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SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 30th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. OUDOVENKO (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic)

later: Mr. GAJENTAAN (Netherlands)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 86: SPECIAL PROGRAMMES OF ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE (continued)

Draft resolution on assistance to Benin, the Central African Republic, Democratic Yemen, Djibouti, Ecuador, the Gambia, Madagascar, Nicaragua and Vanuatu
(A/C.2/42/L.45)

1. The CHAIRMAN said that, if he heard no objections, he would take it that the Committee wished to adopt draft resolution A/C.2/42/L.45, on which a consensus had been reached in informal consultations.
2. It was so decided.
3. Draft resolution A/C.2/42/L.45 was adopted.

AGENDA ITEM 82: DEVELOPMENT AND INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC CO-OPERATION (continued)

(g) HUMAN SETTLEMENTS (continued)

Draft resolution on living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territories (A/C.2/42/L.23)

4. Mr. GAJENTAAN (Netherlands) informed the Committee that a consensus had not been reached on the draft resolution in informal consultations.
5. Mr. HARAN (Israel) said that the assertions in the draft resolution that Israel had put into effect plans and actions intended to change the demographic composition of the occupied Palestinian territories and that the living conditions of the Palestinian people in those territories had deteriorated were false and were not supported even in the report of the Secretary-General which was cited in the draft resolution itself. Far from diminishing, the Palestinian population of those territories had expanded considerably, and the same applied to their per capita income and their educational opportunities.
6. Mr. GLAIEL (Syrian Arab Republic) observed that the Palestinians, the only people to have been expelled from their lands to make room for persons assembled from the farthest corners of the globe and to satisfy the greed of world zionism in Palestine, were facing very complex and urgent problems. The United Nations, which was largely responsible for that tragedy, was providing assistance to the Palestinians, who were exposed to all kinds of suffering and torture under the Israeli occupation. The issue that had to be confronted was the economic situation in the occupied territories, and especially of the Palestinian workers who needed to find work there in order not to be forced to emigrate. The least the international community could do, in the name of that justice to which all conquered peoples under occupation were entitled, was to adopt draft resolution A/C.2/42/L.23 and continue supporting the general assistance programmes. His delegation would have preferred the inclusion of a clear and forceful condemnation of the practices and actions intended to change the demographic character of the territory and not simply a rejection of them, as in paragraph 3.

7. The CHAIRMAN, responding to a point of order raised by the representative of Israel, said that, if there were no objections, he would take it that since the representative of Denmark had requested the floor on behalf of the sponsors of the draft resolution before it was put to a vote, the representative of Democratic Yemen should now be given the floor so that he could introduce an amendment in question.

8. It was so decided.

9. Mr. AL-ALFI (Democratic Yemen) said that the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.2/42/L.23 had decided, after consultations, to amend paragraph 6 to read: "Requests the Secretary-General to prepare an in-depth study on future needs in the field of infrastructure for the Palestinian people in the Palestinian territories occupied since 1967";.

10. Mr. HARAN (Israel), referring to the amendment submitted, said that the proposal for an in-depth study on the needs of the Palestinian people was another attempt to use the United Nations and its resources to provide services and take steps that were neither necessary nor appropriate. The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, through its Special Economic Unit (Palestinian People), was already dealing with the economic development of the territories and preparing the necessary reports. Furthermore, the United Nations Environment Programme had also been asked to make a study. There was no need for another. What should have been done in both the draft resolution under consideration and in draft resolution A/C.2/42/L.22 was to urge those who wished to be really useful to provide more funds to improve the living conditions in the territories, which, as in other parts of the world, could always be improved.

11. A vote was taken on draft resolution A/C.2/42/L.23, as orally amended.

12. Draft resolution A/C.2/42/L.23, as orally amended, was adopted by 116 votes to 2.

13. Mr. BAMBA (Côte d'Ivoire) said that, had his delegation been present at the time of the vote, it would have voted in favour of draft resolution A/C.2/42/L.23.

Explanations of vote

14. Mr. FAABORG-ANDERSEN (Denmark) said that the 12 member States of the European Economic Community had supported draft resolution A/C.2/42/L.23 and wished to specify that it was their understanding that the study requested in paragraph 6 would bear on the infrastructure relating to basic living conditions and would take into account other studies provided for in other relevant resolutions and decisions.

15. Mr. CAHILL (United States of America) said that his delegation was very familiar with the situation in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip and had already explained its position sufficiently, particularly with respect to the Israeli settlements in the West Bank; the United States had contributed significantly to assistance to the Palestinian people in those areas. Nevertheless, it had not been

(Mr. Cahill, United States)

possible for it to support draft resolution A/C.2/42/L.23 because of its exaggerated tone and its distortion of the true situation. Despite the emotions invariably aroused by the subject, that approach did not further the cause of the Palestinian people nor foster a just and equitable solution to its problems. The United States had consequently not been able to cast a favourable vote.

16. Mr. ZIARAN (Islamic Republic of Iran) said that, although his country had voted in favour of the draft resolution, it did not recognize the existence of the illegitimate occupying régime in Palestine. There would be peace and security in the region only when the Muslim people of Palestine recovered their rights over the entire territory of Palestine. It should be emphasized, moreover, that the occupied Palestinian territories were not limited to the territories occupied since 1967 but extended to the entire territory of Palestine.

17. Mr. WORONIECKI (Poland) said that the German Democratic Republic, Mongolia, the Byelorussian SSR, Czechoslovakia and the Ukrainian SSR, on whose behalf he was speaking, attached great importance to United Nations economic and social activities relating to the Middle East question and especially to the kind of action provided for in the resolution just adopted. The position of all those countries, which had been expressed in the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly, remained unchanged and they would continue to support United Nations efforts in that regard.

18. Mr. ABU-KOASH (Observer, Palestine Liberation Organization) thanked the delegations which had voted in favour of the draft resolution, especially for their support for the struggle being waged by the Palestinian people to free itself from Israeli occupation. Referring to the statement of the representative of the United States, he recalled that that country as well had had to fight for its independence, and wondered if he denied the Palestinian people the right to independence because he believed that Palestinians were children of a lesser God.

AGENDA ITEM 83: OPERATIONAL ACTIVITIES FOR DEVELOPMENT (continued) (A/42/3, 136, 178, 293, 354, 359, 381, 411, 417, 603, 604, 677)

- (a) OPERATIONAL ACTIVITIES OF THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM (continued) (A/42/207 and Corr.1, 290, 326 and Add.1-3)
- (b) UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME (continued) (E/1987/25; A/42/597/Rev.1)
- (c) UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT FUND (continued) (E/1987/25)
- (d) UNITED NATIONS TECHNICAL CO-OPERATION ACTIVITIES (continued) (E/1987/25; A/42/110 and Add.1, 275, 305, 387; DP/1987/45 and Add.1 and 3)
- (e) UNITED NATIONS VOLUNTEERS PROGRAMME (continued) (E/1987/25)

19. Mr. PETRONE (Italy) said that in 1988 Italy would channel more than 50 per cent of its development aid through the United Nations and other multilateral organizations and would continue to increase progressively its contributions to the core resources of United Nations programmes. Italy believed that trust funds were a good and flexible financing tool. When it contributed additional funds, Italy therefore preferred to do so through such trust funds rather than relying on traditional bilateral channels. The trust funds, however, should be kept within the policy and co-ordination frameworks established by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

20. His delegation also considered that UNDP should continue to be the central funding agency for technical assistance. It welcomed the Programme Administrator's efforts to streamline co-ordination mechanisms and procedures and supported the order of priorities established by him. In that respect, it called upon UNDP to pay special attention to the front-line States. Italy was considering support for the Africa 2000 projects.

21. With regard to the workings of the Governing Council of UNDP and the new developments in the way the Council examined the Programme budget, Italy believed that the donor countries and the Budgetary and Finance Committee were spending too much time examining the Administrator's performance from the point of view of personnel and Programme structure, a policy of questionable value, since it reduced the Administrator's margins of discretion.

22. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) was getting stronger by the day. Thanks to an effective promotion campaign, UNICEF had become the most successful fund-raiser in United Nations history, and its field network allowed it to discharge its mandate efficiently. The Expanded Programme of Immunization, which played a crucial role in mobilizing the financial participation of donor countries and in raising awareness of the importance of immunization in recipient countries, was one example. Italy would continue to financially support that and other UNICEF programmes.

23. With regard to co-ordination, the World Bank's consultative groups, the round tables and the Joint Consultative Group on Policy for UNDP, the United Nations Fund for Population Activities (UNFPA), UNICEF and the World Food Programme (WFP) were undoubtedly useful mechanisms. However, much remained to be done in that area, not only at the governmental level, where co-ordination should begin, but also at the inter-secretariat level, as was clearly indicated in documents A/42/232 and A/42/326. Italy considered that the comments and proposals of the Director-General for Development and International Economic Co-operation, as contained in paragraphs 19 and 27 of document A/42/326, were well focused and wished to know UNDP's reaction to them. It also wished to receive a detailed assessment by the Director-General as to whether the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination was still the useful tool that it was meant to be.

24. It was known that the Economic and Social Council was not performing its task of co-ordinating operational activities for development, as provided in Article 63 of the Charter. Italy was of the opinion that the Council should indicate to the

(Mr. Petrone, Italy)

Special Commission on the In-depth Study of the United Nations Intergovernmental Structure and Functions in the Economic and Social Fields what the Economic and Social Council needed in order to fully play its role. His delegation was prepared to open-mindedly examine possible solutions. It considered the proposal contained in paragraph 30 of document A/42/232 particularly interesting, i.e., that the Council should identify in advance one, or at most two, areas for in-depth policy review each year. His delegation also wondered whether the Second Committee might not do the same on an experimental basis beginning in 1988.

25. In any event, if the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council wanted to exercise their prerogatives with regard to co-ordination, they must both rely heavily on the Director-General for Development and International Economic Co-operation. Italy was willing to strengthen the prerogatives of the Director-General and, if necessary, place more resources at his disposal. It was willing to lend a very positive ear to whatever requests the Director-General might make in that regard.

26. His delegation had undertaken a preliminary study of the Jansson report (A/42/326/Add.1), to which it had reacted positively. It recognized that the report required further study and that it would be necessary to request that the governing bodies of the appropriate organizations study specific aspects and react to the recommendations made in the report. However, his delegation did not share the Secretary-General's view that some points raised in the report might require further elaboration before the Assembly would be in a position to discuss them usefully. Rather, Italy thought that the General Assembly might initiate preliminary discussion of the report. That report did not really break new ground, and the issues were well known, as were the opinions of the specialized agencies regarding some of the recommendations made therein. His delegation therefore proposed that, before negotiations began on the draft resolution on the item under consideration, the Secretary-General should organize an informal open-ended meeting for the purpose of preliminary discussion. The representatives of the Office of the Director-General, UNDP and the specialized agencies and Mr. Jansson himself should participate in that discussion. He also suggested that, following the meeting, the report should be forwarded to all interested United Nations organs with an appeal for them to promptly express their views on the report so that the Economic and Social Council, at its 1988 summer session, could review those responses and decide on the appropriate follow-up.

27. Mr. Gajentaan (Netherlands) took the Chair.

28. Mr. ZIELINSKI (Poland) said that the growing interdependence of nations in all fields had led to a widely felt need for enhancing the effectiveness of the United Nations system and its operational activities for development. Those activities constituted an important element for confidence-building in international economic relations and security, a truth which had become evident in numerous recent meetings, statements and publications. Of particular relevance in that respect were the findings of the World Commission on Environment and Development, which pointed out that the concept of development had acquired a new dimension - the environmental dimension.

(Mr. Zielinski, Poland)

29. The notion of interdependent development was, undoubtedly reflected in United Nations operational activities and, in particular, in technical co-operation, but that was not sufficient. As the UNDP Administrator had said at the summer session of the Economic and Social Council, in order to ensure such development it was essential that solutions first be found to the problems faced by developing countries as a result of the decline in commodity prices, protectionism, slow growth in international trade, unstable exchange rates and the increase in the debt burden.

30. His delegation also agreed that UNDP's development efforts should be based on a proper integration of economic, social and environmental factors, within the framework of a unified approach to development. UNDP's role should not be limited to providing funds for projects; it must ensure that its assistance fitted into a coherent development strategy.

31. In that connection, emphasis should be placed on the crucial role that the public sector could play in promoting self-reliance, progress in all areas and development. If too much emphasis was placed on promoting the private sector, there was a risk of underestimating that role.

32. Regarding UNDP's future role, Poland felt that Member States should first of all strive to ensure stable conditions for steady development at the national and the international levels. Without stability and continuous governmental support, even the best-designed projects could founder. The technical co-operation potential of all countries also needed to be mobilized, and not only that of traditional donors. There was also room for the introduction of new approaches in technical co-operation, as demonstrated by the success of the inter-governmental programming in the field of technical co-operation among developing countries (TCDC).

33. The concept of TCDC played a special role in promoting development and self-reliance in the developing countries, and his delegation recognized with satisfaction that almost 10 years after the adoption of the Buenos Aires Plan of Action, interest in TCDC was still growing.

34. However, TCDC needed to be expanded, which would require the establishment of adequate national administrative machinery and, in particular, strong and effective national focal points. Also, greater use should be made of experience gained from regional co-operation and as well as in the field of procurement of equipment from developing countries.

35. In any event, the strengthening of TCDC should constitute an important component of any future strategy for development. In that spirit, his delegation supported the decisions adopted by the High-Level Committee on the Review of Technical Co-operation among Developing Countries at its fifth session.

36. It was vital to respect the sovereignty of recipient countries in adopting decisions on technical assistance projects. Moreover, the system of co-operation between Governments, UNDP and executing agencies should be constantly improved.

(Mr. Zieliński, Poland)

With the growing trend towards government execution of projects, Governments concerned should be provided with objective information regarding sources of appropriate expertise. To that end, UNDP and the executing agencies should improve and enlarge their knowledge of technical assistance possibilities in various countries, irrespective of their economic and social systems.

37. The reforms being carried out in a number of countries provided an opportunity for expanding technical co-operation. In that connection, he mentioned that the first industrial consultations on fisheries, sponsored by FAO and UNIDO, had been held in Poland in early 1987. Like other countries, Poland had used the podium of the General Assembly in recent years in order to make a series of proposals, including one for the establishment of an international debt and development research centre. It had also put forward initiatives on promoting the free flow of technologies, experience and know-how related to environmental protection and the exchange of technologies in the field of food production, processing and storage. If the United Nations international agencies were more responsive to such initiatives, the whole international community would benefit.

38. His delegation was pleased to note the form in which the executing agencies had implemented resolution 41/171, as well as the efforts of UNDP as the central body responsible for co-ordinating technical co-operation within the system. It was confident that UNDP and the other United Nations bodies and agencies would continue to contribute to the full extent of their capacities, to the further promotion of co-operation in the future.

39. Mr. LABERGE (Canada) said that it always had to be borne in mind that institutional matters were not an end in themselves, but instruments for promoting international development and that the benchmark of debates on the subject should be their relevance to development. His delegation therefore supported the monographs and the Jansson Report, the value of which was undeniable, even though it did not subscribe totally to its recommendations. The same applies to the Director-General's report, which, inter alia, already presaged some of the basic themes treated by Mr. Jansson.

40. His delegation was pleased that the developing countries attached such importance to United Nations development activities, in particular technical assistance programmes. The Jansson Report listed the reasons why: conditions for donations, the impartial role that the United Nations sought to play, its participation in mobilizing and co-ordinating assistance and the importance of the UNDP activities in the field, which helped to foster mutual confidence and knowledge between the United Nations system and the authorities of the recipient countries.

41. Technical co-operation under the auspices of the United Nations and, in particular, UNDP, faced five major challenges. First, the recent reorganization of the World Bank, involving a great increase in its network of offices in the field, and the World Bank's growing role in financing technical assistance, not only in support of capital-formation projects but also for institutional human development, must encourage UNDP to define its distinctive contribution to the

(Mr. Laberge, Canada)

development process; if it did not, it ran the risk of becoming a marginal element. Second, as the concept of sustained development took on growing importance for development strategies and programmes of the developing countries, United Nations development assistance organizations would have to adapt their working methods in order to tackle environmental problems. Thirdly, the economic deterioration of Africa could not be considered comparable to the development problems of other regions: it was a crisis on a different scale. The United Nations should discover ways of accelerating its participation in the effort for African economic recovery. It was no easy task, since in most cases the countries which most needed technical assistance were those which were the least equipped to take advantage of it, owing to the fragility of their institutional foundations. Fourth, the functioning of the tripartite system, in which UNDP Governments and the specialized agencies participated, left much to be desired. In that regard, the announcement by the Director-General in his report on the changes in the methods of project implementation in the past 10 years was clear: Governments were increasingly taking over execution, which was leading to an increase in intervention by national personnel, thus diminishing the need for long-term advisers; the activities of the Office of Project Execution (OPE) made up 9 per cent of UNDP's work, and participation by the World Bank in those activities had greatly increased. The last challenge was the integration of women into the development process, in implementation of the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women, which certainly constituted a priority task for his Government.

42. His Government had recently reiterated its view that the development of human resources was the corner-stone of international activities for development; in that decisive area UNDP action was fundamental. In order to maximize the effects of its limited funds, UNDP, when so requested by Governments, should try to adopt national perspectives on technical assistance needs, which other donors could use in selecting projects, through national technical co-operation assessments and programmes. The most important contributions that UNDP could make were those of providing assistance at the central level, to help in the planning and implementation of structural adjustment and to improve the management of public administration and enterprises.

43. An approach which saw human and institutional capacity-building as the main objectives of United Nations technical co-operation implied that the bulk of the intellectual energy and financial resources of those programmes should be devoted to countries most in need of technical, managerial and institutional strengthening, many of which were in Africa. Per capita income levels were an incomplete indicator of the need for that type of assistance, because some low-income countries were well endowed with highly educated people and complex institutions. His delegation therefore believed that it was necessary to consider how to devote more of the available resources to those countries, while making a parallel effort to engage technically sophisticated low-income and middle-income countries in ways that were more useful to them than only as recipients of small indicative planning figures. Enhancing their participation as suppliers of services and goods through programmes of technical co-operation among developing countries was one example of what was needed.

(Mr. Laberge, Canada)

44. Ten years after the adoption of resolution 32/197 on restructuring the economic and social sectors of the United Nations system, his delegation would welcome a review by the Director-General of its state of implementation. It hoped that in the current year specific proposals would be forthcoming.

45. The case studies suggested that neither the UNDP country programmes nor the country programming process was used as a frame of reference. While some progress had been made in the fourth programming cycle, the focus should be on the technical assistance activities of the United Nations system. Analyses and national technical co-operation programmes, for example, could provide frameworks which would be used not only by United Nations agencies but by other donors in deploying their own resources.

46. Regarding closer co-ordination of programming methods in the United Nations system, joint programming whose field application, according to Mr. Jansson, was more advanced than had been thought, was an important step which the Joint Consultative Group on Policy was working towards. His delegation would welcome more information on the group's collaboration and on the applicability of that approach on a wider basis.

47. The central role of the resident co-ordinator was a key feature of resolution 32/197. Steps had been taken in resolution 41/171 to define and bolster that function, but as UNDP developed its role in the assessment of technical assistance needs and policy formulation, the resident co-ordinator would become a more important interlocutor on behalf of the system as a whole. With the enhancement of the substantive content of the functions of the UNDP resident representative, proposals to separate the functions of resident co-ordinator and resident representative seemed inappropriate.

48. Central funding was another policy which Canada valued highly. The statistical annex to the Director-General's report showed that bilateral contributions direct to agency programmes were reaching record heights. Given the diversity of funding sources and outlets, it was imperative to give central funding modern meaning. Canada would prefer to see most funding channelled through UNDP. Failing that, the best way to foster the coherence intended by central funding was by reinforcing the country programming process and the selection of projects according to priorities chosen by Governments in the light of assessments of technical assistance needs formulated with UNDP assistance. At the very least, agencies should discuss the broader United Nations framework of activities with the resident co-ordinator and ensure that the central agencies of Governments were involved in the process.

49. Operational activities for development continued to be one of the most important areas of functional co-operation within the United Nations system. Many of the proposals for improving its efficiency and effectiveness were reflected in the current discussions regarding United Nations reform. The useful comments to the Economic and Social Council by governing bodies throughout the United Nations system on specific issues raised in resolution 41/171 showed how progress could be made in the co-ordination and harmonization of operational activities.

50. Mr. DOLJINTSEREN (Mongolia) said that opinion was unanimous that United Nations operational activities for development were an important part of the Organization's multilateral activities and a support for the developing countries' efforts to emerge from backwardness and poverty and achieve social and economic advancement. Those activities were inseparable from the measures adopted by the international community to establish a new international economic order and strengthen international economic security, and were based on such fundamental principles as universality, voluntary participation and respect for the sovereignty of countries receiving assistance.

51. The decisive factor in technical co-operation was UNDP which, since the forty-first session of the General Assembly, had carried out important work in its fourth programming cycle. During that time the Governing Council had approved new country programmes designed to stimulate the efforts of many developing countries to resolve their social and economic problems. At its thirty-fourth session the Governing Council had also taken a number of important decisions relating to the activities of UNDP and other United Nations technical co-operation organs. Its decisions concerning programmes and projects on women's participation in development and on human resources were particularly important. Also important were the decisions at the same session concerning assistance to the liberation movements of Africa and the Palestinian people, which his delegation firmly supported, and the new country programmes for the fourth programming cycle, which represented practical contributions by UNDP to the efforts of developing countries to overcome underdevelopment and restructure international economic relations on the basis of equity and justice.

52. An important aspect of United Nations technical co-operation was co-ordination. His delegation shared the view that the fundamental responsibility for co-ordinating all external economic relations, including co-operation with UNDP and other international economic organizations, lay with the Governments of the countries receiving assistance. That prerogative of beneficiary States should be confirmed in a General Assembly resolution applying to all cases in which the United Nations gave technical assistance to developing countries, in order to prevent the private capital of foreign enterprises - the capital of the transnational corporations - from penetrating the economies of those countries.

53. UNDP must reduce its co-operation with the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund which, despite numerous resolutions and decisions of the United Nations, including the Security Council, maintained relations with the Republic of South Africa.

54. In connection with the activities of UNDP, his delegation once again deplored the long and unjustified delay in approving the new country programme for Afghanistan, a non-aligned country and one of the least advanced. With the current process of national reconciliation, conditions would be favourable for regularizing the situation in the region and he hoped that UNDP and its Governing Council would soon approve the programme.

(Mr. Doljintseren, Mongolia)

55. The People's Republic of Mongolia maintained a fruitful co-operation with the United Nations Fund for Population Activities (UNFPA), which played an important role in solving the demographic problem of the developing countries and which in Mongolia was carrying out projects, including an integral system for collection, analysis and study of demographic data and the establishment of maternal and child care services. Mongolia was grateful to the Fund for its recent allocation of resources to the value of a further \$300,000 to train experts for the programme on maternal and child health.

56. His country also co-operated with UNICEF and the United Nations Environment Programme and in activities of other United Nations operational bodies which provided practical assistance in solving social and economic problems and in helping to develop the country's economy.

57. In conclusion, he hoped the General Assembly at its current session would adopt resolutions aimed at rationalizing the system of United Nations operational activities for development and further increasing their efficiency.

58. Ms. FRANKINET (Belgium) said that, as was pointed out in document A/42/326/Add.1, although UNDP assistance was, in quantitative terms, modest in comparison with bilateral technical assistance and the assistance provided by the World Bank and United Nations agencies, it was better in quality and was much appreciated by the recipient countries. However, in many cases, countries turned to UNDP simply in order to finance less urgent or less important projects which could not be financed by any other means. The idea of a politically and sectorally neutral UNDP, capable of advising Governments about the broad options for development and the channelling and co-ordination of external assistance, was gaining ground. However, the World Bank performed some similar functions.

59. The UNDP programme in each country, which perhaps should be called the programme of the resident co-ordinator, should not be a mere theoretical rationalization based on a series of selected projects lacking a unifying theme; rather, it should be a frame of reference which could ensure the coherence of development activities carried out in the country by all the organizations of the system, as the General Assembly had recommended. It could also constitute the frame of reference for all the other forms of bilateral and multilateral assistance, becoming the Government's programme for external assistance. In their current form, UNDP country programmes could not fulfil those co-ordinating functions, for which there were other, more appropriate mechanisms, such as joint programming. There was a need for a better definition of UNDP functions, in line with the recommendations in document A/42/362/Add.1 on sectoral and geographic concentration.

60. The growing tendency of Governments to make voluntary contributions directly to the specialized agencies for their operational activities, instead of making such contributions through UNDP, should be studied. That tendency could be a reflection of Governments' sectoral priorities or their wish to limit the administrative costs of their multilateral technical assistance. The

(Ms. Frankinet, Belgium)

administrative costs of UNDP were in fact very high, since its local representatives were becoming increasingly involved in questions of administration and representation which had no direct bearing on development programmes.

61. The role of the resident co-ordinator was to harmonize the efforts of the entire United Nations system in the light of the development objectives of the country concerned, limiting conflicts of competence and duplications and maintaining close contact with the Government, whose co-operation was essential for the performance of those co-ordinating functions. Document A/42/236/Add.1 contained a recommendation on the separation of the functions of the resident co-ordinator from those of the UNDP representative even in budgetary and personnel matters. Her delegation did not oppose continuation of the current practice which normally conferred upon the UNDP resident representative the function of resident co-ordinator, provided that all parties concerned were aware that the resident representative was carrying out co-ordinating functions.

62. In his report (A/42/326, annex), the Director-General for Development and International Economic Co-operation referred to the preparation of a system-wide list of possible candidates for the post of resident co-ordinator. Belgium believed that, in certain cases, that function should be entrusted to a local representative who met the relevant requirements. The activities of the resident co-ordinator should not be financed exclusively, as was the current practice, through the voluntary contributions of UNDP, but - at least in part - through the United Nations regular budget, since the co-ordinator also carried out representation functions and, according to a recent decision, the United Nations information centres depended on him.

63. Mr. Oudovenko (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic) resumed the Chair.

64. Mr. LEMERLE (France) commended the various reports on operational activities for development which had been under consideration. With regard to the UNDP-country programme, as the Jansson report (A/42/326/Add.1, annex) indicated, his delegation did not believe that UNDP had fulfilled its function as a frame of reference for providing the agencies of the United Nations system with an integrated and coherent approach to development activities in each country. The only frame of reference for making the best use of the human resources of the recipient countries, and for the programmes of the United Nations system and of other bodies outside it, should be the economic and social development plans of each country, in which each Government determined its priorities. When a large part of the assistance did not come from diverse sources, UNDP programmes played a co-ordinating role, particularly in the least developed countries. However, of particular importance were the technical co-operation financed by the World Bank group, whose volume was twice that of total UNDP resources, and the technical co-operation provided by non-governmental organizations, which allocated resources for development that were considerably greater than the resources of the entire United Nations system. Consequently, in order to achieve good results in their joint activities, the Governments and the United Nations should make use of the experience of those institutions and endeavour to establish good working relations

(Mr. Lemerle, France)

among the various agencies involved in development assistance in each country. In order to make use of the complementarities of the United Nations system itself, the method advocated by the Joint Consultative Group on Policy could be adopted and, as the Director-General had indicated, efforts could be made to involve, as far as possible, the agencies concerned in the development of general programmes for each country, which would provide recipient countries with an overall view of the loans obtained from the various sources. That would also help decentralize the management of operational activities, reduce the rigidities in the current system and introduce genuine inter-agency co-operation.

65. The role of the resident co-ordinator was particularly important, especially since he was the only person involved in negotiations with the recipient Government. The resident co-ordinator should therefore be familiar with the programmes of all the agencies and should act as a source of information for the various participants. If the recipient country's level of development enabled it to take charge of the principal tasks, the role of the resident co-ordinator could be limited to the administrative and financial aspects of his mission, and to follow-up and evaluation. In other cases, the external donors should administer the programme as a whole, and the resident co-ordinator would play the role of team leader with the full support of the various executing agencies. Certain officials of development organizations and agencies who could provide technical support to the resident co-ordinator could be sent to those countries, on an experimental basis. It was not necessary for the resident co-ordinator to come exclusively from UNDP, provided that he had the necessary human qualities and a capacity for negotiation and management. With regard to the suggestion to separate the functions of the resident co-ordinator from those of the resident representative, that measure would only complicate matters. However, his delegation agreed with the Director-General that the resident co-ordinator would need the support of the Government of the recipient country, and that both recipient countries and donor Governments should periodically inform him of their bilateral activities. The Government of France had already given instructions to that effect to the representatives of the missions it was carrying out in Africa.

66. With regard to the role of the Economic and Social Council, as the UNDP Administrator had said, co-operation activities should command greater attention at a time when maximum use had to be made of assistance funds to facilitate the adjustment plans of the recipient countries. That underlined once again the importance of the dialogue at the national and international levels between the recipient Governments and bilateral and multilateral donors, but much remained to be done to achieve that objective. According to the United Nations Charter, the co-ordination of the activities of the specialized agencies was a function of the Economic and Social Council. It was regrettable that that mandate had so far remained a dead letter and the Council had not succeeded in playing its full directional role in that area, or in reducing the discrepancies and pointing the way ahead. His delegation reiterated the proposal made in July in the Economic and Social Council that the Council should devote each triennial review to the analysis of different aspects of operational activities.

67. Mr. TANIGUCHI (Japan) said that, in addition to reconfirming its support for operational activities, which had been responsible for some of the most tangible and important achievements of the Organization, Japan intended to step up, through the promotion of "multi-bi co-operation", its collaboration with agencies which provided international financial assistance in the form of loans and grants.

68. The Director-General's excellent report (A/42/326) raised a number of important points and presented interesting recommendations. Although his delegation had not had time to give it the attention it deserved, document A/42/326/Add.1 covered some of the same points. As the Director-General pointed out in his 1986 and 1987 reports, the traditional distinction between the technical and capital assistance functions of the United Nations system in the overall development area had become increasingly blurred. At times, rigorous adherence to that distinction had made it impossible to respond adequately to the needs of recipient countries, especially since the World Bank had expanded its assistance programme to help the developing countries carry out their structural adjustment policies. A realistic and flexible approach should therefore be adopted, in order to increase the co-operation between multilateral lending and grant-assistance agencies. More active use could also be made of the round tables sponsored by the UNDP and World Bank consultative group, and the important role of those two organizations in aid co-ordination at the local level and the relationship between them should be strengthened. The Director-General's report also indicated that UNDP's share of resources from official development assistance had diminished greatly in recent years. His delegation supported UNDP's role as the central funding agency for development activities and it recognized the need to strengthen the Programme's financial base and secure appropriate growth in the resources allocated to its core activities. The continued decline of UNDP's share impaired the overall effectiveness of its operational activities. However, although that trend must be halted, UNDP's strength did not lie only in its financial capacity but also in the experience and knowledge that it had acquired and in its wide network of field representatives. It was therefore necessary to strengthen the role of the resident co-ordinator/representative and promote closer collaboration between those officials and the recipient Government.

69. As the Jansson report indicated, UNDP must respond more flexibly and promptly to the needs of recipient countries; his delegation had thus listened with great interest to the Administrator's comment that UNDP had raised the project approval limit of the resident co-ordinators. That step would help to decentralize activities and slow down the cost increases of recent years. The Jansson report also indicated that UNDP's country programme as currently formulated did not succeed in co-ordinating the technical assistance activities of the United Nations. The solution to that complex and difficult problem might lie in a more flexible approach that took into consideration the specific situation of each recipient country. It was to be hoped that UNDP would endeavour to improve the modalities of country programme formulation along those lines.

70. His country could not make a definitive judgement on the assertion that the assumption that specialized autonomous funds might attract additional funds from Member States did not seem substantiated by facts (A/42/326, para. 21), but it was

(Mr. Taniguchi, Japan)

concerned about the proliferation of small independent units, which were creating an undue financial and administrative burden on the Organization. The proposal to consolidate some funds into "special windows" (*ibid.*, para. 22) merited consideration, and the Director-General should elaborate upon it.

71. His delegation was firmly convinced that if the resident co-ordinators and resident representatives were to perform their functions effectively, three key requirements must be met: firstly, they must have the co-operation of recipient Governments; secondly, sufficient decision-making authority must be delegated to them; and thirdly, suitably qualified individuals must be appointed. Accordingly, it would study with interest the Director-General's proposal to establish a unified United Nations overseas development service, and it would support the proposal if it thought that it might strengthen the position of resident co-ordinators and resident representatives. However, the proposal in the Jansson report that the functions of the United Nations resident co-ordinator should be separated from those of the UNDP resident representative in countries with large United Nations and bilateral programmes might have the opposite effect, and it should therefore be examined with caution.

72. With regard to the co-ordination of operational activities for development, he recalled that resolution 41/171 indicated that those activities should be a significant dimension of all operational activities for development of the United Nations system. The United Nations expended huge amounts of money and an enormous part of its human resources on those activities, which could clearly not be carried out effectively without proper co-ordination and harmonization. Yet there was no forum in the United Nations in which donors, recipients and the administrators of the various organs and bodies in the system could meet to tackle the task of making development assistance more effective.

73. In view of what was at stake and since the governing bodies of the executing agencies could hardly address the broader problems of the system as a whole, it was extremely regrettable that the Economic and Social Council had not been able to perform its function as the central body for co-ordinating United Nations activities in the economic and social fields, that several multilateral bodies such as the World Bank and the regional development banks did not participate actively in the discussion of the topic, and that ACC and CPC were essentially inoperative. At the summer session of the Economic and Social Council, his country had made a proposal designed to strengthen the work of those bodies in the area of co-ordination. It was to be hoped that the Special Commission of the Economic and Social Council on the In-depth Study of the United Nations Intergovernmental Structure and Functions in the Economic and Social Fields would take due account of that proposal, and that the Council itself would consider the topic in detail. The Secretary-General's proposal that the Council should establish a standing committee to deal with operational activities should also be given serious consideration, for it would enhance the Council's prestige and influence. The matter should be addressed within the context of the work of the Special Commission.

74. Mr. GAJENTAAN (Netherlands) said that the documents before the Committee contained conclusions and recommendations which required follow-up action by the Secretariat, by the organizations of the United Nations system and by Member States, which at the 1988 Pledging Conference for Development Activities had demonstrated their faith in and commitment to the United Nations system.

75. The Committee should therefore seize the opportunity in a spirit of co-operation to enhance the coherence and co-ordination of United Nations development activities.

76. Ten years ago General Assembly resolution 32/197 had mandated the Secretary-General to provide effective leadership in the field of development and international economic co-operation and to exercise overall co-ordination. His delegation was pleased to note the assertive nature and frankness of the Director-General's report on operational activities during the last few years, which had enhanced his authority and without doubt contributed to the greater coherence and co-ordination in the system, and it urged him to make fullest use of the authority given to him. He deserved the unqualified support of Member States in that undertaking.

77. With regard to the report on case studies on the functioning of operational activities (A/42/326/Add.1), prepared in accordance with General Assembly resolution 41/171, the reactions and anxieties it had provoked were a compliment to the author. The report's great value was that it presented a concise agenda for discussion. The collective and individual views of United Nations specialized agencies set out in document A/42/326/Add.2 were nearly unanimous in so far as the findings of the seven case studies were concerned, although, as the Director-General had stated, certain issues should be considered further in the appropriate governing bodies and the Economic and Social Council. At present, the General Assembly should not miss the opportunity to begin the necessary follow-up action.

78. His delegation concurred with the main thrust of the conclusions and recommendations contained in paragraph 82 of the report to the effect that the importance of assistance from the United Nations system went beyond its quantitative value and that coherence, integration and co-ordination were indispensable if maximum effectiveness was to be achieved.

79. The Joint Consultative Group on Policy and its programming approach had a vital role to play in that process and must therefore be strengthened. However, his delegation agreed that it would be inadvisable to separate the responsibilities of the resident co-ordinator from those of the resident representative in countries with large bilateral programmes. As the UNDP Administrator had rightly noted, a resident co-ordinator without operational functions or financial resources would be of little use. However, as field offices occasionally spent 40 per cent of their resources on activities unrelated to country programmes, the role of the resident co-ordinator ought to be redefined. It might be necessary for the co-ordinator to delegate some of his responsibility for the UNDP programme to a deputy, and, where necessary, to reinforce the field offices.

(Mr. Gajentaan, Netherlands)

80. His delegation also looked forward with great interest to the results of the systematic review of field offices which the Secretary-General had requested in order to determine whether the offices could be rationalized.

81. The conclusions and recommendations relating to increased delegation of decision-making authority and the decentralization of management were very important to his delegation. They were the logical consequence of another conclusion, i.e. that uniform prescriptions for all countries were no longer valid. Tailor-made solutions and flexible responses required a change in management style.

82. It was essential to his delegation that country programmes should concentrate to a greater extent on priority sectors. Like other agencies, UNDP should make full use of its comparative advantage, since it seemed particularly well-suited to provide assistance in areas that strengthened national management, planning and co-ordination capacities, in keeping with the priorities set by recipient countries.

83. Over the years, UNDP's role as the central funding agency for technical assistance had diminished. However, there was no questioning its central role in the field of co-operation or its role as an "honest broker" in the arranging of co-financing. By capitalizing on its comparative advantage and concentrating on key areas, UNDP would play an increasingly central role, which in turn could reinforce its role as a funding agency. The Director-General's report had indicated that concessional loan disbursements in the previous year had exceeded grant disbursements. In the introduction to his report, he had noted the importance of maintaining an appropriate balance between loans and grants in order to meet the specific needs of individual countries. The delegation of the Netherlands shared that view.

84. With regard to the question of UNDP country programmes and the country programming exercise as a frame of reference for all sources of technical assistance from the United Nations system, it must also be realized that situations varied from country to country and were subject to change. It was quite likely that the expectations held in that respect had been unjustified from the outset. However, recent years had seen promising developments. Experiences with the National Technical Co-operation Assessment Programme and the round-table process were more and more encouraging, and all the parties concerned considered them to be very useful exercises. If UNDP continued those activities in a professional manner with competent personnel, the result would be improved co-ordination and a strengthening of the Programme's position.

85. His delegation considered the content of document A/42/326/Add.3, on resource flows and procurement, to be less than satisfactory without more careful analysis. The statistics on procurement of goods and services in the system were especially lacking in precision. Procurement from developing countries had decreased from 20 per cent in 1985 to 18 per cent in 1986. His delegation believed that it should increase. However, that topic could be debated only if comparative statistics were available. It seemed that the information on procurement contained in the document

(Mr. Gajentaan, Netherlands)

covered both extrabudgetary contributions and untied grants. If the amount of tied contributions increased in a given year, the developing countries' share of procurement would inevitably be affected. Consequently, separate statistics on tied contributions were needed so that the developing countries' share of procurement in consecutive years could be more realistically compared.

86. His delegation had always attached great importance to the role of the Economic and Social Council in the area of operational activities and considered that the creation of a standing committee within the Council devoted solely to discussions of the operational activities for development of the United Nations system, might be a useful tool for strengthening the Council's role. The possibility of having the Director-General's report considered in depth by that committee on a biennial basis, rather than on a triennial basis, as was currently the case, should be studied.

87. Finally, the current format of the annual pledging conference was not the most useful one; it ought to be possible to make pledges without such cumbersome formalities.

88. Mrs. DJURICKOVIĆ TUVIĆ (Yugoslavia) expressed concern at the decrease in the level of ODA for operational activities but noted that some encouraging signs had appeared, such as the outcome of the recent pledging conference.

89. The emergency nature of food aid, which was needed to alleviate particularly serious situations such as those obtaining in certain African countries, must not obscure the fact that the definitive solution of food problems required the elimination of obstacles which limited developing countries' participation in the international food market, improvement of the production sector, restoration of the ecological balance and an expansion of irrigation systems.

90. UNDP had played a pivotal role in the mobilization of resources for development, but its projects should draw more on the human resources and technical expertise available in developing countries. The same applied to procurement by the organizations of the United Nations system, which failed to take full advantage of the goods and services provided by developing countries. That was why Yugoslavia, which strongly supported technical co-operation among developing countries, had joined in sponsoring the draft resolution contained in document A/C.2/42/L.21.

91. Operational activities were an essential element of the growing internationalization of relations between countries and the development process as well as a channel for the transfer of resources and technology. The decision to prepare studies on the functioning of operational activities in certain countries was a correct one.

92. The report of the Director-General for Development and International Economic Co-operation raised some very important points which required further elaboration. One example was the question of co-ordination and programming of development

(Mrs. Djuricković Tuvić, Yugoslavia)

activities in individual countries: since UNDP country programmes could not, in their present form, carry out those functions, the advantages of joint programming should be studied and recipient Governments should be encouraged to adopt measures aimed at rationalizing the assistance they received and avoiding duplication.

The meeting rose at 1.10 p.m.