



**SECOND COMMITTEE**  
**34th meeting**  
**held on**  
**Monday, 7 November 1988**  
**at 3 p.m.**  
**New York**

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**SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 34th MEETING**

**Chairman: Mr. NAVAJAS-MOGRO (Bolivia)**

**CONTENTS**

**AGENDA ITEM 84: OPERATIONAL ACTIVITIES FOR DEVELOPMENT (continued)**

- (a) OPERATIONAL ACTIVITIES OF THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM (continued)**
- (b) UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME (continued)**
- (c) UNITED NATIONS POPULATION FUND (continued)**
- (d) UNITED NATIONS CHILDREN'S FUND (continued)**
- (e) WORLD FOOD PROGRAMME (continued)**

**AGENDA ITEM 12: REPORT OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL (continued)**

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The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 84: OPERATIONAL ACTIVITIES FOR DEVELOPMENT (continued) (A/43/3, 587, 671; A/43/273-S/19720, A/43/393-S/19930, A/43/457-E/1988/102, A/43/463-E/1988/106)

- (a) OPERATIONAL ACTIVITIES OF THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM (continued)  
(A/43/426-E/1988/74 and Add.1-3 and A/43/426-E/1988/74/Add.1/Corr.1;  
A/C.2/43/L.8; E/1988/76)
- (b) UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME (continued) (A/43/643, E/1988/19)
- (c) UNITED NATIONS POPULATION FUND (continued)
- (d) UNITED NATIONS CHILDREN'S FUND (continued) (E/1988/18)
- (e) WORLD FOOD PROGRAMME (continued)

1. Mr. BROWNE (Fiji) said that his delegation wished to associate itself with the statement made by the representative of Solomon Islands on behalf of the South Pacific Forum Members.

2. In accordance with General Assembly resolution 41/171, the Director-General for Development and International Economic Co-operation had instituted case studies on the functioning of operational activities for development of the United Nations system. One of the seven case studies covered three island States in the South Pacific, namely, Fiji, Solomon Islands and Tuvalu. The reports, published in October 1987, and the comments and views of the United Nations system on their main findings (A/42/326/Add.2 and A/43/426/Add.3) deserved close examination. The case studies should not be down-played merely because of their limited geographical coverage. Such studies provided a useful means of reviewing and re-establishing contact at the ground level, and enabled the people directly engaged in and affected by the work of the United Nations agencies in the field to help make the plans and programmes more realistic.

3. Since national development priorities were determined by Governments, the role of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) should be to co-ordinate United Nations inputs into the planning process and to maximize the value of the multilateral resources applied. UNDP was the most appropriate central funding agency, and the country programme should serve as the frame of reference for the involvement of the United Nations system in channelling and co-ordinating resources. Fiji supported the proposal that the UNDP resident co-ordinator should play a greater co-ordinating role for the United Nations system in the field.

4. For nearly two decades, the development efforts of States of the South Pacific region had been greatly enhanced by the United Nations development system. The emphasis placed by the United Nations on human resources development properly reflected the priorities of the States concerned. The latter would welcome greater efforts on the part of the United Nations system to promote co-operative arrangements and institutions among island countries in the areas of training,

(Mr. Browne, Fiji)

particularly in the public sector. They hoped that the fifth programming cycle would incorporate factors and criteria which would better recognise and assist those countries and segments of society which remained on the fringes of development.

5. He commended the work of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and noted with pleasure the rising international support for the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). Despite its very modest resources, the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) had acted swiftly to help involve women in mainstream development activities. His delegation welcomed the survey which would be undertaken in the Pacific island region in 1989 and looked forward to the formulation of a dynamic programme. The World Food Programme (WFP), too, had played a significant role in the development efforts of the South Pacific island nations and had helped the small farmers of those countries.

6. Every day there were new reports about damage to the earth's environment. Fiji believed that urgent measures should be taken to incorporate parameters within development programmes which would ensure the primacy of environmental protection.

7. Mr. KHAN (India) said that, in order to sustain the confidence of all parties, particularly the recipient countries, in the operational activities of the United Nations development system, it was essential to reaffirm the principles of the consensus of 1970, contained in the annex to General Assembly resolution 2688 (XXV). The need for improved co-ordination should not be used as a pretext to increase conditionality or dictate policy.

8. The ability of the United Nations development system to provide technical assistance would be adversely affected unless there was a significant increase, in real terms, in resources for operational activities for development. He therefore appealed to those countries whose contributions were not commensurate with their capacity, to increase their contributions. Despite very serious resource constraints, India contributed more to the operational activities of the United Nations system than did many developed countries.

9. The Jansson report (A/42/326/Add.1) had added a useful field perspective to the deliberations of the intergovernmental bodies, and the issues raised in the report could facilitate efforts to increase the effectiveness of operational activities at the field level. However, his delegation questioned the recommendation regarding the need to reconsider the criteria regarding the allocation of resources so as to limit resources to a small group of countries. The idea that some low-income developing countries had already reached the stage at which they did not require further technical assistance was not valid and would seriously jeopardize the consensus on operational activities and technical co-operation programmes of the United Nations system and undermine the sovereign prerogative of recipient countries to choose the areas in which they needed assistance.

(Mr. Khan, India)

10. With regard to different approaches to programming, primacy should be accorded to the programming cycle of recipient countries, most of which were on a four- or five-year cycle.

11. The role of the United Nations system should be to strengthen the capacity of the recipients for effective co-ordination. However, the resident co-ordinator should have a more active role in co-ordinating the activities and programmes of the specialised agencies and in providing leadership in the implementation of UNDP-funded projects. India had strong reservations about endorsing the proposal contained in the report of the Director-General for Development and International Economic Co-operation (A/43/426 and Add.1-3) regarding the study of individual country situations with respect to their effective management of total external co-operation programmes, since technical co-operation programmes were only a small part of overall external assistance.

12. His delegation was pleased that work had begun on the simplification, harmonization and decentralisation of procedures, called for in General Assembly resolution 42/196, and hoped that the report to be submitted by the Director-General at the triennial policy review of operational activities in 1989 would contain concrete and practical suggestions in those areas. His delegation would also welcome specific proposals for improving programme and project quality, rates of delivery, quality of technical backstopping and provision of multisectoral and integrated technical advice at the field level.

13. Efficiency must be measured by the extent to which operational activities fitted into the development plans and priorities of the recipient countries. For example, Government execution of some projects had ensured greater cost-efficiency and improved programme delivery and had also led to optimum use of locally available know-how, skills and expertise.

14. The Director-General should make specific proposals and recommendations for removing the institutional, procedural and psychological barriers to increasing procurement from developing countries and a time frame should be set for all agencies to apply the 15 per cent price preferential. His delegation called upon the agencies of the United Nations system to co-operate in improving and refining the statistical data relating to procurement from developing countries.

15. Finally, he said that India was grateful for the support it had received from UNFPA and UNICEF, and he urged Governments to continue to support the programmes of those two very important agencies.

16. Mr. RABGYE (Bhutan) said that Bhutan had benefited enormously from the wide-ranging assistance provided by the United Nations system. He was pleased to hear that UNDP would continue to place emphasis on human resource development

17. While his delegation was grateful to the United Nations system for its positive role, it wished to make a number of suggestions which could further enhance the effectiveness of United Nations-assisted projects. Firstly, the key to

(Mr. Rabgye, Bhutan)

successful technical co-operation lay in sound project design; accordingly, projects should be substantive and relevant, and account should be taken of the recipient country's priorities, capacities and working systems. Secondly, the procedures and modalities for project planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation should be further simplified, since procedural requirements often tended to undermine project impact. Thirdly, senior United Nations officials posted to Bhutan should be given greater authority in the interest of greater efficiency.

18. During the past few years, the governing bodies of UNDP, UNICEF, the United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF) and WFP had approved a number of programmes and projects, which were an integral part of Bhutan's five-year plan. The success of those projects was crucial to the achievement of Bhutan's overall development goals, thus any disruption in the implementation of those programmes and projects would have a serious adverse impact on Bhutan's development process.

19. Miss RAZAFITRIMO (Madagascar) said that, in view of the paradox which existed between the improvement in international political relations and the persistence of economic injustices, the detailed report on operational activities for development (A/43/426 and Add.1-3) was particularly welcome and she associated herself with the remarks made at the 32nd meeting by the representative of Tunisia on behalf of the Group of 77.

20. The general commitment to the principles governing operational activities, set out in General Assembly resolutions 2688 (XXV) and 32/197, ensured that the credibility of the United Nations operational activities would be maintained. She welcomed the assurance which the UNDP Administrator had given at the thirty-fifth session of the Governing Council that the Programme's technical assistance would never become subject to conditions. It was precisely such multilateral, non-political and impartial activities that were needed to meet the pressing needs of developing countries.

21. The United Nations co-operated with Madagascar in many areas of development through a wide range of agencies. Of particular importance were measures aimed at helping the Government tackle the social and other problems generated by the implementation of structural adjustment measures. As in most countries which had embarked on such a course, improvement of the Government's financial situation had necessitated a reduction in the amount of resources allocated for essential services in the economic and social sectors. The compression of domestic demand had placed an intolerable burden on the most disadvantaged groups in society, while debt-servicing continued to absorb nearly half the country's export earnings. The country therefore welcomed all additional resources, particularly those provided through the United Nations system on a grant basis.

22. She welcomed the initiative taken by UNDP to strengthen the capacity of developing countries in the formulation, negotiation and management of structural adjustment programmes, which would reinforce the Programme's pivotal role in the provision of international technical assistance. Reality dictated that capital assistance and technical assistance must be complementary; accordingly,

(Miss Razafitrino, Madagascar)

co-operation was growing between the United Nations system and the World Bank. In that connection, it was to be hoped that all United Nations agencies would continue to demonstrate the objectivity and operational autonomy that were essential to their credibility as development partners.

23. Her delegation fully agreed with the Director-General's selection of areas in which to focus the system's organizational activities. That approach confirmed the conclusion reached by many Malagasy experts that designing co-operation projects on the basis of priority themes tended to facilitate project monitoring and evaluation activities and avoid any overlapping with other sources of assistance. In that connection, she drew attention to a programme of co-operation between Madagascar and UNICEF for the period 1985-1990 which had taken an inter-sectoral approach to maternal and child welfare. The programme involved several ministerial departments under the co-ordination of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Planning Office. One component of the programme was a "community pharmacies" project that had been set up earlier in the year with assistance from UNDP. UNFPA had also worked actively with Madagascar on a series of multisectoral studies on demographic issues and a training programme for medical and paramedical staff from 48 maternal and child health centres.

24. Joint programming was as important as the adoption of a thematic approach. Given the meagre human, financial and physical resources available to Governments for the implementation of operational activities for development as well as the need for prompt action to tackle emergencies, simplification, decentralization and harmonization of regulations and procedures were extremely important. Any effort in that direction, such as the recent decision to expand the authority of UNDP resident representatives to approve projects, was to be commended. The authority of representatives of other agencies which executed UNDP projects should also be expanded.

25. Resources must be adequate to meet the objectives for which they were intended. In that connection, the results of the recent Pledging Conference for Development Activities has been encouraging, although they represented more of a consolidation than an increase. Her own country would endeavour to contribute within the limits of its financial capacity.

26. Recalling the Administrator's appeal for an urgent solution to the problem of non-competitive salaries and benefits for expatriate experts in countries such as Madagascar and India, she urged the Committee to reiterate that appeal.

27. With regard to programme execution, she welcomed the reallocation of \$676 million for the fourth programming cycle. Her delegation had taken note of the concern of major donors whose goods and services were underutilized; for its part, Madagascar was determined to do all it could to make optimum use of the financial, human and technical resources at its disposal. To that end, negotiations had been undertaken with the new UNDP Resident Representative to involve the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in projects to assist the country in evaluating projects and co-ordinating external assistance.

(Miss Rasafitrimo, Madagascar)

28. Given that food production in developing countries was lagging behind population growth and given the serious economic problems of the developing countries, it was essential that the policies of international agencies, including those bodies of the United Nations system carrying out operational activities, should be co-ordinated. The initiatives taken in that direction by the World Food Council were very gratifying, and her Government was particularly appreciative of the assistance provided by the World Food Programme in combating hunger and poverty in Madagascar.

29. Mr. LEMERLE (France) said that technical assistance had an important role to play in human resources development in developing countries, as structural adjustment efforts were forcing many developing countries to make sacrifices in the social sphere. Technical assistance could also help those countries establish effective management mechanisms, which they frequently lacked. However, increased resources were needed to do so.

30. The results of the recent Pledging Conference were encouraging. The substantial increase in contributions to UNDP, UNICEF and UNFPA undoubtedly reflected donor countries' renewed confidence in multilateral assistance. However, technical assistance to developing countries, and the least developed countries in particular, must be not only more abundant but also more judicious. New instruments were required to ensure that those countries made optimum use of all the multilateral and bilateral resources at their disposal.

31. The case studies cited in the Jansson report (A/42/326/Add.1) indicated that co-ordination between the various participants in development at the country level did not function effectively: UNDP country programmes did not always provide a framework for all technical assistance provided by the United Nations system, nor was the role of the resident co-ordinator always used properly. That situation was not helpful to the developing countries, which were at times overwhelmed by assistance from a plethora of sources. Moreover, the multiplicity of procedures, duplications and the absence of an integrated approach to development hampered the effective management of assistance. That situation was due in part to structural obstacles and in part to traditions that had developed over 30 years in most of the organizations in question.

32. The procedure adopted by the Director-General for the implementation of General Assembly resolution 42/196, based on joint action, offered a good approach. The specialized agencies, whose experience in the field was unmatched, must do their part to ensure the satisfactory execution of operational activities. His delegation looked forward to the study being carried out by the Director-General on possible modifications to be made to the United Nations development system as a whole.

33. He urged the Director-General, in co-operation with the organizations concerned, to explore ways and means of removing the obstacles facing the system so that it could meet the demands of a wide variety of situations more effectively and consider new approaches to technical co-operation, such as the execution of programmes and projects by beneficiary countries themselves.

(Mr. Lemerle, France)

34. As the fourth international development strategy was soon to be launched, it was appropriate to reflect on such priority issues as poverty, food, population growth, education and the environment, with a view to strengthening international co-operation in those areas. Innovative approaches to technical co-operation in those areas should be put forward. Many countries, particularly in Africa, also continued to suffer from structural problems which required greater attention on the part of the international community, the latter must accord highest priority to the poorest countries.

35. Mr. OSMAN (Somalia) said that the operational activities of the United Nations system often provided developing countries with their only opportunity to see the Organization in action. The importance those countries attached to operational activities was due to the unique characteristics of United Nations programmes: their multilateralism, impartiality and, more importantly, the prestige attached to the Organization itself. UNDP was, and must remain, the central funding and co-ordinating organ for the operational activities of the United Nations system.

36. The information provided in paragraphs 15 to 32 of document A/43/426/Add.2 was particularly useful as it indicated the possibility of increased resources for operational activities. However, total available resources still fell far short of the amount needed to address development problems in a meaningful way.

37. The UNDP Administrator was to be commended for his efficient management of the Programme and for his view that human resources development should constitute the core of development efforts as well as a cornerstone of the international development strategy for the fourth United Nations development decade.

38. The developing countries must increasingly be allowed to participate actively in operational activities. Greater efforts must be made by UNDP and its executing agencies to stimulate the procurement of goods and services from developing countries. While procurement from those countries had increased by 11.7 per cent from 1986 to 1987, it must increase further, particularly as the base figure had been very low. All agencies should supply more timely data on procurement so that the situation could be monitored accurately.

39. As the tenth anniversary of the Buenos Aires Plan of Action for technical co-operation among developing countries was approaching, the international community must rededicate itself to the Plan's lofty precepts and objectives. The United Nations development system must be the chief promoter of such co-operation.

40. UNDP was to be commended for the success of the thirty-fifth session of the Governing Council. Of particular significance was the consensus reached on the distribution of \$676 million for the fourth programming cycle. In that connection, the Administrator should implement Governing Council decision 88/31 expeditiously.

41. His delegation attached particular importance to Governing Council decision 88/24, which called upon the Administrator to take several important steps to support the implementation of the United Nations Programme of Action for African



(Mr. Osman, Somalia)

Economic Recovery and Development. His delegation also welcomed the conclusions contained in Governing Council decision 88/56, on operational activities for development.

42. His delegation favoured a greater decentralisation of UNDP activities from headquarters to the field in order to ensure a more prompt and effective response to the varied and changing needs of developing countries. The decision of UNDP to raise the project approval limit for resident representatives to \$700,000 was especially welcome.

43. The field operations of United Nations agencies were of crucial importance. Agencies must therefore try to avoid any incoherence, incompetence or competition in their activities. Optimum use must be made of the limited resources available. His delegation did not believe that the United Nations resident co-ordinator should have a separate office in countries with large assistance programmes: the co-ordinator's effectiveness derived from his or her access to UNDP resources. It was more important to ensure that the very best candidates were selected to fill those posts.

44. Close attention should be paid to the constraints which prevented the UNDP country programme from becoming the effective framework for technical co-operation in recipient countries. The Governing Council had provided important insights into the role of the country programme and the programming process. The mandates of agencies carrying out operational activities were quite different from those of international financial institutions. While collaboration between the two groups was desirable, it must always take fully into account the special character, mandates and policies of the various organizations. Most importantly, United Nations agencies must avoid creating an appearance of conditionality in providing assistance.

45. His delegation firmly supported the strengthening of the capacity of recipient Governments to co-ordinate external assistance as well as co-operation among representatives of all United Nations agencies so that Governments could be provided with multisectoral advice at their request.

46. His delegation commended the recent work of the governing bodies of UNICEF and the World Food Programme. It also appealed to all donors to contribute to the United Nations Population Fund and called for a prompt replenishment of the International Fund for Agricultural Development. Finally, he noted that the least developed countries attached high priority to multilateral economic and development co-operation and urged all donors and relevant international bodies to assist those countries as much as possible and to support the second United Nations conference on least developed countries, to be held in Paris in 1990.

47. Mr. JOSSE (Nepal) said that his country had always attached importance to operational activities for development, not least because of their multilateral, non-political and impartial nature. Accordingly, he was greatly encouraged by the results of the Pledging Conference for Development Activities for 1989. He shared

(Mr. Josse, Nepal)

the view that achievement of the 0.7 per cent ODA target would provide the resources required to reinforce the multilateral development institutions.

48. Development programmes must be adequately funded, relevant to the needs of the developing countries and efficiently administered. He welcomed, therefore, the adoption of resolution 42/196 and fully supported the constructive approach to its implementation.

49. The increase in the resources of UNDP was a clear demonstration of confidence, which should make it possible to address some serious problems, including that of attracting and retaining skilled personnel. The reaffirmation of its central funding and co-ordinating role should be taken into account by intergovernmental bodies with regard to future funding arrangements for technical co-operation activities. The criteria for allocation of its very limited resources should be reconsidered, a much larger share than at present being devoted to the least developed countries. He welcomed the increasingly significant role played by UNDP in meeting the environmental concerns of developing countries.

50. UNICEF was an important partner in Nepal's social and economic development. His delegation noted with satisfaction the successes achieved with regard to child survival and development activities. It would support preparation of a UNICEF strategy for children in the 1990s. The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) also played an important role, promoting, for example, mother and child welfare and family planning in Nepal. With continued assistance and guidance from UNFPA, it was hoped to develop family planning as an essential component of basic health services, and to further integrate population and development programmes. The encouraging increase in contributions pledged to UNFPA should permit expansion of its activities world-wide and greater effectiveness. It was also encouraging that serious efforts were being made to streamline its internal operations.

51. The Capital Development Fund had provided concessional capital for a wide range of development projects in Nepal; it had served as a useful channel between UNDP-financed, pre-investment activities and large-scale investment financing from other multilateral institutions such as the World Bank. It was encouraging that, by the end of 1988, the Fund would have approved a record amount of \$US 60 million for small capital projects in the least developed countries.

52. Not only was Nepal a beneficiary of the United Nations Volunteers programme, but it had also contributed volunteers. It was disappointing that pledges had fallen sharply at a time when a record number of volunteers had been working in over 100 developing countries.

53. He urged the international donor community to continue to support the World Food Programme since it played a valuable role in connection not only with emergency food requirement, but also with food-for-work projects.

54. Mr. NGUYEN QUOC ZUNG (Viet Nam) said that, during the past year, the operational activities of the United Nations system had made important contributions to the development of developing countries. The quality and efficiency of assistance programmes had improved. Another important aspect of operational activities was technical co-operation. His delegation shared the view that it played an important role in strengthening the capacities of recipient developing countries in the implementation of assistance programmes and projects.

55. At a time when the world economy was undergoing rapid and complex changes, the in-depth study of the United Nations intergovernmental structure and functions in the economic and social fields was of particular importance. Viet Nam was pleased that several main United Nations organizations responsible for operational activities had begun to carry out comprehensive reviews of their role in the next decade with a view to assisting developing countries in a more effective manner. Moreover, his delegation supported the studies being undertaken by the Secretariat to implement General Assembly resolution 42/196.

56. During the past year, the Administrator of UNDP and his staff had made tremendous efforts to strengthen the Programme's efficiency. UNICEF had played a significant role in the improvement of living conditions of children in various parts of the world, and had become more effective in the implementation of its assistance programmes. The activities of UNFPA had contributed effectively to curbing population growth and increasing awareness in the developing world of the close relationship between population and development.

57. Although Viet Nam faced numerous economic constraints, it was determined to make every effort to develop its co-operation with the United Nations operational agencies. Viet Nam had received valuable assistance from UNDP, WFP, UNICEF, UNFPA and others. The series of natural disasters which had occurred in 1988 had seriously affected Viet Nam's economic development. Representatives of many international agencies had visited the hard-hit areas, and a number of Governments, international agencies and non-governmental organizations had rendered timely assistance to Viet Nam in its relief and rehabilitation efforts.

58. Mr. MISSARY (Democratic Yemen), speaking also on behalf of Yemen, said that any discussion of operational activities for development must take account both of the serious economic situation, and of the improved political climate. Such activities called not only for financial support, but also for political will. The small increase in contributions resulting from the Pledging Conference was a step in the right direction, but the overall amount still fell short of what was required to meet the needs of the developing countries, especially the least developed countries, which had to contend with natural disasters in addition to other impediments.

59. The two countries joined in the appeal to the international community, above all, the developed countries, to fulfil their responsibilities at such a critical time. They highly valued the United Nations funds in general, appreciating, in particular, the vital role played by UNDP in the funding of development projects, and as the central co-ordinating body. Also of considerable importance were the

(Mr. Missary, Democratic Yemen)

contributions of UNICEF, with regard to the growth and survival of children, and of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), which was responsible for implementing the World Population Plan of Action.

60. He hoped that, for the rest of the decade, more intensive efforts would be made to help the developing countries, and that the role of the Economic and Social Council, as the principal intergovernmental body, would be enhanced. Furthermore, the viewpoints of the recipient Governments should be taken into account and their priorities reflected in the activities undertaken in order to make the assistance provided more effective.

61. The two countries supported the proposal made by the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics that resources released as a result of a reduction in the arms race should be used to set up an international fund, benefiting the developing countries.

62. Mr. OSILLA (Argentina) said that at a time of international economic crisis when countries were becoming increasingly interdependent, international co-operation was an effective means of overcoming the obstacles preventing the developing countries from achieving reasonable standards of living. The situation called for both bilateral and multilateral co-operation, with operational activities playing a vital role.

63. Although the increase in contributions was welcome, it was regrettable that the programmes themselves failed to meet the direct needs of the developing countries. While operational activities could not relieve Governments of their responsibilities, the contributions made should reflect actual requirements.

64. This Government had established close relations with the office of the UNDP resident co-ordinator, using it to channel information and services, above and beyond the projects financed by indicative planning figure (IPF) resources. The UNDP country programme provided a framework for co-operation in Argentina. Projects had involved, for example, financial co-operation, the joint participation of numerous agencies within the United Nations system and technical co-operation among developing countries. UNDP was providing \$6 million during the fourth programming cycle, funds from other sources bringing the total amount for the programme to \$100 million.

65. There was increasingly active co-operation among the developing countries, particularly technical co-operation based on shared-cost projects. It was important, however, to overcome the scepticism of some of the developed countries with regard to technical co-operation among developing countries. The intention was not to compete with the developed world, but to achieve a complementary status.

66. Argentina had for some time been a net contributor to UNDP and UNICEF, and had initiated significant technical co-operation programmes involving African countries. Aiming, above all, to restore their stock-breeding capabilities, it had, for example, trained technicians, conducted study visits to identify needs, and organized seminars on stock-breeding techniques. On the basis of the results

(Mr. Osella, Argentina)

of its study visits, it had designed projects for individual countries, covering aspects such as pasture improvement, animal health, the establishment of an experimental farm and an experimental herd, and the development of fodder crops.

67. Furthermore, his Government had awarded training grants in the field of paediatrics to the nationals of various African countries, and organised a seminar on demographic techniques for African officials. All such projects had been accomplished with the collaboration of UNDP.

68. His country fully endorsed the objectives of UNICEF, to which it continued to contribute, in spite of its own serious economic problems. In view of the adjustments that developing countries had been forced to make at the expense of social development, he welcomed the UNICEF proposals applying the concept of adjustment with a human face.

69. Argentina would continue to support the World Food Programme and hoped that the target of \$1.4 billion for 1989-1990 would be achieved as a step towards the eradication of world hunger and malnutrition.

70. While operational activities for development should be open to innovation, it was important not to lose sight of their basic, guiding principles. The programming cycle, for example, permitted an adequate balance to be maintained not only between the interests of the recipient country and those of the contributors, but also between executing and financing agencies. It could not easily be changed. He was concerned that paragraph 148 of document A/43/426 might be interpreted as suggesting that national projects should be designed in accordance with global objectives, which could lead to activities which failed to meet the real needs of the recipient countries. Furthermore, constant attention should be paid to problems of co-ordination and evaluation. Diagnosis should be accurate. Appropriate mechanisms existed and should be brought into play. There was no need to create new ones for their own sake.

71. With regard to the decision by the UNDP Governing Council to analyse the costs of support, he pointed out that more and more recipient Governments were participating as the executors of projects and there were more local consultants and national experts. The developing countries should be considered more often as the potential suppliers of equipment and services. Such trends reflected the achievements of the system and the fact that the developing countries were gradually becoming more developed. Efforts should still be made, however, to meet the specific needs of each country in accordance with their levels of development.

72. It was important to hear the views of all the parties concerned. The recipient countries best understood their own problems. It was to be hoped that the reviews of the role of the principal organizations in the 1990s, referred to in paragraph 149 of A/43/426, would give rise to proposals based on an analysis of actual requirements of the recipient countries.

73. Mr. LUCAS (Guyana) said that the 1989 triennial review of operational activities would occur at a time when thought must be given to the Organization's role in future development activities. The review would also present an opportunity to address a number of important questions raised in General Assembly resolution 42/196. The Jansson report had called into question the efficiency of the Organization's current methodology for delivering development assistance. Those Governments which had already submitted their views on the subject had recognized the need for increasing the effectiveness of such assistance, particularly at the country level. Differences in opinion between funding bodies, and between specialized agencies and funding bodies, seemed to go beyond institutional and functional considerations. His delegation hoped that those differences would be examined critically and objectively in the interest of formulating an efficient system of delivery.

74. The decision as to whether trust funds should be eliminated as a source of central funding, must be made by donors. The beneficiaries of trust funds would, of course, have to be convinced that their funding would not be reduced under another arrangement. Since not all beneficiaries were low-income countries, the current criteria for determining indicative planning figures (IPF) might have to be reassessed. Central funding would be less of an issue, and conflicts with agencies minimized, if the frame of reference concept worked. The debate on that point had evolved much more quickly than was warranted by the objective conditions. The situation changed since the 1970 Consensus, for in some developing countries, UNDP was currently providing less than half the total assistance from the United Nations system. The change did not reflect aggressive funding by agencies so much as a change in the situation of those countries. The relevance of central funding and the country programme as a frame of reference should be taken into account in future case-studies. The inter-agency agreement, co-location and resolution 42/196 had not provided sufficient support to the Resident Co-ordinator. His delegation welcomed the Director-General's proposal to undertake an overall review. Consultations under that review should be broad enough to benefit from the individual experiences of as many countries as possible. The objectives of operational activities should focus more on responding to priorities set by recipient countries than on enhancing the supportive role of United Nations assistance.

75. His delegation accorded high priority to the work of UNDP and looked forward to learning more about some of the issues raised in the report of the UNDP Administrator. Guyana had pledged increased contributions to UNICEF, UNFPA and UNDP at the recent pledging conference. UNICEF's progress on a number of initiatives, including the Bamako Initiative and adjustment with a human face, was heartening. His delegation wished to reiterate its support for UNICEF's sensitive approach to development.

76. Mr. CROOKE (United Nations Industrial Development Organization) said that the Industrial Development Board had invited Member States to submit their views to the Director-General on case studies concerning the functioning of operational activities for development. It had also requested the Director-General to draw the attention of the Economic and Social Council to its discussions of relevant topics.

(Mr. Crooke, UNIDO)

77. Resolution 42/196 called for improvement by executing agencies of the quantity and quality of technical assistance given to developing countries. He noted with satisfaction, therefore, that UNIDO anticipated implementing technical assistance of over \$150 million in 1988, compared with \$98 million in 1987. Further substantial growth should take place in 1989. UNIDO had also intensified its efforts to enhance the quality of technical assistance.

78. With regard to improvements within UNIDO itself, the project appraisal section helped to ensure compliance with programme criteria and design standards in order to improve the overall quality of project documents. The project design and evaluation system had been streamlined and improved in line with UNDP procedures.

79. A new method had recently been introduced for the assessment, programming and management of integrated production and consumption systems. It had been tested in the analysis of food industries in Latin America and had just been applied to the fishery industries in West African countries.

80. The resolution also referred to the simplification of procedures for programme and project formulation, which was of particular interest to UNIDO. Together with UNDP, it had been in the forefront of efforts to harmonize procedures, having recognized the difficulties confronting recipient Governments. That exercise had also involved major bilateral donors, who had expressed an interest in harmonization.

81. With regard to increasing procurement from developing countries (para. 27 of the resolution), UNIDO had sent missions to countries in Asia and Latin America to inform competent Government authorities, manufacturers and engineers of its policies, procedures, rules and regulations with regard to equipment purchases and contracts. It had encouraged all potentially suitable companies to register as prospective suppliers or contractors.

82. Progress had also been made with regard to the integration of women in industrial development, and economic co-operation among developing countries. The Senior Industrial Development Field Advisers of UNIDO were now fully integrated into the offices of the resident co-ordinators of UNDP, and UNIDO was negotiating with UNDP to ensure that the arrangement would strengthen relations between the two.

83. Mr. NAVARRO RIVAS (Nicaragua) said that the question of operational activities for development held special significance for Nicaragua. The current international scene provided an excellent opportunity to highlight the importance of operational activities for development in the maintenance of international peace and security. Co-operation to that end should be strengthened in the regions most affected by war, hunger and political and social conflicts. For his country, but also for other developing countries, operational activities for development were the most effective means of countering such adversities.

84. The adoption of General Assembly resolution 42/196 had demonstrated the need to restructure existing machinery for development, identify new objectives and

(Mr. Navarro Rivas, Nicaragua)

mobilize the resources of the international community and the United Nations system in the light of changing circumstances. Support from Member States of the United Nations was crucial and in that context, it was of great significance that over \$1 billion had recently been pledged to UNDP.

85. His delegation attached particular importance to co-ordination in the field between the United Nations system and national authorities in defining priorities and allocating resources. Co-ordination in time of national emergency was also extremely important. The United Nations system had recently played a key role in providing assistance when Nicaragua was affected by natural disaster. The UNDP resident co-ordinator and his field staff must determine objectives in conjunction with the national authorities. Technical capacity and human resources at the national level must also be strengthened urgently in order to ensure sustained programme development.

86. Resolutions 41/171 and 42/196 had brought about significant progress, but they would not be sufficient. With the approach of the 1990s, an effort must be made to reverse the negative trends of the 1980s. The fourth United Nations development decade would provide an excellent opportunity for adjusting mechanisms and redefining goals. Concerted action and political will would be required on the part of both the developed and developing countries in order to attain a consensus. Other opportunities would be provided by the special session on the reactivation of economic growth and development in developing countries, proposed by the Group of 77, the 1990 United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries and the eighth session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), without the support of operational activities for development, Nicaragua which faced serious economic and financial difficulties as the victim of a war of aggression - would have been unable to carry out development programmes.

87. Mr. KUMARAKULASINGHE (International Labour Organisation) said that the Jansson report had highlighted certain aspects of the United Nations which should shape the course of its operational activities in the 1990s. Those aspects included the Organisation's non-political character, its ability to adjust to government plans and priorities and the accumulated experience of the United Nations system. The report had also found that the accumulated experience of the specialized agencies was not being fully tapped - a problem which had been raised at the summer 1988 session of the Economic and Social Council and the thirty-fifth session of the UNDP Governing Council. While human resources development was central to the work of ILO, it was also relevant in other organizations of the United Nations system. The document which ILO had prepared for a recent meeting of the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination (ACC) and the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination (CPC), pointed up the danger of duplicating existing knowledge and practical experience rather than co-ordinating those resources within the United Nations system. The same view had recently been expressed in the Second Committee by the Nordic countries.



(Mr. Kumarakulasinghe, ILO)

88. The success of operational activities depended far less on external assistance than on each of the partners fulfilling its responsibilities. As Governments came to play an increasingly important role, it would be necessary to review the roles and responsibilities of each partner in the tripartite arrangement.

89. ILO fully supported the consultations being held by the Director-General for Development and International Economic Co-operation, as they would be important in formulating proposals for the implementation of resolution 42/196. ILO also supported the Director-General's proposal to enhance the role of the resident co-ordinator. However, as indicated in paragraph 43 of the ILO governing body response to resolution 42/196, experience had shown that the effectiveness of resident co-ordinators depended, above all, on their calibre and the extent to which they were truly representative of the United Nations system. In that context, ILO was collaborating with its partner organizations, through the ACC mechanism, in order to give fuller effect to the existing, and largely adequate, framework for the functioning of the resident co-ordinator system. The role and effectiveness of the resident co-ordinator also depended on host Governments. The additional measures to be taken under paragraph 25 of resolution 42/196 would undoubtedly contribute to achieving the common objectives of the specialized agencies. The ILO governing body welcomed the Jansson report's acknowledgement of the essential role played by agency field workers and of the direct contribution by ILO field staff to development and dialogue with Governments. In response to paragraph 24 of the resolution, ILO had renewed its instructions to its field structure to share premises and services with other United Nations organizations.

90. He wished to draw the Committee's attention to paragraphs 41 and 45 of the ILO response to resolution 42/196 with regard to the questions of central funding, the co-ordinating role of UNDP and country programming as a frame of reference. In its response, ILO supported the Jansson report finding that the sectoral approach would be crucial in determining the effectiveness of the country programme as a frame of reference. As the Director-General and certain delegations had indicated, the specialized agencies also played an important technical role. ILO believed that that technical role was closely linked to the agencies' role in all phases of country programming and that it reinforced the activities of United Nations organizations.

91. Mrs. DARLING (Australia) said that the report of the Director-General provided a valuable interim response to the issues raised in General Assembly resolution 42/196. None the less, the debt problems of developing countries were increasing rather than diminishing, and the social consequences were greater. The adoption of socially responsive adjustment programmes should not obscure the fact that the basic debt, trade and aid problems themselves must still be resolved.

92. There was no doubt that operational activities in the 1990s would have to be very different from activities in the past two decades, largely because the needs of developing countries had changed. There was no time to waste on ascribing blame. Development activities and technical co-operation must be better managed and co-ordinated. They must be responsive to national development priorities in

(Mrs. Darling, Australia)

order to win increased support from the international community. Pledges of increased funding for operational activities must not be followed by complacency. The real challenge of the 1990s would be to re-orient operational activities in order to win the confidence of donors and recipients alike. The UNDP Governing Council had made a start with its proposal for a management development programme to assist countries in a sectoral approach to institution-building. The most valuable kind of programme would be one which would help Governments to assess their own requirements for better management in the public sector. Such a programme would be especially valuable in formulating development strategies which considered the human dimension - the most important dimension - within the context of assistance from the Bretton Woods and other multilateral financial institutions. Her delegation looked forward to the early evaluation of that important UNDP programme.

93. Referring to the review by the Consultative Committee on Substantive Questions (Operational Activities) (CCSQ (OPS)), she said that her delegation strongly supported closer co-operation among the United Nations development agencies and between the agencies, particularly UNDP, and the international financial institutions. Her delegation welcomed proposals for a wide-ranging review of the relationship in the 1990s between UNDP as the Organization's central funding agency for operational activities and the executing agencies. Only after the needs of developing countries were examined should a decision be made on action to be taken by the agencies. While much had been done to integrate women in development programmes, their concerns must still be thoroughly integrated at the decision-making level. The proposed cross-organizational programme analysis (COPA) on activities related to the advancement of women would be important in evaluating the integration of women in development.

94. The resident co-ordinator had a vital co-ordinating role in the field and in that context, UNESCO had taken a positive initiative by enhancing consultations with the co-ordinator. However, the co-ordinator's role and responsibilities must be better defined. To that end, an inter-agency agreement and integrated field offices would both be valuable. Her delegation noted with interest a proposal to establish such offices in a few locations on an experimental basis.

95. Her delegation also welcomed the proposal to strengthen the co-ordinating role of CCSQ (OPS) at the field level. Unfortunately, the Director-General's report contained few references to implementation by CCSQ (OPS) of inter-governmental policies for operational activities. More attention must be devoted to enhancing the joint planning and co-ordination role of the Joint Consultative Group on Policy in accordance with General Assembly resolution 41/171. The membership of the Group might be expanded to include other United Nations executing agencies. Care should be taken, however, to avoid duplication with other inter-agency consultative mechanisms.

96. Closer linkages must be established between the budget and planning cycles of Governments on the one hand, and UNDP and the various executing agencies, on the other. Improvements in management and accounting systems of UNICEF were

(Mrs. Darling, Australia)

encouraging. However, her delegation attached great importance to reforms which would make UNICEF more accountable to its Executive Board and it hoped they would be implemented speedily.

97. The South Pacific was a region with distinct development problems, engendered by factors such as susceptibility to natural disaster, small populations and vast distances. The United Nations system, particularly UNDP, had demonstrated a keen awareness of those unique circumstances, by inter alia, UNDP's establishment of a multi-island planning figure and the organisation of round-table meetings in Geneva for Vanuatu, Solomon Islands and Western Samoa. Her delegation welcomed the proposed visits to the region by the UNDP Administrator and the Executive Director of UNFPA.

AGENDA ITEM 12: REPORT OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL (continued)  
(A/C.2/43/L.13/Rev.2)

98. Mr. RABGYE (Bhutan) said that, had his delegation been present during the voting on draft resolution A/C.2/43/L.13/Rev.2, on assistance to the Palestinian people, it would have abstained, because certain elements of the text were not in keeping with the principle of universality embodied in the Charter of the United Nations.

The meeting rose at 6.25 p.m.