



SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 33rd MEETING

Chairman: Mr. OUDOVENKO (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic)

later: Mr. SHAABAN (Egypt)

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20p.

The meeting was called to order at 6.20 p.m.

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: REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (continued) (A/42/207 and Corr.1, 326 and Add.1-3, A/42/290)
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1. Mr. YUDIN (Secretary of the Committee) announced that the Observer for Switzerland had submitted the text of a statement which he had intended to make to the Committee but would be prevented from making owing to his absence from New York. Copies of the text were available to delegations in the Conference Room.

2. Mr. COKER (United States of America) said that the well co-ordinated response of the United Nations system to the situation in Africa through the Office for Emergency Operations in Africa was an example of what the system could do when it put its collective mind to it. It was however clear from the report contained in document A/42/326/Add.1 that serious co-ordination problems existed at the field level. Those problems would only be resolved by the best efforts of all concerned: donors, recipients and the administrations of the agencies of the United Nations system.

3. It was a matter for regret that the report and also the report contained in document A/42/326 had not been distributed in sufficient time to permit substantive analysis from Headquarters. The work-loads of the Secretary-General and the Director General must therefore be reassessed in order to avoid such delays in the future. The governing bodies of the United Nations agencies and also the Economic and Social Council should give serious consideration to the reports and submit their comments to the General Assembly at its forty-third session. In the light of the Director General's case studies, his delegation would expect some very practical recommendations to be forwarded to the Economic and Social Council. Some of the recommendations would not however require any amendment of existing basic texts.

4. Recipient Governments had the ultimate responsibility for co-ordination, and might therefore want to review their own decision-making processes. Central agencies for aid co-operation must be provided with the mandate and resources to enable them to perform effectively. Each recipient Government must ensure that

(Mr. Coker, United States)

such agencies scrutinized all proposed aid projects to ensure that they fitted the country's stated development goals and that those goals were not circumvented by the special relationship that often existed between the specialized agencies and their counterpart ministries. For the sake of efficiency and economy, recipient Governments had a responsibility to encourage, wherever feasible, co-location of field offices of United Nations system organizations. They could also assist in the creation of effective management capability by increasing support for the development of national human resources and institutional capacity; everything possible should be done to enhance government capabilities in that field. Recipient countries should be encouraged to establish public sector investment plans as a framework for assistance flows and a means for ensuring that assistance programmes were in keeping with the country's stated development goals.

5. Governments should also strive to speak with consistency in the various governing bodies. Measures should be taken to consolidate autonomous funds under the authority of one of the main organizations. The termination of the United Nations Financing System for Science and Technology for Development and the creation of the United Nations Fund for Science and Technology for Development under UNDP auspices was an example which could well be emulated. At the field level, donors for special purpose trust funds should ensure that all activities undertaken by those funds were vetted by the resident co-ordinator.

6. The agencies of the United Nations system must stop paying mere lip-service to co-ordination and begin working with UNDP to make improved co-ordination a reality. As a start, proposed activities might be reviewed for their relevance to the priorities outlined in the country programme process. His delegation agreed with the Director General that the NATCAP exercise might provide the basis on which to build a country programme for all technical assistance activities at the field level. However, such exercises were not being utilized to their full potential, and there was insufficient follow-up. UNDP, as the agency designated by the Economic and Social Council to co-ordinate operational activities for development, had the responsibility to assume a more systematic role in helping Governments to assess technical assistance needs.

7. While a resident co-ordinator's effectiveness in co-ordinating operational activities at the field level depended to a certain extent on his or her personality, the United Nations agencies, donors and recipient Governments must provide him or her with the authority and encouragement to carry out that vital function. Management must also give field staffs responsibility for ascertaining the feasibility of proposed activities.

8. His delegation considered that the recommendation in the Janason report to the effect that the resident co-ordinator assignment be separated from that of the UNDP resident representative in certain countries did not merit further consideration. It would withhold endorsement of the Director-General's proposal to create a unified United Nations system overseas service until it had been able to examine the matter in greater detail.

(Mr. Coker, United States)

9. His delegation had serious concerns regarding the Jansson report's recommendation that the project approval limit of \$400,000 for resident representatives should be raised. More than half of UNDP's projects involved expenditure of less than \$400,000 and his delegation did not believe that increasing the number of projects routinely approved at the field level was the correct way to ensure that all of UNDP's projects met minimum standards. The limit should not be raised without consideration by the Governing Council.

10. Mr. LIECKMANN (Federal Republic of Germany) said that, for at least 20 years, the international community had been discussing identical issues but, notwithstanding some progress, it had not been able to achieve a truly concerted action and optimum performance for the benefit of the third world. In the mean time those concerned with the administration of bilateral assistance had been more successful, since co-ordination in a multilateral framework was more cumbersome than in a national context.

11. The overall flow of development assistance from his country in 1986 had reached a total of DM 17 billion, representing 0.80 per cent of GNP. Of the total, DM 8.3 billion represented official development assistance (ODA). Grants for food aid had reached a total of DM 260 million, the bulk of which had gone, mainly through international organizations, to African countries.

12. The distribution of his country's assistance among regions and countries was based on their level of development, their development potential and their readiness to create favourable conditions. Consistent with recommendation 82 (f) of the Jansson report, Africa had remained the largest recipient continent in 1986, with approximately DM 2 billion, representing 42 per cent of his country's net bilateral ODA disbursements while Asia had received 37 per cent. Of all his Government's commitments, 54 per cent were concentrated on countries with an annual per capita income of less than \$US 400.

13. The Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany had stated that important goals of his country's development assistance were concentrated on the very poor, attainment of food self-sufficiency, more scope for self-help, greater consideration of the role of women in the development process, training and education independent of inappropriate foreign models, protection of the environment in the third world and aid for structural adjustment measures. In pursuit of those goals, his Government was participating in the co-ordination processes of a number of developing countries with multilateral and bilateral institutions, including at the field level.

14. Consistent with Trade and Development Board resolution 165 (S-IX), his Government had cancelled the debts of 24 least developed countries, 20 of which were in Africa, totalling DM 4.2 billion. It had also contributed, including a voluntary contribution, to the IDA replenishment as well as to the 200 per cent capital increase of the African Development Bank. It was the intention of his Government to use gradually increasing amounts of free flows from financial aid for the financing of new measures. The draft budget for 1988 accordingly provided for an amount of up to DM 100 million repayments to be used as additional quick-disbursing money.

(Mr. Dieckmann, Federal Republic
of Germany)

15. His Government continued to channel approximately 30 per cent of its overall aid through the multilateral sector, including the European Economic Community and the international financing institutions. Its contribution to UNDP would be increased in 1988 to DM 130 million, thereby confirming his Government's appreciation for the valuable work of that body. The high priority accorded to the United Nations Fund for Population Activities was reflected in his Government's contribution of DM 39.1 million.

16. Concerning the agenda item under discussion, his Government endorsed the direction in which improvements were sought by the United Nations system. It remained particularly concerned about the relationship between the United Nations itself and the specialized agencies. It therefore welcomed the proposal of the Director General in document A/42/326 that the role of UNDP vis-à-vis other institutions should be discussed. UNDP financed a substantial proportion of the activities of the specialized agencies in developing countries. In that connection it should be noted that his Government's budgetary regulations did not permit funds to be allocated to an institution which forwarded the bulk of those funds to other organizations while not being in a position to hold those organizations accountable. The standard agreements between UNDP and the agencies were not sufficiently legally binding in that regard. His delegation therefore believed that the issue called for urgent attention.

17. His delegation welcomed the Jansson report (A/42/326/Add.1) as a realistic assessment of key issues relating to UNDP, the specialized agencies and their field performance. It supported the proposal of the representative of New Zealand for a resolution carrying the momentum of the report to other institutions of the system. His delegation had however been taken aback by the assessment of the report to the effect that even the activities of the United Nations system itself were not presented through UNDP country programmes in a consolidated manner. His Government had concluded, in the bilateral context, that a consolidated approach, incorporating the multilateral as well as the bilateral dimension, was the most efficient way to help solve a country's development needs. The question also arose of what status an improved country programme should have; if it was to be binding on all parties, it would certainly have to be a plan of the developing country concerned and not a donors' plan. The Committee had hardly touched upon that issue.

18. The Jansson report should be considered in depth by the Economic and Social Council at its second regular session in 1988, as well as by the Special Commission of the Council on the In-depth Study of the United Nations Intergovernmental Structure and Functions in the Economic and Social Fields, governing bodies and the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination (ACC). It would also be desirable to hold an informal meeting with the authorities concerned as soon as possible in order to clarify a number of points. The Economic and Social Council, in line with its mandate as laid down in Article 63 of the Charter, should play a more distinguished role in providing policy guidelines for operational activities. The triennial policy review document submitted by the Director General in 1986 was a first step in the right direction. A further step

(Mr. Dieckmann, Federal Republic
of Germany)

should be to decide the extent to which Council decisions on operational activities should be binding and whether structures other than the existing ones were needed to fulfil such tasks.

19. Mr. MWANZIA (Kenya) said that his Government's commitment to United Nations operational activities for development had once more been reaffirmed by its pledge of a total of K Shs. 5,237,460 at the 1987 Pledging Conference for United Nations Operational Activities for Development. The 10 per cent increase in total pledges announced at the Pledging Conference was a clear demonstration of the renewed commitment of Member States to multilateral co-operation for development.

20. His delegation fully supported the proposals contained in paragraph 52 of document A/42/326. Proposal 11, regarding the strengthening of the role of resident co-ordinators, could not be overemphasized; that role should however be further clarified in order to avoid any inter-agency squabbles in co-ordinating programme delivery inputs from bilateral as well as multilateral donors. His delegation was also in full agreement with proposal 12 which would enable Member States to express specific and concrete views on a given theme. Despite the fact that the "development crisis" in Africa continued to be aggravated by degradation of the environment, drought and desertification, mounting debt coupled with high interest rates, famine and decline in food production and the stagnation of overseas development aid, the majority of the sub-Saharan African countries had taken bold social and economic reform steps as part of their commitment to the United Nations Recovery and Development Programme. He urged the developed donor community to emulate the action of the Nordic and certain other countries in announcing the cancellation of official bilateral debts owed to them by African countries and in increasing in real terms their voluntary contributions to the various United Nations operational activities for development.

21. As the main source of resources for technical co-operation between the United Nations system and the developing countries, UNDP was fully involved in promoting self-reliance and human resource development in the developing countries. UNDP had continued to collaborate with individual African Governments in strengthening their capacities to formulate and implement economic reforms and sectoral plans.

22. His Government fully supported UNFPA's assistance for sub-Saharan Africa, and its co-operation with UNFPA had included projects and health plan implementation review as well as family planning and family life education. Fully aware that rapid population growth tended to frustrate its efforts to provide the people with basic needs, his Government had fully integrated population issues in all development plans and programmes. For UNFPA to carry out its mandate effectively and faithfully, it would require additional voluntary resources on a continuous and predictable basis.

23. Since its inception, UNIFEM had rightly given priority attention to the development of the African Investment Plan which had focused mainly on food production, processing and storage.

(Mr. Mwanzi , Kenya)

24. Over the past two and a half decades, UNDP had co-operated with the Government of Kenya in a broad spectrum of areas, including integration of women in development, agricultural production, development and marketing, improvement of the environment, rural water development and the utilization of alternative sources of energy, in particular geothermal energy.

25. He appealed to those Member States in a position to do so to contribute to the United Nations Capital Development Fund.

26. Kenya appreciated the importance of the role played by the Department of Technical Co-operation for Development in the transfer of appropriate technology to developing countries. His delegation had noted the Department's efforts to ensure the inclusion of women in projects executed by it, both as beneficiaries and as participants, but it was nevertheless anxious that women and, in particular, women from the developing countries in general and especially from Africa, should be appointed to key policy-making posts. His delegation welcomed the Department's focus on training, but considered that there was a need in the future to emphasize, among other issues, food production, improvement of food storage facilities, rural water and energy development, improvement of health-care facilities in rural areas, irrigation techniques, development of small-scale industries to cater for rural women and rural literacy programmes.

27. The United Nations Volunteers programme was an important source of cost-effective operational expertise for development co-operation activities. Most of the volunteers held teaching posts in Kenya while others participated in the fields of water engineering and coastal aquaculture. His delegation endorsed UNDP Governing Council decision 87/36, particularly the emphasis which it had placed on promoting the possibility of the United Nations Volunteers as a source of technical expertise.

28. In conclusion, his Government attached great significance to the work being done by UNICEF, particularly in the areas of prenatal care and child welfare and development in sub-Saharan Africa. It fully supported the universal immunization for all children of the world by the year 1990.

29. Mr. Shaaban (Egypt) took the Chair.

30. Mr. MUTALIK (World Health Organization) said that his organization's viewpoint was adequately reflected in document E/1987/R2/Add.2 and in section K of document A/42/326/Add.2. The Jansson report, although based on only a limited number of country studies, provided a general perspective. The perception of the country-level role had to be sharpened, and the specialized agencies' work needed to be better understood, before cogent conclusions could be drawn. It was possible, however, to draw certain inferences.

31. Some agencies, including WHO, had long since abandoned the so-called project approach; WHO's programme approach had increasingly been integrated with national health programmes. Among the crucial lessons learned was that a global strategy as a policy framework was a basic requisite for the development of national

(Mr. Mutalik, WHO)

strategies; once such strategies were in place, problems of co-ordination could then be overcome more easily. The efficacy of the approach had been demonstrated time and again in health activities; one example was the universal immunization programme, in which co-operation had been so effective that the goal was already within sight - without the need for any urging by the Assembly or the Economic and Social Council. Without detracting from the value of global co-ordination, it was clear that, unless the individual recipient country played the primary role, no amount of structural reorganization would improve complementarity and co-ordination.

32. Although the United Nations agencies' lack of authority in the field was a weakness often criticized, WHO at least was striving to change the situation; one conclusion of a study carried out by the Director-General was that national field offices of the WHO Representative and Programme Co-ordinator should be strengthened. In an experiment carried out in Thailand, the entire WHO biennial country budget had been placed at the disposal of an ad hoc Government/WHO co-ordinating committee; although its working had been exemplary and taken as a model, that arrangement underlined the demands on a Government's resources and competence in the sector concerned. It suggested a direction for all the United Nations system's operational activities.

33. In 1988 WHO would have been in existence 40 years. It had recorded some historic achievements through its operational activities, such as smallpox eradication, but still faced daunting problems, such as the global pandemic of AIDS. Its mandate was twofold: to promote global policy formulation as a framework for national policies, a task which it carried out exceedingly well; and to provide technical co-operation with its member States, on which it spent roughly 70 per cent of its budgetary resources. It would continue to develop improved means to fulfil its mandate, and to co-operate in all the efforts of the United Nations system.

34. Mr. RAICHEV (Bulgaria) said that operational activities for development were particularly important as part of the world community's joint efforts to strengthen international peace and security and address the urgent problems of world economic development. The latter could not be solved until the arms race had been halted - a condition reaffirmed at the International Conference on the Relationship between Disarmament and Development and in the joint statement by the socialist countries circulated at the thirty-fourth session of the UNDP Governing Council. The latter body exerted a major influence on the trend of activities within the United Nations system and on the extent to which co-operation related to the interests of all countries, particularly the developing nations. It was important to adhere strictly to the Programme's fundamental principles; those and UNDP's global character were the main guarantees that the tasks would be successfully carried out. The Administration had made commendable efforts to enhance effectiveness and resource utilization and UNDP had made satisfactory progress in assisting least developed countries and national liberation movements, in carrying out important work relating to the environment and in involving women in operational activities for development. In 1986 the Programme had managed, for the first time, to mobilize over \$1 billion in resources for programme implementation.

(Mr. Raichev, Bulgaria)

35. But there were a number of shortcomings and problems. In recent years there had been a marked tendency to emphasize the private sector, whereas the basic criterion for technical co-operation activities should relate rather to the enhancement of the recipient countries' independent socio-economic development. Aims and priorities should reflect each recipient country's sovereign right to determine the direction of assistance. Attempts to expand UNDP's co-ordinating functions in any way should be deemed a violation of the principles set forth in the 1970 Consensus. The role of UNDP in helping developing countries develop their human resources was a complex issue requiring broad international co-operation in all its aspects, including the reverse flow of resources.

36. The activities of UNDP were echoed in a number of regional and interregional programmes. His country's own experience showed that national programmes could be so implemented as to provide more active regional and global co-operation. A number of recent national projects in Bulgaria provided favourable conditions for participation in regional projects in fields such as low-calorie solid fuel technology, genetic resources and telecommunications. European regional co-operation played an important role in operational activities for development, in which the European region had enormous potential. His delegation welcomed the decision to allocate part of the resources of the European regional programme for the fourth programme cycle so as to make the region's achievements available to others. European IPF countries occupied a unique place between the developed industrial nations and developing countries.

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

38. Bulgaria, despite difficulties arising from extremely unfavourable climatic conditions, had provided 331.4 million leva, equivalent to 1.23 per cent of its GNP, in assistance to developing countries, assistance to African countries alone accounting for 0.92 per cent. Some 5,000 Bulgarian experts had been working in developing countries, 7,600 of whose nationals had received training in Bulgaria.

39. His country supported the efforts of UNICEF to help children and mothers in developing countries. It was important to continue UNICEF activities not only in traditional areas but in measures such as preventing the spread of AIDS among the children. His country supported the policy aimed at stabilizing UNICEF's budget and economizing resources used for its administration.

40. In recent years his country had co-operated actively with UNFPA, a number of projects having been undertaken in Bulgaria. UNFPA-financed projects in Europe could be used more effectively for training and exchange of experience in order to benefit developing countries, a task which required a more balanced approach to individual programmes.

41. Mr. VILCHEZ (Nicaragua) said that for most developing countries, including his own, United Nations operational activities for development, as defined in General Assembly resolution 35/81, were of incalculable importance, particularly in the current world economic situation, in which the net transfer of resources from developing to developed nations was the most negative phenomenon. His delegation

(Mr. Vilchez, Nicaragua)

therefore welcomed the news that pledges made to UNDP had raised the contribution level to over \$1 billion. However, still more was needed if the developing countries' needs were to be met. Although, as noted in document A/42/326, total ODA disbursements had increased on average, in real terms, by 2.2 per cent per annum between 1979 and 1985, there were signs that, during the next two years, no significant increase in real terms could be expected.

42. Technical co-operation for development was one of the most effective and least costly means of solving development problems; his country, despite the many limitations it faced, was prepared to share its experience with others. The United Nations system, too, should take the developing countries' technical capacity into account in project planning and development in recipient countries.

43. Another important aspect was co-ordination between agency and recipient countries, which should be enhanced by means of national consultative groups, since host countries were the best judge of conditions for optimum co-ordination. There should be a systematic exchange of information in that regard as well as enhancement of the recipient countries' capacity for co-ordinating programme implementation, both overall and by sector.

44. Assistance approved for Nicaragua by agencies of the United Nations system during the year ended May 1987 had amounted to \$23,336,000, of which 32.5 per cent had been allocated to agriculture, forestry and fishing and 46.3 per cent to health. Operational activities had been important to his country in implementing economic and social development programmes which otherwise could not have been carried out because of the country's economic and financial plight, caused by circumstances known to all. His country greatly appreciated the contribution of the United Nations system, and hoped that it could be increased in the immediate future.

45. Mr. RAKOTONALIVO (Madagascar) said that one of the essential aims of the studies carried out pursuant to General Assembly resolution 41/171 was greater cohesion and co-ordination in operational activities. As could be seen from the reports contained in documents A/42/326 and Addendums 1 to 3, programming and co-ordination, in particular, had given rise to difficulties. The recommendations made in that regard warranted the attention of governments, since some of them tended to modify established principles such as those underlying the 1979 Consensus. It would also be a good idea to obtain at the same time the reactions of the bodies concerned; consultations could begin immediately, on the basis of document A/42/326/Add.2, under the direction of the Director-General for Development and International Economic Co-operation. Member States would be able to discuss the issues further at subsequent meetings of UNDP and the Council.

46. His country was in favour of measures to harmonize and simplify procedures for speedy project implementation, particularly "joint programming". By their nature, the problems called for improved co-ordination of operations, better programmes and enhanced authority for representatives in the field: they should not be approached solely in the context of cost reduction.

(Mr. Rakotonaivo, Madagascar)

47. Co-ordination was not an end in itself: the important issue was that assistance should be appropriate to development needs. To that end, operational activities should remain based on respect for universality and the need to maintain multilateral co-operation, as well as on respect for national targets and priorities and the developing countries' structural adjustment efforts. Whatever views the agencies might hold, recipient countries themselves were the best judge of programmes' effectiveness. It was essential to improve co-operation in the field between the agencies of the system and other international and governmental bodies. In all measures to that end, primary responsibility for co-ordination rested with the host Government. At the international level, the role of the United Nations system was to strengthen national capacity and enhance co-ordination through consultative measures; the increased collaboration between UNDP and the World Bank in that regard was welcome. Greater participation by bilateral donors in consultation and co-ordination procedures was also necessary.

48. The financing of operational activities must be commensurate with their role in the development process. The difficulties which the developing nations continued to face made the need for multilateral financial and technical assistance greater than ever. Although ODA to Africa had increased, in absolute terms, at an annual average of \$2 billion during the past four years, that increase was insignificant when compared to the needs of the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development, evaluated at \$9 billion per annum, and the African nations' annual debt-servicing burden of \$14.6 billion.

49. His delegation approved the according of priority to human resources development. It also appreciated the efforts of the Department of Technical Co-operation for Development, particularly in regard to pre-investment projects and natural resources development. It also reaffirmed its Government's support for other programmes, particularly those of UNFPA, UNICEF and WFP, as part of the operational activities for development.

50. Miss NCHAPI (Lesotho) said that United Nations operational activities played a crucial role in the development of the developing countries and particularly of the least developed. The decline between 1979 and 1986 of the total share of official development assistance (ODA) contributed to grant assistance organizations was a matter of deep concern to her delegation, which remained of the view that, despite the significant increase in contributions to and disbursements from regional development banks, the developing countries, and the more vulnerable ones in particular, would benefit more from assistance in the form of grants. The Director-General's appeal to the international community to increase the amount of resources made to grant organizations in the system should therefore be heeded.

51. Food aid had become increasingly important for the financing of development in most developing countries. Food-aid assistance to Lesotho through the World Food Programme had been used inter alia for development activities in connection with public works, and would continue to be used in afforestation development, the control of soil erosion, and road building and maintenance. Further thought was being given to gearing food-aid projects to closer collaboration between organizations, such as UNICEF, IFAD and the World Bank.

(Miss Nchapi, Lesotho)

52. Her Government was concerned at the significant drop since 1975 in UNDP's share of ODA contributions, and trusted that that trend would be reversed; it was essential for more resources to be channelled to UNDP, which continued to play a very effective role in Lesotho's economic and social advancement.

53. Her delegation was also concerned at the establishment of small administrative units and funds for the delivery of technical co-operation activities, since such funds were not only expensive administratively but also stood in the way of UNDP's co-ordinating role. UNDP was uniquely placed to fill that role in an effective manner, and all those concerned should be urged to co-operate in strengthening it.

54. With regard to the administration and management of operational activities, member States had always taken the view that UNDP country programmes should provide the common frame of reference for operational activities, and to that end various mechanisms had been established at the country level. However, not all countries used the same mechanisms and, moreover, a significant portion of the activities of United Nations organizations at the country level were not covered by country programmes. Her delegation noted from the Jansson report (A/42/326/Add.2) that the new format for the fourth programming cycle contained important innovations which might heighten expectations of the UNDP country programme becoming a frame of reference for all sources of United Nations system technical assistance. The fourth country programme for Lesotho, approved by the Governing Council at its thirty-fourth session, underlined the need for a programme which would be in line with the objectives laid in the fourth five-year development plan. The problem, however, lay with the agencies, which tended to by-pass the co-ordinating ministry and deal directly with sectoral ministries. Although her delegation noted UNDP's view (A/42/326/Add.2) that the proposal that agencies should use the UNDP country programme as their frame of reference was bound to cause difficulties, it hoped that the latter could be overcome through a greater co-operative effort on the part of the various agencies.

55. In view of the resident co-ordinator's role as team leader of the United Nations family at the country level, his personality as well as the environment in which he operated were important ingredients for the success of his mission. Lesotho provided the resident co-ordinator with every support, and the donor community in Lesotho seemed to have accepted his role. That co-operative spirit was a valuable factor in facilitating the provision of technical assistance to the Government and also in providing support for its co-ordination activities.

56. While the Jansson report had raised some crucial questions, the case-studies conducted were too small to provide a representative sample of the various situations obtaining in the countries concerned. Her delegation would therefore regard the findings of document A/42/326/Add.1 as preliminary pending further studies. The views of the various United Nations organizations on the Jansson report were, however, frank and constructive, and should be drawn on by governing bodies in their follow-up action.

57. It was encouraging to note that the resources pledged to the UNDP had reached a record level for the third consecutive year but, in view of its role as a central funding mechanism, still further resources were needed. Her Government, which had

(Miss Nchapi, Lesotho)

maintained the increase it had pledged at the recent United Nations Pledging Conference, in dollar terms, was grateful to all those who had contributed to the activities of UNICEF and UNFPA. It trusted that those countries which had not yet made their voluntary contributions to United Nations operational activities for development would do so in due course.

58. Mr. BRODODININGRAT (Indonesia) said that multilateral development co-operation was crucial to alleviate the plight of the developing countries and to help to sustain their development. While the outcome of the recent United Nations Pledging Conference was most encouraging, the percentage increase in pledges was largely accounted for by the sharp fall in the United States dollar; there were therefore no grounds for complacency. It was apparent from the Jansson report that the funds pledged were modest, rising in most cases to only 1.4 to 8.4 per cent of ODA in 1985 and 1986. The real value of United Nations system operational activities was far higher than their nominal amount.

59. The Director-General's report identified a number of new developments in the area of financing which had brought about profound changes in the operational activities of the United Nations system, and suggested a number of measures to cope with those changes. In addition, the Jansson report recommended that NGO assistance should become part of the aid co-ordination arrangements, particularly in the social sector. While his delegation generally agreed with those suggestions and recommendations, it considered, first, that any measure designed to cope with changes in the financing of operational activities should be designed to enhance the effectiveness of such activities, and should certainly not entail a reduction in ODA flows to developing countries. Secondly, NGO assistance was often governed by a different régime under national legislation, and the relevant arrangements were best left to recipient Governments.

60. His delegation was concerned that the share of developing countries in system-wide procurement had stagnated at around 20 per cent at a time when 40 per cent of total procurement was within their capacity as suppliers. It therefore welcomed the efforts of the Inter-Agency Procurement Services Unit of UNDP (IAPSU) to help to overcome the constraints faced by developing countries as procurement suppliers, and agreed with the five general comments of the Director-General set forth in paragraph 35 of document A/42/326. It considered, however, that priority in procurement should be given to local goods and services. It also considered that the issuance of country-specific binders by IAPSU should cover as many developing countries as possible, rather than being limited to a small number selected on the basis of questionable criteria.

61. His delegation was encouraged by the growing practice of government execution of projects, and considered that UNDP Governing Council decision 82/8 was a step in the right direction. In its view, the disadvantages associated with government execution, such as lack of reporting on progress and of proper procedures for project evaluation and disruption in the system of remuneration to executing agencies, were not insoluble. His Government was ready to co-operate in any effort to formulate appropriate reporting and evaluation procedures, and trusted that a formula based on objective criteria could be devised for the remuneration of co-operating or supporting agencies for the services rendered.

(Mr. Brotodiningrat, Indonesia)

62. In dealing with the issues facing the United Nations at the local level, it was necessary to reiterate the principle of the primary responsibility of recipient countries. At the same time, his delegation accepted the Director-General's proposal that his annual reports on operational activities in the interim years between the triennial comprehensive policy reviews should focus on one or two specific themes, and also agreed that the field structure of the United Nations system and the role of the country programme as a frame of reference for all operational activities would be suitable themes for discussion.

63. Indonesia had supported the institution of resident co-ordinator from the outset and had always been in favour of strengthening his role. At the same time, it was mindful of the practical problems faced by resident co-ordinators and, in that connection, agreed with the Director-General that the distinction between the functions attributed to resident co-ordinators and those attributed to the UNDP as an organization at the country level should be further clarified. It was also essential to strengthen the corresponding central authorities at headquarters, at both the Secretariat and the intergovernmental level, to ensure that the reports of resident co-ordinators were acted upon and that their problems were dealt with adequately. That was even more necessary than the establishment of a unified United Nations development overseas service at the field level. His delegation had never altogether understood the desire of those who wished to strengthen the resident co-ordinators' role with respect to bilateral assistance since, from the standpoint of a recipient country, they had a purely supporting role, which was to assist recipient Governments upon request in the discharge of the Government's responsibility for overall management and co-ordination.

64. The Jansson report, in affording a view of reality at the field level, confirmed his delegation's belief that each country had its special characteristics. His delegation therefore approached the conclusions of the report, based as they were on generalities, with some caution and in the realization that such generalizations were only a partial reflection of reality. Also, as recognized in the report, the experience of the United Nations system in countries other than those studied might lead to different conclusions. It would therefore be only logical for recipient countries to verify the extent to which such general conclusions were relevant to their respective situations. In view of the importance of the report, it should certainly receive further attention in the future.

65. Mr. FERNANDEZ (Liberia) welcomed the increase at the recent Pledging Conference in contributions to United Nations development agencies, particularly UNDP, UNICEF and UNFPA. As the Secretary-General had noted in his report (A/42/326/Add.1), the value of assistance by the United Nations system stemmed not only from the amount of aid but its multilateral and non-political character.

66. His delegation agreed that the system must act coherently, and hoped that the office of the UNDP resident representative would be further strengthened to deal with the new mandate of resident co-ordinator. Cost-effectiveness was not synonymous with reduced staffing. Although the Under-Secretary-General for Technical Co-operation for Development had mentioned a substantial reduction in

(Mr. Fernandez, Liberia)

staff as one reason for his department's financial health, he had also described the current level of total staff resources as barely adequate to support the substantial increase in operational activities.

67. Co-ordination must be vested entirely in Governments as soon as possible. In order to overcome the weakness, noted in the report, among national co-ordinators, perhaps a regional programme institution could be established, within a university or national development institution, to provide suitable training in procedures and practices, including the use of a national data base.

68. His delegation did not think that IMF structural adjustment measures were a panacea for development. All African countries were undergoing economic reforms of some sort and knew the social cost to be high.

69. Mr. RABGYE (Bhutan) said that the overall resources available for operational activities for development continued to be a matter of concern. The technical assistance requirements of developing countries were so great that they were often forced to take loans from commercial banks at high rates of interest for the provision of essential services, while many United Nations programmes and funds had experienced stagnation, or only a marginal increase, in the growth of their resources. Fluctuating rates of exchange had also affected levels of resources and, as was apparent from document A/42/326, although the volume of resources made available to the grant assistance organizations of the United Nations system had increased in 1986, the share of total ODA contributed in that connection had declined between 1979 and 1986. That shortfall was felt severely by the developing countries, and the least developed in particular. The recent Pledging Conference, however, gave ground for cautious optimism.

70. An increase in resources alone, however, would not necessarily suffice to solve all the difficulties faced by the United Nations development system. Rather, all those concerned, including the governing bodies and recipient Governments, should share in the responsibility for making development activities more responsive to changing needs. There was a need for vigilance and a degree of flexibility in programme implementation and for sensitivity to the needs of recipients.

71. The key to successful technical co-operation lay in sound project design, which called for an understanding of the country's priorities, capacities and working systems. If donor Governments were understandably concerned that effective use should be made of their contributions, recipient countries were much more concerned about achieving their development objectives and using their scarce resources in an optimal manner. His delegation considered that, while evaluation was important and should be improved, it should be seen not as the ultimate objective but rather as a means toward the end.

72. In addition, consideration should be given to simplifying and standardizing procedures between the various agencies. With a view to making those procedures more effective, care should be taken to ensure that United Nations-assisted programmes did not perpetuate the dependence of recipient countries, and assistance

(Mr. Rabgye, Bhutan)

should be phased out over a period of time. Secondly, emphasis should be placed on the need to make United Nations assistance more responsive to the needs of recipient countries as reflected in their national policies. Thirdly, there should be closer co-ordination among the various United Nations agencies and especially those involved in related or similar projects and activities. Lastly, agencies should conduct tripartite reviews of United Nations system projects, the monitoring of which should be further streamlined and made mandatory. Co-ordination and integration of United Nations system activities in the field and promotion of inter-agency co-operation required constant attention. With regard to the former, national Governments had as large a role as organizations of the United Nations system. In Bhutan, UNDP country programmes served as a frame of reference for all United Nations system assistance, and his Government recognized the responsibility of the United Nations resident co-ordinator for the co-ordination of all United Nations activities in the country.

73. Some of the funds administered by UNDP were of crucial importance, in particular to the least developed countries. In Bhutan, for instance, the Special Measures Fund for the least developed countries, the Capital Development Fund, and the Special Voluntary Fund for the United Nations Volunteers programme had all provided useful assistance. His country's development process had also benefited from contributions by the Department of Technical Co-operation for Development, the World Food Programme, the World Health Organization, which were concerned with the delivery of basic needs and services, UNICEF and the United Nations Fund for Population Activities (UNFPA).

74. The UNDP round-table approach was a most valuable institution, and his delegation trusted that Bhutan's traditional partners and other friendly nations would attend the next round-table meeting to be jointly co-ordinated by UNDP and the World Bank, and was tentatively scheduled to be held in Geneva in 1988.

75. Mrs. CHALLENGOR (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) said that financing for the operational activities of UNESCO, unlike other specialized agencies, was derived from extrabudgetary resources, slightly more than half of the funds coming from UNDP. The amount of operational project funds administered by the Organization had been somewhat reduced as a result of the proliferation of structural adjustment programmes, which had led to less support for cultural and educational projects, the reduction of trust fund resources due to declining revenues in oil-producing countries, increased government execution and extensive use of national project personnel. It was a source of pride for UNESCO that it had made greater use of national expertise than had other executing agencies, given that it thus promoted self-reliance and achieved significant savings. However, it was also important to ensure that the recruitment procedures and remuneration policies of the various agencies were harmonized at the country level, and UNESCO fully supported the proposal to create field-level inter-agency committees to address such questions in co-operation with recipient Governments.

76. UNESCO was proud to have increased its procurement of equipment from developing countries, contrary to the trend noted in paragraph 7 of appendix II of document A/42/326/Add.3. It had also undertaken special efforts to foster

(Mrs. Challenor, UNESCO)

technical co-operation among developing countries, including both routine training and the use of developing countries' existing capacities to encourage South-South co-operation.

77. The Jansson report constituted a useful point of departure for the elaboration of broad policy outlines and provided an important perspective from the field on problems which had often in the past been seen only through the eyes of secretariats located in industrialized countries. It was regrettable that the concerns expressed in the report over the inadequate policy guidance provided to developing countries by the specialized agencies had not taken account of the sectoral work carried out by UNESCO, or other specialized agencies, in advance of a development plan or project. The report also ignored the elaboration of development plans and priorities through regional and subregional sectoral meetings. UNESCO's positions with respect to the role of the resident co-ordinator, trust funds and collaboration with non-governmental organizations were set forth clearly in paragraphs 62 to 65 of document A/42/326/Add.2.

78. UNESCO strongly endorsed greater co-ordination and rationalization of the development assistance provided by the United Nations system, as well as more co-ordinated programming of United Nations system inputs. However, the problem of co-ordinating the experience, know-how and analytical capacity situated at some 28 central headquarters and several hundred outlying regional and subregional offices could only partially be solved by increased decentralization, which would be neither efficient nor effective without significant spending on suitable computer equipment and related staff training. The capacity to communicate rapidly and effectively with headquarters was essential for technical personnel in the field.

79. As long ago as 1969, a study of the capacity of the United Nations development system had called on UNDP to decentralize the maximum of functions to the country level. It had also advocated a strengthening of the specialized agencies and a maximum use of those agencies in all phases of operations financed by UNDP. In view of the changing character of operational activities, the fading distinction between capital and technical assistance in the United Nations system and the continuing relevance of the 1969 study, it might be appropriate to undertake a new capacity study, taking account of field-based considerations such as those raised in the Jansson report.

80. Mr. EL GHAOUTH (Mauritania) said that his delegation was disturbed by the distinct lack of progress in implementing the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development 1986-1990, and recent pledges of funds to operational activities for development did not raise hopes for any major improvement. It was only to be hoped that bilateral CDA and co-financing of certain UNDP activities would to some extent satisfy the expectations aroused when the Programme was unanimously adopted.

81. His country, which strongly supported all initiatives to promote technical co-operation for development, looked forward to a further strengthening of the central funding role of UNDP. It shared the view that the UNDP country programme should constitute a frame of reference for all sources of United Nations system

(Mr. El Ghaouth, Mauritania)

technical assistance and also serve as a mechanism to promote a more coherent and co-ordinated approach to operational activities. At the same time, the country programme exercise should provide sufficient flexibility for the incorporation of major adjustments and give resident representatives increased authority to formulate, in co-operation with recipient Governments and the various agencies concerned, the type of country programme which was best suited to the level of IPF funds provided. Secretariats would thus be enabled to devote more time to the mobilization of funds, to evaluation and to logistic support. However, a problem was posed in the case of small developing countries which were still not in a position to formulate detailed plans. United Nations agencies must increase their technical assistance with a view to strengthening those countries' national mechanisms for the co-ordination of external aid, as well as their methods of formulating, evaluating, approving and executing programmes and projects.

82. Co-ordination could be effective only if accompanied by a firm commitment on the part of Governments which were capable of putting such co-ordination into practice. His delegation urged United Nations agencies to play a much more active and specific role in joint programming. Non-governmental organizations should also be invited to take an active part in joint programming and the execution of projects. Given the ability of several developing countries to provide a large proportion of the equipment and sub-contracted services required by the agencies, his delegation hoped that UNDP would undertake a detailed study of the subject and submit practical proposals with a view to correcting the current imbalances.

83. In view of the urgent need to increase the insufficient IPFs allocated to small countries and of the difficulties and expense involved in obtaining the services of experts from the agencies, a substantial increase in the number of government-executed projects was required. His country supported measures to reduce to a minimum the costs of the agencies' field offices, provided such reductions did not adversely affect the performance of their duties, and had already taken measures to strengthen the role and responsibility of the resident co-ordinator. The Economic and Social Council should implement the provisions contained in the annex to General Assembly resolution 41/171, as well as resolution 41/213, in accordance with its responsibilities under Article 63 of the Charter.

84. At a time when many countries were pursuing structural adjustment programmes, his delegation supported the proposal for closer co-operation between the various multilateral financial assistance sources and United Nations agencies, particularly with regard to the assessment of technical assistance requirements. The time had also come to re-examine the criteria for allocation of UNDP resources, with a view to devoting a larger share of such resources to the least developed countries, two thirds of which were in Africa.

85. His delegation believed that it was essential to have access to field-based information on the extent and nature of United Nations operational activities, and welcomed the innovative case-study approach. It was also his country's ardent hope that those countries which had the means to do so would provide United Nations agencies with sufficient funds to enable them to fulfil the role assigned to them under the Charter.

86. Mr. OTHMAN (Jordan) said that the central funding role of UNDP and the leadership role of the resident co-ordinator enjoyed his country's strong support, but the decline in the share of UNDP of ODA contributions inevitably had an adverse effect on both roles. The reasons for the decline included a rapid increase in the provision of extrabudgetary resources to agencies, which appeared to have begun after the adoption of General Assembly resolution 32/197, relating to restructuring of the economic and social sectors of the United Nations system. The reaction of certain agencies to such restructuring appeared to have been an attempt to strengthen their direct relationship with host Governments. In making that point, his delegation did not wish to detract from those agencies' mandates but rather to indicate the difficulties encountered in allocating responsibilities for funding and co-ordination.

87. Despite the inclusion of valuable findings in the Jansson report, his delegation had strong reservations with respect to the recommendation contained in paragraph 82 (c) and believed that the role of the resident co-ordinator/resident representative could be strengthened through substantive support from UNDP and/or the agencies, as well as general support from host Governments and donor representatives. Neither did it fully understand the call, in paragraph 50 of document A/42/326, for the establishment of a unified United Nations development overseas service, and it therefore requested clarification in that respect. It was, on the other hand, encouraged to note increased pledges of support to UNDP and other agencies, as well as a heightened interest in better co-ordination, and hoped that such trends would continue.

88. With regard to the concept of the country programme as a frame of reference for operational activities, his delegation believed that national development plans should continue to provide the broader framework for the establishment of country programmes. Mechanisms such as round tables and consultative group meetings had proved useful in the past, and organizations such as UNICEF, UNHCR and WFP should become more involved in such activities. It should be possible to combine within the country-programme framework a concentration of efforts on priority areas and a capacity to respond to specific urgent needs. The NatCAP exercise, as noted in paragraph 46 of document A/42/326, was an important innovation. Decentralization had also proved to be of value, provided that management support continued to flow from headquarters. It was his delegation's understanding that the submission of projects over \$400,000 for approval by the Action Committee constituted a means of ensuring the consistent and universal application of standard criteria and of obtaining feedback from related experiences.

89. The participation of developing countries in operational activities for development had expanded since some had become net contributors and others had joined in country programme exercises based on full cost-sharing. The gratifying increase in government execution, together with the use of national expertise and local procurement of equipment, helped to strengthen the development management capabilities of recipient Governments. In the final analysis, it was the strengthening of individuals' and institutions' capabilities that constituted the most important task of the United Nations system in the co-ordination and provision of external aid.

90. Mrs. APPLEWHAITE (Jamaica) said that the Jansson report, while not raising any new issues, provided a new perspective from the field. Since it was there that the most valid judgements on the effectiveness and value of United Nations operational activities could be made, her delegation believed that the report should be widely circulated and discussed throughout the United Nations system. It also supported the proposal that the Economic and Social Council should undertake an in-depth examination of the report at its second regular session in 1988, in order to enable the General Assembly to take definitive action at its forty-third session. Such an examination would require major inputs from the various agencies involved, necessitating substantial follow-up to the preliminary comments contained in documents A/42/326/Add.2 and Add.4. The report should also be examined by the Special Commission of the Economic and Social Council.

91. Her delegation concurred with the report's conclusions and recommendations relating to the integration of activities through joint programming, decentralization and harmonization of procedures, sectoral and thematic programming and co-operation with the World Bank and regional banks. The recommendations on the leadership role of the resident co-ordinator and expanded use of the UNDP country programme also merited serious consideration. However, her delegation would have great difficulty in supporting any proposal that would restrict the universality of co-operation in the delivery of United Nations assistance. While there might well be a need to reconsider the criteria for allocation of UNDP resources, any reassessment designed to limit the number of developing countries eligible for United Nations assistance could not be entertained.

92. Caution was also required with respect to the recommendation that the role of UNDP as the central funding agency should be strengthened by the channelling of trust funds through UNDP. While agreeing that UNDP core resources should be increased in real terms, her delegation believed that the proposal required careful consideration before any general conclusion could be reached. That was one of the issues which could usefully be examined by the Special Commission of the Economic and Social Council.

93. Ms. SAAD (Egypt) said that her country welcomed the increase in funds pledged to UNDP for 1988, looked forward to increased co-operation with UNDP and noted with appreciation the decision of its Governing Council to approve Egypt's fourth country programme. It wished at the same time to emphasize the importance of technical missions in relation to the programming exercise, as well as the role of the resident co-ordinator in conducting a dialogue with the national ministries and institutions concerned.

94. Her delegation also believed in the importance of co-ordinating United Nations operational activities, and awaited with interest the conclusions of the Special Commission of the Economic and Social Council and the subsequent related decision of the General Assembly. It also noted with appreciation Governing Council decision 87/1 on the biennialization of documentation relating to reports of the special funds administered by UNDP, in the hope that that measure would be applied to all funds, and decision 87/15 relating to women in development, particularly paragraph 6 of that decision. It also welcomed decisions 87/20 and 87/50.