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on Monday, 23 July 2001, at 3 p.m.

President: Mr. SIMONVIĆ (Croatia)
(Vice-President)

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In the absence of Mr. Belinga-Eboutou (Cameroon), Mr. Simonović (Croatia),
Vice-President, took the Chair

The meeting was called to order at 3.15 p.m.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECLARATION ON THE GRANTING OF INDEPENDENCE TO COLONIAL COUNTRIES AND PEOPLES BY THE SPECIALIZED AGENCIES AND THE INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONS ASSOCIATED WITH THE UNITED NATIONS (agenda item 9) (A/56/59-E/2001/9, A/56/65, A/56/89-E/2001/89, A/56/123-E/2001/97, E/2001/57)

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL REPERCUSSIONS OF THE ISRAELI OCCUPATION ON THE LIVING CONDITIONS OF THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE IN THE OCCUPIED PALESTINIAN TERRITORY, INCLUDING JERUSALEM, AND THE ARAB POPULATION IN THE OCCUPIED SYRIAN GOLAN (agenda item 11) (A/56/90-E/2001/17)

Mr. TANOH-BOUTCHOE (Côte d'Ivoire), Acting Chairman of the Special Committee on the Situation with Regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, said that the Council, as the custodian of Article 55 of the Charter, had an important role to play on behalf of the inhabitants of the Non-Self-Governing Territories. Self-determination and economic and social development were parallel endeavours and it was his Committee's hope that the United Nations system would continue to assist it in completing the unfinished business of decolonization.

The Committee's most recent deliberations had focused on the political, economic and social situation in the remaining 17 Non-Self-Governing Territories, most of which were small island territories situated in the Caribbean and Pacific regions. Their special needs had been highlighted at the Caribbean Regional Seminar held at Havana in May 2001.

The Committee had reviewed the information provided by the administering Powers under Article 73 (e) of the Charter. It had listened to representatives of the various Territories regarding developments in those Territories and had adopted, by consensus, one decision and nine resolutions. In addition, it adopted a unanimous resolution on Puerto Rico.

The valuable contribution made by representatives and peoples of the Non-Self-Governing Territories was central to the Committee's work. In addition, however, the Committee had repeatedly emphasized that, for it to carry out its mandate successfully, it also needed the cooperation of the administering Powers. It continued to enjoy excellent cooperation from New Zealand and representatives of France and Portugal had attended its recent sessions.

It had also welcomed the informal presence of representatives of the United Kingdom and the United States at some of its meetings and was gratified to note that the United Kingdom had been officially represented by an observer at the Regional Seminar.

It hoped that its working relationship with all the administering Powers would be further strengthened. In that regard, the recent meetings of members of the Committee with the representatives of Tokelau and representatives of the Government of New Zealand had been particularly inspiring. Encouraged by those meetings, the Committee looked forward to having all the administering Powers follow New Zealand's example and be more formally involved in the Committee's work. It was awaiting the response of the United Kingdom and the United States on the modalities for continuing the informal dialogue begun in 2000 on Pitcairn and American Samoa, with the full participation of representatives of the Territories. The Committee felt that the administering Powers should not miss that opportunity to make progress in the United Nations decolonization process.

Throughout the Committee's 2001 session, emphasis had been placed on the need for joint efforts by the Council and the Committee to ensure adequate international assistance to the Territories. The draft resolution before the Council on the implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples by the specialized agencies and international institutions associated with the United Nations (E/2001/L.22) was very similar to the Special Committee's own resolution on the topic, adopted on 2 July 2001. Both texts emphasized the recognition by the main organs of the United Nations of the legitimacy of the aspirations of the people of the Non-Self-Governing Territories to exercise their right to self-determination and reaffirmed that all appropriate assistance should be extended to them. Both resolutions requested the specialized agencies to examine and review conditions in each Territory and to make concrete proposals for accelerating economic and social progress.

As part of its information-gathering mandate, the Special Committee's text focused on the need for detailed information on issues such as the environment, natural disasters, drug trafficking, money laundering and the illegal exploitation of marine resources in the Territories. The draft text before the Council focused on the need for cooperation and integration arrangements to maximize the efficiency of the assistance provided to the Non-Self-Governing Territories.

The Council's draft resolution also requested that steps should be taken to organize a joint meeting of the Council and the Special Committee to discuss issues related to the

implementation of the Declaration by the specialized agencies and programmes, building on the preliminary contacts between the President of the Council and the Chairman of the Committee. The Special Committee strongly hoped that such a joint meeting could be held in the near future. It looked forward to strengthening its cooperation with the Council with a view to finding effective ways of accelerating social and economic progress in the Non-Self-Governing Territories.

Mr. OKELO (Deputy Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process), introducing the report of the Secretary-General on assistance to the Palestinian people (A/56/123-E/2001/97), said that it had been prepared by the Office of the Special Coordinator (UNSCO) in Gaza, on the basis of information supplied by United Nations agencies, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and various international non-governmental organizations (NGOs). It covered the period from June 2000 to May 2001 and provided an analysis of United Nations assistance in the period before the outbreak of the current conflict and of the measures taken to address the new emergency situation. It emphasized the shift from the focus on development to emergency humanitarian assistance.

The report first described the development assistance extended to Palestine in the three months preceding the outbreak of the conflict in terms of the sectors included in the Palestinian Development Plan. Those activities had contributed to making the occupied Palestinian territory one of the largest recipients of external aid in the world. The activities had been coordinated by the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee and the Local Aid Coordination Committee with the Special Coordinator, representing the various United Nations agencies.

With the outbreak of the conflict on 28 September 2000, the situation in Palestine had changed dramatically, profoundly affecting the living conditions of the Palestinian people and their hopes and aspirations for peace and a brighter future. In response to the crisis, the United Nations agencies and NGOs active in the area had been obliged to reorient and readjust their assistance programmes. The report described the ways in which they had sought to respond to the crisis while at the same time trying to ensure that previous developmental gains were not eroded. The report also recognized the need to strengthen the existing coordination mechanism further, in order to eliminate duplication and ensure responsiveness to the needs identified.

Three aspects of the crisis were particularly significant. First of all, the acute economic and social hardship endured by Palestinians in Gaza and the West Bank as a direct result of the closure of the border with Israel and the restrictions on the internal movement of people and

goods inside the territory. Secondly, the ongoing conflict was seriously weakening the various the Palestinian Authority institutions, including the Authority itself. The third aspect was the severe and traumatic impact on children, women, unemployed men and the others most directly affected.

The Middle East conflict and its painful consequences were becoming daily worse since the ceasefire had all but collapsed. Nevertheless, as the Secretary-General had repeatedly stated, the conflict could be resolved by implementing fully the recommendations of the Mitchell Report: political, economic and security. The recent diplomatic efforts of the Secretary-General and his Special Coordinator had centred on that endeavour. The Secretary-General was continuing to work in that direction, in close collaboration with the United States, the European Union, the Russian Federation, Egypt, Jordan and others. He welcomed and endorsed the recent statement by the Heads of State and Government of the Group of Eight (G-8). All those efforts required the full support of the international community, beginning with that of the Council.

Ms. TALLAWY (Executive Secretary, Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA)), introducing the report on the economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan (A/56/90-E/2001/17) prepared by ESCWA in response to Economic and Social Council resolution 2000/31 and General Assembly resolution 55/209, said that the report covered the period April 2001-March 2001. In recent months, the situation had deteriorated still further. In considering the report, the Council might wish to bear in mind the basic principles of international law and jurisprudence related to self-determination and the occupation of territory by force, among them the Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War (Fourth Geneva Convention), which stipulated that the occupying Power should not deport or transfer parts of its own civilian population into the occupied territory.

Sources indicated that 59 per cent of the West Bank, 20 per cent of the Gaza Strip and 30 per cent of East Jerusalem were still under exclusive Israeli control. The current Israeli Government had set no restrictions on the expansion of settlements and planned to increase the number of Israelis living in the area to 250,000 by the year 2020. At the same time, Israel was severely restricting the growth of Palestinian communities and the free movement of people.

Israeli activities in the occupied areas were not in line with the Oslo Peace Agreements of 1993 and 1995, the Sharm el-Sheikh Accord of October 2000, or the many bilateral Interim

Agreements. The report's findings emphasized the need to end the collective punishments through border closures, the withholding of resources and revenue, and the destruction of property and infrastructure. They also stressed the importance of discontinuing the policy of establishing illegal settlements. Israeli practices in the occupied territories had had a devastating effect on the living conditions of the Palestinian people and the situation deteriorated with each passing year. Israeli policy, moreover, posed a serious threat to peace and security in the whole region.

Mr. RAMLAWI (Observer for Palestine) said that the Council had adopted many resolutions, at successive substantive sessions, on the economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation of Palestinian territory on the living conditions of the Palestinian people, in which it requested Israel to discontinue the practices leading to a worsening of living conditions, in particular, the closure of the territory's borders, the isolation by military force of Palestinian towns and villages, the demolition of Palestinian homes and the Judaization of Jerusalem. Invariably, those resolutions also reaffirmed the inalienable right of the Palestinian people and the Arab population of the occupied Syrian Golan to all their natural and economic resources and called upon Israel not to exploit, endanger or cause loss or depletion of those resources.

They also reaffirmed that Israeli settlements in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and in the occupied Syrian Golan, were illegal and an obstacle to economic and social development. Inasmuch as they represented gross violations of international law, the settlements indeed posed a major obstacle to the peace process. The ICRC representative in Tel Aviv had described the settlements as a war crime committed by Israel against the Palestinian people.

The practices of the Israeli occupation in the past, as outlined in reports of the Secretary-General, had increasingly worsened the living conditions of Palestinians, but the current situation was one of a criminal war being mounted by the Government of Israel and the militias of the Israeli settlers against the Palestinian people. Violations and crimes of every kind were being committed daily against human beings and the environment, aimed at destroying all forms of life in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem. The reports before the Council clearly illustrated the scale of that humanitarian tragedy.

The Israeli Government continued to ignore United Nations resolutions, considering itself above international law. In its criminal war against the Palestinian people, the law of the jungle prevailed. Palestinian farmland, homes, orchards and water resources had been seized or

destroyed, waste deliberately dumped on Palestinian land, and the movement of medicines and food blocked by Israeli forces. Israeli settlements were used as military garrisons to launch attacks against Palestinians, and that revealed the true function of the settlements. The complete dismantling of those settlements was recognized as a prerequisite for peace in the region, yet their expansion had only been intensified, with devastating economic and social consequences for the Palestinians.

The massacre near Hebron some days previously revealed that even newborn infants were not spared the brutal force of the Israeli military machine. Since the beginning of the second intifada, 30 per cent of Palestinian victims had been children. More than 600 had been killed at the hands of Israeli forces and settlers, and thousands more injured.

Thanks to world media reports, the international community hardly needed more evidence of the brutal war being waged against his people. He thus called upon the international community to intervene to provide international protection and to support the Palestinian struggle for independence and self-determination, in accordance with United Nations resolutions.

Mr. HUSSAIN (Observer for Iraq) said that the denial of a people's right to self-determination was one of the most serious violations of human rights. A ferocious and systematic campaign was being waged against the Palestinian people in order to uproot them from their territory. The report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on her visit to the occupied Palestinian territories, Israel, Egypt and Jordan (8-16 November 2000) (E/CN.4/2001/114) testified to violations by the Zionist authorities and to the latter's arrogant disrespect for international law. As the reports by Human Rights Watch, Amnesty International and the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies had also confirmed, the Israeli forces had overstepped all limits in their use of excessive violence: illegal weapons had been used to assassinate civilian demonstrators, including children, and the arrival of ambulances had been obstructed.

In addition to the closures of Palestinian villages and towns, an economic blockade and non-payment of revenues to the Palestinian authorities, the collective punishment of the Palestinian people included the destruction of their culture, infrastructure, land, soil and homes. The Palestinians were deprived of their most basic rights, in flagrant violation of the Fourth Geneva Convention and all international human rights law.

In particular, he wished to draw attention to the plight of the people of the Golan Heights who had been subjected to Zionist occupation since 1967. He called upon the international

community to condemn illegal Zionist practices, such as the continued construction of settlements and the killing of civilians and Palestinian leaders. The Iraqi people shared the sufferings of their Palestinian brothers and appealed to the international community to end the Zionist occupation of Palestinian territories and to condemn the violations of the human rights of the Palestinians in accordance with United Nations resolutions, including Commission on Human Rights resolution 2001/7 of 18 April 2001 which reaffirmed the inalienable right of the Palestinians to self-determination.

A people that claimed to have been victims of Nazism was committing similar crimes against the Palestinians. Such was the price that Palestinians had to pay for offering land and providing asylum to the Israeli people 50 years previously.

Mr. IBRAHIM (Syrian Arab Republic) said that the ESCWA report on the economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation on the living conditions of the Palestinian people in the occupied Palestinian territory, including Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan (A/56/90-E/2001/17) provided further evidence of the brutality and ferocity of Israeli practices in the occupied territories. Of particular concern was the planned reinvigoration of settlement expansion in the Golan Heights (para. 55) and the lifting of the ban on new construction (para. 56). The report also testified to the deterioration of living standards of the Golan Arab population and to the restriction of employment opportunities in the occupied territories.

Since the occupation of the Golan Heights in 1967, more than half a million people had fallen victim to Israeli aggression. Arab civilians languishing under the nightmare of occupation were prevented from laying the foundations for their own development, while Israeli officials vied to see who could inflict the most damage on the social and economic fabric of the region. The Government of Israel's defiance of United Nations resolutions was a blatant challenge to the international community's desire to establish a just and lasting peace.

The previous week, the Israeli Prime Minister had stated that the introduction of new Jewish migrants was the only means to ensure the irreversibility of Israeli settlements in the Golan Heights. The Israeli Government had invited bidding for the construction of some 100 new houses and 220 tourist facilities in that territory and persisted in allocating an annual US\$ 500 million for the expansion of current settlements and the strengthening of settlement security.

Meanwhile, Israeli forces continued assassinating Palestinian and Arab citizens. Even children were killed, or taken hostage and brutally tortured. Israel was clearly a rogue State with no respect for international law. The international community must urge it to withdraw from all occupied territories and comply with all relevant United Nations resolutions. It must also bring maximum pressure to bear on the Government to end its aggressive policies and to build a just and lasting peace in the region.

Mr. AL-FAIHANI (Bahrain), stressing the serious economic and social repercussions of the Israeli occupation, said that his delegation urged the Israeli authorities to cease violating the Fourth Geneva Convention. Continued occupation would undermine the peace process for the entire region and encourage the spread of bigotry and extremism. For there to be peace, living conditions in the occupied territories must be improved.

Israel's economy was thriving, but the Palestinian economy was being deliberately strangled. Israeli closures had denied more than 125,000 Palestinians access to their jobs in Israel, and more than 365,000 Palestinians were currently unemployed. In recent months, the Israeli Government had acted in blatant violation of accords concluded with the Palestinian Authority. His delegation was particularly concerned at the closures imposed on Palestinian towns and villages and Israel's attempts to control unilaterally all border crossings.

The international community had a duty to protect the Palestinian people and help them redress the devastating effects of the Israeli occupation, claim compensation and build an independent Palestinian State with Jerusalem as its capital. The implementation of the relevant United Nations resolutions was a prerequisite for the entire region's stability and development. Further blockades, continued collective punishment, the seizure of Palestinian resources and the expansion of Israeli settlements would only further undermine peace and consolidate hatred.

Ms. ABOULNAGA (Egypt) said that the Palestinian people had been subjected to persistent and widespread Israeli aggression since the provocation by Israel of the second intifada and the dead end reached by the peace process. Even infants and women were not spared the brutal aggression. Television pictures gave some idea of the plight of the Palestinians, but only a careful reading of the reports before the Council clarified the extent of their sufferings.

In view of the severity of Israeli repressive practices, including the damage inflicted on the Palestinian economy, the daily violation of human rights at the hands of the Israeli forces and their use of sophisticated weapons against civilians, the international community must provide urgent protection and assistance to the Palestinian people.

The decision reached at the recent G-8 Summit to despatch international monitors to Palestinian territories was most welcome, as were the efforts of the Government of Switzerland to reconvene a meeting of the High Contracting Parties to the Fourth Geneva Convention. If an unarmed population was to be protected from a brute Power, the Government of Israel must be made to abide by its obligations under that instrument. The international community could not turn a blind eye to flagrant violations of humanitarian and human rights law in the occupied territories. The commitment of the United Nations to the Palestinian struggle for self-determination must never be doubted.

Mr. LEVY (Observer for Israel) said it was regrettable that the Council should stray from the business in hand, which called for attention to many social and economic problems throughout the world, in order to focus on one particular country. The contents of the ESCWA report (A56/90-E/2001/17) - based largely on media material, mainly from Palestinian sources, and the views of certain NGOs - suggested that all the problems in the territories concerned were the fault of Israel. But Israel had not instigated the violence at the root of all those problems. Over the past seven years, serious efforts had been made at collaboration and compromise, with so much progress that Israel had been ready to tackle the issue of permanent status. Palestinians and Israelis had met at Camp David the previous year to discuss core issues with a view to achieving a long-term solution.

The Palestinian leadership, under Mr. Arafat, had decided however, in September 2000, to instigate, on the flimsiest of pretexts, the current wave of violence, whose tragic consequences, it should be remembered, had been suffered by Israel too. Both sides to the conflict had indeed been grievously harmed; but it was extremely unjust to support, even implicitly, the instigators of the violence while blaming another party for the consequences.

With regard to economic deterioration, it should be recalled that, had the violence not begun, some 125,000 Palestinians would still be travelling freely to and from their work. Moreover, virtually all the cooperation projects initiated by Israel since 1993, leading to improvements in the medical, environmental, employment and other fields, had been wrecked by the Palestinian leadership for its own motives. To blame Israel for the dire consequences, although easy because a certain view could attract an automatic majority in some forums, was the height of unfairness. The situation reflected in the report could easily be rectified by ending

the violence and the incitement to it. Israelis and Palestinians were destined to live together; both sides should strive to implement the conclusions of the Mitchell report, seeking peaceful coexistence rather than confrontation of the sort reflected in one-sided resolutions.

Mr. MADI (Observer for Jordan) said that his Government would continue to abide by the peace process in the Middle East undertaken in accordance with United Nations resolutions and the land-for-peace formula. Peace would require full Israeli withdrawal from all occupied Palestinian territories, including Jerusalem, and the occupied Syrian Golan, with a return to the June 1967 borders, as well as from all Lebanese territory, in line with the relevant Security Council resolutions. The Palestinian people must be allowed to reclaim their inalienable rights, including those to compensation for damage caused by the Israeli occupation and to establish an independent homeland with Jerusalem as its capital.

His delegation was thus deeply concerned at the recent escalation of violence in occupied Palestinian territory and at the incidents stemming from the extremism of forces that rejected peace. The Israeli Government was primarily responsible for the danger to the peace process, since its occupation was a flagrant violation of human rights. His Government refused to recognize the legislative and administrative measures adopted by the occupying Power, and called for an end to all the inhumane practices manifest in the building of settlements and confiscation of land, and Israel's attempt to alter the territories' demographic and physical composition.

His Government also objected to the economic strangulation of Palestinian territory and condemned the constant aggression against the Palestinian Authority's infrastructures and vital facilities, all of which were factors that the international community should address. It called for the speedy resumption of the Multilateral Conference of the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949 as a means of international protection for the Palestinian people languishing under Israeli occupation, and those of occupied Syrian Golan. Israel must desist from exploiting and endangering Palestinian resources and violating the economic and social rights of the Palestinian people.

His delegation was dismayed at the adverse impact on the Palestinian people of the Israeli aggression against them, in addition to policies of closures and restrictions on trade, as well as direct losses accounting for hundreds of millions of United States dollars. In his Government's view, the peace process, an irreversible strategic option for the Middle East, must continue. It called for the resumption of the peace talks on the basis of the peace-process

framework and the agreements concluded. International responsibility for the protection of the Palestinian people must be maintained until a lasting, comprehensive peace had been attained, and the Palestinian people endowed with the right to self-determination and the establishment of an independent State on its national territory, with Jerusalem as its capital.

Mr. RAMLAWI (Observer for Palestine), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that Israel's claim to be a victim of violence was an insult to the intelligence of the members of the Council. It was Israel that committed all forms of violation against the Palestinian people, starting with its occupation of Palestinian territories. Was the violence referred to by Israeli delegate the violence of children facing Israeli soldiers armed to the teeth? Of a stone tossed by a child at an Israeli military tank? Of a bullet in the face of a helicopter pilot strafing Palestinians or their homes?

From his delegation's point of view, violence was the very essence of the Israeli occupation, a crime under international law: Israel's massacre of Palestinians; its withholding of water supplies to Palestinian communities; its pollution of the Palestinian environment; its building of settlements on Palestinian territory, and indeed, its every act and practice as outlined in the statements of previous speakers and in the documents submitted, constituted war crimes. No person present would support the Israeli observer's remarks. Indeed, all speakers on the item had condemned Israel's practices, which violated human rights and international law and had devastating consequences for the economic and social life of the Palestinian people.

Mr. LEVY (Observer for Israel), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that all the speakers on the item had condemned Israel because they all represented Arab countries. The Council was being politically manipulated by the Arab countries, which were internationalizing the conflict for their own political ends. The Member States paid the penalty, since the Council deemed it unnecessary to undertake detailed research and to commission reports on serious crises in other regions, opting instead to expend disproportionate time and resources on a single tiny area.

Israel shared the concern expressed by the Palestinian and other delegations regarding the living conditions of the Palestinian people. However, responsibility and moral accountability for the situation in the West Bank and Gaza lay at Chairman Arafat's door. Palestinian leaders lacked the courage to accept the extreme concessions proposed by Israel for the attainment of

peace, preferring to embark on a new wave of violence and terror. The real aim of the Palestinians was to make the entire country a Palestinian State, as evidenced by the fact that the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO) continued to use, nearly 40 years after its foundation, the entire map of Israel as its emblem.

Israel called on its neighbours to forgo the use of violence, as Chairman Arafat had promised the late Prime Minister Rabin in writing in 1993. While it wished to live in peace with its neighbours, Palestinians preferred violence. Israel was ready to return to the path of peace and hoped that Palestinian leaders would assume the moral obligation to make that peace.

Mr. RAMLAWI (Observer for Palestine), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that Israel was indulging in misleading camouflage, invariably talking peace in international forums, while persisting in violence which could only end with the cessation of the Israeli occupation and which Palestinians were pursuing through their armed struggle. Israel's aggression was a crime under international humanitarian law. Palestinians were merely defending themselves against the daily massacres by Israel. The members of the Council must not forget Sabra and Shatila and Sharon's responsibility therefor.

COORDINATION, PROGRAMME AND OTHER QUESTIONS (agenda item 7) (continued)

- (a) REPORTS OF COORDINATION BODIES (E/2001/55; A/56/16 and Corr.1)
- (b) PROPOSED PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 2002-2003 (A/55/6, A/56/16 and Corr.1)

Mr. CIVILI (Assistant Secretary-General for Policy Coordination and Economic Affairs), introducing the annual overview report of the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC) for 2000 (E/2001/55), said that there had recently been a welcome improvement in system-wide coordination. In the past, agencies had been involved first and foremost with their respective mandates and concerned solely to avoid outright duplication, with the General Assembly and the Council acting as watchdogs in the administrative and programme fields respectively. They had come to depend increasingly, however, on concerting not only their activities but also their policies with those of other United Nations agencies. As a result, the Council was becoming more active in shaping system-wide policies and the interaction of the Council and ACC had not only been enhanced but had become more necessary.

The unprecedented level of participation by agency heads in policy dialogue and the work of the Council's high-level segment reflected the new state of affairs and the growing desire throughout the system for common objectives and procedures. That evolution was

reflected in the style and content of ACC reporting, not confined to providing the Council with information but giving a sense of the state of system-wide coordination and responsiveness to central intergovernmental directions.

Three other elements were, he hoped, discernible in the report. One was the degree to which the system's response to globalization was a unifying force and a measure of the commitment to concerted, effective follow-up to the Millennium Summit. The second was the handling of almost every United Nations activity as a broader inter-agency effort. The third, a new spirit of candour and self-assessment.

There were two specific points in the report that should, perhaps, be highlighted. One was the reform of ACC and its subsidiary machinery, based inter alia on the considerations outlined in paragraph 58 of the report. There had been two basic objectives: to free the executive heads in ACC to focus on the strategic directions of the system as a whole and to ensure that system-wide imperatives were, from the outset, built into the agencies' policies and programmes. The second point, dealt with in paragraph 63 of the report, was a proposal to rename ACC the United Nations System's Chief Executives Board (CEB), intended to reflect the changing role of ACC. Endorsement by the Council of the new name would symbolize its support for the new direction in which the system was moving.

At the previous meeting, a comment had been made by the spokesman for the European Union about the interaction between ACC and the Council. The recent activities of ACC reflected its desire to strengthen such interaction, an example being the new ACC Web site that enabled delegations to keep up to date on ACC developments. What was more important, however, was that the growing concertation of policies and programmes throughout the system meant that, in its dialogues such as those with the Secretary-General and the Bretton Woods institutions, the Council was interacting with ACC and the system. Such interaction could and should be strengthened.

Mrs. BRENNEN-HAYLOCK (Bahamas), Chairperson of the Committee for Programme and Coordination (CPC), introducing the report of the Committee on its forty-first session (A/56/16 and Corr.1), expressed concern at the delay in issuing the report in Geneva, although the text in all official languages had been duly prepared at Headquarters one week previously. All the budget sections examined by the Committee had been approved but, because of time constraints and its sensitive nature, the section on human rights had had to be

deferred for review by the General Assembly at its fifty-sixth session. As in the case of the Committee's previous sessions, many observer delegations had participated in the work.

The review of the United Nations administrative and financial functioning had been discussed in the context of the Secretary-General's report (A/56/82). There had been general support for the report, but also considerable concern that its treatment of the areas where efficiency measures were being taken had not been broad enough. The Committee had merely noted the report and requested that, in future, the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) should play a greater role in programme evaluation, with more coordination among the existing oversight bodies.

The broad mandate of CPC, contained in the Medium-Term Plan, was to review, analyse and pronounce on the programme content of the proposed budget, the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ) being responsible for examining actual funds and resources. The Committee had commented, however, on an apparently increasing reliance on extrabudgetary resources for activities that ought to be funded under the regular budget - a matter that should be considered by the General Assembly. The Committee had also noted that the distribution of resources among budget sections should comply fully with the priorities established in the Medium-Term Plan, and had recommended that the General Assembly consider that matter also.

The budget was the first prepared according to the results-based format approved by the General Assembly at its fifty-fifth session. The new format, intended to reflect a more qualitative approach than hitherto, had been welcomed by delegations, although some had questioned whether the language used to indicate the expected accomplishments and the achievement indicators were precise enough - although it could, of course, be refined over time. The Committee had approved all the budget sections before it, except that relating to human rights, and had requested that the wording of the expected accomplishments and achievement indicators concerning section 8, Office of Legal Affairs, be brought into line with the Medium-Term Plan's language. The proposed budget also had a strong gender component and reflected the importance of ensuring, as an integral part of policies and programmes, that men and women in the Organization benefited equally.

The Committee had reviewed the in-depth evaluations by the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) of the programmes relating to sustainable development (E/AC.51/2001/2), population (E/AC.51/2001/3), drug control (E/AC.51/2001/4) and crime prevention and criminal

justice (E/AC.51/2001/5). It had recommended approval of that work and invited the Department of Economic and Social Affairs to consult more widely with all relevant organs, stressing that the national monitoring of nationally owned strategies should be encouraged.

The Committee had taken note of the ACC report (E/2001/55), had reaffirmed the role of ACC in mobilizing and monitoring the international community's economic assistance efforts and recommended that ACC should continue to coordinate implementation of the relevant intergovernmental mandates and provide annual overview reports, which should place more emphasis on ensuring better coordination among the system's organizations. The Committee had also examined the independent evaluation of the System-wide Special Initiative on Africa (E/AC.51/2001/6 and Corr.1) and, after extensive debate, had requested that a more detailed examination of it be conducted in the context of the final evaluation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s.

The Committee had also reviewed the Secretary-General's report on the draft system-wide medium-term plan for the advancement of women for the period 2002-2005 (E/CN.6/2001/14), the report of the JIU (A/55/59 and Add.1) and improvements to its own working methods and procedures.

- (e) INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION IN THE FIELD OF INFORMATICS (E/2001/96)
- (f) LONG-TERM PROGRAMME OF SUPPORT FOR HAITI (E/2001/67)
- (g) MALARIA AND DIARRHOEAL DISEASES, IN PARTICULAR CHOLERA (E/2001/80)

Mr. SCHOLVINCK (Division for Economic and Social Council Support and Coordination), introducing the Secretary-General's report on international cooperation in the field of informatics (E/2001/96), said that the report summarized the action taken pursuant to Council resolutions 1999/58 and 2000/28 relating to the follow-up action taken by the Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group on Informatics. The Working Group, pursuant to the mandate contained in the Ministerial Declaration of the Council's high-level segment, adopted on 7 July 2000, had produced a draft resolution that, in its annex, established directives for operation of the Task Force, and had been adopted by the Council in its resolution 2000/29.

The Working Group's activities had included collaboration with the Association for Information Technology (AIT), with a view to engaging the United Nations diplomatic community in the crucial task of investigating the impact of information and communication

technologies on economic and social matters, and the convening of a conference on information security at United Nations headquarters in March 2001. It had also considered speedier access to Member States through digital subscriber line (DSL) connections and the management of data recorded in meetings. It continued to improve and expand electronic information services to Member States and their permanent missions. The Council might wish to recommend that the Working Group continue its work in developing a coherent system-wide strategy for information and communication technology.

Introducing the Secretary-General's report on the long-term programme of support for Haiti (E/2001/67), he said that the report gave an overall review of the situation in Haiti, the main activities of the United Nations system and the progress made towards a long-term programme of support. One important development was that the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) had, to a certain extent, taken over the activities previously carried out by the International Civilian Support Mission in Haiti (MICAH) in respect of governance, human rights and institution-building. The Resident Coordinator had been playing a significant role with regard to long-term development prospects. Following completion of the common country assessment (CCA), a United Nations development assistance framework (UNDAF) had been concluded in April 2001. The Government had also undertaken to prepare a poverty reduction strategy paper (PRSP), work on which was being hindered, however, by the political and institutional situation in Haiti, efforts to solve which were being carried out with the help of the Organization of American States (OAS).

Mr. ALNWICK (World Health Organization (WHO)), introducing the report of the Secretary-General on preventive action and intensification of the struggle against malaria and diarrhoeal diseases, in particular cholera (E/2001/80), said that malaria not only mainly affected the poor but was itself a factor of poverty and accounted for 2 million deaths per year, 90 per cent of them in Africa, including 20 per cent of all deaths of children under five. He highlighted the part played by organizations and entities of the United Nations system in the Roll Back Malaria Partnership and the efforts to involve all segments of society in solutions to the problem, the current sector-wide approach and the successes achieved through the PRSPs and the heavily indebted poor countries (HIPC) initiative. The two latest technologies being applied were treated bed nets that currently lasted 6 to 7 years, as opposed to the earlier useful life of five months, and a new combination drug therapy. He commended the effective action taken by African countries to reduce the costs of malaria treatment.

Mr. CHARLIER (Observer for Belgium), speaking on behalf of the European Union and the associated countries of Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia and Turkey and Norway, a member of the European Economic Area, drew the Secretariat's attention to a number of editorial corrections required to the French text of the ACC report (E/2001/55), which he would submit in writing.

The Union welcomed the strengthening of the dialogue between the Council and ACC, the institutions' support for the Council's technical commissions and the ACC contribution to preparations for follow-up meetings to major United Nations conferences, all of which were essential to system-wide coordination.

It would be interested in hearing the views of the executive heads on past and prospective results of the reform of the ACC machinery, especially on the achievements of the objectives of the High-Level Committee on Programmes, the High-Level Committee on Management and the single secretariat co-located in New York and Geneva.

Inasmuch as preparations for, and follow-up to, major conferences increased the need for coordination to meet the goals set by the international community, the Union commended the ACC efforts to ensure effective implementation of the Millennium Declaration, and the various bodies' contribution to preparations for the International Conference on Financing for Development. Also of interest would be the executive heads' views on preparations for the World Summit on Sustainable Development and the coordinated implementation of the Habitat Agenda via the task manager system.

Lastly, the Union was pleased to see that the security of humanitarian staff remained an ACC priority. It would be tabling a draft resolution on the subject at the next session of the General Assembly.

Mr. PAYOT (Observer for Belgium), speaking on behalf of the European Union and the associated countries of Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia and Turkey, welcomed the steps taken by all concerned to elaborate and implement a long-term programme of support for Haiti. Full observance of the constitutional provisions and the electoral law in force must be the basis of democracy and the rule of law.

Since the period preceding the presidential election in November 2000 had, regrettably, been marked by violence, and since no international observers had witnessed the count, the

Union thanked OAS for its many good offices in an endeavour to find a solution to the crisis and supported its recommendations and the resolution on support for democracy in Haiti, adopted in June at its thirty-first session in San José, Costa Rica. In the context of President Aristide's call for parliamentary elections in 2002, a transparently organized count was the best guarantee of the reinforcement of Haiti's still fragile democracy. The Union invited all sectors of Haitian society to cooperate with a view to normalizing the political situation and implementing the provisions of the OAS resolution, particularly the establishment of a credible, independent and neutral electoral council.

While aware of the reasons for the non-renewal of the MICAH mandate, the Union commended the Mission's excellent work in difficult conditions and noted the measures adopted by UNDP to establish the post-MICAH programme, and the work of the Resident Coordinator and the various United Nations organs. Despite the formulation of a UNDAF for 2002-2006, development assistance policy could be reviewed under the Lomé Convention if the democratic process were called into question. The Union was ready to cooperate closely with OAS and the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) to resolve the crisis and reaffirmed the importance it attached to effective cooperation with those two organizations.

The meeting rose at 6.15 p.m.