

**Economic and Social Council**

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Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, on Monday 18 July 2011, at 3 p.m.

President: Mr. Gutiérrez Reinel (Vice-President) (Peru)**Contents**Operational activities of the United Nations for international development cooperation (*continued*)

- (a) Follow-up to policy recommendations of the General Assembly and the Council
- (b) Reports of the Executive Boards of the United Nations Development Programme/ United Nations Population Fund, the United Nations Children's Fund, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women and the World Food Programme
- (c) South-South cooperation for development

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In the absence of the President, Mr. Gutiérrez Reinel (Peru), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

Operational activities of the United Nations for international development cooperation (agenda item 3) *(continued)*

(a) Follow-up to policy recommendations of the General Assembly and the Council (E/2011/86, E/2011/88, E/2011/112 and A/66-79-E/2011/107) *(continued)*

(b) Reports of the Executive Boards of the United Nations Development Programme/United Nations Population Fund, the United Nations Children's Fund, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women and the World Food Programme (E/2011/5, E/2011/6, E/2011/14, E/2011/34 (Part I), E/2011/34 (Part I)/Add.1, E/2011/35, E/2011/36 and E/2011/L.18) *(continued)*

(c) South-South cooperation for development *(continued)*

General discussion (continued)

1. **Mr. Chave** (Switzerland) drew the participants' attention to the third interim report on progress in the implementation of General Assembly resolution 62/208 on the 2007 triennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system (E/2011/112). To judge from that report, it appeared that little progress had been made in harmonizing the practices of United Nations funds, programmes and specialized institutions, despite the introduction of high-level mechanisms, while coordination costs were increasing. The General Assembly should use its authority to insist that funds and programmes should harmonize their administrative and financial procedures without delay. Other United Nations entities, including the specialized institutions in particular, could follow their example and thus avoid being financially, operationally and politically marginalized and outdistanced. It was more necessary than ever to give resident coordinators legal and financial authority over country teams, enable them to coordinate their activities effectively, and represent them to governments and other development stakeholders.

2. In view of the lack of authority and flexibility of the United Nations system following disasters and conflicts, it would be desirable to remove administrative obstacles and facilitate staff mobility between organizations in order to make more effective use of existing capacities while also enhancing programme quality. With respect to financing, it was important to determine the critical mass of resources needed to ensure that funds and programmes could execute their mandates adequately, attract the most outstanding specialists and conduct appropriate, effective activities in the field. The question might be made the subject of an agreement on the occasion of the next comprehensive quadrennial review of operational activities.

3. **Mr. Pintado** (Mexico) said that it was important for funds and programmes to revise their priorities and strategies constantly in order to adapt to new situations and challenges. Recent revolutions and popular movements had confirmed the importance of development programmes for social peace. The activities conducted by funds and programmes in middle-income countries were particularly noteworthy, and it was essential to take the specific needs and situations of each of those countries into account. In the current context of budgetary restrictions, the distribution of assistance to middle-income countries should not be viewed as a competition, but rather as an exercise in which synergistic effects could be harnessed for the benefit of all concerned. Consequently, those countries should be helped to play an active role in regional development through South-South and triangular cooperation mechanisms and the promotion of commercial cooperation. In that connection, his delegation supported the initiatives submitted by the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States to the Boards of Directors of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women). Those initiatives were aimed at revising the development indicators used by United Nations funds and programmes with a view to taking the difficulties facing middle-income countries into account in designing projects and determining the resources to be allocated to the various countries. It was essential to preserve the principle of universality applied by UNDP.

4. **Ms. Helle Ajamay** (Norway) said that resident coordinators should be given the authority and resources needed to direct and coordinate country teams, and that effective safety devices should be introduced. The resources devoted to United Nations operational activities were still inadequate, with the result that the objectives set by the international community were not attainable and the various bodies were unable to execute the mandates they had been given by the Member States. Accordingly, provisions should be made for reliable, adapted, predictable and stable funding and a critical mass of essential resources.

5. In addition, it was important to strive to enhance results, strengthen controls and apply the principle of responsibility. To that end, efforts should be distributed more fairly among countries that were members of the Development Assistance Committee of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development and broaden the donor base to include strongly growing emerging countries. Furthermore, governments should be accountable for the results they obtained, as United Nations institutions already were, and should highlight the impact of their activities.

6. Middle-income countries, for their part, should supplement their public revenues through taxation and the redistribution of wealth. The legitimate needs of poverty-stricken population groups in those countries should not be met from the limited resources allocated to least developed countries, vulnerable countries and countries affected by conflicts. Her delegation saluted the establishment of UN Women and invited all United Nations institutions to do more to help countries promote gender equality and the empowerment of women.

7. **Mr. Popov** (Observer for Belarus) said that his delegation was gratified at the progress achieved in implementing General Assembly resolution 62/208 and noted with satisfaction that the programme document cycle for Belarus was consistent with the national development programme. Belarus and UNDP had recently signed a country programme for 2011-2015 and were awaiting approval of the next United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF). Inasmuch as the United Nations was playing an increasingly important role in mobilizing and coordinating international assistance in pursuit of the Millennium Development Goals, official development assistance should not restrict countries' right of self-

determination and a free choice of strategies; it was important to ensure that assistance was not politicized in any way. His delegation supported the efforts of the United Nations to promote the status of women and applauded the establishment of UN Women.

8. **Mr. Glucksman** (Observer for the United States of America) said that it was true that periodic reviews had traditionally been centred on procedures, but that the time had come to prepare a balance sheet for operational development activities, applying soundly based, credible assessment techniques, as was currently being done for the "Delivering as One" pilot programmes.

9. Similarly, United Nations bodies had always been concerned essentially with funding sources for their operational activities and the amount of the necessary resources, but in the current budget climate and in the light of concerns relating to efficiency, transparency and the principle of accountability, it was essential to focus on how those bodies could use their financial resources efficiently and obtain the anticipated results. Accordingly, those bodies should have effective, reliable follow-up, assessment and monitoring mechanisms.

10. It was essential to transcend the traditional North-South divide in order to adapt to the changing global partnership for development, which included important new State and non-State participants. The United Nations development system, which was based on approximately ten traditional donors, represented an outworn formula that had no future.

11. Tasks should be better distributed within the resident coordinator system, as UNDP could not bear sole responsibility for funding a system that was beneficial to all United Nations development bodies and programmes. The resident coordinator selection procedure should be designed to ensure that the best-qualified and most effective applicants could be recruited and deployed in the field. More precisely, in the case of the most important humanitarian operations or in countries affected by natural disasters, applicants should be selected in close consultation with the Emergency Relief Coordinator.

12. **Ms. Mishra** (India) said that she would like to emphasize the universal, multilateral and impartial nature of operational development activities conducted by United Nations bodies. It was essential to be constantly alert in order to make sure that funding for

those activities was adequate to attain internationally agreed development objectives. It was especially important to strengthen official development assistance at a time when the developing countries were confronted with diminishing capital flows and expanding needs.

13. The growing imbalance between core resources and other resources, and also the highly fragmented nature of other resources, were having a negative impact on the effectiveness, coherence and relevance of development activities and driving up transaction costs. Programme activities should therefore be harmonized with the budgetary cycles and programming cycles of recipient countries.

14. It was gratifying that priority was being given to the importance of experience and national institutions, and the country approach was still very important. Much remained to be done to ensure that South-South cooperation was systematically integrated into the work of United Nations funds, programmes and specialized institutions. Poverty reduction, food security and access to energy sources were all issues that warranted priority.

15. **Ms. Madrigal** (Observer for Cuba) said that her delegation wished to associate itself with the statement by the Chairman of the Group of 77 and China. Operational activities for development conducted by the United Nations should continue to be universal, neutral and multilateral and well as flexible. Internationally agreed development goals, of which sustainable development was the cornerstone, constituted the general framework of United Nations activities. It would be desirable to put together a stronger global alliance for development, one that would take into account countries' determination to control their national strategies, and within that framework, international development cooperation should be guided by the preferences and needs of those countries, with no other conditions.

16. General Assembly resolution 62/208 on the 2007 triennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development, the fundamental legislative framework, provided that development activities should be evaluated according to the benefits accruing to the recipient countries. Consequently, it was essential not to weaken or eliminate mandates that played an important role for development, and to make

sure that standard-setting functions were entrusted to essentially operational bodies.

17. In the absence of a uniform method, it fell to States themselves to set their national priorities. Certainly more effective coordination among United Nations funds, programmes and institutions would help avoid overlapping and duplication, and accordingly was desirable. At the same time, it was important not to adopt a single model for the purpose of enhancing system-wide coherence, as such an approach would give rise to conflicts of interest.

18. Cuba had adopted five-year strategic plans for HIV/AIDS prevention and control since 2001, but the embargo imposed by the United States of America was harming efforts in that connection. Early in 2011, the United States had frozen nearly \$5 million contributed by the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria for the purpose of funding three cooperation projects in Cuba. That illegal act had been a serious blow to multilateral cooperation, the work of the United Nations and the elimination of major epidemics. Her delegation deemed it unacceptable for a State to arrogate to itself the right to regulate multilateral cooperation resources allocated to Cuba.

19. **Ms. Arango Olmos** (Observer for Colombia) said that her delegation appreciated the 23 specialized United Nations institutions operating in Colombia and supported system reform and the measures that had been adopted with a view to greater coherence. The Government had adopted a number of good practices, including in particular nine cooperation frameworks and programmes aimed at extending planning activities undertaken with the United Nations Development Assistance Framework for 2008-2012, and governmental participation in an extended assistance and recovery initiative on a basis of cooperation with various specialized United Nations institutions. Programme development had involved a concerted effort on the part of those institutions and national entities, and national priorities, as set forth in the document entitled *Visión Colombia II Centenario 2019*, the national development plan for 2006-2010, the international cooperation strategy for 2007-2010 and UNDAF 2008-2012, had been duly taken into account. In 2011, the competent national authorities were to initiate a medium-term review of cooperation programmes and frameworks with a view to bringing them into line with the country's priorities as formulated in the new national development plan for

2010-2014, on the basis of the results that had been achieved.

20. Early in 2011, the country programme of the United Nations Children's Fund had afforded an opportunity of identifying new national priorities, framing recommendations relating to its implementation strategy, pinpointing areas and population groups that were in need of assistance, reviewing effective initiatives, strengthening results-based management, and determining indicators to measure the impacts of development strategies. Lastly, her delegation wished to recall the importance of reinvigorating South-South cooperation, which was a means of strengthening development assistance, sharing lessons learned from experience, and promoting capacity-building between countries. It was essential for the United Nations Development Programme and the United Nations Population Fund to continue to upgrade the activities of the Special Unit for South-South Cooperation, country information systems, and financial mechanisms that could help States to develop such cooperation.

21. **Mr. Beshta** (Ukraine) expressed gratification at the progress that had been achieved in implementing the principles set forth in General Assembly resolution 62/208. His delegation supported the measures aimed at promoting technical cooperation and mustering financial resources to support the effectiveness of operational activities. It also applauded the ongoing effort to harmonize and simplify United Nations development activities, including in particular the Plan of Action for the Harmonization of Business Practices in the United Nations System. However, while various positive measures had undoubtedly been taken to improve the resident coordinator system, more could be done in the area of funding operational activities for development. In particular, the imbalance between core resources and other resources should be rectified, and funding predictability and reliability should be enhanced.

22. It was gratifying to note that there was excellent coordination between the Government and the United Nations country team operating in Ukraine, and that cooperation with UNDP had been initiated with a view to reducing inequalities and achieving growth that included concern for social welfare, environmental protection and action to combat HIV/AIDS. UNDP had contributed to the preparation of the national human development report, working in collaboration

with distinguished Ukrainian scientists. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) had been active in the areas of child health, action to combat HIV/AIDS and the protection and promotion of childhood, while UNFPA had focused on the issues of reproductive health, HIV/AIDS prevention, gender equality, and the implementation of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing. Excellent work had been done by UNDP, UNFPA and UNICEF country teams in the preparation of new programme documents for Ukraine for 2012-2016, ensuring that they were consistent with the Ukrainian reform programme for the period 2010-2014, the Millennium Development Goals, and the Ukraine-United Nations partnership framework 2012-2016. In addition, it was gratifying to note that all United Nations bodies were participating actively in the various measures that had been adopted with a view to promoting the empowerment of women. Ukraine was a member of UN Women, and would seek to enhance coordination among Member States aimed at achieving gender equality and implementing policies designed to reduce inequalities and combat sexist violence and trafficking. At the same time, it was important to remain vigilant to make sure that resources were used efficiently.

23. **Ms. Namakau Mutelo** (Namibia) said that her delegation wished to associate itself with the statement of the representative of Argentina on behalf of the Group of 77 and China. Namibia, with income toward the upper end of the middle-income range, was confronted with social and economic inequalities which it had inherited from the colonial apartheid period, and which the Government was endeavouring to eliminate. The Government aspired to turn Namibia into an industrialized, developed country by 2030. Since independence in 1990, there had been a number of national development plans aimed at reinvigorating economic growth, reducing inequalities, creating jobs, eliminating poverty, promoting gender equality, fostering ecology and combating HIV/AIDS, among other objectives. Development remained precarious none the less, as the country was vulnerable to exchange rate instability, weather events and growing public indebtedness. The programme document for Namibia that had been developed by the Government and UNDP, formulated the major issues that the country would have to overcome in order to attain the objectives set forth in its "Vision 2030" programme and the Millennium Development Goals. The proposed programme was based on the multi-year financing plan

for 2004-2007 and the priorities identified in UNDAF 2006-2010 for Namibia. Capacity-building was the central factor in the programme, structured as it was around three components: HIV/AIDS prevention and control, poverty reduction, and an environment-friendly energy policy for sustainable development.

24. Her delegation attached great importance to universality, neutrality and multilateralism in the operational development activities of the United Nations system. It was essential to enlist the support of member countries. The dwindling of core resources relative to other resources was a cause of concern. The United Nations system should use more of the former in funding activities, but it should also continue its efforts to achieve greater coherence and efficiency in operational development activities in the various countries in order to ensure availability of the necessary funding.

25. **Mr. Warraich** (Pakistan) said that his delegation wished to associate itself with the statement that had been made on behalf of the Group of 77 and China. Developing countries were confronted with issues of ever-greater complexity, taking into account the combined effects of the economic and financial crisis and rapidly rising food and energy prices. The fragile recovery was being put at risk by the sovereign debt crisis in Europe, speculation was aggravating insecurity, and climate change was jeopardizing development. In view of dwindling development assistance and the imminent failure of the Doha round of negotiations, development partners were pleading a lack of resources for assistance to developing countries, even as the needs of the latter were growing.

26. In that context, it was vitally necessary to enhance the efficiency of the United Nations development system and to coordinate operational activities more effectively. It was also essential for the Bretton Woods institutions to be associated with efforts aimed at upgrading the coherence of the system. Those institutions should be part and parcel of all development cooperation measures, on the same footing as partners in bilateral development activities, if the problem of the fragmentation of assistance was to be corrected. Greater participation in the activities of resident coordinators would be advantageous for the specialized institutions in view of the prospect of more effective cooperation and better harmonized responses to the priorities of States. Resident coordinators, for their part, should not only be accountable to

Governments for results achieved, but should also engage in more active consultation with national authorities, in order to ensure that the latter had more control over programme placement. Capacity-building lay at the heart of the development activities of the United Nations system, and national skills and resources could be used to better advantage. At the same time, South-South cooperation should be reinforced, while regional mechanisms were a potentially useful source of technical assistance. Moreover, greater emphasis should be placed on new technology promotion and transfer to developing countries and information-sharing on best practices in the area of operational activities in those countries.

27. The imbalance between core resources and other resources was a further cause of concern in view of the fact that there had been no increase in core resource contributions, as was clear from an operational activity funding estimate for 2009 and 2010. In that area, the United Nations was in competition with other national or international development partners, and should emphasize its comparative advantages and fundamental assets if it wished to attract the resources required for its work.

28. **Mr. Christófolo** (Observer for Brazil) said that he would like to associate himself with the statement that had been made on behalf of the Group of 77 and China. The organization of panel discussions in the context of the debate on operational activities was a gratifying development. The results of the debate would enrich the preparatory process for the quadrennial comprehensive review of those activities. The results obtained from the triennial comprehensive review of operational activities and the implementation measures and processes currently under way indicated that encouraging progress had been made in the area of capacity-building and promotion of South-South cooperation. In the matter of gender equality and the empowerment of women, the ability of the United Nations system to help and support Member States had been significantly strengthened by the establishment of UN Women. Brazil was closely following the results of national assessments of the "Delivering as One" pilot initiative, and awaited with interest the conclusions that would emerge from the next independent evaluation of that initiative.

29. However, the lessons of experience should not jeopardize the ability of the United Nations system to provide countries with assistance programmes adapted

to their needs, plans and priorities. Furthermore, much work remained to be done in other areas, including in particular operational activities in emergency situations and during the transition from relief to development phase. The role of the resident coordinator should be enhanced; he or she should supervise the implementation of more general decisions adopted by the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council, and he or she should be accountable to national authorities for results achieved. It would also be useful to establish an institutionalized interactive network and a central data base on good practices and policies applied in programme countries, as exchanges among resident coordinators would thereby be facilitated.

30. With respect to General Assembly resolution 64/289 on the coherence of the United Nations system, it would be desirable for a comprehensive edition of all relevant legislative provisions relating to United Nations funds and programmes to be made available. With respect to the issue of funding, an opportunity to collaborate on the task of exploring in greater depth the concept of critical mass referred to in paragraph 30 of the resolution would be most welcome. The trends and data presented by the Secretary-General in his report on analysis of the funding of operational activities for development of the United Nations system for 2009 (E/2011/107) were a source of grave concern, especially the growing imbalance between core resources and other resources and the fact that the former were used to subsidize activities funded from the latter. It was highly desirable that the information requested in paragraph 37 of the resolution should be made available. In addition, the results of periodic surveys, directed to Governments, on the effectiveness, efficiency and relevance of the support provided by the United Nations system would be of considerable interest.

31. **Mr. Shangzhe** (China) remarked that despite numerous difficulties related to the global economic and financial crisis, the programmes and funds of the United Nations system had demonstrated their effectiveness and had made progress. The coming years would be critical for achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, and the United Nations development system should take into account the spirit of resolution 62/208 and the results of the high-level discussion.

32. To avoid inequalities, different developmental priorities should be set, the elimination of poverty emphasized, the least developed countries supported, and the self-development capacities of the developing countries strengthened. On the matter of funding, improvement of the resource structure was one of the main priorities of all developing countries: the trend toward shrinkage in development funding and resources was having an adverse impact on the effectiveness of the United Nations development system and might jeopardize the universality and neutrality of development activities. His delegation asked all contributors to comply with the relevant United Nations resolution where the coordination of development efforts throughout the world was at stake. Concerning the resident coordinator system, it was gratifying that progress had been made toward the goal of placing responsibility for the coordination of foreign aid in the hands of national authorities, and that assistance was being tailored to the priorities of the receiving countries. These were fundamental principles to which resident coordinators should conform for the sake of obtaining good results from official development assistance. Experience had shown that the institutions of the United Nations system should make sure that they provided targeted assistance. They should also be accountable to national Governments and take countries' experience into account, the better to respond to their needs.

33. Furthermore, South-South cooperation should be a priority area for operational activities for development. It was highly gratifying that the developing countries had made striking progress in the matter of the terms and conditions governing such cooperation and had developed useful mechanisms. None the less, a policy aimed at supporting South-South cooperation—not to replace North-South cooperation, but rather to supplement it—should be established and given a new format. At the same time, care should be taken to avoid any weakening of the central role of the State.

34. **Ms. Gervasi** (Peru) said that Peru, as a middle-income country, was chalking up encouraging figures in terms of its growth and gross domestic product (GDP). However, it was having difficulty in achieving the Millennium Development Goals, including in particular the elimination of poverty, in many regions. Recent sustained growth had driven the poverty rate down to 30 per cent nation-wide, but in 14 departments

poverty rates were still above the national average (over 60 per cent in some instances), a situation that showed how unevenly distributed economic growth had been. Macroeconomic indicators did not take inequalities into account in a middle-income country like Peru, and consequently it was time to abandon per-capita GDP as a measure of a country's level of development, focusing instead on the geographical distribution of income and on social equity, which was a key factor in development.

35. It was important to recognize that middle-income countries had contributed significantly to the recovery following the economic and financial crisis and had made great efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. Those countries might also become catalysts for South-South cooperation. In that connection, Peru was cooperating extensively in the areas of fisheries, customs and mining, among others. The discussion on the next quadrennial comprehensive review of operational activities should focus primarily on how the United Nations development system might strengthen its ability to support Governments in a world in which necessary changes were occurring, and how the system's various institutions could enhance the coordination and coherence of their activities and use the available resources more effectively to obtain concrete results. It was important to find appropriate ways of supporting middle-income countries in their efforts to combat poverty and inequalities, inasmuch as the ultimate objective of collective endeavours was to improve the daily lives of the inhabitants of developing countries.

36. **Ms. Dowlatchahi** (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations – FAO) said that it was gratifying to find the Economic and Social Council continuing to devote so much attention to the task of improving its relations with the specialized institutions and working more closely with them in their respective areas of competence through policy analysis and product development world-wide. The Council should be encouraged to pursue its efforts in that connection, as knowledge acquired from past experience would undoubtedly serve as a guide to more effective action in the future.

37. It was important to encourage participation, within United Nations country teams, by non-resident specialized institutions with limited capacities at country level. Funding for the resident coordinator system should be addressed within the general funding

framework of the United Nations development system at the global, regional and national levels. The terms and conditions governing the action of the specialized institutions and their respective capacities were particularly noteworthy. It was essential to acknowledge clearly that those institutions did participate through their knowledge and technical capabilities.

38. For purposes of the next quadrennial comprehensive review of operational activities, it was essential to view the national programming frameworks of the specialized institutions as supplementing UNDAF. Furthermore, a number of specialized institutions were currently adopting new integrated approaches to resource planning, and those approaches would have to be taken into account in order to facilitate priority identification and follow-up action. It was quite true that the United Nations development system would have to continue to rely on core resources, but recent experience with other funding mechanisms—such as multi-donor trust funds, which had become a major source of funding for joint projects at country level—should be taken into account as well. Such mechanisms should be viewed as supplementing existing mechanisms, and not as replacing core resources. Lastly, predictability and commitment capacity over a period of several years were essential for the implementation of results-based planning.

Action on draft resolution E/2011/L.35

39. **The President** invited the Council to adopt draft resolution E/2011/L.35, entitled “Progress in the implementation of General Assembly resolution 62/208 on the triennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system”. He informed the Council that the draft resolution contained no programme budget implications.

40. *Draft resolution E/2011/L.35 was adopted.*

Oral decision on documentation submitted under agenda item 3

41. **The President** directed the Council's attention to the report of the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme and the Executive Director of the United Nations Population Fund (E/2011/5); the annual report of the Executive Director of the United Nations Children's Fund (E/2011/6); the annual report

of the World Food Programme for 2010 (E/2011/14); the report of the Executive Board of the United Nations Children's Fund on the work of its first regular session of 2011 (E/2011/34 (Part I) and E/2011/34 (Part I)/Add.1); the report of the Board of Directors of the United Nations Development programme/United Nations Population Fund on the work of its second regular session of 2010 and on its first regular session and annual session of 2011 (E/2011/35); the report of the Executive Board of the World Food Programme on the first and second regular sessions and annual session of 2010 (E/2011/36); and the extract from the report of the Executive Board of the United Nations Children's Fund on its 2011 annual session (E/2011/L.18). The President proposed that the Council should take note of the above-mentioned documents.

42. *It was so decided.*

Oral decision on documentation submitted under agenda item 3 (c)

43. **The President** reminded the Council that the report of the High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation on its seventeenth session was not available owing to the fact that that session had been postponed until 2012. He understood that the Council wished to defer its consideration of that report to a session in 2012.

44. *It was so decided.*

Conclusion of the discussion on operational activities

45. **The President** noted that the United Nations development system had made progress in terms of its efficiency and coherence. Unity in action, so far from being a slogan, was an idea that had begun to make headway within the organizations of the system and was having an impact on working methods. However, there were a number of factors that called for new responses and bolder approaches. The system's efforts and resources should be devoted to initiatives that would act as catalysts and generate multiplier effects. The system should focus on the least developed countries, but it should also strengthen its support for middle-income countries. Bolder methods should be tried in order to simplify and harmonize practices. A more satisfactory load distribution would enhance the predictability and stability of financial flows into the system. The next resolution on the quadriennial comprehensive review of operational activities should be ambitious and should lead to changes in the way the

system worked at country level. Follow-up and assessment objectives and mechanisms should be an integral feature of guidelines. Lastly, independent activity assessments and the planned survey on the prospects of Member States were significant contributions to the discussion.

46. The President announced that the Council had concluded its discussion of the operational activities segment.

The meeting rose at 4.45 p.m.