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Agenda item 8

ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON ITS THIRTY-FIFTH SESSION

Rapporteur: Mr. Hisham ELZIMAITY (Egypt)

Draft report

Addendum

PROPOSED PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 1996-1997

Section 24. Department of Humanitarian Affairs

1. At its 28th meeting, on 6 June 1995, the Committee considered section 24, Department of Humanitarian Affairs, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1996-1997.

Discussion

2. Many delegations recalled the objectives enshrined in resolutions 46/182 of 19 December 1991, 49/22 A of 2 December 1994 and 49/22 B of 20 December 1994 and expressed the hope that the Department of Humanitarian Affairs would enhance its efforts to meet the purposes for which it had been established.

3. Delegations expressed strong support for the programme on emergency humanitarian assistance, and the importance of providing adequate regular budget resources for its implementation.

4. Many delegations expressed concern with the decline in the level of extrabudgetary resources projected to be available in 1996-1997. They

considered that the Department's activities should be funded on a more secure and predictable basis. Some delegations emphasized the need to secure continuous funding for important activities such as the early warning systems.

5. Some delegations regretted the use of new terms in the programme narrative, such as "humanitarian diplomacy" and "humanitarian advocate". One delegation welcomed the use of new words like "humanitarian diplomacy", which was understood to mean diplomacy in the service of humanitarian assistance. Some delegations regretted the use of the word "intervención" in the Spanish text and requested an accurate translation of the word used in the English and French texts. Some delegations questioned the Department's mandate for demining activities.

6. Some delegations welcomed the inclusion of the "White Helmets" initiative in the activities to be performed in subprogramme 1, Policy planning and development, and its legislative mandate based on General Assembly resolution 49/139 B of 20 December 1994. In that regard, it was mentioned that additional operative guidelines should be established by the Economic and Social Council at its 1995 substantive session (July 1995). Other delegations expressed their concern about the usefulness of the initiative in complex emergency situations.

7. A number of delegations suggested that the respective responsibilities of the New York and Geneva offices should be more clearly defined.

8. Some delegations emphasized the interrelationship between natural disaster reduction and development and stressed that natural disaster reduction strategies should cover the continuum from relief to development.

9. Some delegations stressed the importance of information component in natural disaster preventive measures and requested that information related to natural disaster should be easily accessible for all countries.

Conclusions and recommendations

10. The Committee recommended approval by the General Assembly of the programme narrative of section 24 of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1996-1997.
