



## General Assembly

Distr.  
LIMITED

A/C.2/42/L.92  
3 December 1987

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

Forty-second session  
SECOND COMMITTEE  
Agenda item 83

### OPERATIONAL ACTIVITIES FOR DEVELOPMENT

Draft resolution submitted by the Vice-Chairman of the Committee, Mr. Henricus Gajentaan (Netherlands), on the basis of informal consultations held on draft resolutions A/C.2/42/L.58 and A/C.2/42/L.5.

#### Operational activities for development

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 3201 (S-VI) and 3202 (S-VI) of 1 May 1974, containing the Declaration and the Programme of Action on the Establishment of a New International Economic Order, 3281 (XXIX) of 12 December 1974, containing the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States, and 3362 (S-VII) of 16 September 1975 on development and international economic co-operation,

Recalling also its resolutions 32/197 of 20 December 1977 on the restructuring of the economic and social sectors of the United Nations system and 41/171 of 5 December 1986 on operational activities for development,

Recalling further its resolution 2688 (XXV) of 11 December 1970 on the capacity of the United Nations development system,

Reaffirming that the operational activities for development of the United Nations system are carried out for the benefit of developing countries, at their request and in accordance with their own policies and priorities for development,

Emphasizing the need to keep under periodic review the structures and modus operandi of the organizations of the United Nations system in relation to their operational activities so as to ensure efficiency and responsiveness to the needs and priorities of the developing countries,

Deeply concerned that the targets for official development assistance spelt out in the International Development Strategy for the Third United Nations Development Decade 1/ have not been met, and stressing the urgent need to strengthen multilateral co-operation for development through, inter alia, increased voluntary contributions to the operational activities for development of the United Nations system,

Emphasizing also the need for a significant, continuous, predictable and real increase in resources for operational activities for development to meet the growing requirements for development of the developing countries, in particular the least developed countries,

Emphasizing further the need to increase the proportion of grants in overall official development assistance,

Considering that all countries should continue to make efforts to participate in operational activities for development in accordance with their financial and developmental capacities,

Reaffirming that, at the national level, the allocation of resources for operational activities must be based on the national development plans, priorities and objectives of the recipient countries, to which the assistance provided by the United Nations system should conform,

Reaffirming also that economic and technical co-operation among developing countries should be a significant dimension of operational activities for development and that technical co-operation among developing countries as understood in the Buenos Aires Plan of Action for Promoting and Implementing Technical Co-operation among Developing Countries, 2/ and endorsed by the General Assembly in resolution 33/134 of 19 December 1978, is an important instrument in this respect, and taking note with appreciation of the report of the High-level Committee on the Review of Technical Co-operation among Developing Countries on its fifth session, 3/

Reiterating that the activities of the resident co-ordinators in fulfilling their role relating to operational activities, as defined in General Assembly resolutions 32/197 and 41/171, vary according to the development needs and priorities determined by the recipient countries,

Mindful of the special needs of the least developed countries,

---

1/ Resolution 35/56, annex.

2/ Report of the United Nations Conference on Technical Co-operation among Developing Countries, Buenos Aires, 30 August-12 September 1978 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.78.II.A.11 and corrigendum).

3/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-second Session, Supplement No. 39, (A/42/39 and Corr.1).

Aware of the acute problems of island and land-locked developing countries and their particular needs for development to overcome their economic difficulties,

Deeply concerned about the falling share of developing countries in the procurement of equipment and services for the operational activities for development of the United Nations system, as reported, 4/

Stressing the urgent need for harmonized, flexible and simplified procedures for the operational activities for development of the United Nations system in order to respond better to the needs of developing countries and particularly to reduce the administrative burden on Governments and facilitate their participation in these activities,

Noting with deep concern the shortcomings reported by the Secretary-General 5/ in the discharge by the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination, through its Consultative Committee on Substantive Questions (Operational Activities), of the responsibilities envisaged for it as the forum for the consideration by the organizations of the United Nations system of central matters relating to operational activities for development, particularly their co-ordination,

Noting with appreciation the important contribution made by the World Commission on Environment and Development,

Aware that a substantial part of world resources, human as well as material, continues to be diverted to armaments, with a detrimental effect on international security and on bilateral and multilateral co-operation, including the operational activities for development of the United Nations system,

I

Report of the Director-General for Development and International  
Economic Co-operation: case studies on operational activities  
and follow-up action

1. Takes note with appreciation of the report of the Director-General for Development and International Economic Co-operation on the operational activities of the United Nations system 6/ and of the case-studies on the functioning of operational activities for development of the United Nations system, 7/ undertaken in accordance with General Assembly resolution 41/171;

---

4/ See A/42/326/Add.3, annex, para. 25.

5/ A/42/232-E/1987/68, para. 59.

6/ A/42/326-E/1987/82, annex, and Add.33, annex.

7/ A/42/326-E/1987/82/Add.1, annex.

2. Invites the governing bodies of the organizations of the United Nations development system to discuss in detail the conclusions and recommendations of the report on the findings of the case-studies, 8/ at their next sessions and to submit their views to the Economic and Social Council;

3. Welcomes the announced intention of the Director-General to organize in early 1988 an informal discussion of the report's findings, with the participation of delegations, the authors of the report, and the relevant programmes and agencies of the United Nations system;

4. Requests the Director-General to continue to carry out the tasks entrusted to him in Assembly resolution 41/171 and to ensure, in accordance with Assembly resolution 32/197, effective leadership of the United Nations system in the field of development and international economic co-operation and in exercising overall co-ordination within the system in order to ensure a multidisciplinary approach to the problems of development on a system-wide basis;

5. Takes note of the comments provided by organizations of the United Nations system in response to elements of resolution 41/171; 9/

II

Priorities, resources and guiding considerations for operational activities for development

6. Reaffirms that the operational activities for development of the United Nations system are undertaken at the request of developing countries and are designed to respond solely to their development needs and priorities as determined by them;

7. Reaffirms the central role of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council as forums for overall policy guidance and co-ordination of the operational activities for development of the United Nations system, and emphasizes the need to strengthen further the co-ordination functions of the Council in this respect;

8. Affirms the importance of the operational activities of the United Nations system in strengthening the capacities of recipient countries to plan and implement development policies and programmes in accordance with their goals and objectives, and recognizes the important role of the United Nations development system, in particular the United Nations Development Programme, in assisting recipient Governments, at their request, in determining and meeting their technical co-operation needs, including human resources development, institution building and transfer of technology, as defined by them;

---

8/ Ibid., sect. VIII.

9/ A/42/326-E/1987/82/Add.2, annex, and Add.4, annex.

9. Invites the Secretary-General, as Chairman of the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination, to report to the General Assembly through the Economic and Social Council on the implementation by the Committee of its decision in October 1986 to improve the overall functioning and efficiency of its subsidiary machinery for operational activities and on further measures to improve performance in inter-agency co-operation in this regard, particularly through a review of the work of the Consultative Committee on Substantive Questions (Operational Activities);

10. Emphasizes that a substantial and real increase in the flow of concessional resources, particularly grants, on a predictable, continuous and assured basis, is important for the development process of developing countries, and calls for increased contributions from a broader range of countries in order to provide such resources;

11. Reaffirms the central funding and co-ordinating role of the United Nations Development Programme in technical co-operation within the United Nations system in conformity with the consensus of 1970 10/ and General Assembly resolutions 32/197 of 20 December 1977, 33/202 of 29 January 1979 and 35/81 of 5 December 1980, recommends to the intergovernmental bodies concerned that the need to preserve this role should be taken fully into account in the consideration of new funding arrangements for technical co-operation activities, and requests the Director-General for Development and International Economic Co-operation to submit to the General Assembly at its forty-fourth session, through the Economic and Social Council, an analysis of the issues relating to the implementation of the central funding concept;

12. Affirms that the functioning of operational activities for development of the United Nations system should be guided, inter alia, by the following considerations, taking into account the particular development needs, priorities and policies of recipient countries:

(a) Developing countries have the primary responsibility for co-ordinating the operational activities for development of the United Nations system at the national level, and the main role of the United Nations system in that regard should be to reinforce and strengthen the capability of developing countries to co-ordinate international co-operation and assistance in accordance with their priorities and needs;

(b) The programming procedures for the operational activities for development of the United Nations system should be made more flexible within established principles of accountability so that they may correspond to the policies, procedures and objectives of recipient countries, in order to permit the allocation of external assistance and co-operation in the context of a programme approach, either on a project-by-project basis or on a sectoral basis; this will also enable these countries to manage their programmes, to exploit substantive linkages among projects and sectors and to have a coherent and integrated approach;

---

10/ Resolution 2688 (XXV), annex.

(c) The United Nations system should improve its ability, at the field level, to respond to requests from developing countries for advice on developmental issues by, inter alia, enhancing its capacity for, and performance in, providing sectoral, multisectoral and integrated advice to Governments at their request, through, among other things, increased co-ordination among the organizations of the system and improved technical backstopping;

(d) To facilitate the task of developing countries in co-ordinating development co-operation and assistance, multilateral and bilateral donors concerned should endeavour to harmonize and simplify their rules and procedures in order to respond as fully as possible to conditions and practices in recipient countries;

(e) To maximize the efficiency and effectiveness of the operational activities of the United Nations system, the resident co-ordinators should receive the necessary support from the United Nations system and donor and host countries in order to discharge their functions in accordance with the needs, priorities and objectives of the recipient countries;

13. Urges the governing bodies of the organizations of the United Nations development system, in co-operation with the Economic Commission for Africa and the existing subregional economic groupings, as appropriate, to provide increased support, as a matter of priority, to African countries in the implementation, follow-up and monitoring of the priority themes of the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development 1986-1990; 11/

14. Urges the governing bodies of the organizations of the United Nations development system to place priority emphasis on the full and expeditious implementation of the Substantial New Programme of Action for the 1980s for the Least Developed Countries 12/ and the recommendations of the mid-term review of its implementation; 13/

### III

#### Programming

15. Requests the Director-General for Development and International Economic Co-operation, in consultation with the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme and the executive heads of other organizations of the United Nations system, to assess the constraints on the use of the United Nations

---

11/ Resolution S-13/2, annex.

12/ Report of the United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, Paris, 1-14 September 1981 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.82.I.8), part one, sect. A.

13/ Resolution 40/205, annex.

Development Programme's country programme and programming process as a frame of reference for the operational activities of the United Nations system, to consider the nature, scope and feasibility of a wider, more effective process in terms of improved coherence of action and effective integration of the various sectoral inputs of the United Nations system, to identify the grant organizations and resources that such a process may take into account, and to report thereon for the next triennial policy review of operational activities for development, in 1989;

16. Welcomes as a potentially significant contribution towards improved coherence and co-ordination the joint and collaborative programming of activities undertaken by the Joint Consultative Group on Policy, and requests the Director-General, in co-operation with the executive heads of the organizations that are members of the Group, to inform the Economic and Social Council of the nature and scope of their joint and collaborative activities and to comment on the possibility of more systematic exchanges at the headquarters level among those organizations on a broader agenda;

17. Reiterates the importance attached to the integration of women in United Nations development programmes, both as agents and as beneficiaries of development, calls on the funding and executing agencies to intensify efforts to increase the participation of women, especially those from developing countries and requests the Director-General, taking into account the requirements of Economic and Social Council resolution 1987/86 of 8 July 1987 in this regard, to report on such efforts and on the establishment of mechanisms for generating baseline information and measuring results;

18. Invites the governing bodies of the organizations of the United Nations system that provide grant assistance for technical co-operation to report to the Economic and Social Council on the content and nature of their current and prospective co-operation with the World Bank, including the criteria for the selection of the Bank as an executing agency and also indicating whether project agreements for World Bank-executed projects differ in character from those for projects executed by other United Nations agencies;

19. Requests the Director-General to examine in detail urgent measures that can be taken to ensure further flexibility, simplification and harmonization of procedures for programme and project formulation, approval, implementation, monitoring and evaluation, so as to adapt them to the needs and priorities of developing countries, and to report thereon to the General Assembly at its forty-fourth session through the Economic and Social Council;

IV

Organization at the field level

20. Considers that decentralization of operational activities at the field level should, within established principles of accountability, foster appropriate flexibility and responsiveness to the needs of developing countries, and requests the Director-General for Development and International Economic Co-operation to provide information on the measures taken by organizations of the system in this regard;

21. Urges funding and executing agencies to consider additional measures to ensure that expertise for all aspects of the project cycle, particularly project execution, is of the highest standard of quality and that project inputs are provided on a timely basis;

22. Invites Governments and organizations of the United Nations system to avail themselves, as envisaged in General Assembly resolutions 32/197 and 41/171, of the services of the resident co-ordinators and to solicit the views of the resident co-ordinators in considering projects to be funded or implemented by the United Nations system;

23. Also requests the Director-General, in consultation with the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme, to assess the resources required by the resident co-ordinators to carry out their increasing responsibilities, taking into account differing national situations;

24. Invites the governing bodies of the organizations of the United Nations system urgently to review and rationalize their field office structure to enhance co-operation, coherence and efficiency through, inter alia, increased sharing of facilities and services, and in this connection:

Expresses the need for such a review to take full account of the need for the provision, at the field level, of ongoing technical advice by the organizations of the United Nations system in accordance with the needs identified by developing countries;

Emphasizes that this advice should be offered in an integrated and multisectoral manner as envisaged in resolution 32/197;

Requests the governing bodies to report thereon to the Economic and Social Council at its second regular session of 1988;

Also requests the Director-General to report periodically to the General Assembly, through the Economic and Social Council, on developments related to the field office structure of the United Nations system;

25. Invites the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination to review the inter-agency arrangement concerning resident co-ordinators with a view to enabling them to better discharge their leadership role and functions and requests the Secretary-General to formulate specific proposals for the consideration of the Committee in that regard and to report orally to the Economic and Social Council;

26. Requests the Director-General to report on the progress made in the review undertaken by the member organizations of the Joint Consultative Group on Policy and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees of the pattern of their field offices, and invites other organizations of the United Nations system to participate in this review process;



V

Procurement and project execution

27. Requests the Director-General for Development and International Economic Co-operation to consult with recipient countries and the relevant funding and executing agencies of the United Nations system and make recommendations for innovative, practical and effective measures to increase substantially the procurement from developing countries in the operational activities of the United Nations system, taking into account the need for the full implementation of the preferential arrangements for these countries and making maximum use of national institutions and firms, giving also due regard to regional comparative advantages, consistent with the principle of competitive international bidding and maximum effectiveness;

28. Considers in that respect that the data base on which to assess procurement trends system-wide needs significant improvement, and requests the Director-General, in consultation with the executive heads of the organizations of the United Nations system concerned, to develop proposals for common practices within the United Nations system for the compilation and reporting of procurement information related to operational activities, including information on the sources of experts, training, services and equipment;

29. Affirms that all countries should have equal opportunities and access to the procurement process of operational activities of the United Nations system and that the flow of information on procurement opportunities, including competitive international bidding, and on countries' capacities and offers should be facilitated as appropriate and that the information should be made available to all interested countries, all of which would facilitate obtaining the desired increase in the procurement from all sources, including under-utilized donor countries;

30. Requests all organizations of the United Nations system concerned to provide full support for the activities of the Inter-Agency Procurement Services Unit so as to enable it to provide more comprehensive and reliable information on the procurement activities of the United Nations system;

31. Considers that the technical capacities of the United Nations system in the field could more fully be brought to bear in support of the modality of government execution of projects, and requests the Governing Council of the United Nations Development Programme at its thirty-fifth session to consider what further support can be offered to Governments and what further flexibility may be called for to facilitate government execution of projects;

32. Requests United Nations funding organizations, especially the United Nations Development Programme, rigorously to adhere to established criteria and procedures in the selection of executing agencies to be recommended to recipient Governments so as to ensure the provision of technical expertise and appropriate project support, including technical backstopping, as well as the reliability and accountability of the executing agencies;

33. Invites the Governing Council of the United Nations Development Programme to examine modalities for enhancing the implementation of its intercountry programme, taking fully into account the technical skills and capabilities existing within the United Nations system and in other appropriate organizations and bodies and also taking into account the different characteristics of each region;

34. Invites the Governing Council of the United Nations Development Programme, given the expiry in 1991 of current arrangements for project support costs, to begin considering successor arrangements designed to ensure enhanced project quality and maximum cost-effectiveness, with a view, inter alia, to ensuring the full utilization of technical and managerial capacities at all stages of the project cycle;

35. Requests the United Nations Development Programme to provide information to its field offices on programmes promoting or facilitating technical co-operation among developing countries offered by various developing countries;

\*\*\*

36. Requests the Director-General for Development and International Economic Co-operation to report on the implementation of the present resolution through the Economic and Social Council to the General Assembly at its forty-third session.

-----