead earnings from projects executed on behalf of UNDP, UNFPA and other donors. The Department's major contribution to the self-reliance and well-being of developing countries had entailed a long-term investment of technical financial resources which the United Nations had been in a unique position to make.

38. In 1990, the Department had implemented \$181 million in projects representing a continuing pattern of increased programme delivery in response to country needs and requests. It now had over 1,500 experts and consultants working in country projects and purchased roughly a third of the necessary equipment from suppliers in developing countries. Its fellowship programme, involving over 4,000 fellows a year, was one of the most developed in the United Nations system.

(Mr. Ji Chaozhu)

39. Geographically, Africa received the largest share of expenditures, with 45 per cent in 1990. Among the Department's many concerns, poverty eradication was of fundamental importance; during the previous year, expenditures in the least developed countries had come to about \$76 million, or over 40 per cent of total project expenditures.

40. Projects in the fields of natural resources and energy accounted for 40 per cent of the Department's total delivery. Management development was an important theme in its efforts in public administration, public finance, and development planning, and it had helped to establish more than 30 national schools and regional and interregional institutes in that field. Environmental issues were a growing area of importance.

41. While a good deal of institution-building remained to be done in the field of population, the training the Department had helped to organize had built up capacities so that many developing countries were now able to provide much of their own university-level training. The Department's technical input had become more and more specialized and included new methodologies and software.

42. In statistics, the Department had contributed towards the development of national capacities to gather, process, analyse and use census data throughout the world. Timely and reliable statistics were, of course, the necessary underpinnings for well-designed national development plans and programmes.

43. The Department had helped countries to assess their mineral resources and build up their capacities to manage them. In several cases, it had served as "honest broker" in negotiations between Governments of developing countries and private investors, thus promoting the investment process.

44. In recent years, many countries had come to the Department for independent advice on structural adjustment programmes and the complex processes facing transitional economies. The Department was well aware of the need for close linkage between technical cooperation and research activities, and cooperated with other main substantive departments of the Secretariat, in particular the Department of International Economic and Social Affairs, in the area of entrepreneurial development. Cooperation with the regional commissions had also been increasing steadily through their greater involvement in training programmes and closer association in various United Nations Secretariat undertakings.

45. In response to General Assembly resolution 44/211 and various decisions of the UNDP Governing Council, the Department was taking a number of initiatives to help strengthen national capabilities for project execution, more particularly with regard to recruitment, contracts and procurement, training and project finances. In a related effort, the Department had organized meetings with participants from donor and recipient countries on the harmonization of aid accountability requirements and had helped to establish a working group on the subject.

(Mr. Ji Chaoshu)

46. The Department's multisectoral capacities clearly set it apart from all other entities in the United Nations development system and were a resource of vital importance in dealing with major new challenges.

47. Several recent resolutions, decisions and studies had focused attention upon the tripartite relationship between Governments, UNDP or UNFPA, and United Nations agencies. It was necessary to ensure that through such complementarity of efforts, all parts performed at their best and collaborated efficiently. The growth of national execution changed but did not diminish the importance of United Nations support. The existing complementary capabilities had to be used in the most productive manner. That was particularly important in view of the major changes taking place in response to General Assembly resolution 44/211. The role of the United Nations resident coordinator or the UNDP Resident Representative was pivotal in ensuring that the capacities of all organizations within the system were fully utilized and in avoiding duplication of capacity. That was a matter of concern particularly to his Department, which had no independent field representation and relied upon the resident coordinator to take the initiative of including it in programming exercises and other activities to which it could contribute.

48. As regarded the relationship with the two main financing bodies, UNDP and UNFPA, there were still points of difference to be settled, not only on the issue of support costs but also because of their increasing assumption of project execution functions, which had brought about duplication and erosion of the established partnership. The Department was therefore glad that the recent UNDP Governing Council decision 91/38 had called for a study of the relationship between UNDP and United Nations/DTCD with a view to exploring all possible options for closer cooperation.

49. At its forty-fifth session, the General Assembly had asked the Secretary-General to review the structure of the Secretariat in order to streamline operations in the economic, social and related fields. Reform could certainly be greatly beneficial. However, restructuring was not an end in itself. Its purpose should be to strengthen the role of the United Nations, the Secretary-General and the Director-General in helping the developing world overcome poverty, narrow the gap between North and South and truly fulfil the United Nations mandate as envisioned by its founders. Where the result would be otherwise, such so-called streamlining should be firmly eschewed.

50. Mr. GRANT (Executive Director of the United Nations Children's Fund) said that while the prospects for the world economy did not look promising and there were questions as to whether international commitment to development would be sustained and strengthened, there were some reasons for optimism in both the political sphere and the sphere of development; indeed, much success had been achieved for child survival and development. The universal child immunisation effort was now saving the lives of more than 3 million children a

(Mr. Grant, UNICEF)

year and should soon be saving more than 4 million a year as it moved towards the global eradication of polio. That was the largest peacetime collaborative effort in history and had seen the effective collaboration of WHO, UNICEF, the World Bank, UNDP, many bilateral aid programmes and scores of non-governmental organizations. It was necessary now to move decisively to apply the lessons of both the negative and positive experiences. At the international level, one of the largest and most readily accessible tools available was the operational activities of the United Nations system. The focus of those efforts must be moved from project goals to serving as a catalyst in support of mobilization, and in order to achieve that a clear set of achievable common objectives was needed.

51. A number of consensus strategies had emerged to help meet the challenges. The International Development Strategy for the Fourth Development Decade had been adopted and the effort to adapt it to country-level efforts offered an opportunity to mobilize international support for national development objectives. The Programme of Action of the Second United Nations Least Developed Countries Conference, and the work being done by the World Bank and UNDP to follow up on their 1990 reports represented valuable elements of an emerging international consensus to restore priority to long-term economic and human development objectives. That effort must now be moved forward to the country level. Teams from the United Nations system, under the leadership of the resident coordinator, should be actively seeking to help support Government efforts to develop and achieve national strategies for the 1990s. Those efforts should be a priority objective of the United Nations system, under the leadership of the Director-General, and drawing heavily on the resident coordinator system.

52. It would be easy to focus on some of the more spectacular elements of the World Summit for Children, which, with 71 heads of State or Government, had been the largest summit meeting in history, but he wished rather to call attention to the ambitious yet achievable Declaration and detailed Plan of Action adopted at the Summit, which had now been signed by 126 heads of State or Government. The World Summit for Children had adopted seven major goals to be achieved by the year 2000 as well as a longer list of more specific targets. Along with the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Plan of Action represented a comprehensive programme for deep-seated change. From within the United Nations system, 18 organizations had made specific contributions, most developed after an intensive process of discussion at the regional level. In short, the Summit had been a "bottom-up process" that drew content and strength from a multitude of sources and experience.

53. That process itself was critical for the implementation of the commitments made. The broad-based nature of the preparatory process would make it possible to mobilize community groups, local level governments, national Governments, non-governmental organizations, regional organizations, and the entire United Nations system. Thus, the vast majority of Member States were now drawing up national programmes of action to achieve the goals

(Mr. Grant, UNICEF)

established for the 1990s by the Summit. Regional and subregional efforts were also under way, as several regional summit meetings (OAU, the Ibero-American Countries, the Commonwealth) had expressed their desire to achieve the goals of the World Summit for Children.

54. The activities of the United Nations system needed greater coherence. Specific examples had been given of how the system could give real meaning to the principles set forth in General Assembly resolution 44/211, but it was necessary now to move forward to a number of internal questions if the necessary tools were to be available. One such issue was the necessary review of the United Nations system by Governments, a topic currently under active discussion, as illustrated by the efforts under way to strengthen the role of the Economic and Social Council. Its role in operational activities should be strengthened. Under the Charter, the Economic and Social Council and the Second Committee had key roles to play. The latter should ensure that the Council and the General Assembly were able to provide the kind of leadership and guidance for operational activities that the current international situation called for. General Assembly resolution 44/211 placed emphasis on the "programme approach", an issue intimately linked with the need to define common goals. To UNICEF, a programme approach meant the provision of support not through a succession of separate externally supported projects but through the support of long-term country programmes focused on a defined range of national goals. That approach shifted the focus to results. It also required a flexible blend of technical assistance, capital equipment, supplies and recurrent costs support. The move from a project to a programme basis would be a critical element of the improved flexibility and effectiveness that would be necessary to meet the goals of the 1990s.

55. Another vital issue was the strengthening of the resident coordinator system. After the major overhaul undertaken during the past year by CCSQ/OPS, it was necessary to ensure that the provisions for more effective substantive interaction among United Nations agencies at the country level were implemented. For example, country level multidisciplinary teams focused on specific themes, under the overall leadership of the resident coordinator and chaired by the Organization or individual best suited to the task, should be formed quickly. UNICEF had actively supported everything that had been done to harmonize programme cycles around recipient Government planning cycles and to establish common premises for the various United Nations bodies in each country. Concluding, he reaffirmed UNICEF's commitment to cooperating fully in the implementation of the Committee's decisions.

56. Mr. OHLIN (Assistant Secretary-General for International Economic and Social Affairs) introduced the report of the Secretary-General on developing human resources for development (A/46/461), which, despite its grandiose title, was not a handbook for the development of human resources. Its objective, which was more limited, was that established by the General Assembly itself in its resolution 45/191. Thus, the report specified how the coordination activities of the United Nations system relating to human

(Mr. Ohlin)

resources development could be strengthened and made proposals for the promotion and intensification of cooperation to that end. The report contained brief accounts of operational activities in human resources development undertaken by members of the United Nations system, as reported to the Department of International Economic and Social Affairs. However, those accounts might not do justice to the enormous variety and high quality of work undertaken by those institutions. Nevertheless, the accounts showed both that substantial cooperation was already part of their operations and that there also was a need for more coordination at several levels. In each country, the main coordinator of operational activities was the Government itself, through its high-level officials. It was Governments who decided on the allocation of their resources. To some degree their efforts were supplemented by members of the United Nations system and non-governmental organizations. The coordination process also was facilitated by the work of the United Nations resident coordinator, who integrated the responses of the United Nations system with government requests. Such coordination was important in all sectors, but particularly so in human resources development, where the processes were so closely linked that efforts undertaken in one programme could be wasted in the absence of another programme. Thus, a child who was sick could not attend school. A child who was deprived of primary education could never attend university. Projects for family planning and fertility reduction would be more effective if mothers were educated. Literacy was a powerful lever to help women participate in development, encourage initiative and entrepreneurship and stimulate political reform. Consequently, the effectiveness with which resources were put to use depended heavily on the coordination and harmonization of efforts. In some instances the allocation of resources by members of the United Nations system was coordinated in consultative groups organized by the World Bank or round tables organized by UNDP. Coordination of activities in support of human resources development was the task of the Administrative Committee for Coordination and its various task forces and subcommittees. At times, coordination efforts ran into genuine difficulties in the field. The programmes of each specialized agency were determined by its own governing body. There were many General Assembly resolutions, such as the International Development Strategy, which referred to human resources development, but the decisions in each specialized agency were often taken independently. Ways and means of coordinating those activities through the centralization of management were few and weak. However, there was much scope for cooperation, and it should be encouraged.

#### General debate

57. Mr. NAADJIE (Ghana), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77, recalled that one of the purposes and principles of the Charter was "to achieve international cooperation in solving international problems of an economic, social, cultural, or humanitarian character" and said that that was the goal of operational activities. In the past few years a new conceptualization of the role of the United Nations had emerged which conceived of an enhanced world body capable of assuming a central role in finding solutions to the

(Mr. Naadje, Ghana)

myriad problems facing mankind. Those included, of course, the development of the developing countries. Operational activities had come a long way from their very modest beginnings, although not without some difficulties, owing to factors of a structural nature that had impinged on delivery mechanisms. Added to that was a chronic lack of resources that had at times led the United Nations to cut back on operational activities in areas which nevertheless were vital to developing countries. At its special session in 1990, the General Assembly had called for the revitalization of economic growth and development of the developing countries, which was a recognition that the United Nations system had a major role to play in international cooperation to bring about that revitalization. The General Assembly also had adopted the International Development Strategy for the Fourth United Nations Development Decade, which emphasized poverty alleviation, human development and integrated development. That implied tacit acceptance of the fact that a coherent and comprehensive approach to operational activities for development was required. It was imperative to ensure effective coordination among the various agencies; however, although some progress had been made, there still were issues to be resolved before operational activities truly could be one of the main instruments by which the United Nations met the development needs of the developing countries. One such issue was the lack of resources. There was no doubt concerning the urgent need to provide substantial concessional resources to those countries so that they could revive and sustain their economies. The General Assembly recognized that in its resolution 44/211. It was also urgent for the developed countries to meet the agreed official development assistance (ODA) target of 0.7 per cent of their gross national product as well as the targets established by the Second United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries. The effective management of operational activities also was of paramount importance to the developing countries. The field networks of the United Nations system had grown during the past decade. That had led to an expansion of activities which must be closely linked together to ensure coherence and effective delivery.

58. It was significant to observe that certain provisions of General Assembly resolution 44/211 had not yet been implemented. The Group of 77 would like to see the full implementation of that resolution. It also would welcome the simplification and harmonization of procedures governing programming and the project cycles of the United Nations system. That would make it possible to meet the needs of the developing countries more effectively by allowing them greater flexibility in adapting the rules to their needs; that would also lead to decentralization and greater adaptation to the needs of the developing countries without losing sight of essential standards of accountability.

59. The triennial review of operational activities would be undertaken in 1992. The Group of 77 endorsed the Secretary-General's recommendations in that connection. Its desire was to strengthen operational activities for development and ensure that they were not marginalized, as that would be very much to the detriment of developing countries. General Assembly resolution 44/211 should be fully implemented so that the United Nations could play the role envisaged by its founders.

60. Mr. RADE (Netherlands), speaking on behalf of the European Economic Community, noted the vast scope of agenda item 88, and pointed out that human resources development was not the same as human development although both concepts basically addressed the same set of issues. It would be useful to clarify them. The belief that human resources were an essential precondition for development had been widely accepted as far back as the 1960s, but the notion of human development had only recently begun to receive attention. Human development concerned more than the formation of human capabilities: it also concerned the role of the individual and his or her full development and participation in social, cultural and political life. Every human resources development policy, therefore, must be part of a broader human development approach. It must be coupled with a democratic and accountable political system, popular participation and respect for human rights. Human resources development had been recognized as a cornerstone of the development strategies of the 1990s. The Declaration on International Economic Cooperation adopted at the eighteenth special session of the General Assembly, the Second United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries and the International Development Strategy for the Fourth United Nations Development Decade all treated human resources development as a central feature of any sustainable development. The same was true of the report of the South Commission. Such development was both a source of immediate gain in human well-being and a crucial means of expanding the productive capacities of a country's economy.

61. The first concepts that came to mind in that context were education and health. In the case of the former, it was widely accepted that autonomous development must be based on the education of the population, in particular through primary education, vocational and on-the-job training of the labour force, and indigenous educational institutions. Education fulfilled two important social functions, one socio-economic and the other socio-cultural. From the socio-economic point of view, a high quality educational system open to all not only promoted economic growth but also helped to improve the position of disadvantaged groups by creating equality of opportunity. The socio-cultural function of a good educational system lay in the fact that it enabled people to respond to changing external conditions from within their own culture. In other words, education was not only a consumer good but also, and above all, a productive investment in human capital.

62. For developing countries, universal primary education meant a combination of formal and informal teaching, intended to give people, children and adults alike, the essential knowledge, skills, values and attitudes which they needed in order to create a decent human existence. However, although enrolment in primary education and literacy levels had increased spectacularly in most countries, the overall number of persons unable to read or write, 98 per cent of whom lived in developing countries, had increased almost everywhere. The contribution of education to economic growth had not achieved its full potential, due in part to delays in achieving the quantitative growth in education envisaged and in part to the sometimes poor quality of the education provided. Many children dropped out of school. The quality of teachers, facilities and curricula was uneven and did not correspond adequately to a

(Mr. Rade, Netherlands)

country's real needs and learning materials were insufficient. In many countries government spending on education had declined in terms of percentage and sometimes even in absolute terms. The problem had been exacerbated by population growth and the rise in demand for education. The World Conference on Education for All, held in Thailand in March 1990, had set the objective of primary education for all by the year 2000. That goal could be attained through a restructuring of educational systems and a reallocation of government resources. Less formal types of education, generally less costly, deserved more attention. Recipient countries in general must give higher priority to education which was still too often regarded as a form of consumption and a first target for budget cuts. That shortsighted policy must be rejected because it jeopardized the productive capacity of society. In many of the poorest countries, higher education had grown faster than primary or secondary education, absorbing a disproportionate share of the national budget. While parents often had to pay for secondary education, higher education was heavily subsidized by Governments. When the participation rate of the underprivileged was low, that was tantamount to transferring resources from the poor to the rich.

63. Without a sound health policy, human resources development would remain an illusion: there would be no sustainable development without a healthy population. The objectives of the strategy of Health for All by the Year 2000, which originated at the Alma Ata Conference in 1978, provided a useful tool in that respect but the high expectations raised by its adoption had been only partly fulfilled. The introduction of primary health care had proved to be more expensive and complex than had originally been envisaged. If policy remained unchanged prospects for the 1990s were not bright. Developing countries must give higher priority to health care, especially primary health care. Since the resources available would continue to be insufficient, the effectiveness and efficiency of health care programmes must be improved. The donor community must support those programmes. In cooperation with the developing countries, they must reinforce self-help and participation through multilateral or bilateral programmes.

64. The Community and the signatory countries of the Lomé Convention had always endeavoured to devote a significant proportion of Community funds to improving educational and health facilities. The Community had been providing its partners with financial and technical assistance in the educational field since the establishment of the first European Development Fund. Within the framework of the Fourth Lomé Convention, which had come into force in 1991, human resources development was one of the chosen priorities. In all its integrated development programmes, the Community continued to give people a central place in development. Member States of the Community also provided substantial assistance through their bilateral programmes. Lastly, no substantial progress could be achieved in human development without the full participation of women in decision-making and economic and social progress. Together with education, health, nutrition and the acquisition of skills, popular participation was a fundamental aspect of any national development

(Mr. Rade, Netherlands)

plan, but it must be coupled with a democratic and accountable political system and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. In short, while human resources development was an essential prerequisite for sustainable economic growth, it was not in itself sufficient. It must be pursued within the broader context of human development.

65. Referring to agenda item 82 on operational activities for development, he said that the second Human Development Report showed that sustainable development was possible, even in countries with a fairly low gross national product and low international transfers. The report of the Director-General for Development and International Economic Cooperation on operational activities for development dealt mainly with the implementation of General Assembly resolution 44/211, which must be reviewed regularly. Resolution 44/211 charged the Director-General with various tasks, which he had indeed executed. However, the general tone of the report was too positive, as if further improvements were hardly necessary. The Twelve would have appreciated more precise and more concrete proposals on strengthening collaboration among the various United Nations agencies in the field. Indeed, the United Nations must decentralize its activities at that level and promote national execution. The report should have contained suggestions as to how to improve the system further. The section on programming did indeed point out substantive cooperation among United Nations organizations in that respect. However, while recognizing that some progress had been achieved, the Twelve believed that improvements should be sought, together with the recipient countries themselves, taking into account national programming frameworks and priorities. The same held true for the simplification and harmonization of procedures. The Twelve were not convinced by the argument that progress in the United Nations system depended on progress in a broader framework, involving multilateral and bilateral donors. While it was certainly important to ensure better coordination within the donor community, that should not prevent the United Nations from properly coordinating activities within its own system, if only because that was the desire voiced by Member States. It was also important for recipient countries themselves to harmonize and simplify their own procedures as much as possible.

66. On the question of the integration of women in development, the Twelve joined the Director-General in acknowledging that the United Nations had played a catalytic role over the past 15 years, by creating global awareness of the issue, and by facilitating the integration of women in all aspects of the development process. However, there was no cause for complacency, for much remained to be done. Women's access to resources and their share of resources must still be increased. Referring to entrepreneurship, he said that, while considerable and valuable work had already been carried out by nearly every major organization in order to encourage the participation of the private sector in development, much remained to be done in that area as well.

67. The triennial review of operational activities would take place in 1992 in both the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly. It would be useful to give some guidance to the Director-General on the kind of

(Mr. Rada, Netherlands)

preparatory work to be done to that end. The Twelve suggested the following guidelines: (a) there was no need for a review of all aspects of operational activities of the system, since resolution 44/211 set forth the main policy directions: decentralization, coordination, national execution, strengthening at the local and field levels; (b) as resources were limited, the report of the Director-General for the triennial review should focus on a few important issues; (c) those issues might include: first, field representation of the United Nations, particularly the role of the resident coordinator, multidisciplinary teams and common premises; second, programming, including an integrated operational system-wide response taking into account the comparative advantage of the various programmes and organs of the United Nations, to integrated national programming frameworks; third, national execution, the provision of technical assistance and participation; fourth, the issue of training in the field and at headquarters; fifth, the issue of decentralization and accountability.

68. In conclusion, it was essential for the Committee to draft a resolution on operational activities during the current session, which would send a message about the determination of all delegations to implement resolution 44/211 fully, provide guidance for the work undertaken in certain areas where progress was felt to have fallen short of expectations, and contain clear guidelines on preparations for the triennial review of the operational activities of the United Nations system.

69. Ms. CUAYO (Philippines) thanked the Chairman for expressing the Committee's sympathy to the Philippine people, who had suffered greatly as a result of many natural disasters in recent days. The Philippines thanked the international community, the United Nations and its specialized agencies for the assistance provided and appealed for continued assistance in support of its national development efforts.

70. Within the context of the United Nations system, operational activities for development translated development philosophies into practical realities. Over the years, Member States had assigned to the United Nations responsibility for an increasing number of operational activities for development. However, resources were required in order to carry out those activities. The report of the Secretary-General on the question stressed that the Governments of developed market-economy countries were reviewing their development policies. There was reason to believe that the review would affect their positions in the United Nations specialized agencies and multilateral financial institutions.

71. It was reasonable for donors to hope that their contributions would be applied to areas they considered priorities and used as effectively as possible. In that regard, her delegation wished to raise a number of questions: whether the meaning of development philosophy at the grass-roots level had been sufficiently analysed; whether the existence of varied situations among the various recipients of development aid had been

(Ms. Cuayo, Philippines)

recognized; whether the attention currently devoted to "favourite themes" (the status of women, promotion of entrepreneurship, environment) was sufficient to respond to development requirements; and whether sufficient consideration had been given to ways and means of enhancing the productive capacity of people in their everyday lives.

72. In the light of the varied needs and experiences of regions and nations it was important, first of all, to understand how improvements had been made in the quality of life of the people to whom development resources were devoted. To that end, there were parameters for measuring how basic needs of populations had been met and the extent to which their productive capacity had been enhanced. That basic development objective must never be overlooked.

73. On the other hand, the Philippines, as a recipient country, fully recognized the responsibilities incumbent on it. The Philippine Government attached great importance to the principle of mutual responsibility. Execution modalities, which should facilitate the exercise of that responsibility included the following: programming or project approach, field representation and coordination, decentralization, harmonisation, and simplification of procedures, and the training of local coordinators.

74. A feedback mechanism must also be established within the framework of the United Nations system. The mechanism should enable recipient Governments to express their views throughout programme or project implementation and indicate whether the programme or project in question was truly responsive to the needs of the target sectors or groups.

75. Her delegation hoped that, when the Committee drafted a resolution on the question, it would take all those aspects into account and place people at the centre of the development process.

76. Ms. SAAD (Egypt) said that a new approach seemed to be emerging with regard to the concept of development and to international cooperation which would have a bearing on the future role of the United Nations in the field of operational activities for development. It would therefore be appropriate at that stage to refer to the Charter of the United Nations, which had laid the bases for many international aspects, including development. The preamble mentioned recourse to international machinery for the promotion of the economic and social advancement of all peoples. That was a goal to which the peoples of the United Nations had aspired; it fell within a comprehensive framework, and was based on international law. Article 55 also stated that, in the field of international economic cooperation, the United Nations would seek to find solutions of international economic, social, health and related problems. Those provisions indicated that the role of the United Nations in providing development assistance was enshrined in the Charter.

77. Unfortunately, there had been an increasing tendency in recent times to move away from such a commitment. Various initiatives had been pursued, which, if they materialized, could weaken the substantive role of the United

(Ms. Saad, Egypt)

Nations in the development sector and erode its intergovernmental nature and eventually lead to the disappearance of the very concept of assistance. They were intended to change the role of the Organization, to shift the focus of its activities from the development sector to the humanitarian sector, from the long-term process to one tailored to immediate needs. They measured success and effectiveness by purely market criteria rather than by the criteria of collective responsibility. The United Nations would thus cease to play a catalytic role in international cooperation.

78. General Assembly resolution 2688 (XXV) on the capacity of the United Nations development system, known as the 1970 consensus, contained a number of basic elements which were still topical: they included neutrality, universality, multilateralism, assistance in the form of grants, the role of the recipient Government (country programmes were based on national development plans and priorities); the role of the United Nations system; and, finally, the role of the resident coordinator; it would be noted that the latter derived their legitimacy from the very existence of organizations within the United Nations system and the need to coordinate their activities. The resident coordinator's mandate was determined by agreement with the recipient Government within the framework of a country programme.

79. Operational activities for development represented the most viable and tangible achievement of the United Nations system in the development field in that they benefited both donor and recipient.

80. She expressed the sincere hope that the United Nations would continue to afford impartial assistance to the developing countries, which were making desperate efforts to improve their peoples' standard of living.

81. Mr. ELIASHIV (Israel) said that his country hoped that UNDP would continue its efforts, under the effective direction of its Administrator, to meet the needs and priorities of the developing countries, particularly those of the least developed countries. The Programme's resources were, however, clearly insufficient in relation to the growing needs of those countries, and Governments must therefore increase their contributions.

82. Concerted international efforts in the field of international cooperation were taking place against a background of enormous and widespread poverty. It was therefore to be hoped that greater attention would be paid to the social and environmental aspects of development, particularly in the context of structural adjustment policies, which ought also to stimulate economic growth.

83. Referring to multinational assistance, he said that there should be greater complementarity between bilateral and multilateral aid projects. Furthermore, bilateral and multilateral technical cooperation projects should take greater account of the possibility of taking advantage of the ability and experience of the more advanced developing countries for the benefit of the other developing countries.

(N. Eliashiv, Israel)

84. It was also to be hoped that the climate favouring innovation and experimentation to improve multilateral technical assistance to the developing countries would persist. An examination of UNDP-supported projects highlighted the substantial benefits that resulted from efforts at the global, interregional and regional levels.

85. The number of multilateral projects was increasing, a factor which might offer considerable advantages to the developing countries. Greater attention should be paid to identifying, formulating and implementing such projects, which could have a multiplier effect, thus enhancing the self-reliance of the developing countries. Greater focus should also be placed on the application of science and technology to development in those projects and efforts.

86. UNDP should play a primary role in the transfer of science and technology to the developing countries, and should concentrate on those sectors which could contribute directly to development. Science and technology could substantially improve the living conditions of the population in the developing countries; for that reason, a precise formulation of projects in that field might be extremely helpful.

87. Particular efforts should be made with regard to projects relating to agricultural development and agricultural extension, small-scale industries, arid- and semi-arid-zone development, community development and water and energy resources. Such projects could effectively contribute to lasting development and would have a direct impact on the economic progress of the developing countries. They also highlighted the importance of developing human resources. For its part, Israel had adopted an approach to rural development which was based essentially on the human factor, taking into account the fact that the development of human resources was the prerequisite of agricultural development.

88. As a developing country, Israel attached great importance to technical cooperation between developing countries. Such cooperation was one of the essential preconditions for improving the economic and social conditions of those countries. That was why, for over 30 years, his country had been participating in various activities in association with many developing countries in projects involving integrated farms, solar energy, literacy and cooperatives. Thousands of Israeli advisers and experts had been sent abroad to contribute to the development of agriculture, the strengthening of health and social services and other activities.

89. Multilateral assistance should continue to benefit from the necessary assistance from Governments, and particularly those of the industrialized countries. At the same time, the developing countries must be encouraged to reassess their use of multilateral funds, in order to increase contributions to their development.

(Mr. Eliashiv, Israel)

90. His delegation was also concerned by the situation of the least developed countries, and supported the special measures on their behalf and the implementation of the Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development. In conclusion, his delegation reaffirmed that cooperation between nations, partnership for development and human solidarity, would ensure that the objectives of the Fourth United Nations Development Decade became a reality.

91. Mr. SAMUELSSON (Sweden), speaking on behalf of the Nordic countries, recalled that they had manifested a long-standing interest in strengthening international cooperation, notably the United Nations system, including its operational activities for development.

92. The Nordic countries had recently put forward comprehensive reform proposals in order to strengthen the role of the United Nations in that field and make it more effective. They attached great importance to the comprehensive triennial policy review of operational activities for development and the guidelines for the system that should emerge therefrom. General Assembly resolution 44/211 referred to a number of highly important issues in that regard. The resolution to be adopted at the current session should concentrate on those areas requiring further impetus, including decentralization, coordination and the role of the resident coordinator, programming, better utilization of the respective organs' comparative advantages, harmonization of rules, regulations and procedures, and execution by Governments or national agencies.

93. The end of the cold war offered new challenges to the world community. Many of the threats to human survival remained, however, and the enormous imbalance between North and South continued basically unchanged. Environmental degradation, the pressure of population growth and poverty-driven migration were but some of the issues that might become causes of new conflicts. The problems were global and must be dealt with globally. The United Nations, in facing those risks and opportunities, was confronted by new demands and expectations. While the Organization was now increasingly being used to settle political conflicts, it was making less headway in the social and economic development field. Strengthening the role of the United Nations in those fields was the real challenge of the 1990s. As major contributors to United Nations operational activities, the Nordic countries were very concerned about the efficiency and impact of those activities.

94. The Nordic project had been launched three years earlier as a contribution to the strengthening of United Nations activities in the development field. It had been motivated by a concern to maintain international solidarity so as to promote development in an increasingly interdependent world. The final report of the project, submitted in May 1991, had met with a very encouraging response.

(Mr. Samuelsson, Sweden)

95. The resources available to the United Nations system amounted to some \$5 billion per annum; more than two thirds of that amount was allocated to operational activities for development. But the organizational structure had proliferated in an ad hoc manner in response to emerging needs, and in many ways reflected past problems rather than current realities.

96. The United Nations was involved in an ever-growing range of activities in the economic and social fields, for which new institutions had been created. But the roles and mandates of the various agencies, funds and programmes had been insufficiently defined. Fragmentation had increased, often encouraged by a diversity of contributions to the financing of United Nations activities. Coordination was more difficult than ever and the Organization's basic problem was to respond coherently and rapidly.

97. Partly as a consequence of the shortcomings of the United Nations system, the World Bank group and the regional development banks were now playing a much more prominent role with regard to technical assistance, largely because many donors seemed to be convinced that multilateral development banks were more competent in managing programmes and projects and were more responsive to members' concerns about programme direction and management accountability in particular. Whatever the reasons, there was a clear tendency towards marginalization of the operational activities for development of the United Nations system. If the opportunities offered by international political developments were not grasped, that process would become accentuated. It was thus essential to reform the system, failing which its inefficiency would lead to a decrease in donor contributions which would in turn reinforce the process of marginalization. The system must achieve better results in order to break that vicious circle and make the Organization a more effective channel for the delivery of well-defined assistance programmes.

98. Improving the system of governance and designing a more appropriate funding system were the two most important issues to be considered in the forthcoming substantive discussion on reform of the operational activities of the United Nations system. There was insufficient coordination of the development programmes and funding activities of the United Nations and inadequate overview of the resources allocated for that purpose. Member States had difficulty in exercising effective guidance over the various activities. There was therefore a need for a high-level forum for Member States to discuss development issues in a coherent way. To that end the Nordic project had proposed the establishment of an international development council. The institutional arrangements were not spelled out in detail, but it was understood that no reform should lead to a more complicated system of governance. It was not excluded that the reformed Economic and Social Council might undertake that function.

99. There was also a need to create more effective governance of United Nations operational activities. The existing governing bodies did not always give the necessary support and guidance on a continuous basis. In that

(Mr. Samuelsson, Sweden)

connection the Nordic project was proposing the creation of a system of smaller governing bodies that should meet on a regular basis. The membership of those bodies should respect the principle of universality.

100. The basic question was how to match multilateral funding with international needs, notably in terms of predictability, stability and fair burden-sharing between nations. The Nordic countries felt that the current system of voluntary contributions was not satisfactory. A new approach must be adopted and the current funding system revised. In that connection the Nordic project introduced the idea that funding for operational activities for development could be broadened by combining contributions from three sources: assessed contributions from all Member States, negotiated pledges to cover the bulk of the costs, and possible additional voluntary contributions.

101. The most appropriate venue for an in-depth discussion of the various reforms to be introduced in the field of operational activities seemed to be the high-level meeting of the reformed Economic and Social Council scheduled for July 1992. The Nordic countries would introduce a procedural decision to that effect. In preparation for the substantive discussion they would ask the Secretary-General to prepare a report on the various reforms proposals recently introduced.

102. Reform of the operational activities for development of the United Nations system could be carried forward only on the basis of consensus. The Nordic countries, for their part, would work to that end through consultation. The overriding goal was clear: to shape a United Nations that could meet the development aspirations of the countries of the South.

The meeting rose at 1.25 p.m.