

as well as other factors, contributions to various technical assistance funds and programmes were likely to decrease. The 47 least developed countries had experienced a fall in their per capita income for two consecutive years and, according to a recent report by UNCTAD, the outlook for 1993 was not promising. The report attributed the dampening of the least developed countries' hopes, after a decade of progress, to adverse changes in world economic conditions, such as the recession, competing claims on aid budgets, trade problems, and domestic difficulties in a number of individual countries. It must be recognized, therefore, that the capacity of UNDP to achieve its targets would be limited.

54. At the same time, the Secretary-General's report stressed the need to provide assistance in new fields such as human rights, judicial reforms and law enforcement, improved governance and the electoral process. If the multidisciplinary character of UNDP assistance was to be maintained, both developed and developing countries would have to guarantee the necessary flow of funds.

55. In that context, his delegation would like to know how paragraph 3 of General Assembly resolution 47/199, which stressed the need for a substantial increase in resources, was to be implemented. The Under-Secretary-General for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development had referred at the Council's previous meeting to the restructuring process, but, in his delegation's view, draft resolution A/47/L.58 had been very vague about the flow of resources on a predictable, continuous and assured basis.

56. His delegation was pleased to learn that consultations were taking place on widening the pool of candidates for the post of resident representative/coordinator and that the selection process was to be made more transparent. Perhaps the Secretary-General's representative could give the Council more details regarding the selection procedures and explain the ultimate goal of transparency.

The meeting rose at 4.45 p.m.

26th meeting

Thursday, 8 July 1993, at 10.20 a.m.

President: Mr. Juan SOMAVÍA (Chile)

E/1993/SR.26

AGENDA ITEM 3

Operational activities for development (*continued*)

1. Mr. BAIER (Austria) noted with satisfaction that the United Nations system of operational activities had responded effectively and flexibly to rapidly changing requirements by redefining the balance between emergency assistance and the promotion of development and by providing support to societies grappling with fundamental economic, social and political changes. Austria also welcomed the operational activities' increased focus on people.

2. As requested by the General Assembly in its resolutions 44/211 and 47/199, the United Nations system had taken numerous steps to enhance coordination and integration, including the concept of country strategy notes, the adopted common framework for the programme approach and national execution, and harmonization between the organizations concerned. Nevertheless, the diversity of the mandates of the funds, programmes and

specialized agencies involved should be borne in mind. At the same time, the emphasis placed on decentralization and delegation of authority to the country level would strengthen the capacity of the United Nations system to respond to development requirements. Common premises, wherever feasible, would also facilitate integration, coordination, improved utilization of resources and reduction of administrative costs.

3. His delegation supported the strengthening of the function of resident coordinator and the efforts to open that post to candidates from members of the Joint Consultative Group on Policies and to make the selection process more transparent. The Resident Coordinator should oversee a multidisciplinary approach based on a division of labour and responsibilities, enhance consultations with all parties concerned through the country strategy note and, when required, adjust country programmes and major projects as they went along.

4. In the medium term, the United Nations system of operational activities would face a formidable challenge

with the continued widening of the gap between developed countries and most developing countries and, at the same time, the expected decrease in contributions. In that connection, his delegation welcomed thematic focusing and hoped that due consideration would be given to the three issues of science and technology for development, human development, and economic and social reforms. In order to secure the most effective utilization of available resources, reviews of the functioning of the various bodies would be equally as important as the reform of operational activities as such.

5. In that connection, he noted the importance of the draft resolution recently submitted to the General Assembly (A/47/L.58). Its adoption would considerably strengthen the coordinating role of the Council *vis-à-vis* the operational agencies and would improve the interface between the Council and the Assembly by eliminating duplicative debates and streamlining agendas. His delegation remained convinced that the draft resolution concerned, which was a compromise text, constituted what was politically feasible at the present stage and hoped that it would soon be possible to arrive at an agreement.

6. Mr. CHOI Jong Moo (Republic of Korea) said his delegation attached great importance to the implementation of resolution 47/199 which, while based on resolution 44/211, incorporated new modalities for the operational activities for development of the United Nations system and at the same time redefined certain concepts on the basis of experience gained. He commended the efforts made by United Nations bodies, particularly CCPOQ, to reach agreement on a common interpretation of the programme approach. In that connection, the Republic of Korea looked forward to a report by the Secretary-General on an evaluation methodology permitting improved monitoring of the practical application of the programme approach at the field level.

7. It was encouraging to note that the role of national execution in country programmes had recently increased, even though much remained to be done in that area. Since the United Nations system was likely to be called upon to provide increased technical assistance, efforts should be made to utilize agency technical services to the full. The United Nations system should also continue to decentralize decision-making authority to the field offices, while ensuring respect for the principles of transparency and accountability.

8. With regard to resources, his delegation noted that the decrease in contributions had already had an adverse effect on certain programmes. There was a danger that such problems would eventually undermine the coherence and effective implementation of overall operational activities. While the United Nations system was required to maximize the efficiency of its activities within the limits of available resources, ways should nevertheless be found to secure a substantial increase in funding.

9. In conclusion, he stressed the need to use mid-term reviews based on annual progress reports to monitor the

implementation of resolution 47/199 until 1995, when the General Assembly would make a comprehensive analysis of the question.

10. Mr. DE MARÍA Y CAMPOS (Director-General, United Nations Industrial Development Organization) said that UNIDO was currently engaged in reviewing its priorities in the light of the new requirements of developing countries, so as to be more responsive to socio-economic objectives. The responsibilities of UNIDO extended not only to the promotion of industrialization in developing countries, but also to the enhancement of human resources and technological skills for self-sustained industrial development. The organization's programmes and goals were fully geared to furthering the objectives of the World Summit for Social Development.

11. Industrial development in the developing countries was unevenly distributed between regions and had fallen considerably short of the expectations and targets proclaimed in the Lima Declaration and Plan of Action on Industrial Development and Cooperation¹ adopted at the Second General Conference of UNIDO, held in Lima in 1975. Despite liberalization policies towards investment and the growing emphasis on private-sector development, the overall proportion of foreign direct investments had declined significantly during the 1980s.

12. There were two other worrying trends: first, in many industrialized countries with sluggish economies, there were increasing calls to restrict "delocation" of investments, on the grounds that labour conditions in the developing countries were a factor of social dumping; and, secondly, similar arguments were advanced in the name of environmental requirements. Since most developing countries had liberalized their trade, investment and technology transfer policies and legislation, such arguments were not only unfair but also a source of antagonism. In his opinion, the only way out was through global economic recovery, enhanced employment opportunities in both developed and developing countries, increased overall competitiveness and reinforced international economic cooperation.

13. The impact of recession in the advanced countries had significantly reduced the level of voluntary contributions to the United Nations system. Moreover, development activities were now vying for funds with peace-keeping operations, which had greatly expanded. In that context, there was a need to integrate industrial development in a framework of broader socio-economic objectives. On the one hand, rapid industrial expansion and competitiveness should be promoted, while on the other, efforts should be made to ensure that industrialization, while environmentally rational, also led to more equitable development through job creation, the expansion of small and medium-sized enterprises, and enhancement of the role of women.

¹ See A/10/12, chapter IV.

14. In that connection, there were several UNIDO programmes that should have a major impact on social progress. His organization was planning to emphasize the enhancement of human resources, the development of small and medium-sized enterprises, the correlation between industry and the environment, support for technological developments with regard to energy and renewable energy sources, and the strengthening of institutional infrastructure and capability in support of industry. One of the most vital aspects of the reorientation of UNIDO was its increased emphasis on relationships between enterprises, particularly links between foreign and local firms with respect to finance, technology, marketing and other contractual arrangements. UNIDO was also planning to concentrate on economic and technological cooperation between developing-country enterprises.

15. In his view, such a reorientation of the activities of UNIDO was both realistic and achievable, but the scarcity of available resources was a problem. The current system, essentially revolving around UNDP country programming and its global themes, did not always fully meet analytical and advisory needs and priorities of Member States, particularly in the industry and production subsectors. In that connection, UNIDO intended to strengthen coordination and teamwork.

16. The programme approach, if applied at the subsectoral or thematic level, would reflect national programmes in the broader context of the United Nations system. Resident coordinators should endeavour to take full account of the capacities of UNIDO, and his organization did not propose to limit itself to operational activities but also intended to place more emphasis on upstream analysis and advice to Governments.

17. He agreed that the attainment of the objective of sustainable development depended on stability that was social and economic as much as environmental, hence the importance of the World Summit for Social Development to be held in Copenhagen in 1995. Human development, which was the theme of that meeting, implied first of all a recognition that the main responsibility for development lay with society itself. Development could be stimulated or accelerated by outside assistance, but it could certainly not be imposed or transferred. In that connection, there seemed to be an emerging recognition of the need for "shared development", which was doubtless the best long-term solution.

18. Mr. AFANASYEV (Russian Federation) said that developments in world economic relations called for a review of the operational activities of the United Nations system. Like the Secretary-General, the Russian Federation would like the Economic and Social Council to play a coordinating role in that area.

19. In Russia, economic reforms were having harsh consequences for the population, and many more difficulties were anticipated. That was why the Russian Federation welcomed UNDP Governing Council deci-

sion 93/15 concerning support for the transition to a market economy and democracy in countries of Eastern and Central Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States. UNDP had the technical expertise and advisory services that undoubtedly equipped it to provide assistance in the fields of management, privatization or training of economic managers. Russia hoped that the transfer of the UNDP Office for Project Services to the Department for Development Support and Management Services would not have an adverse effect on operational activities. His delegation also supported the measures to reduce the administrative budget of UNDP, although it was somewhat concerned over the volume of UNDP resources for the period 1993/1994, which apparently would be far below the forecasts for the fifth programming cycle.

20. The Russian Federation also hoped to benefit from the experience of UNIDO, particularly in regard to industrial restructuring and training of supervisory staff.

21. An agreement had recently been signed for the opening of a United Nations office in Moscow which might help to resolve certain problems confronting the Russian Federation, particularly that of refugees.

22. His delegation noted that there was often duplication between the programmes of UNDP, UNICEF and other United Nations bodies, and that the various programmes and funds of the United Nations system should harmonize their programming cycles and adjust them, as necessary, to national budgetary cycles, strategies and plans. In order to improve cooperation with the countries in transition, coordination of the activities of the United Nations system and the Bretton Woods institutions needed to be enhanced. The Russian Federation was pleased with its cooperation with UNFPA and UNICEF, and indeed intended to strengthen it.

23. Lastly, his delegation shared the concern expressed by a number of other delegations with regard to the deadlock in negotiations on the restructuring of the United Nations in the economic and social fields. It was willing to participate in consultations and to display flexibility, and it hoped that it would be possible to reach a consensus and arrive at an early solution permitting the financing of operational activities.

24. Mr. NICULESCU (Romania) said that his country supported the efforts started in 1989 to improve operational activities for development, which played a central role in building national capacity and supporting national strategies in priority areas. The high-level debate at the current session of the Economic and Social Council had highlighted certain factors affecting the environment in which the system operated, such as the world's deteriorating economic and social situation, the challenges facing most developing countries and the countries in transition, and the difficulties in financing operational activities. Those difficulties could only be resolved by concerted action on the part of all organizations of the United Nations system.

25. In recent years, development had increasingly come to be viewed as a people-centred process. Applied to operational activities, that concept created new tasks and requirements for the system, and it was therefore particularly important to ensure that the system retained its flexibility and responsiveness.

26. Romania's cooperation with UNDP and with other funds and programmes demonstrated the ability of the system to respond effectively to changing requirements. In the case of Romania, a country in transition towards a market economy, UNDP support was being directed to three areas: privatization, human resources development, and protection of the environment. UNDP had also helped to implement a long-term programme for retraining former economic managers and training new ones for the private sector. Lastly, UNDP had recently sent a mission to Bucharest to evaluate the economic consequences for Romania of the sanctions imposed on the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro).

27. His delegation wished to express its thanks to UNFPA, which had enabled a population and housing census to be carried out in Romania for the first time in 15 years, and to UNICEF, whose Executive Board had, in May 1993, approved a significant programme designed to address the urgent needs of Romanian children.

28. Romania appreciated United Nations technical cooperation activities and welcomed the new measures taken to restructure that sector, in particular the establishment of the Department for Development Support and Management Services, which had an important role to play.

29. His delegation considered that, in order to improve the effectiveness of the operational activities of the United Nations system, greater decentralization was required at the country level.

30. It hoped that outstanding matters connected with the restructuring of the economic and social sectors of the United Nations system would be settled as soon as possible, thereby enabling operational activities to be better adjusted to national development strategies.

31. Mr. GOUDYMA (Ukraine) said he regarded the implementation of General Assembly resolution 47/199 as one of the most important stages in the reform of the United Nations system. Ukraine regretted the fact that the Secretary-General's report (E/1993/73) failed to mention the coordination difficulties encountered by the Under-Secretary-General for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development and contained no critical analysis. In general, Ukraine favoured the basic approaches to operational activities for development that were indicated.

32. The implementation of the proposals of certain countries, particularly the Nordic countries, regarding the restructuring of the governing bodies of United Nations funds and programmes would serve to

enhance the effectiveness of operational activities. It was also necessary for the membership of those governing bodies to rotate.

33. His delegation considered that the assessment of the current economic situation in the territory of the former USSR was altogether appropriate. Ukraine was undergoing a major economic crisis as a result of a decline in production, an increase in its expenditures, the economic consequences of the Chernobyl disaster and the sanctions imposed on the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro). Those difficulties called for action and made the application of paragraphs 48 and 49 of resolution 47/199 even more urgent. Ukraine had no wish to challenge the orientation of operational activities for development in favour of the least developed countries, but it hoped that UNDP and other United Nations funds and programmes would strengthen their activities in favour of the countries in transition. Lastly, it emphasized that an integrated United Nations mission had recently been set up in Ukraine to contribute, in particular, to operational activities.

34. Mr. BAHADIAN (Brazil) said that he fully subscribed to the statement made by the representative of Colombia on behalf of the Group of 77. However, the implementation of General Assembly resolution 47/199 prompted some additional comments on his part.

35. One of the most innovative concepts contained in the resolution was that of the country strategy note. Brazil was anxious that, in the application of that concept, the principle governing the entire system of United Nations operational activities should not be forgotten, namely that it was the recipient country that was primarily responsible for decisions and coordination of such activities. Consequently, the mechanism of the national strategy note was optional, and it was for Governments to decide whether, in the particular case, it could enhance coordination of United Nations cooperation activities. It was therefore inappropriate to promote that concept too forcefully: if it was a good one, it would sell itself. It had been devised because the previous machinery defined by General Assembly resolution 44/211, namely the national programme framework/integrated United Nations response approach, had failed. It was now necessary to ensure that the new coordination instrument made available to recipient Governments was fully successful.

36. There seemed to be unanimous agreement on the need for speedy and full implementation of General Assembly resolution 47/199, yet one of its main provisions—namely, the call for a substantial increase in resources for operational activities for development, commensurate with the increasing needs of the developing countries—was widely ignored. The UNDP representative had in fact indicated informally that the dwindling resource base of the United Nations development system was the largest constraint to the implementation of that resolution. It would not be easy to convince Gov-

ernments to prepare country strategy notes in the context of ever-scarcer resources.

37. Progress in strengthening the resident coordinator system was necessarily slow, but his delegation hoped that it would continue in the future. It would also welcome an assurance that the function of resident coordinator was indeed restricted to the coordination of operational activities in the field and did not have any political tinge.

38. In 1992, the Council had embarked on a new phase of its efforts to restructure the economic and social sectors of the United Nations. The suspension of the discussions on the proposals made in the Nordic project and on the rationalization of the agendas of the Second and Third Committees of the General Assembly and the Council perhaps signified that those proposals were not yet ripe. Brazil was fully ready to participate in a resumption of the negotiations, since it was essential for them to succeed. However, it also concurred in the UNICEF representative's comments to the effect that the United Nations should attach as much importance to substantive problems in the economic and social sectors as to internal structural and coordination issues. Only if it did so would it at last become a forum for the adoption of decisions that were meaningful for Member States and their populations.

39. Mr. DEMIN (Belarus) said it was impossible to exaggerate the importance of General Assembly resolution 47/199, which reflected an international consensus in favour of development. The report of the Secretary-General (E/1993/73) and the rest of the documentation before the Council, together with the statements made by the representatives of various programmes and agencies, gave an overall picture of the multiple activities undertaken to give effect to that resolution. There was no doubt that, in order to carry out the necessary work with regard to harmonization and adjustment of programming cycles, the programme approach, national execution, decentralization and training, there was also a need for in-depth restructuring of the Organization: Belarus shared the concern expressed by many speakers regarding the continuing disagreements in that area, and the General Assembly should revive the negotiations that had now been suspended, with a view to arriving at a final consensus.

40. In fact, broad agreement already existed regarding the programme approach and national execution, in particular; it was now necessary to implement the decisions taken so that they produced tangible results at the country level. It was indeed for that reason that the United Nations machinery needed to be adapted; in that connection, he commended some of the decisions recently adopted by UNDP regarding, in particular, the population sector, the development of Africa in the 1990s, and the transition of the East European countries to a market economy.

41. In the countries in transition, which were compelled to make a whirlwind transition from confrontation to policy coordination, the first phases of that radical transformation had inspired a desire to play a greater role in world trade: Belarus, in particular, had sought new trading partners. It was UNDP that had first opened up such possibilities by granting Belarus the status of recipient country in 1991. Today, Belarus had become an active partner and the UNDP office in the country was a dynamic interlocutor of the Government, which it helped to formulate projects for privatization, re-equipping of enterprises, etc. A draft short-term programme was being prepared together with UNDP.

42. Belarus firmly intended to continue such cooperation and to give practical effect to the provisions of resolution 47/199.

43. Mr. MUDZAKIR (Malaysia) deplored the fact that, in the restructuring of the economic and social sectors of the United Nations, a process which had now been suspended, no provision had been made for increasing the resource commitments of the international community for development; UNDP's resources had even been significantly curtailed. He hoped that the negotiations would resume shortly and that the new commitments expected would be forthcoming.

44. With regard to programme development and implementation, the Under-Secretary-General for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development had struck an encouraging note. Most developing countries were amenable to the change process and were ready to take initiatives. The adoption of the country strategy note, the harmonization of programming cycles, the systematization of the programme approach and national execution were particularly commendable. The basic challenge was to build up a national capacity in each recipient country so as to encourage self-reliance: the test of success of United Nations programmes and funds was precisely in their catalytic role in reducing dependency. Therefore, it was important to promote the increased utilization of national professionals and local consultants and consulting firms which could help to reduce the cost of assistance, while at the same time enhancing national capacity. However, it was also necessary for outside support to be properly adjusted to the situation and for follow-up measures to be taken.

45. Overall, he was encouraged by the various innovative measures undertaken by the Secretariat and the agencies to respond to General Assembly resolution 47/199.

46. Mr. JI Chaozhu (Under-Secretary-General for Development Support and Management Services) said that the time had undoubtedly come to rethink cooperation for development. While there were legitimate fears of a proliferation of situations similar to that in modern-day Somalia, it was essential not to stop investing—or, still worse, to disinvest—in multilateral cooperation. On the

contrary, the future of all mankind might very well rest on the long-term investments that were made today.

47. The Secretary-General had undertaken a comprehensive programme of reforms to revamp the Secretariat's economic machinery, and in particular had established the Department for Development Support and Management Services, with particular responsibility for weighing the United Nations' response to the technical cooperation needs of developing countries, especially the least developed among them, and the countries in transition. The Department had a twofold mandate: to act as an executing agency for programmes and projects relating to institution-building and human resources development, especially in such areas as economic management and policy, public administration and capacity-building in the public and private sectors; and to be the focal point at United Nations Headquarters for the provision of management services for United Nations technical cooperation activities. In that connection, the Governing Council of UNDP, in its decision 93/30, had encouraged the Department to help to strengthen national capacities for programme management and, in its decision 93/42, had accepted the modalities for the transfer, within the Department, of the Office for Project Services. He informed the Council that that transfer had now been set for 1 January 1994.

48. In response to Governments' changing needs, the Department had strengthened its activities in areas of rapidly growing importance such as privatization, governance, electoral administration and military to civilian use conversion. It was collaborating with the other new departments working in the economic and social sectors and was strengthening its cooperation with the humanitarian assistance, political and peace-keeping departments. However, it was national capacity-building that lay at the core of United Nations technical cooperation activities: in that connection, the Department had participated fully with the other organizations of the system in the implementation of various provisions contained in General Assembly resolution 47/199.

49. In particular, the Department wished to participate in the formulation of country strategy notes. For the purpose of actively promoting national self-reliance, it was organizing training courses and developing programmes in cooperation with the ILO's International Training Centre at Turin. It was planned to conduct a pilot study in a number of least developed countries, including Bangladesh, Nepal, Jamaica and Malawi, in order to assess their financial management system and the improvements that needed to be made to it. In that connection, the Cairo Plan of Action adopted in March 1993 was a major step forward. In all those endeavours, the Department drew heavily on the experience and expertise of many developing countries so as to strengthen technical cooperation among developing countries, a subject covered by an interregional symposium in Abidjan in June 1992. The Department had made special efforts to disseminate certain Asian experiences among African countries. In association with an African grouping, the

Department was currently cooperating with the Government of Japan in organizing the International Conference for the Development of Africa which would take place in Tokyo in October 1993.

50. The Department would not fail further to consult countries members of the Council and the UNDP Governing Council on all matters relating to the evolving role of United Nations technical cooperation activities. It was intended that such activities should support humanitarian assistance and rehabilitation efforts, as well as peace-keeping activities.

51. Mr. WORONIECKI (Poland) said that the revitalization of the United Nations, and revival of participation in and increased responsibility for global development were questions of interest to all parties concerned, namely donor or recipient Governments, international organizations and financial institutions, technical cooperation and specialized agencies, non-governmental organizations and all segments of the societies concerned. Obviously, they were also of interest to the Economic and Social Council, which should go beyond its coordinating role and propose a global vision of United Nations activities in the socio-economic sphere. As was stated in a document submitted by the ILO to the eightieth International Labour Conference, cooperation for development could no longer be just any technical cooperation. It must be selective, consistent and effective.

52. Poland viewed the fortieth session of the UNDP Governing Council as an example of how a governing body should act in the face of mounting development problems. The Governing Council had completed its agenda in a fortnight and had adopted a number of important decisions, of which he mentioned several examples (see E/1993/L.24). One of the most striking (93/15) related to technical cooperation in support of the transition to a market economy and democracy in countries of Eastern and Central Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States. That decision, which recognized the complexity and difficult nature of the transition, called for a new concept of technical cooperation among the countries in transition. The successful completion of the transition to a market economy and the integration of the countries concerned within the world economy would be in the interests of the whole international community, as the UNDP Governing Council had duly recognized.

53. UNDP and UNFPA had devised special programmes to facilitate the transition; the programme for Poland, for example, concentrating on human resources development, the establishment of market-economy institutions and ecological infrastructure, offered numerous possibilities for joint enterprises with interested countries and organizations. Certain non-governmental organizations such as Rotary International were also active in Poland ("BEST" project).

54. Difficulties related to the overall economic environment and those resulting from the restructuring of the United Nations economic and social sectors should not have a negative impact on development cooperation within the United Nations system. The recipient countries had invested heavily in such cooperation, in terms both of human and of material resources, thus serving not only their own interests but also the goals of international cooperation. They should not be disappointed in their endeavours and expectations.

55. In its decision 93/15, the UNDP Governing Council had noted with interest the activities undertaken by UNDP to facilitate the transition to a market economy and democracy in the countries of Eastern Europe. In that connection, Poland welcomed the recent initiative of the Division for Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States to prepare region-wide periodic reports on technical cooperation in the countries concerned. That experience would surely make overall technical cooperation activities more effective and less costly.

56. Full use should be made of the comparative advantages of technical cooperation by the specialized agencies to overcome the problems of transition in the Central and East European countries at relatively low cost for the development partners and societies concerned. The prospects of cooperation between developing countries and countries in transition should also be enhanced.

57. Mr. YAKER (Executive Secretary, Economic Commission for Africa) noted that the main objectives of the forthcoming World Summit for Social Development, which were the struggle against poverty and unemployment and strengthening of social cohesion, could also be goals for United Nations operational activities. For Africa, the attainment of those goals would be set in a context defined by five considerations.

58. First, there was the tendency towards regionalization, marked by the establishment of major groups of countries. Secondly, there was already a development strategy for the continent in the form of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s and the Treaty of Abuja establishing the African Economic Community, which would enter into force shortly. Thirdly, Africa could also be regarded as a region in transition. Like the countries to which that term was normally applied, it aspired to democracy, a multi-party system and respect for human rights and had a private sector. Like those countries, too, it had too many upheavals and conflicts: there was not a single African country that was not in crisis. Fourthly, the continuum of humanitarian action to development should take account of another continuum, namely that linking the State to the subregional level and the subregional to the regional level. Lastly, interregional cooperation was particularly important, not only among developing countries but also between North and South.

59. In Africa, the transition was likely to take longer than elsewhere. The continent was preparing to become

a full partner in the world economy, to which it would contribute its enormous potential. In that connection, he noted that Africa was the richest region of the world, that it contained the poorest populations and 31 of the least developed countries, and that its population was growing by 3.1 per cent each year. Africa would thus have a heavy impact on the world's future, and sustainable development was inconceivable unless the situation in Africa was addressed differently, bearing in mind its urgency.

60. All those factors pointed to the need to strengthen regional cooperation. Doubtless that was why the Secretary-General had decided that the regional commissions would play a major role in coordinating United Nations activities. As far as Africa was concerned, an inter-agency committee comprising the Organization of African Unity, ECA and the African Development Bank had assessed the situation in the continent and proposed measures to improve it.

61. The regional commissions must participate in the implementation of General Assembly resolution 47/199, particularly in respect of the country strategy note, the programme approach, national execution and the harmonization of programming cycles. It was therefore regrettable that the regional commissions had not been invited to the March 1993 session of CCPOQ, where agreement had been reached on a joint interpretation of the programme approach and national execution. Similarly, paragraph 40 of resolution 47/199 provided for the establishment of a committee "which will normally comprise all resident United Nations system representatives". It was essential for the ECA regional directors to be members of that committee, to which they could provide the benefit of a regional perspective which had been strangely absent from the current discussion. The Secretary-General himself had spoken about such a perspective, and Africa needed one. The informal consultations that were to be initiated would doubtless provide an opportunity to give the matter further thought.

62. The PRESIDENT, winding up the discussion on operational activities for development, referred to two major problems which had emerged in the course of the deliberations.

63. The first was the suspension of the New York negotiations on the proposed restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations in the economic, social and related fields. Those negotiations undoubtedly had implications for the Economic and Social Council, but their successful conclusion was in the hands of the General Assembly. It would, however, be a good idea for the Council, which was at the origin of the proposal, to discuss it itself, both as a body and in institutional terms. Perhaps, short of being able to revive the negotiations themselves, its members could collectively create the climate of accommodation which would break the deadlock.

64. Secondly, there was the problem of the financing of operational activities for development. For the first time, a tendency that had been feared had become a reality: resources for development programmes were dwindling; and peace-keeping operations were mobilizing a growing proportion of the available funds. The Council might perhaps wish to ponder that phenomenon: was it the result of a political decision? Was it a deliberate choice and, if so, where was that choice spelt out? If, on the other hand, it flowed from an empirical sequence of specific decisions, the new state of affairs was even more problematic. While the humanitarian operation in Somalia had cost \$166 million, the associated military

operation had cost \$1.5 billion. Was it to be concluded that the United Nations was now practising a double standard?

65. Those two issues were of concern to all United Nations development institutions. Only an overall response by the United Nations system as a whole could provide a solution for them. The time had come to abandon a certain inter-agency folklore, marked by competition and turf wars.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.

27th meeting

Thursday, 8 July 1993, at 3.20 p.m.

President: Mr. Olexandre SLIPTCHENKO (Ukraine)

E/1993/SR.27

AGENDA ITEM 3

Operational activities for development (*continued*)

1. The PRESIDENT suggested that the Council should begin its exchange of views by examining the Secretary-General's report (E/1993/73).

2. Mr. BARNETT (United Kingdom) suggested that the Council should start by considering chapter III of the Secretary-General's report, which raised the issues members would wish to discuss with representatives of the funds and programmes. Most of the issues in chapter II were of chiefly inter-governmental interest.

3. Mr. ROHNER (Observer for Switzerland) supported that suggestion. He thought the Council might adopt the procedure followed at earlier meetings when a number of representatives had put a series of questions which were later answered by representatives of the programmes and agencies.

4. The PRESIDENT said he took it that the Council wished to begin the discussion with chapter III of the report and follow the procedure mentioned by the observer for Switzerland.

It was so decided.

5. Mr. CARMICHAEL (Canada) understood that a number of countries had expressed interest in the coun-

try strategy note. He would welcome further information on the matter.

6. Mr. BARNETT (United Kingdom) asked how the last sentence of annex II, paragraph 6, of the Secretary-General's report could be reconciled with the sentence in paragraph 39 (c) of Assembly resolution 47/199 which required members of the Joint Consultative Group on Policies to inform, consult with and take account of any views of the resident coordinator in the context of major programming exercises before reporting to their headquarters on major programming and policy issues.

7. Mr. SLEEUWAGEN (Belgium) said that he would like information concerning coordination with activities of national organizations of the recipient country.

8. Ms. POLLACK (United States of America) asked whether the Secretariat or agencies had given any thought to the possible results of the seminar referred to in paragraph 33 of the Secretary-General's report.

9. Mr. ROHNER (Observer for Switzerland) said that he would welcome information on the way in which the system operated on the basis of Assembly resolution 47/199.

10. Mr. HAEMMERLI (Department of Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development) noted that under resolution 47/199 it was for each Government to decide whether it would opt for the country strategy note procedure. His Department had accordingly asked its repre-