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PROVISIONAL SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 35th MEETING

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,  
on Tuesday, 15 July 2003, at 3 p.m.

President: Mr. KUCHINSKY (Ukraine)  
(Vice-President)

CONTENTS

SPECIAL ECONOMIC, HUMANITARIAN AND DISASTER RELIEF  
ASSISTANCE (continued)

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In the absence of Mr. Rosenthal (Guatemala), Mr. Kuchinsky (Ukraine), Vice-President, took the Chair.

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

SPECIAL ECONOMIC, HUMANITARIAN AND DISASTER RELIEF ASSISTANCE  
(agenda item 5) (continued) (A/58/85-E/2003/80 and Add.1; A/58/89-E/2003/85;  
A/58/99-E/2003/94; A/57/821-E/2003/86; E/2003/L.28)

Draft resolution concerning the strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations (Future E/2003/L.28)

The PRESIDENT invited the Council to examine the draft resolution concerning the strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations, which had no programme budget implications, and was currently available in English only.

Ms. BELOT (France) said that her delegation had noted the particular circumstances that explained why the draft resolution was being examined before it had been distributed in all of the official languages. She wished to emphasize the importance that France attached to respecting the language rules and the principle that all texts submitted to the Council for adoption should be available in the six official languages of the United Nations. However, owing to the importance of the text, the French delegation would accept, as an exceptional case, the submission to the Council of the draft resolution in English only.

Mr. FERRER RODRIGUEZ (Cuba) also wished to show flexibility and agreed that the text should be examined in English, on the understanding that it was an exceptional case.

Mr. ISSAKOV (Russian Federation) considered it unacceptable that official consultations were taking place without the necessary interpretation services and that the texts which had resulted from those consultations had not been distributed in all the official languages of the Organization. In a spirit of compromise, however, his delegation was ready to examine the text as it stood, provided it did not set a precedent in the Council.

Draft resolution E/2003/L.28 was adopted.

Mr. BOUCHAARA (Observer for Morocco), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, welcomed the adoption of the draft resolution, which contained innovative

provisions on funding for humanitarian operations. The text responded to several delegations' wish to see the Council give clear directives to United Nations bodies so as to enhance the effectiveness of humanitarian action.

Mr. ALESSANDRO (Italy), speaking on behalf of the European Union, welcomed the adoption of the resolution, which would enable everyone involved in humanitarian work to have clear directives for effectively orientating their activities.

Ms. McASKIE (United Nations Deputy Emergency Relief Coordinator, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs), going over the main points of the discussion on humanitarian affairs, welcomed the emphasis laid on the transition from the relief phase to the aid-to-development phase. Several delegations had stressed that during that transition period priority should be given to the consolidation of peace. The attainment of that crucial objective required investment and economic development programmes aimed at creating favourable conditions for the return and reintegration of refugees or displaced persons. Donors had therefore been encouraged to establish special finance mechanisms whose flexibility would allow emergency relief and development activities to be funded simultaneously. Several delegations had made constructive proposals, particularly on the need to associate political authorities, funding bodies and development actors in the framing of strategies that would enable the artificial gap between emergency relief and development to be bridged.

Several proposals had also been made on the subject of funding for humanitarian aid, and many delegations had asked for better account to be taken of the significant role of non-traditional donors and the increasing contribution of emigrant communities. As well as being predictable and based on flexible mechanisms, funding must be tailored to precisely and transparently evaluated needs. That could best be done on the basis of the principles and good practices of humanitarian action adopted by the International meeting on Good Humanitarian Donorship, held in Stockholm on 16 and 17 June 2003.

The discussion had demonstrated that the AIDS pandemic, owing to its scale, required not only adequate resources and close cooperation, but also a concerted and integrated approach based on innovative strategies that took account of the exceptional nature of the crisis. United Nations agencies had been invited to take AIDS into account in all phases of planning

and implementation of their humanitarian aid programmes, with particular regard to global appeal procedures and needs assessment, and to be guided by the experience acquired in southern Africa. Several delegations had stressed the need to include a gender-specific perspective in all humanitarian aid programmes, and especially in AIDS control strategies.

Among the other points considered essential was the need to protect civilians, particularly the most vulnerable among them - women, children, the elderly and disabled - and to guarantee them access to humanitarian aid. At the same time, Governments and non-State actors must reaffirm their determination not to let attacks against humanitarian workers go unpunished. Several delegations had mentioned natural disasters, and in particular the synergy required between programmes for prevention, impact mitigation, preparedness and recovery.

In conclusion, she assured delegations that humanitarian organizations would spare no effort to give effect to the proposals put forward, all of which were designed to increase the effectiveness of humanitarian action. The Inter-Agency Standing Committee intended to continue its efforts to improve the coordination of all United Nations humanitarian activities. It was for States themselves to tackle the problems, whose persistence was endangering humanitarian action, in particular flouting of international humanitarian law, difficulties in reaching populations in need, attacks on humanitarian workers and the problem of internally displaced persons.

The PRESIDENT proposed that the Council should take cognizance of the two notes by the Secretary-General: the first transmitting the report of the Joint Inspection Unit entitled "Evaluation of the United Nations system response in East Timor: coordination and effectiveness" (A/58/85-E/2003/80) and the other the observations on that report (A/58/85/Add.1-E/2003/80/Add.1).

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT said that the Council had concluded its consideration of agenda item 5 and thanked all delegations for having contributed to a frank and enriching dialogue.

The meeting rose at 3.50 p.m.