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SPECIAL ECONOMIC AND DISASTER RELIEF ASSISTANCE: SPECIAL  
PROGRAMMES OF ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE

Assistance for the reconstruction and development of Lebanon

Report of the Secretary-General

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## I. INTRODUCTION

1. The present report is submitted to the General Assembly pursuant to its resolution 42/199 of 11 December 1987. It provides a brief description of the various assistance programmes implemented in Lebanon from August 1987 to July 1988.

## II. GENERAL SITUATION AFFECTING ASSISTANCE EFFORTS

2. In economic terms, 1987 was a particularly difficult year for the Lebanese people and it now appears that the economic crisis reached its worst phase during the fourth quarter of 1987. However, during the first half of 1988, some of the economic indicators showed a more favourable trend. None the less, sustained economic improvement will depend on the restoration of political stability and rebuilding of confidence.

3. The lack of fiscal authority of the Government was one reason for the persistent public sector deficit. The Government has virtually lost control over revenue collection, including direct and indirect taxes and fees for services. For example, customs duties are estimated at LL 423 million in 1987, compared to LL 1,273 million in 1983. However, in real terms, the 1987 income from customs duties was only 1.5 per cent of the 1983 level. Nevertheless, the Government has been obliged to continue meeting recurrent expenditures, the bulk of which were salaries and wages, and internal debt servicing. Interest on internal debt is estimated at 15 per cent of total public expenditures in 1987. At this point, government revenues no longer cover the interest on internal debt.

4. The Lebanese Government's traditional policy of subsidizing the prices of petroleum products and wheat accounted for most of the LL 65 billion paid out in subsidies in 1987, i.e. 41 per cent of total public expenditures. The Government's decision at the beginning of the fourth quarter of 1987 to eliminate the subsidy on most petroleum products will considerably decrease the overall cost of subsidies in 1988. Investment expenditures, mainly payments on previously acquired equipment, accounted for 19 per cent of total public expenditures in 1987. The 1987 public sector deficit, roughly estimated at LL 140 billion, increased fivefold in relation to 1986. This soaring deficit has burdened internal debt servicing, which has in turn led to increased expenditures and an increase in the money supply.

5. Price increases registered in 1987, especially during the fourth quarter, reached levels never before attained in Lebanon: 731 per cent in 1987, doubling in each of the third and fourth quarters. However, during the first semester of 1988, prices fell by 9 per cent to the level of November 1987. June 1988 prices were 7.5 times the December 1986 level, 4 times the June 1987 level and 85 per cent up from September 1987. The galloping rate of inflation of 1987 was the result of the combined effect of increasing public sector deficits and the serious depreciation of the exchange rate.

6. The acceleration of price increases affected the Lebanese people's expectations and resulted in the converting of assets held in Lebanese pounds into foreign currencies, which practice affected the exchange rate of the Lebanese pound

vis-à-vis foreign currencies and, in turn, the prices of imported consumer goods and raw materials, thus further contributing to the inflation.

7. During 1987, the Lebanese pound plummeted vis-à-vis foreign currencies, depreciating against the United States dollar at the rate of 14.8 per cent per month (end of period figures). The rate of exchange between the Lebanese pound and the dollar deteriorated from LL 87 to \$1 at the end of 1986 to LL 289 to \$1 at the end of September 1987, and to LL 500 to \$1, LL 525 to \$1 and LL 455 to \$1 at the end of October, November and December 1987, respectively. During the first semester of 1988, the exchange rate appreciated gradually to LL 363.5 to \$1 at the end of March 1988 and LL 353 to \$1 at the end of June (4.3 per cent per month).

8. There are indications of improved expectations on the part of the Lebanese concerning the economic outlook since the ratio of residents' deposits in foreign currencies to total residents' deposits decreased from 92 per cent at the end of 1987 to 81 per cent at the end of March 1988, compared to 35 per cent and 71 per cent at the end of 1985 and 1986 respectively.

9. After a phase of collective bargaining, wages were adjusted belatedly during the last quarter of 1987 and the first quarter of 1988. However, the increases agreed upon were much less than both the price and exchange rate increases.

10. The minimum wage rate increased from the equivalent of \$14.5 at the end of September 1987 to \$18.7, \$41.3 and \$42.5 at the end of December 1987, March 1988 and June 1988, respectively. In real terms, the minimum wage rate at the end of June 1988 was still at only 90 per cent of the December 1987 level. On the whole, the economic situation in 1987 remained extremely difficult for wage earners.

11. Although the overall performance of the Lebanese economy deteriorated in 1987, the productive sectors, particularly industry and agriculture, were generally better able to cope than the service sectors. Exports in general and industrial exports in particular increased. At the same time, imports decreased and consequently the balance of trade deficit decreased from an estimated \$1,200 million in 1986 to \$500 million in 1987. The balance of payments, however, registered a surplus of only \$119 million.

12. The slow improvement during the first semester of 1988 in some of the main economic indicators such as prices, the exchange rate, wages and interest rates might gradually restore the purchasing power of wage earners. The overall economic situation nevertheless remains extremely fragile. Without restoration of political stability and, particularly, the Government's fiscal authority, the economic situation might easily deteriorate again.

13. Against this backdrop, the Council for Development and Reconstruction of the Government of Lebanon continued the implementation of the 1984/85 expenditure programme and started implementing the 1987 expenditure programme approved in December 1986.

14. Total new commitments made in 1987 amounted to LL 12,099 million, of which LL 5,674 million was to be financed from internal loans and LL 6,424 million from foreign grants and loans. LL 11,586 million of these commitments pertain to

capital projects and LL 501 million to credit programmes. It was planned to grant an amount of LL 12 million of emergency relief assistance to displaced families.

15. Total payments for previously contracted and new projects amounted in 1987 to LL 19,456 million, of which LL 11,134 came from local sources and the equivalent of LL 8,322 million from foreign grants and loans. LL 17,716 million of these payments were made to the account of capital projects and LL 1,690 million to the account of credit programmes.

16. The education sector remained one of the priority interests of the Council for Development and Reconstruction. Total new commitments in this sector amounted to LL 2,337 million in 1987, of which LL 2,064 million was disbursed. Most of the funds (LL 2,095 million) were designated for the rehabilitation of primary, complementary and secondary schools, projects that will be financed entirely by the European Community starting April 1988, while the balance was used to purchase equipment for the Lebanese University. Rehabilitation of technical schools started in 1987. Requirements for new equipment for the schools have yet to be funded.

17. Within the health sector, it has been necessary to respond to the requirements for emergency assistance. The bulk of new commitments in the health sector (LL 1,530 million) related to a study on major hospitals in Tripoli (LL 1,517 million), while almost all actual expenditures during the period under review were made for the rehabilitation and development of facilities in order to ensure their effective operation under previously contracted projects (LL 111 million).

18. During the review period, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) funded technical assistance projects aimed at re-establishing the basis for planned agricultural and rural development. Commitments in this sector amounted to LL 0.8 million.

19. Total new commitments in 1987 in the irrigation sector amounted to LL 29 million, while most of the payments were disbursed on previously contracted amounts.

20. The implementation of the water sector programme, which consisted of providing immediate assistance for the rehabilitation of supply storage treatment and distribution systems for potable water initiated before 1987, was continued. Miscellaneous new water studies and physical projects were contracted in various Lebanese regions, to an amount of LL 417 million in the period under review, while expenditures in the sector for the same period amounted to LL 342 million.

21. Commitments in the waste management sector in 1987 amounted to LL 38 million. The bulk of these commitments pertained to main supply lines while expenditures in this sector, LL 41 million, related mainly to commitments made previously on a waste incinerator plant in the suburbs of the capital as well as on a study for waste incinerator plants in various regions.

22. New commitments in the telecommunication sector amounted to LL 75 million, representing mainly the study on electronic telephone exchanges, and the study for

the creation of telephone exchanges. Expenditures in 1987 were valued at LL 1,519 million and relate to previously contracted projects.

23. The bulk of expenditures continued to be on the road and service rehabilitation programme. This represents an infrastructure service essential to the social and economic development of the Lebanese regions and consists of reinforcement of the road, pavement and underground networks, including telephone, electricity, potable water and sewerage networks. Commitments made in 1987 in this sector amounted to LL 2,659 million, whereas expenditures in the same period amounted to LL 2,262 million.

24. One major contract was concluded for the transportation sector, namely that for the Tripoli port study, which will amount to LL 173 million out of total new commitments for that year amounting to LL 248 million. The study is under way.

25. Following the transfer of responsibility for the implementation of the comprehensive airport development plan to the Council for Development and Reconstruction in 1985, new commitments for 1987 were valued at LL 1,104 million, whereas expenditures for the same period amounted to LL 860 million.

26. In the area of public administration, two major contracts were signed in 1987 relating to the computerisation of the civil service commission and the internal security forces directorate, to a total amount of LL 2,268 million, whereas total new commitments in this sector amounted to LL 2,375 million. Expenditures on this sector and for the same period amounted to LL 561 million, while previous computerisation projects continued.

27. Two major master plan studies were contracted in 1988 for a total amount of LL 19 million, namely, the public transport sector study and the consolidation of public sector accounts.

28. The Council for Development and Reconstruction continued its assistance to the private sector through credit programmes. Loans for an amount of LL 501 million were committed and a total of LL 259 million was disbursed, mainly on housing and agriculture.

### III. UNITED NATIONS ROLE AND ACTIVITIES

29. During the period covered by this report, the United Nations system significantly upgraded its activities and presence in Lebanon in order to respond to the increasing need of the Lebanese people for emergency relief assistance, but the lack of political stability and continuing security problems made it extremely difficult for the United Nations to carry out its programme of reconstruction and development.

30. In order to evaluate the extent of the critical economic situation in Lebanon, the Secretary-General sent a high-level inter-agency mission to Lebanon in October 1987 to reassess the emergency relief needs. The mission was led by the representative from the Office of the United Nations Disaster Relief Co-ordinator (UNDRO) and was composed of senior representatives from the United Nations

Children's Fund (UNICEF), the World Food Programme (WFP) and the World Health Organisation (WHO). Together with representatives of the United Nations organisations and agencies in Lebanon, it identified 250,000 families as most affected and in need of emergency relief assistance in terms of food, health and sanitation, education, shelter and fuel.

31. As a result of the inter-agency mission's findings, on 4 December 1987 the Secretary-General launched an appeal to the international community for approximately \$85 million on behalf of the 250,000 most affected Lebanese families. As at 31 July 1988, the donor nations had generously pledged over \$70 million to United Nations agencies, the Lebanese Government and to non-governmental organisations.

32. After carefully evaluating the security situation, and in order to ensure a co-ordinated and responsible distribution of the donations received from various Governments, the Secretary-General appointed Mr. Ragnar Gudmundsson as Special Representative for the Reconstruction and Development of Lebanon. He also was appointed the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Resident Representative/Resident Co-ordinator for operational activities with a view to facilitating a consolidated United Nations system approach to the implementation of the various United Nations programmes in Lebanon. The Special Representative assumed his functions at Beirut in July 1988.

33. Owing to the prevailing circumstances in the country, United Nations activities continued to focus on providing emergency relief aid as well as the maintenance of essential services, such as health care and water supply. The United Nations programmes and specialized agencies active in Lebanon include UNICEF, UNDP, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), UNDRO, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), WFP, the International Labour Organisation (ILO), FAO, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and WHO. The Office of the Under-Secretary-General for Political and General Assembly Affairs provides policy guidance and co-ordinates the United Nations assistance for the reconstruction and development of Lebanon.

34. The organizations of the United Nations system as well as the Lebanese Government co-operated closely with local and international non-governmental organizations to implement the various relief and reconstruction programmes. These voluntary organizations deserve to be commended for their tireless efforts.

35. The United Nations Interim Forces in Lebanon (UNIFIL) continued to provide humanitarian assistance on an ad hoc basis in its area of operation in order to alleviate emergency needs. These humanitarian activities included distribution of food, medicaments and blankets to the local population, in particular during winter-time, as well as medical assistance and emergency transportation.

36. In his annual report to the General Assembly, 1/ the Commissioner-General of UNRWA describes the assistance to Palestine refugees in Lebanon, including the emergency relief assistance provided to them.

United Nations Children's Fund

37. Because of the ongoing conflict in Lebanon, UNICEF encountered severe limitations in the operational capacity of the Lebanese Government. As a result of the critical economic situation, virtually all levels of the population have experienced shortages in basic food supplies, medical care and drinking water.

38. One of the major constraints in Lebanon has been the lack of a governmental focal point to channel external assistance. Given the problems of logistics and communication caused by the continuing instability, experience has shown that a decentralised approach to assessing needs and delivering assistance through local groups is the only effective method. UNICEF therefore designed the "qada system" approach, which was first used as an operational structure to support the UNICEF vaccination campaign all over Lebanon in September 1987.

39. The qada system approach consists of mobilizing a collective and collaborative effort on the part of the implementing agencies and these governmental and non-governmental agencies then channel the assistance through co-ordinating committees at the district (qada) level. In addition, this mechanism is utilized in order to assess the needs of the population more accurately and to monitor and evaluate the respective programmes.

40. In November 1987 the Lebanese Prime Minister requested UNICEF and the Hariri Foundation, the largest non-governmental organization in Lebanon, to assist the Government in a joint programme to provide assistance to the approximately 500,000 students attending government and private schools all over the country.

41. The strategy employed in this context is also based on the qada system. Lebanon is divided administratively into five regions (mohafaza's) and each region is divided into districts (qadas). The whole country consists of 24 qadas and Beirut City.

42. A Central Co-ordination Committee headed by the Prime Minister and comprising high-level representatives of the Ministries of Education and Foreign Affairs, the Interior, Health, as well as representatives of UNICEF and the Hariri Foundation, is responsible for the planning. The Government puts at the disposal of the programme its available resources, that is, mainly staff and premises. The Hariri Foundation implements the logistics and UNICEF, in addition to its related projects, handles the co-ordination, monitoring and reporting of the programme.

43. As experienced during the vaccination campaign, the support of local committees is essential. In January the basic effort was to consolidate the qada committees: UNICEF trained and delegated a liaison officer to every one or two qadas to co-ordinate future activities and to liaise with the main office.

44. UNICEF's activities implemented through the qada system, totalling \$4.7 million, include the rehabilitation of potable water systems; assistance to social child care institutions; health education and participation in Lebanese Child's Week; child survival development activities; essential drugs programmes; and the distribution of donated assistance to the Central Co-ordination Committee.

45. The UNICEF water programme is one of the most important projects being implemented in the country and thanks to it the collapse of the water system was averted. The water rehabilitation programme consists mainly of the following components: repair or replacement of pumping equipment; completion of wells drilled either by the Government or as a local initiative; drilling new wells; maintenance of old water mains or installation of new ones; renovation of pumping stations; and the repair or replacement of chlorination equipment.

46. Since August 1987, UNICEF, in co-operation with the Ministry of Hydraulics and Electricity and the appropriate local water authorities, has implemented water rehabilitation projects all over Lebanon. The total number of projects implemented and completed between August 1987 and July 1988 is 233 projects, for a total value of \$3,090,347, and presently under implementation are an additional 54 projects. With \$10,000 provided by UNDRO, UNICEF also rehabilitated the water system in flooded areas in the northern Beq'aa and Byblos.

47. The UNICEF water system rehabilitation programme covers over 90 per cent of the water supply in Lebanon. In view of the importance of maintaining an appropriate water system, UNICEF strongly hopes that donors will continue their valuable assistance.

48. In the context of developing child care services in Lebanon, a project has been designed to define and consolidate innovative approaches to assist orphans. Another objective is to support widowed mothers with their responsibilities as heads of family, to strengthen family cohesion, to assist in developing a stable source of income and to promote the social integration of the whole family into society.

49. At a total cost of \$222,600, this programme provided the following elements: (a) financial support for the most basic needs of 1,000 families in terms of housing, schooling fees, books and stationery; (b) provision of equipment to 10 community-based centres to upgrade vocational training programmes for 800 women and girls, as well as to support activities of approximately 5,000 orphans; (c) income-generating projects in four community-based centres; (d) functional literacy training programmes for widowed mothers and their daughters; (e) recreational and educational activities for 500 children during the summer holidays.

50. In the area of training and reorientation, two refresher training workshops for 60 already trained family social workers were held to upgrade their technical skills in social intervention and evaluation techniques.

51. To assist social institutions, the European Community contributed \$235,000, through UNDRO, for which UNICEF acted as implementing agency. Thirty-nine child care institutions were provided with essential equipment for their dormitories, kitchens, laundry and dining rooms.

52. In order to improve health education in public and private primary schools in Lebanon, UNICEF organized training workshops that will eventually reach about 300 teachers and enable them to take on the role of health educators. The programme will eventually provide health education to approximately 35,000 to 40,000



schoolchildren, as well as establishing offering health services on the premises. The expenditure for this project amounted to \$114,000.

53. As in previous years, UNICEF participated in the Lebanese Child's Week. UNICEF's contribution included assisting in the preparation of the events, television and radio interviews, producing and distributing posters on health education and nutrition as well as of a pamphlet entitled "Health Education of the Child". These activities were organized nation-wide in close co-ordination with the regional and field committees. Total expenditures for the reporting period amounted to \$120,000.

54. UNICEF's activities in child survival development between August and December of 1987 concentrated on the acceleration of the expanded immunization programme. In August the efforts focused on the mobilization of the officials and the population to secure the proper response for the vaccination campaign. Some 2,000 health workers were trained and television spots and media material were produced to support the campaign.

55. On 21-24 September, 21-23 October and 27-29 November some 220,000 children, i.e. 91 per cent of the unimmunized children of Lebanon under 5 years of age, were vaccinated against polio and diphtheria/pertussis/tuberculosis, and 81 per cent of them received measles vaccines. This nation-wide effort, with 700 vaccination posts supervised by the Ministry of Health and its qada doctors, was supported by all international, national and local non-governmental organizations as well as all factions and parties, irrespective of their conflicting positions. Total expenditures between August 1987 and July 1988 amounted to \$365,800.

56. A programme to distribute 44 essential drugs has been prepared for implementation through the qada system in co-operation with the Ministry of Health. The project is estimated at \$6 million per year. Twenty-five per cent of the funds has already been received and drugs procured. The drugs will be distributed all over Lebanon through about 700 governmental and non-governmental dispensaries.

57. At present all dispensaries are receiving medicaments against scabies and lice for distribution to students in all schools. Overall expenditures for the reporting period were \$510,000.

58. UNICEF also assisted in distributing assistance donated to the Central Co-ordinating Committee. The Committee received donations from Kuwait (\$10,000,000) and Italy (\$18,000,000) consisting of food items, stationery, clothing and medicaments.

59. UNICEF prepared the statistics required for the implementation of the programme and the qada committees finalized the lists of schools and students. The Hariri Foundation provided the logistics and carried out distribution. UNICEF also provided the appropriate supervision, co-ordination, monitoring and reporting in order to ensure that the donations reached the intended beneficiaries.

60. Within two months, the donations were distributed nation-wide. The medicament component of the Kuwaiti government donation was distributed to government

hospitals and private ones on contract with the Government, as well as to dispensaries, while the food donation was distributed to about 500,000 students and teachers of kindergartens and primary and secondary government and private schools. Overall programme support, planning, operational support and freight charges for all the above projects for the reporting period amounted to approximately \$128,000.

#### United Nations Development Programme

61. In conformity with the February 1987 decision of the Governing Council of UNDP, technical co-operation activities were continued on a project-by-project basis, focusing on viable small-scale projects. However, in view of the slightly improved operational conditions in certain areas of the country, UNDP decided in mid-1988 to proceed with a revitalization of its programme, at a measured pace. The first stage of this operation was the appointment of a new Resident Representative who took up his duties at Beirut in July 1988. He concurrently holds the post of United Nations Resident Co-ordinator and Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the Reconstruction and Development of Lebanon. Action is now under way to appoint additional international staff to UNDP's Beirut office and to enhance its operational capacity.

62. The originally approved indicative planning figure (IPF) for Lebanon for the fourth programming cycle (1987-1991) was \$5,500,000. At its June 1988 session, the UNDP Governing Council decided to increase the IPF to a total of \$8,562,500. To this amount, a carry-over of \$5,340,000 from the previous cycle should also be added. The total of available IPF resources thus comes to some \$13.9 million.

63. Funds committed under the IPF in 1987/88 amount to \$2,714,000. The corresponding projects address a variety of needs. Five projects are now operational in the agriculture sector, namely, Animal health (Phase II), Agricultural Documentation Centre, Greenhouses (Phase III), Olive cultivation (Phase II) and Cereal seed production. The crucial field of human resources development is addressed through an umbrella fellowships project, a project in technical education and vocational training as well as projects for training in telecommunications and postal planning. A project in the field of civil aviation infrastructure is expected to be reactivated in 1989.

64. In the first half of 1989, UNDP plans to organize an inter-agency mission to Lebanon to programme the available IPF resources of \$11,188,200, provided that the political and security situation in the country at that time will so permit. In co-operation with the local authorities and non-governmental organizations active in developmental work, UNDP has already identified a number of tentative project proposals in various crucial fields, such as primary health care, waste collection and treatment, environmental quality control, water supply, technical education for women, science education at the secondary level, vocational training, agricultural research and production, and technical support for the Lebanese Council for Development and Reconstruction.

65. The programme sectors specified above are those where UNDP considers that its assistance can be of the greatest comparative value and responsive to needs. In the light of the difficulties the Government of Lebanon is facing, UNDP is of

course ready to assist in what it perceives as the essential task of enhancing the effectiveness of Lebanon's public administration, in particular its fiscal management. The re-establishment of the public income base is a prerequisite for effective social and economic reconstruction and development. However, the present political situation would not justify UNDP's major involvement in the field of public finance at this point in time.

66. In response to decision 88/31 taken by its Governing Council last June, UNDP has taken the necessary steps, in collaboration with the Government of Lebanon and the World Bank, to obtain the necessary statistical data needed to adjust Lebanon's interim illustrative indicative planning figure for the fourth cycle.

67. UNDP will proceed in its efforts to revitalize its programme at a measured pace, taking fully into account the operational situation pertaining at any given moment. The success of the inter-agency planning mission and the ensuing programme implementation will obviously depend on the operational situation and the capacity for co-operation of Lebanese counterparts.

#### Office of the United Nations Disaster Relief Co-ordinator

68. During the period under review, the general continuation of military activities throughout the country and the economic crisis in particular required that UNDR0 continue and even intensify its organization of emergency assistance to the Lebanese population.

69. Out of the contributions pledged to the United Nations as a result of the appeal made by the Secretary-General on 4 December 1987, more than \$5.5 million was channelled through UNDR0. This amount (mainly from Canada, Italy, Finland, the Federal Republic of Germany, Norway, the Arab Gulf Programme for United Nations Development Organizations (AGFUND) and the European Community) has been distributed through the United Nations system, Lebanese non-governmental organizations and international organizations for the procurement of medicaments and medical equipment (60.3 per cent), for shelter repairs (23.0 per cent), for children and orphans (14.7 per cent) and for food (2.0 per cent). In distributing these funds, UNDR0 also took into account bilateral government donations to various sectors in order to avoid overlapping.

70. During the reporting period UNDR0 also responded quickly to other requests for immediate assistance. In January 1988, at the request of the Lebanese Government, \$10,000 was allocated for flood victims in Byblos and the northern Beq'aa valley region. Some \$150,000 was given to the Lebanese Red Cross, to the Jabel Amel Association and to UNIFIL for civilians wounded in clashes in Beirut's southern suburbs and in southern Lebanon during April and May 1988.

71. Pending the appointment of the Secretary-General's Special Representative, the UNDR0 representative in Beirut was in charge of the office of the United Nations Co-ordinator of Assistance for the Reconstruction and Development of Lebanon and acted as Chairman of the United Nations Co-ordinating Committee in Beirut. In order to facilitate the co-ordination of emergency relief assistance to Lebanon and to supervise its assistance, UNDR0 made two delegates available.

72. In order to keep all parties concerned informed, the Office of the United Nations Disaster Relief Co-ordinator in Geneva organized two meetings on Lebanon for representatives of Member States, and international and non-governmental organizations. The latter, held on 8 July 1988, was addressed by the Under-Secretary-General for Political and General Assembly Affairs, and by the newly appointed Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the Reconstruction and Development of Lebanon and UNDP Resident Representative/United Nations Resident Co-ordinator in Beirut.

#### Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

73. During the reporting period, UNHCR was not directly involved in programmes for the reconstruction and development of Lebanon. However, following the contribution of \$600,000 from AGFUND, UNHCR is presently studying a project for the improvement and extension of the Islamic Hospital in Tripoli. In addition, the High Commissioner has approved in principle financing for a project sponsored by the Association for Social Action for the Hamelieh Technical High School amounting to \$50,000. The project is currently under study. The Regional Office of UNHCR in Beirut is in the process of identifying new projects for assistance to displaced Lebanese in various areas.

#### World Food Programme

74. The severe civil strife that has plagued the country since 1975 has caused considerable disruption in the economic sector and in the social and educational infrastructure. It has also resulted in considerable loss of life, a massive dislocation of the population and the creation of belts of poverty around Beirut and in other areas, as well as a sizeable increase in the number of permanently disabled, particularly among young people. The general economic situation has deteriorated dramatically during this period and the constant fall in the purchasing power of the Lebanese pound, combined with an increasing shortage of foodstuffs on the market and a sharp rise in prices, has resulted in an ever larger proportion of the population having difficulty in meeting their basic food requirements.

75. In response to the deteriorating situation and the increasing needs, WFP has continued to provide food aid both as emergency assistance and for development purposes.

76. Over the past seven years, the Programme has been providing assistance under a number of emergency operations for victims of the war and civil strife and for displaced persons. The most recent operation was three phases of the project EMOP LEB 3168, "Emergency assistance for needy and displaced persons", providing assistance to 300,000 beneficiaries. The original phase was approved on 14 August 1986, at a total cost of \$5.4 million, and distribution was carried out between February and August 1987. Expansion I was approved on 30 June 1987, at a total cost of \$5.1 million, and distribution took place between March and July 1988. Expansion II was approved, for a period of six months, on 17 December 1987, at a total cost of \$2.6 million, and distribution is expected to commence in October 1988. WFP food in the form of dry take-home family rations is distributed by the Government's High Relief Commission and regional and local

social welfare sub-committees to beneficiaries identified as being among the most needy and needy displaced.

77. Project LMB 524/Exp. II, "Feeding programme for children and youths in institutions and for vulnerable groups in mother and child health centres", with a total cost to WFP of \$14.4 million over a period of three years, was approved by the twenty-third session of the Committee on Food Aid Policies and Programmes in June 1987. This expansion, which followed a previous project for the same categories of beneficiaries, commenced operation in April 1988.

78. The basic objectives of WFP assistance are: (a) to maintain a satisfactory diet and increase the food intake of the underprivileged and vulnerable groups, including orphans, abandoned, handicapped and destitute children, expectant and nursing mothers and pre-school children, needy primary school children and old people, through food aid to socio-educational institutions, mother and child health centres and primary school canteens; and (b) to enable those institutions to improve and extend their infrastructure and facilities through the release of funds, as a result of WFP food aid, that would otherwise have had to be used for the purchase of local food.

79. The institutions assisted by the Office of Social Development in the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs and receiving WFP food cater for the poorest and most underprivileged sectors of the population. The WFP food is used, together with local foods, to provide cooked meals in institutions located throughout the country and through two primary school canteens, while dry take-home rations are distributed monthly through the mother and child health centres, to expectant and nursing mothers and to pre-school children (six months to five years). During the first year of the project it is expected that 26,000 beneficiaries in residential institutions, 8,000 beneficiaries in semi-residential and day care centres, 1,200 primary school children in school canteens and 19,000 mothers and pre-school children in mother and child health centres will receive assistance.

#### International Labour Organisation

80. During the reporting period ILO provided the following assistance to Lebanon:

(a) One fellowship for participation in the two-week Regional Workshop on Development of Policies and Programmes for Social and Vocational Rehabilitation of Disabled Women held at Amman (funded by AGFUND and ILO), \$2,000;

(b) One fellowship for participation in the ten-day Regional Seminar on International Labour Standards held at ILO headquarters (funded by ILO), \$3,000;

(c) Technical consultation at ILO headquarters on the pension scheme, with participation of a tripartite delegation (funded by ILO), \$9,000;

(d) Two specialised fellowship programmes organized under project RAB/83/002, "Regional Arab Centre for Labour Administration", \$4,000.

Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations

81. Since the last reporting period, despite difficult conditions and the evacuation of its international experts, FAO continued to implement its programme in Lebanon with the assistance of national experts or consultants and co-ordinated by the FAO representative in Lebanon.

82. The FAO programme in Lebanon is supported financially from three funding sources: UNDP, trust funds and the FAO Regular Programme for Technical Co-operation:

(a) FAO/UNDP projects

There are five projects financed by UNDP at a total cost of \$1,267,000. These projects address the fields of animal health, protected cultivation, olive production, cereal seed development and agricultural documentation.

UNDP and FAO are currently considering a project on consultancy services at a total cost of \$350,000. In addition, the Government of Lebanon has recently requested FAO to field a formulation mission for the rehabilitation of the forestry sector. This project will begin once UNDP funding is approved.

(b) Trust fund projects

A project on technical assistance in planning for agricultural and rural development has been operational since 1983 at a total cost of \$680,000. This project is financed under trust fund arrangements from the Near East Co-operative Programme and will last six years and three months.

Several other trust fund projects (FAO/Government Co-operative Programme), under consideration for funding, are pending until the prevailing situation improves. For example, project GCP/LEB/013/ITA, "Strengthening the operational capacities of the Ministry of Agriculture", is to be financed by Italy for a total cost of \$1 million.

(c) FAO Regular Programme for Technical Co-operation (TCP)

Three technical co-operation programme projects are operational in the field of rehabilitation of fish production, development of small dams and rehabilitation of irrigated agriculture in the mountain area, with a total cost of \$160,000. Three other projects have recently been completed in the fields of fruit production, apiculture and assessment of emergency food aid requirements, with a total cost of \$71,000.

The FAO Global Information and Early Warning System on Food and Agriculture regularly monitors the crop and food supply situation in Lebanon. FAO assessments are published in the system's monthly report "Foodcrops and shortages" in order, inter alia, to assist donor countries with decisions concerning the provision of aid.

The FAO Office for Special Relief Operations has contributed to the FAO programme in Lebanon through involvement in several of the technical co-operation programme projects mentioned above.

#### United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

83. The projects approved by UNESCO for the biennium 1988-1989 amount to \$120,000. The activities include financial contributions to the following organizations or projects: Association for Rural Development; folk art of the Lebanese Mountain People; restoration of historic monuments in Tripoli; Lebanese Association for Ottoman Studies; financial assistance for the editing and publication of UNESCO documents; the Tripoli Cultural Club Library; advertising studies; workshop on the application of modern technology in teaching; microfilming of official documents, and publication of documents.

84. Operational projects that are being financed from extrabudgetary sources include the development of teaching techniques and the provision of science laboratory equipment in secondary schools. The first project is covered by two project documents, one of which refers to teaching techniques for men and the other for women. UNDP has indicated its willingness to provide more than \$750,000 for the two projects. The second project, formulated in 1981-1982, was intended to equip science laboratories in secondary schools in Lebanon; however, it had to be deferred. It was presented again to the Islamic Development Bank, which agreed to provide the financing. A first payment of \$950,000 allowed UNESCO to acquire the necessary equipment and to expedite its delivery to Lebanon.

85. UNESCO also plans a number of projects in the area of cultural development. In August 1987, UNESCO discussed with the General Director of Archeology in Lebanon a project to safeguard and develop various sites in Byblos and the old souks of Saida. This project entails the production of 8 20-minute television broadcasts about the Lebanese heritage, which will be aired on local channels during the phase of reconstruction of the historic sites in Byblos and Saida. The Lebanese authorities have shown great interest in the project and UNDP is considering pledging \$150,000, while the Governments of France and Italy are willing to provide \$100,000 each.

86. The security situation has significantly slowed down, if not stopped, a number of UNESCO projects planned for Lebanon. An example of this situation is the international campaign to safeguard the archeological site in Tyre. Security considerations have until now prevented sending a commission of experts to formulate specific projects and their presentation to potential donors, and has put this plan on hold. In the mean time, UNESCO in November 1987 launched a "heritage watch" to increase the awareness of the Lebanese people of the value of the site and the dangers confronting it.

#### World Health Organization

87. The WHO budgetary provision for assistance to Lebanon during the biennium 1986-1987 amounted to \$1,293,900, and the amount approved for 1988-1989 is \$1,302,300.

88. Upon the appointment of a Special Representative for the Reconstruction and Development of Lebanon by the Secretary-General and the reassignment of the WHO representative to Beirut, the WHO office was asked to supervise all the emergency relief projects in the health sector supported financially through UNDR0.

89. Following reports regarding the dumping of hazardous substances along the shores of Lebanon, the Government requested WHO assistance in assessing the environmental implications in terms of health and its advice on the best measures to be taken to control coastal pollution. A WHO consultant visited Lebanon from 28 June to 29 July 1988. Recommendations were submitted to the Government regarding strengthening environmental management capabilities, control of environmental pollution and the containment of hazardous residues. Allocations for environmental health in the Secretary-General's appeal of December 1987 were estimated at \$200,000.

90. During the period covering this report, WHO has worked closely with the national authorities in the setting up of mental health programmes. The provision of psychiatric services has become a top priority in war-torn Lebanon. The national mental health programme has included two local training courses for primary health physicians and auxiliary health workers, which was arranged during a visit of two nationals to the WHO Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean in Alexandria.

91. Because of the high casualty count in Lebanon, activities have also been strengthened in the area of rehabilitation in order to make full use of the resources and facilities available. One of the increasingly important priorities in this area is the management of burns.

92. On 13 May 1988, the World Health Assembly, in the resolution WHA41.21, entitled "Health and medical assistance to Lebanon", requested the Director-General of WHO, inter alia, "to continue and expand substantially the Organization's programmes of health, medical and relief assistance to Lebanon". The resolution also called upon the United Nations system as a whole to increase its co-operation with WHO in this field and requested member States to increase their support.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

93. In view of the critical economic situation in Lebanon, the organizations of the United Nations system substantially increased their emergency relief activities and upgraded their presence there during the reporting period. The relief assistance provided by the international community as a result of the appeal by the Secretary-General, either through United Nations channels or on a bilateral basis, significantly alleviated the suffering of the Lebanese people. Though in the first two quarters of 1988 there were signs of a slight improvement in the economic situation, the United Nations will continue its efforts to mobilise all possible support in terms of emergency relief aid as well as assistance for the reconstruction and development of Lebanon.

94. To a large extent, the future economic development of Lebanon and consequently the well-being of its people will depend on the restoration of peace, stability and



mutual trust among the various parties. The Secretary-General is following the developments closely and, circumstances permitting, intends to send a high-level inter-agency mission to evaluate emergency needs of the population. The Secretary-General may once again have to appeal to the international community to provide additional emergency relief assistance. He appeals to the parties concerned to do everything possible to promote the restoration of peace and stability in Lebanon.

Notes

1/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-third session, Supplement No. 13 (A/43/13 and Add.1).

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