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SECOND COMMITTEE
53rd meeting
held on
Wednesday, 28 November 1984
at 3 p.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 53rd MEETING

Chairman: Mr. HARLAND (New Zealand)

later: Mr. KAABACHI (Tunisia)

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

AGENDA ITEM 80: DEVELOPMENT AND INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC CO-OPERATION (continued)

(c) TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT (continued)

(n) IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SUBSTANTIAL NEW PROGRAMME OF ACTION FOR THE 1980s FOR THE LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRIES: REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (continued)

Draft resolutions A/C.2/39/L.75, L.76, L.82, L.83 and L.84

1. Mr. SAAD (Egypt) introduced, on behalf of the States Members of the United Nations belonging to the Group of 77, draft resolutions A/C.2/39/L.82, on the action programme in favour of island developing countries, A/C.2/39/L.83, on the implementation of the Substantial New Programme of Action for the 1980s for the Least Developed Countries, A/C.2/39/L.76, on development aspects of the reverse transfer of technology, A/C.2/39/L.75, on economic measures as a means of political and economic coercion against developing countries, and A/C.2/39/L.84, on the United Nations Conference on Conditions for Registration of Ships. Draft resolution A/C.2/39/L.83 concerned the substantive and administrative preparations for the mid-term global review of the implementation of the Substantial New Programme of Action, to which the organs, organizations and bodies of the United Nations system were requested to contribute. Draft resolution A/C.2/39/L.76 was essentially procedural in nature, and sought to ensure the continuation of activities initiated by the United Nations system in the area in question. The positive outcome of the Second Meeting of Governmental Experts on the Reverse Transfer of Technology, held at Geneva from 22 August to 5 September 1984, should facilitate the adoption of the draft resolution by the Second Committee. The issue discussed in draft resolution A/C.2/39/L.75 was of great concern to the developing countries, since, according to the Secretary-General's report (A/39/415), economic measures were being used more and more frequently to exert political and economic pressure. As for draft resolution A/C.2/39/L.84, it should be emphasized that the meeting of the United Nations Conference on Conditions for Registration of Ships had been extremely useful and that a resumption of that session would enable the Conference to complete its work. The members of the Group of 77, sponsors of the five drafts, hoped that they would be adopted by consensus.

Draft resolution A/C.2/39/L.80

2. Mr. KITIKITI (Zimbabwe) introduced draft resolution A/C.2/39/L.80, entitled "Preferential Trade Area for Eastern and Southern African States", on behalf of its sponsors (Burundi, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Lesotho, Malawi, Rwanda, Somalia, Swaziland, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe). In view of the tragic crisis which Africa was experiencing, some of the affected countries were simply requesting in the draft resolution that the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States and the numerous resolutions on economic development adopted by the General Assembly should be translated into reality so as to permit action which must be undertaken simultaneously in the short-, medium- and long-term. The Preferential Trade Area

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(Mr. Kitikiti, Zimbabwe)

for Eastern and Southern African States established on 1 July 1984 had as its primary objective the transformation of the region's production structures and the replacement by new structures of those which were currently dependent on international commodity markets for both employment and foreign exchange earnings. The Preferential Trade Area was a form of economic integration which had many features of a free trade area. Under the terms of the treaty establishing the Area, member States were committed to a gradual reduction and eventual elimination of customs duties and non-tariff barriers and to the development of a common tariff policy. The goal which had been set, i.e., the creation of an economic community of Eastern and Southern African States, originally scheduled for 1992, would probably be reached before that date, despite problems caused by shortages of foreign currency, lack of information and skilled manpower, competition from outside suppliers and bottlenecks in transit facilities. The draft resolution sought to obtain the international community's assistance in implementing projects intended to remedy those deficiencies and give it an opportunity to do more than provide emergency assistance. He requested that the draft resolution should be adopted by acclamation in view of the magnitude of the crisis affecting Africa.

(k) EFFECTIVE MOBILIZATION AND INTEGRATION OF WOMEN IN DEVELOPMENT: REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (continued)

Draft resolution A/C.2/39/L.77

3. Ms. LANDSVERK (Norway), introducing on behalf of the sponsors, which now included Algeria and the Netherlands, draft resolution A/C.2/39/L.77, dealing with the world survey on the role of women in development, recalled that, in its resolution 36/74, the General Assembly had requested the Secretary-General to submit that survey in its final form to the Assembly at its thirty-ninth session. The final version had not yet been prepared, and the report of the Secretary-General (A/39/566) only outlined a number of problems and conclusions. Care must be taken to ensure that women's needs received due consideration in the context of development activities. The sponsors of the draft resolution hoped that the final version of the survey would be submitted to the Second Committee at the fortieth session of the General Assembly. At that time it would also be possible to take into account the decisions adopted and the comments made at the World Conference to Review and Appraise the Achievements of the United Nations Decade for Women, to be held at Nairobi in 1985.

AGENDA ITEM 81: OPERATIONAL ACTIVITIES FOR DEVELOPMENT (continued) (A/39/3 (Part II), A/39/118, 131 and Corr.1, 133, 236, 590 and Corr.1)

- (a) OPERATIONAL ACTIVITIES OF THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM: REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (continued) (A/39/417)
- (b) UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME: REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (continued) (A/39/80 and Add.1, A/39/308; E/1984/20)
- (c) UNITED NATIONS CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT FUND (continued) (F/1984/20)

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- (d) UNITED NATIONS FUND FOR POPULATION ACTIVITIES (continued) (A/39/537; E/1984/20)
- (e) UNITED NATIONS VOLUNTEERS PROGRAMME (continued) (E/1984/20)
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- (g) UNITED NATIONS CHILDREN'S FUND (continued) (E/39/292; E/1984/19)
- (h) WORLD FOOD PROGRAMME (continued)
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- (j) LIQUIDATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS EMERGENCY OPERATION TRUST FUND AND ALLOCATION OF THE REMAINING BALANCE: REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (continued) (A/39/284 and Add.1)

Draft resolution A/C.2/39/L.85

4. Mr. DOLJINTSEREN (Mongolia), introducing draft resolution A/C.2/39/L.85 on the role of qualified national personnel in the social and economic development of developing countries, said that the draft resolution mainly followed the previous General Assembly resolutions on that subject. The Secretariat had not prepared the report requested in General Assembly resolution 37/228 because as document A/39/308-E/1984/118 showed, it had thought that the implementation of that resolution would have financial implications. The sponsors of draft resolution A/C.2/39/85, on the other hand, considered that the resolution would entail no financial implications, on the understanding that the Secretary-General would prepare his report on the basis of the replies provided to him by the Governments. They hoped that the Second Committee would adopt the draft resolution by consensus.

General debate (continued)

5. Mr. SAAB (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations) said that the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) was placed at the very heart of the development process, a process which could take place only if man's survival was first ensured. The connection between the imperative of survival and the need for development was nowhere more painfully evident than in Africa.

6. With respect to the food crisis in Africa, the Global Information and Early Warning System on Food and Agriculture had provided Governments and international organizations with alarming assessments as early as the beginning of 1983. Recalling the role played by FAO (establishment of the Special FAO/WFP Task Force to monitor the situation in Africa, appeal issued by the Director-General of FAO, meeting of representatives of donors and affected countries, appeal to the General Assembly, FAO Regional Conference for Africa, endorsement by the developing and the developed countries gathered at the FAO Council in Rome of the most recent initiatives taken by FAO for urgent action to restore African agricultural

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(Mr. Saab, FAO)

production, eliminate food shortages and continue and increase emergency food aid), he still wished to point out that the assessments, appeals and situation reports were only as good as the quality of the responses they elicited. The response, when it came, had been positive. By mid-September 1984, 2.6 million tons of food aid had been pledged, 2.3 million of which had already been delivered. For agricultural rehabilitation and post-emergency measures, donor allocations had by that time amounted to \$190 million. The Director-General of FAO had approved just under \$200 million in World Food Programme (WFP) emergency food aid to affected African countries during the period from April 1983 to November 1984. There was no doubt that without that emergency aid the suffering and starvation would have been far more tragic than they currently were. During the same 20-month period, FAO had financed from its own resources, under its technical co-operation programme, 42 emergency projects costing more than \$6 million. Another 41 food-production-related emergency projects, financed from the remaining balance of the United Nations Emergency Operation Trust Fund, were currently being executed by FAO in Africa. FAO had also participated fully in preparations for the second International Conference on Assistance to Refugees in Africa, visiting the 14 countries concerned and assisting in the identification of 40 rural development projects costing about \$94 million. Drawing once again on its own resources under the technical co-operation programme, rather than waiting for the eventual disbursement of resources mobilized at the Conference, FAO had immediately ensured that 23 of those 40 projects were prepared and formulated, ready to be implemented as soon as financing was secured.

7. In addition to the role it could thus play in food crisis situations, FAO also played an essential role in assessing and confirming emergency needs at country level through its local representatives or assessment missions, whose findings were communicated to donors, and by executing emergency projects for the rehabilitation of the agricultural sector.

8. In its operational activities proper, FAO attached great importance to co-operation and co-ordination with recipient and donor governments as well as with other United Nations bodies. Co-operation and co-ordination with WFP was a good example. In that case, FAO did not just organize joint emergency food aid operations with WFP; it also continued to provide essential technical support for WFP programmes and projects involving food aid for development. It should be recalled that the Director-General of FAO and the Secretary-General of the United Nations had a constitutional responsibility to ensure the implementation of the objectives of WFP.

9. The improvement of co-ordination at country level must begin with the strengthening of countries' own co-ordinating capabilities. There was also a need for close relations and information exchange at country level between the various aid organizations. Resident co-ordinators must keep organizations informed of their discussions with national planning bodies, while the organizations must keep resident co-ordinators informed of their activities. The representatives of the United Nations organizations had indicated that in the vast majority of countries, those arrangements for co-ordination and co-operation appeared to be working well.

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(Mr. Saab, FAO)

FAO for its part contributed actively to exchanges of information with resident co-ordinators and UNDP. The fact that FAO representatives had contributed to the Secretary-General's recent initiative for Africa hundreds of project ideas and proposals also evidenced the desire of FAO to ensure optimum co-operation.

10. Measured against that record, FAO regretted that the report of the Director-General for Development and International Economic Co-operation yet again conveyed the impression that somehow resident co-ordinators were alone in their quest for better co-ordination and that their efforts encountered difficulties which in turn engendered confusion among donor and recipient countries. That might perhaps be the impression prevailing at United Nations Headquarters with regard to co-ordination at field level, but it was hardly borne out in the host countries themselves and was not in conformity with the views of the vast majority of resident co-ordinators.

11. At their request, FAO provided developing countries with assistance in strengthening the co-ordination of sector programmes and projects but its primary focus was on assisting Governments in the programming of inputs for the food and agriculture sector. It therefore hoped that plans and arrangements made by UNDP and the World Bank for the assessment of technical co-operation needs (A/39/417, para. 71) would take particular account of the sectoral competence of FAO and other specialized agencies.

12. While FAO participated in co-operative endeavours as part of the United Nations system, its operational activities nevertheless occupied a distinct place in the broad field of development assistance. They covered a very wide range of food and agriculture projects. Some 3,000 projects had been executed in over 140 countries and some 40 per cent of its field activities were in Africa, where needs were greatest. About 45 per cent of those projects were funded through UNDP, 45 per cent through trust funds and 10 per cent through the FAO regular programme. Because of its long experience, many developed countries, and some developing countries, entrusted substantial amounts to FAO for project execution. It had also been increasingly entrusted with the execution of technical assistance projects financed by the World Bank and other development banks. Most FAO field projects had significant training components in order to promote self-reliance and many now contained elements promoting technical co-operation among developing countries.

13. The FAO Investment Centre annually generated more than \$2 billion of investment in the food and agriculture sector in developing countries. It monitored all FAO technical assistance projects for possible investment follow-up. It also worked closely with the World Bank, regional banks, IFAD and national development banks in the recipient countries themselves. The Director-General was therefore correct in observing that there was every reason to expect a growing involvement of United Nations organizations with borrowing countries in the carrying out of technical assistance activities financed by the multilateral development banks (A/39/417, para. 117).

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(Mr. Saab, FAO)

14. At the country level, there were more than 70 FAO representatives who, in addition to their functions in emergency situations, played a valuable role in the identification, co-ordination, monitoring and assesement of FAO field programmes.

15. Lastly, concerning evaluation, FAO noted with satisfaction the observation in the report of the Director-General (A/39/417, para. 118), that there had been a growing understanding of the value of evaluation in improving the quality and results of programmes and in increasing co-operative efforts to help develop evaluation by governments. In the case of FAO, its field activities were regularly evaluated and reviewed from a variety of angles in order to ensure their effectiveness and their relevance to the needs of the developing countries.

16. Mr. QUINLAN (Australia) said that there was a vital need for the specialized agencies to harmonize and co-ordinate their activities more closely through joint procurement, joint evaluation, better exchange of information, flexibility in the deployment of staff and general administrative, financial and audit compatibility. His delegation therefore commended the experiment in co-ordinated programming carried out by UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF and WFP in which, as an initial step, collaboration would take place in the health and nutrition sector, particularly in Africa. The efforts of resident co-ordinators to enhance coherence at the country level seemed to be fruitful and to make for better co-ordination of external assistance and the capacities of the recipient countries.

17. Much nevertheless remained to be done. Specifically, real efforts must be made with regard to agency support costs. The ex post facto format for reporting was interesting, in spite of deficiencies, and his delegation agreed with the decision in which the UNDP Governing Council requested the Administrator to continue submitting such a report on a biennial basis. The agencies must continue progress towards the standardization of definitions and account procedures in order to eliminate the inconsistencies noted by the Director-General for Development and International Economic Co-operation in his report (A/39/417). It was a source of dissatisfaction that, according to the report, the data provided by the ex post facto reporting system did not allow for a meaningful comparison among agencies. His delegation hoped that the greater standardization that would result as the biennial exercises proceeded would bring about more thorough system-wide analysis. Perhaps the more interesting and innovative methods introduced by different agencies to reduce supports costs could be highlighted in future reports.

18. His country's attitude was that all core contributions should neither be tied nor earmarked for particular purposes or recipients. Extra-core contributions might be tied where practicable, but his country opposed major shifts towards such contributions at the expense of core funding. Substantial tying of assistance would introduce distortions into the programming process. Some of the least developed countries, especially those badly affected by drought and desertification, saw tied procurement as helping to meet their particular needs. The question remained, however, whether that method genuinely made additional resources available. In order to answer that question, there was a need to improve the transparency of information on tied procurement.

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(Mr. Quinlan, Australia)

19. His country, which felt that UNDP should play the central role in funding and co-ordination, was reassured to see that the financial prognosis for the Programme was looking better. It noted again that resource commitment by donors was not simply determined by the funds at their disposal. Even more than that, donors wished to be sure that those funds would be well spent so as to be able to maintain public confidence in multilateral assistance. Better and more uniform evaluation and increased programme and budgetary transparency were essential. The Committee of the Whole established by the UNDP Governing Council had an important technical role to play and must not be used as a scapegoat for problems created by circumstances outside the domain of the Governing Council itself. The consultations among Governments for the fourth programming cycle had been another step forward in the development of a realistic programme.

20. UNICEF occupied a special place in the United Nations development system and his country regarded it as one of the most effective organizations in that system. The last session of the UNICEF Executive Board had focused in particular on the child survival and development revolution and on its implications for the Fund's capacity to respond. UNICEF must itself evaluate how it was conducting that enterprise. The Executive Board's consideration of the emergency situation in Africa and of the need to strengthen UNICEF capacity on that continent had already had positive results and his delegation looked forward to many more.

21. The success of the International Conference on Population had highlighted the importance of UNFPA in the operational activities of the United Nations. The international community had reaffirmed its commitment to the World Population Plan of Action. The effectiveness of UNFPA assistance had been raised as an issue, and his country hoped for a comprehensive report on that subject.

22. The critical situation in Africa once again highlighted the growing importance of the World Food Programme (WFP) and food aid in the framework of international development assistance. WFP currently ranked second to the World Bank as a multilateral aid donor and, since the number of its development projects had greatly increased, it was having to orient its activities increasingly towards development without relinquishing its role in emergency situations, which it carried out with remarkable effectiveness.

23. Owing to the changing circumstances of WFP, the rules governing the relationship between the Programme and its parent bodies, the United Nations and FAO, were proving increasingly inadequate, and a change in the administrative structure of WFP was becoming inevitable. His delegation noted with satisfaction that the establishment of a joint task force to carry out a full review of the management problems of WFP was a step in that direction. That initiative, which had been fully supported by the Committee on Food Aid Policies and Programmes at its eighteenth session, should make it possible to solve the personnel problems recently referred to by the Joint Inspection Unit. There seemed to be considerable differences of interpretation with regard to the procedures and objectives of the

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(Mr. Quinlan, Australia)

task force. In any event, in carrying out its mandate it should take due account of the views of the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the Director-General of FAO, as well as the wishes of the Committee on Food Aid Policies and Programmes. The task force should maintain close contact with the Executive Director of WFP, who should participate in all its work, and all issues must be studied by trilateral, not bilateral, working groups. His delegation fully supported the position taken by the Nordic countries in that regard, particularly with respect to some of the points to which the task force should give particular attention in the course of its work.

24. Mr. AMORIN (Uruguay) said that the gap between developing and developed countries was continually widening, particularly in terms of the quality of life. Despite the increase in contributions from some programmes, the results of the operational activities of the United Nations system were generally negative. No doubt the current crisis partly accounted for the fact that the economic situation was particularly serious in the developing countries. Nevertheless, the problems encountered in the field of operational activities also had political causes, in that some donor countries no longer had confidence in the multilateral system of co-operation for development and even went so far as to attack it. Yet multilateralism gave developing countries equal access to co-operation programmes and lessened the danger of assistance being subject to political pressure, and was the best protection of the right of developing countries to dispose of their natural resources and draw up the national economic policies which they considered to be the most appropriate for their development. The interests of the developing countries were guaranteed in the legal instruments on which the United Nations system was based and were reaffirmed in General Assembly resolutions 37/226 and 38/171, which clearly indicated that it was the exclusive responsibility of the recipient countries to formulate their priorities and national development objectives.

25. The current crisis also gave rise to the problem of the redistribution of assistance, which was carried out to the detriment of many developing countries. The IPFs established by UNDP for countries with a per capita income higher than \$US 500 had undergone the greatest relative decline. The needs of the least developed countries obviously required particular attention, but it should not be forgotten that the other developing countries also required technical co-operation in order to initiate and strengthen the economic development process and, in particular, to build up their scientific and technological capabilities. For that reason, an effort should be made within the framework of the negotiations concerning the fourth programming cycle to devise new compensatory procedures for the redistribution of assistance.

26. In order to revitalize operational activities, his delegation felt that it was necessary first of all to co-ordinate services, avoid duplication of effort, make savings and allocate available resources to priority sectors. In that regard, Uruguay recognized that preference should be given to the least developed countries, while at the same time seeking new methods of co-operation for the other developing countries, in the light of their particular needs and current

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(Mr. Amorin, Uruguay)

capabilities. The measures to be carried should take account of the existing infrastructures in the developing countries, their ability to draw up projects, and their untapped human, scientific and technological resources. To achieve those objectives, contributions to the assistance programmes should also be revitalized in accordance with the following criteria: first, all States must make a contribution, whatever its form or the amount; second, those contributions should take account of the economic differences between countries; third, the developed countries should assume a share of the contributions proportional to their position in the world economy. Uruguay had renewed its voluntary contribution to UNDP, for multilateral co-operation involved the active participation of the recipient country and did not amount to accepting donations.

27. He expressed concern at the delays in the execution of the project concerning the global system of trade preferences among developing countries, which was to be financed by the resources released through the liquidation of the United Nations Emergency Operation Trust Fund.

28. Mr. DE SILVA (Sri Lanka) noted with satisfaction that, following the 1984 Pledging Conference for Development Activities, the Administrator of UNDP had been able to announce that the contributions would probably exceed by 7 per cent those which he had announced in 1983 and that there had been substantial new support from developing countries, 21 of which had increased their pledges to UNDP by at least 10 per cent. Those contributions were in addition to the counterpart support in cash and kind provided by certain countries for UNDP-financed projects, as well as to the cost-sharing component. The results of the Pledging Conference in respect of UNICEF and the United Nations Fund for Population Activities were also encouraging and would enable them to continue their programmes.

29. Since the needs in the field of development assistance were constantly growing because of the crisis, it was important that contributions should increase further if the operational activities were to have the desired impact on developing countries. The international community had certainly responded magnificently to the sufferings of many African countries affected by drought and devastating famine. Nevertheless, it should be kept in mind that, for lack of resources, it had been impossible to prevent that crisis, which had been building up for more than 10 years. That should shock the international community into an awareness of the urgent need to deal with problems before they became acute.

30. In response to the wish expressed by some donor countries to learn about the specific benefits of United Nations operational activities in developing countries, he referred to an irrigation and hydropower project being carried out in Sri Lanka. Other programmes included the strengthening of the organizational, structural and operational functions of the Urban Development Authority, which was carrying out an ambitious development project in the priority areas of housing, health, water supply, sanitation and the environment. That UNICEF and UNFPA programmes had also been effective was demonstrated by the fact that Sri Lanka had achieved an annual population growth rate of 1.5 per cent in 1982, whereas the

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(Mr. de Silva, Sri Lanka)

target for developing countries set under the World Population Plan of Action was 2 per cent. The average life expectancy in Sri Lanka had been 69 years in 1983, as against the Plan target of 62 years by 1985, and the infant mortality rate had been reduced to 34.2 per thousand live births in 1982, while the Plan target had been 120 per thousand live births by 1985. Paradoxically, those attainments had sometimes acted to Sri Lanka's detriment by entailing a reduction in the amount of assistance received. Thus a form of penalty was imposed on those countries which worked resolutely towards self-reliance. It would surely be more equitable if donor countries and international agencies gave priority to Governments which successfully implemented sound policies.

31. His delegation was convinced that aid programmes should be integrated in the national development process. It welcomed the improvements made in institutional arrangements for the delivery of external development assistance. Sri Lanka regarded the tripartite reviews of UNDP-financed projects as a useful tool in managing projects more efficiently. Efforts made to achieve greater cost-effectiveness and to eliminate duplication were steps in the right direction. His delegation was also pleased to note that UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA and WFP were pursuing closer co-operation through the Joint Consultative Group on Policy. Greater co-operation among international agencies and a keener sense of common purpose were indispensable if the United Nations system was to play a leading role in increasing the effectiveness of the international effort to meet the needs of developing countries.

32. His delegation welcomed the Administrator's proposal that human resources development should become a central issue on the agenda of the United Nations. It had been recognized for some time that lack of management and technical skills and inadequate attention paid to human resources development were major obstacles to economic and social development. The fact that the Administrator had already decided to establish a task force to advise on strengthening the role of the human factor in development was therefore to be welcomed.

33. Mr. GBEHO (Ghana) said that the debate on United Nations operational activities for development should form the center-piece of the work of the Second Committee. More time should be spent on the consideration of that agenda item so that States which were not members of the governing bodies of operational agencies might have an opportunity to take part in an in-depth discussion. The usefulness of the Committee's work would be greatly enhanced as a result.

34. Like other members of the Committee, he welcomed the halt in downward trends in the mobilization of resources, the application of additional cost-effective ways of delivering assistance, and the further co-operation between organizations of the United Nations system and international financial institutions, referred to in the report of the Director-General for Development and International Economic Co-operation on operational activities of the United Nations system (A/39/417). He regretted, however, that extrabudgetary contributions placed directly at the disposal of specialized agencies and other organizations for their operational activities had, for the first time, declined by 10 per cent in 1983. It was

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(Mr. Gbeho, Ghana)

encouraging to note that resources provided to developing countries through organizations of the United Nations system were increasingly used to attract supplementary funding from other sources. He also noted with appreciation that the performance of a number of smaller donors, including oil-exporting developing countries, appeared to be better than that of some larger donors, reflecting a policy preference in favour of multilateral assistance.

35. With regard to expenditures, he was also pleased to note that the system reflected both universality of participation and a focus on least developed and other low-income countries. In the case of UNICEF and funds administered by UNDP, countries with a per capita GNP of less than \$500 had accounted for over 80 per cent of grant-financed expenditures on operational activities.

36. For the first time, the annual report on operational activities included data on equipment procurement. Three quarters of the total system-wide procurement took place in developed market economies and about 50 per cent of total procurement in 1983 had taken place in five countries belonging to that group. That meant that multilateral co-operation for development was not simply an exercise in charity, but benefited all countries, developed as well as developing, especially since a major share of consultancies also accrued to the same group of developed countries. The Director-General stated in his report that consultations would take place with concerned organizations with a view to preparing more accurate data on procurement activities, should the General Assembly see merit in such an approach. His delegation, for one, supported that proposal.

37. As to co-ordination at the country level, his delegation endorsed the Director-General's view that in order to make a sustained contribution to development, external assistance had to be closely woven into economic and social programmes which thoroughly reflected the policies of the developing countries. The recipient countries must be at the centre of any efforts at co-ordination, and one of the most useful approaches in that connection would be for donor countries and institutions to respond to specific requests from Governments for assistance which could strengthen the country's national capabilities to enhance co-ordination of external assistance. His own Government had taken steps to strengthen internal co-ordination arrangements and had held extensive consultations with UNDP and other organizations of the United Nations system in preparation for the World Bank Consultative Group's meeting on Ghana scheduled for December 1984. A donors' group recently established in Ghana met regularly under the auspices of the Government and with the participation of the World Bank with the objective of increasing the exchange of information among donors represented in the country. Co-ordination would be enhanced by the fact that, as the Director-General stated in his report, Governments were relying increasingly on national project directors and were depending more on national manpower in the execution of projects. Ghana, for its part, intended to make extensive use of UNDP's Transfer of Knowledge through Expatriate Nationals (TOKTEN) mechanism. As the Director-General rightly pointed out, co-ordination at the country level required qualities of initiative, diplomacy and tact from the local representatives of aid agencies; the choice of resident representatives was therefore of real importance.

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(Mr. Gbeho, Ghana)

38. On the question of the relationship between programme delivery and administrative costs, his delegation hoped for more detailed information in subsequent reports on the operational activities of the United Nations system. On the question of evaluation, his delegation thought that the recipient Government was best placed to assess the value and effectiveness of the programmes and projects carried out on in its territory. Donor countries and institutions, for their part, could assist developing countries in improving their mechanisms for carrying out local evaluation of external assistance. It was good to know that the four main funding agencies for operational activities had agreed to work more closely together to find ways of increasing complementarity and avoiding duplication; that should be particularly useful in the context of current operational activities in Africa.

39. He noted with regret that, according to the report of the Secretary-General giving statistical information on United Nations technical co-operation activities in 1983 (DP/1984/42/Add.3), project expenditures had decreased by 16 per cent in that year and the decline had especially affected development planning, population and statistics, public administration and social development, all sectors of crucial importance for the development process. He also noted with some anxiety that the services of experts and consultants had taken up 54 per cent of the expenditures of the Department of Technical Co-operation for Development in 1983. A way should be found to bring that percentage down.

40. On the other hand, the information contained in the report of the Secretary-General on the liquidation of the United Nations Emergency Operation Trust Fund and allocation of the remaining balance (A/39/284 and Add.1) was more encouraging: a large part of the funds administered by UNDP would help Africa and, directly or indirectly, benefit agriculture on that continent. Moreover, while the funds were essentially being used for quick disbursements in support of urgently needed projects, the available framework nevertheless ensured that the inputs provided led to longer-term benefits.

41. The report of the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) on the Office for Projects Execution of UNDP (A/39/80) and the comments of the Secretary-General on that report (A/39/80/Add.1) provided useful information on the operations of the Office in relation to those of other organizations of the system. While some technical agencies shared the reservations about the role of the Office expressed by JIU, others recognized the Office's flexibility and believed that its activities should be fully maintained. His delegation, for its part, adhered to one principle: the primary purpose of UNDP-financed technical co-operation activities was to meet the needs of developing countries, with emphasis on the promotion of their self-reliance by building up local capabilities through the transfer of technical know-how and management skills. Responsiveness to developing countries' requirements should therefore be the overriding consideration in determining the most suitable executing arrangements for UNDP-assisted projects. Additionally, with regard to project execution, the main consideration should be to ensure that the United Nations made available to developing countries a sound and flexible set of mechanisms designed to ensure both the quality and the timeliness of project inputs and outputs.

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(Mr. Gbeho, Ghana)

42. In Ghana, as in other developing countries, UNICEF was doing remarkable work in support of the most vulnerable groups. His country would do its best to enable the organization to continue working effectively there, especially in promoting the child survival revolution.

43. WFP had in the past two years given Ghana very valuable assistance. In view of the current emergency in Africa, the international community should continue to provide WFP and FAO with all the means necessary to help the African countries to overcome the crisis.

44. Mr. ASHUR (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) said that international co-operation had been compromised by the current world economic crisis and by the regrettable failure of the North-South dialogue, because the organizations of the United Nations system had suffered the backlash from that situation in the financial field and could not maintain previous levels of support for operational activities for development.

45. Some developed countries were reluctant to recognize the complexity of current economic problems, which called for solutions on a world scale, and were trying to undermine the foundations of international co-operation by impeding the operational activities of the United Nations system and putting political and economic pressure on developing countries. However, the latter attached great importance to operational activities for development because they made it possible to strengthen international economic co-operation and, hence, to find collective and just solutions to international economic problems by responding, as a matter of priority, to the needs of the least developed countries, protected from any political or economic pressure.

46. His delegation considered that the economic and technical co-operation activities conducted by United Nations bodies in developing countries were of vital importance for strengthening their self-reliance, which was a real guarantee of their independence; the developed countries should mobilize more resources to support those activities by implementing the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly and other international institutions in their entirety. But it was also important to rationalize management and financing methods within the United Nations system so that the administrative, technical and financial resources at its disposal were fully and effectively employed, and to strengthen co-ordination among the organizations of the system so as to ensure the effectiveness of operational activities.

47. The deterioration of the economic and social situation in Africa was a matter of priority, and his delegation noted with concern the failure of the efforts of the African countries and the international community to put an end to it. The bilateral and multilateral technical and financial assistance given to African countries was inadequate, and it was important to expand it so as to help those countries achieve self-sufficiency, especially in the agricultural sphere. His own country, for its part, had launched an agricultural revolution and had transformed vast areas of uncultivated land into green and fertile areas. It also attached

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(Mr. Ashur, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya)

great importance to multilateral co-operation in all spheres and was contributing so far as it could to the expenditures of international bodies conducting operational activities for development and of organizations for co-operation among Arab and African countries. It was playing an active part in the committees of the League of Arab States and the Organization of African Unity responsible for promoting Arab-African co-operation for purposes of economic and social development.

48. His delegation wished to reaffirm certain principles which should govern operational activities for development: (a) in order to control the increase in expenditures on the services of experts and consultants provided to implement programmes and projects, developing countries should be able to rely on their own national and regional technical resources; (b) recipient countries should give priority in their national development programmes to the operational activities of United Nations bodies; (c) the development of human resources was of capital importance because man played a fundamental part in the development process; (d) the resources available to United Nations bodies for implementing operational activities for development should be fairly distributed among developing countries; (e) to ensure that the programmes envisaged were implemented effectively, it was important to reduce administrative and other support costs; and (f) the contributions and resources provided by the developed groups should not serve as a pretext for putting pressure on international bodies or developing countries.

49. Mr. SAFI (Afghanistan) said that the retrogressive policies of the imperialist circles which preached the free play of the market and granted privileges to transnational corporations, as well as private investments, had had detrimental effects on multilateral co-operation. Those circles undermined the effectiveness of the operational activities of the United Nations system by obstructing assistance provided by the system to certain developing or least developed countries which were following a path of socio-economic development which did not conform to imperialist norms. In particular, the tendency towards greater linkage of the activities of the programmes and funds of the United Nations system, and especially that of UNDP with those of the World Bank and similar institutions in which monopolistic capital held a dominant position, seriously harmed the independent economic development of the developing countries. The growing influence of those financial institutions on the programmes and funds of the United Nations was a violation of the sovereign right of recipient States to determine for themselves the direction of their national development. That matter must be seriously considered by the authorities of the United Nations system.

50. The socio-economic development programmes of the revolutionary Government of Afghanistan had been realistically conceived. The Afghan Government was doing everything possible to consolidate the economy, increase industrial, agricultural and handicraft production and to improve foreign trade. Recognizing that the least developed countries had the primary responsibility for their overall development, the Afghan Government, in an effort to fulfil its obligations at the national level, was mobilizing resources to the maximum extent to attain a self-sustained and progressive economy. In 1983, 48 per cent of development expenditure had been covered by domestic resources and, in 1984, about 52 per cent of total development expenditure was planned to be met domestically.

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(Mr. Safi, Afghanistan)

51. The goals and objectives of the socio-economic development plans of the Afghan Government were identical to those which had been recommended at various United Nations conferences. However, the external assistance which should be provided to Afghanistan under the Substantial New Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries and other United Nations resolutions was not forthcoming, even though it should be a major input in the implementation of national development plans.

52. Afghanistan had none the less benefited from the assistance provided by various United Nations agencies and programmes and, in particular, by UNDP, which played the pivotal role in the implementation of the Substantial New Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries. It was therefore all the more regrettable that some capitalist countries - headed by the United States - had opposed, at the thirty-first session of the Governing Council of UNDP, held in June 1984, the adoption of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan's Third Country Programme. That unlawful action flagrantly violated the procedural norms of the United Nations, seriously damaged the credibility and prestige of UNDP and created a very dangerous precedent for the future work of the Governing Council.

53. Nevertheless, other United Nations agencies and programmes continued to provide Afghanistan with extremely valuable technical and economic assistance, in particular UNICEF, which should further increase its assistance programmes to Afghanistan. Unfortunately, the World Food Programme and the United Nations Capital Development Fund had not yet resumed their activities in Afghanistan, where a resumption of those activities was urgently needed. He hoped that the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank and other financial institutions would soon start their co-operation with Afghanistan. The entire international community should support the activities of the United Nations agencies responsible for furnishing multilateral assistance to developing and, in particular, the least developed countries, by providing them with the resources currently being absorbed by the arms race.

54. Mr. Kaabachi (Tunisia) took the Chair.

55. Mr. TURJANSKY (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic) said that, in 1984, the United Nations agencies responsible for conducting operational activities for development had continued to implement, under the auspices of UNDP, important projects in Asia, Africa and Latin America. They had also taken steps to provide assistance to the most hard-hit African countries.

56. Unfortunately, those positive elements were by no means representative of all UNDP activities and, in particular, they could not obscure certain dangerous tendencies, such as the rapprochement which had begun between IBRD, IMF and UNDP. Since the Fund and the Bank were controlled by Western countries, their policy was to strengthen the integration of developing countries in the world capitalist system, to exploit their natural and human resources through neo-colonialist practices, and to prevent them from adopting progressive economic and social reforms. It was no accident that those agencies were constantly increasing the amount of technical assistance linked with trade conditions. Monopoly capital made

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(Mr. Turyansky, Ukrainian SSR)

use of UNDP channels in order to infiltrate the key sectors of developing countries' economies, and his delegation was strongly opposed to any attempt to exploit the Programme for commercial ends.

57. UNDP activities should remain based on the principles of universality and voluntariness contained in the 1970 consensus and on the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council, whose goal, in particular, was to promote the true economic independence of the developing countries. In particular, as indicated in paragraph 5 of Assembly resolution 38/171, operational activities should be in accordance with the national plans, priorities and objectives of the recipient countries in order to enhance their impact and relevance to the national development process of those countries.

58. Unfortunately, those principles were often violated, as evidenced by the unprecedented decision of the Governing Council of UNDP at its thirty-first session not to resume the assistance programme to Afghanistan, although that country figured among the least developed States and therefore should have the right to preferential treatment on the part of the international community. The pressures which had been brought to bear by the United States and its allies were intended in fact to destroy the unity of the developing countries and to impose on them the diktat of imperialism.

59. There were other areas in which the fundamental principles of the activities of UNDP were not respected: its administrative costs were excessive and the mandate of the resident co-ordinators was becoming too broad.

60. The Ukrainian SSR had always supported and continued to support operational activities because they facilitated the implementation of the basic instruments adopted by the United Nations, such as the Declaration and the Programme of Action on the Establishment of a New International Economic Order, the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States, and the International Development Strategy for the Third United Nations Development Decade. The Ukrainian SSR did all it could, within the framework of its relations with the Soviet Union, to assist newly independent States of Asia, Africa and Latin America by taking part in the implementation of projects - in particular, industrial projects - by sending specialists to those countries and by training their nationals in its educational institutions. Thus, the Ukrainian SSR had facilitated the construction of metallurgical and petrochemical complexes in India, and a hydroelectric and a railway complex in Algeria; it had also helped carry out projects in Burma, Guinea, Iraq, Syria, Egypt, Mali, Bangladesh and Tunisia. The technical training courses which it organized in co-operation with UNIDO were highly valued.

61. The developing countries relied heavily on the United Nations system for their development, but fruitful international co-operation could only be established in a climate of peace and security, and should be based on détente and a restructuring of world economic relations on the basis of just, egalitarian and democratic principles.

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62. Mr. BOUBACAR (Guinea-Bissau) said that there was reason to question the capacity of the United Nations system to bring about an orderly transformation of international economic relations, especially as the North-South dialogue seemed to have reached an impasse. However, it had been demonstrated that the current crisis in the world economy could be overcome only through universally negotiated global measures.

63. That crisis seemed to grow worse as time went by, particularly, in the developing countries, as a result of the structural imbalances and inequalities which characterized the international economic system. The collapse of commodity prices, inadequate flows of resources, particularly on concessional terms, monetary instability, high interest rates, a deterioration in the terms of trade and the persistence of protectionist practices were all factors which, in combination, had forced the developing countries to incur heavy indebtedness and curb their development activities.

64. In view of that situation, United Nations operational activities for development must be in accordance with the principles of complementarity and solidarity at all levels, since any departure from that rule might result in cost increases and duplication. In particular, closer ties must be established between technical co-operation and investments. Moreover, stronger technical co-operation among developing countries must result in specific and co-ordinated actions, suited to development needs and to the financing and assimilation possibilities of the States concerned. In that regard, it was reasonable to expect the developed countries also to assume their share of the responsibility.

65. In 1984, pledges had been larger than expected. Most countries, including the developing countries, had expressed renewed confidence in United Nations operational activities for development. The agencies responsible for operational activities, in particular UNDP, would be in a position to continue to meet the needs of the developing countries. His country supported the measures and decisions of the UNDP Governing Council, as they seemed likely to improve the management and effectiveness of the Fund as well as the system of voluntary contributions. It was also in favour of all the decisions taken with regard to population at the Mexico City Conference.

66. Africa was experiencing a critical situation since it contained three quarters of the least developed countries, including his own, 23 of the most seriously affected countries, half of the land-locked countries and large concentrations of refugees and displaced persons. Moreover, 70 per cent of its population was near or below the poverty threshold and its share of world agricultural and industrial production and of international trade in manufactures was negligible. It was therefore the continent most severely affected by the world recession in spite of its considerable economic potential, which was engendering a process of gradual marginalization. The international community must pay special attention to Africa in order to reverse that inexorable process in which it was engaged. Any action undertaken must be firmly directed towards a restructuring of the current economic order.

67. Ms. QOANE (Lesotho) said that, a short while ago, the international community as a whole had been concerned at the dwindling resources made available to the United Nations system for development. There was a growing lack of confidence in multilateralism. However, that trend had now been reversed. The volume of contributions had been stabilized, which, it was to be hoped, would lead to an increase in resources for agencies responsible for operational activities. The fact that the least developed countries (LDCs) were being allocated an increasing share of those resources was especially heartening.

68. Her country, as a least developed country, belonging to a continent experiencing a devastating economic crisis, benefited from the assistance of various funds and programmes under the effective management of UNDP, which continued to play a leading role in co-ordinating multilateral assistance. The round-table conferences on the LDCs had been successful and the UNDP decision to establish a post of co-ordinator of assistance to the least developed countries was to be commended. The LDCs were hopeful that the mid-term review of the implementation of the Substantial New Programme of Action, which was to take place in 1985, would be successful and that the donors would renew their financial commitment to UNDP so that it could fulfil the expectations of the LDCs. Increased contributions to the Special Measures Fund for the LDCs would be an important step in that direction.

69. The emergency measures adopted by the international community to neutralize the crisis engulfing Africa were very positive. But they had not solved the entire problem and most African countries remained helpless, as they had been unprepared for the assumption of full control of their economic destinies, inherited models of economic development imposed from outside. The response to the current crisis should be twofold: there should be short-term measures and a long-term rehabilitation programme of economic restructuring.

70. The development of skilled manpower was also a prerequisite of that strategy. It was encouraging to note that it was now being accorded the priority that it deserved in operational activities. The role played by the Department of Technical Co-operation for Development in development planning was of crucial importance. The developing countries needed skilled personnel in the areas of development planning, public administration and other important fields. The assistance and guidance provided in the framework of North-South co-operation would always be welcome, but it should also be possible to use the services of advisers from other developing countries since they were more familiar with development needs and priorities. Such an approach would ensure the implementation of the Caracas Programme of Action for economic and technical co-operation among developing countries.

71. It was also most gratifying to note that the three other leaders in operational activities for development, namely, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Fund for Population Activities (UNFPA) and the World Food Programme (WFP) had long-term measures as components of their assistance to developing countries, especially in Africa. At its most recent session, the Executive Board of UNICEF had devoted due attention to the crisis in Africa and

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(Ms. Qoane, Lesotho)

to its effects on the most vulnerable groups: mothers and children. It had examined ways of improving the economic situation of women, primarily at the village level, so as to enable them to contribute to the success of the child survival revolution. Lesotho hoped that the Conference to Review and Appraise the Achievements of the United Nations Decade for Women, to be held in 1985, would give new impetus to that effort. For its part, UNFPA was involved in raising the awareness of Governments concerning the close relationship between population policies and development and, consequently, the need for long-term programmes to enhance the standard of living of the people. The Executive Director of WFP had recently stressed in the Committee the need to consider food aid as a tool for longer-term development. WFP, which had always been operational, was also considering food aid from a new perspective. Those three agencies needed growing support, and co-ordination and co-operation between them must be strengthened to ensure cost-effective delivery of their assistance. She also expressed satisfaction with the existing co-operation between UNDP and the World Bank.

72. Mr. McBARNETTE (Trinidad and Tobago) said that the tone of the statements made by the heads of agencies and the perceived optimism that operational activities were again showing signs of revival were a source of gratification for his delegation, which hoped that wisdom and foresight would prevail to give those activities once more the place they deserved.

73. Technical assistance premised on the promotion of self-reliance through the provision of inputs allowing developing countries to enhance their productive capacity and efficiency to utilize their indigenous resources was a concept his Government supported. His Government considered that such technical assistance enhanced the ability of developing countries to carry out development activities under their own steam. The policy review of technical co-operation conducted by the Governing Council of UNDP at its thirty-first session had been timely as the third programming cycle was drawing to a close. His country shared the view that technical co-operation would have to show enhanced flexibility without abandoning old traditions. Developing countries, while they shared several "commonalities", were by no means a monolithic bloc. The quality of technical assistance offered throughout the rest of the 1980s would in large measure depend on the ability of the system to adapt to changing needs.

74. UNDP, the focal point of operational activities within the United Nations system, was preparing for the fourth programming cycle, and his delegation found it opportune to make a few comments on some proposed adjustments to the programme. In Trinidad and Tobago, as in many other developing countries, the exercise of country programming had been elaborated and integrated into the planning process. In most countries the resource crisis of the last few years and the climate of uncertainty that it left in its wake could, if not checked, undermine the confidence that Governments had placed in that exercise. Many developing countries, recognizing the usefulness of technical assistance offered through the United Nations system, had, by cost sharing, increased the resources for country programming over and above the country Indicative Planning Figures (IPFs). According to the Director-General's report, cost sharing contributions had risen from \$41.9 million

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(Mr. McBarnette, Trinidad and Tobago)

in 1979 to \$94.4 million in 1983, and it was likely that the figure would exceed \$100 million for the 1984 programme. Those efforts by the developing countries demonstrated the value which they placed on international economic co-operation within the multilateral context.

75. His Government had also used the device of cost sharing to supplement the small IPF of the country and had sought thereby to mount a more comprehensive programme better suited to its development goals. The practice of his Government was to make available its cost sharing contribution to UNDP in advance of the year in which payment was due, in order to avoid delays and gaps in the implementation of programmes and projects. His Government was, however, not satisfied with the responses received so far from UNDP in relation to the utilization of the interest accruing on the advance payment of its contribution. His Government considered that since cost sharing arrangements had become a permanent feature of the Programme, mechanisms should be worked out in consultation with recipient Governments to solve any problems that might arise. Over the past few years, cost sharing arrangements had made additional resources available to UNDP, and his delegation was prepared to support any proposal that would free additional resources for those countries in greatest need, provided that those proposals did not compromise the voluntary and universal nature of UNDP.

76. His country had supported the decision to direct the major share of technical assistance resources to the least developed countries, and had not opposed the allocation of 49.4 per cent of total country IPFs to those countries in the first cycle, 64.7 per cent in the second cycle and nearly 80 per cent in the third programming cycle. His country could not, however, accept the proposal that certain countries with a per capita gross national product (GNP) above a set level should be excluded from the programme. His delegation found that proposal unacceptable, as it seemed to imply that above a certain level of per capita GNP less technical assistance was needed. In addition, while realizing the difficulties involved in the formulation of different criteria, his delegation considered that per capita GNP was not a reliable indicator of economic development.

77. The resources available for country programming in Trinidad and Tobago had been decreased by 45 per cent during the third programming cycle. His Government, with the resources at its disposal and with considerable adjustments, had sought to fill the gaps and make the programming exercise more meaningful. It would be an added injustice if Trinidad and Tobago, which had been afforded small IPFs in past cycles on account of its relatively high per capita GNP and small population size, were now to find itself having to accept technical assistance on a reimbursable basis. His delegation considered that the only significant effect of that proposal would be to marginalize several countries from the mainstream of operational activities within the system. Similarly, his delegation found difficulty in understanding the proposal made by certain delegations to eliminate the "floor" principle in the fourth programming cycle. Country programming had become, as had been said before, an integral part of the planning process in many developing countries. The effect of such a proposal would only be to create further complications for planners and decision makers in developing countries.

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78. Commenting on other operational activities within the United Nations system as a whole, particularly in the areas of evaluation, co-ordination, procurement and the use of expert services, he said that he was gratified that evaluation had become part of the United Nations system of operational activities and that several agencies and organizations had acquired considerable experience in that area, experience which could be utilized by the developing countries. His delegation supported the view that recipient countries were key factors in that process and believed that quality programming could only result from evaluation in the field as opposed to evaluation at the centre.

79. On the question of co-ordination, his delegation had examined with interest the Director-General's report on that subject. It considered that effective co-ordination at the country level would ensure that the multiple elements making up technical assistance formed a package which optimized available resources and inputs. His delegation considered, however, that co-ordination must not be an end in itself and should, while promoting more efficient use of resources, assist in the evolution of a dynamic system more responsive to the ever-changing priorities of developing countries. Co-ordination and exchange of information among donor countries would facilitate better structured and more comprehensive assistance to recipient countries. In that respect, field offices and, in particular, the resident co-ordinator, should play a more active role.

80. In its statement of the previous year, his delegation had noted that several major contributors tended to tie their contributions or attach conditions to their utilization. That practice, if accepted within the system, would limit the recipient country's choice of technology or equipment which it considered most appropriate to its needs and would in some cases increase the total cost of projects. His delegation therefore welcomed the inclusion for the first time of statistical information on procurement, which gave a better picture of the overall situation. It hoped that more concerted efforts would be made to ensure that a greater percentage of procurement was carried out in developing countries and that future reports would include relevant statistical information and analysis.

81. In addition, greater attention should be paid to project design and the provision of expert services. His Government had experienced problems in that area and suggested that executing agencies should provide information on experts and consultants to allow recipient Governments to assess their suitability for the tasks assigned to them.

82. His delegation supported the establishment of a human resources task force within UNDP, as announced by the Administrator in his statement before the Committee.

83. Mr. Harland (New Zealand) resumed the Chair.

84. Mr. SAVIĆ (Yugoslavia) observed that the operational activities for development within the United Nations system enjoyed the general support of the international community and had always been cited as an example of successful

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(Mr. Savić, Yugoslavia)

co-operation. There were thus grounds for hope that further efforts would be made for the constant promotion of such activities, since they were of growing interest to the developing countries. That would demand constant and timely perception of new needs and similar solution of new problems, for only thus could the vitality of the programmes be maintained.

85. In addition to rationalization measures, it was at the moment most important to ensure that UNDP funds were increased. His delegation had to some extent been encouraged by the assessment that prospects for overcoming the financial difficulties that had been plaguing the system of operational activities for several years had improved. For a considerable improvement to take place in current contribution trends, a substantial and real increase in the inflow of resources was needed, taking as a criterion the goals set by some organizations. The efforts made in that regard by some developed countries, and also by a number of developing countries, were encouraging. In his delegation's view, the greatest portion of the resources should be allocated for assistance to the least developed countries, i.e. for the implementation of, for instance, the Substantial New Programme of Action. In that connection, Yugoslavia supported all efforts made by UNDP to relieve the critical economic situation in Africa.

86. The report on operational activities (A/39/417) deserved further study, and his delegation would therefore touch upon only some of the issues dealt with. His delegation agreed with what was said in the report regarding the significance of co-ordination at the country level. It therefore supported the measures envisaged for promoting co-ordination. In its view, successful co-ordination of technical assistance could greatly contribute to the efficiency of operational activities for development. It also supported all efforts aimed at a rational utilization of resources and the improved efficiency of UNDP activities in general. In order to meet the growing technical assistance needs of the developing countries, improvements were needed in the efficiency of technical co-operation programmes, the co-ordination of operational activities within the United Nations system, resource mobilization, project planning, and the evaluation system. Co-ordination should consist in setting common priorities, particularly in key sectors such as food production, energy, population activities, health care services, and trade and industry, in order to help the developing countries promote their own human and material potential and self-reliance. Such co-ordination was also necessary at the national level.

87. His delegation supported in particular all efforts made by the UNDP Administrator to utilize resources rationally and effectively. Co-operation between UNDP, the World Bank and other international financial institutions had to be strengthened.

88. Technical co-operation among developing countries should receive greater support from UNDP and the entire United Nations system. Additional resources should be allocated for the purpose. Yugoslavia had created a solid basis for bilateral and multilateral implementation of the objectives of technical co-operation among developing countries. Despite the economic difficulties it was

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facing, it had increased its contribution to the main UNDP programme and had maintained the status of a net contributor. In addition to the activities his Government was carrying out as a beneficiary of UNDP assistance, Yugoslav enterprises were engaged in numerous projects in developing countries. Yugoslavia also continued to give financial support to other funds and programmes in the field of operational activities, such as the United Nations Capital Development Fund, the United Nations Sudano-Sahelian Office, the Fund for Population Activities and others, with which it co-operated very successfully.

89. His Government had noted with satisfaction the positive trend in the participation of developing countries in the realization of projects, particularly with regard to the amount of equipment ordered and the number of subcontractors. Also positive was the increased participation of the developing countries in project financing on the basis of cost-sharing arrangements. Those types of co-operation should be further strengthened.

90. Mr. MALIK (India) said that he found the report on operational activities for development (A/39/417) to be extremely useful and lucid. India attached the utmost importance to that vital sector of United Nations activities, because it constituted a key element in supplementing national development efforts and in maintaining the emphasis on economic and social factors in development policies. That element was even more important in the context of the burdens of adjustment imposed on the developing countries by the cut-backs in programmes, which had the greatest impact on the most vulnerable sections of the population. Indeed, the very future of generations was at stake. In that connection, he wished to focus on a few aspects of particular importance.

91. First of all, the question of resources. It was heartening to note that the trend towards a decline in the resources pledged had been arrested, although that was only of marginal comfort. Resources had stagnated at a level lower than in 1982, and the picture was more grim when viewed in the context of a 10 per cent decline in the extrabudgetary resources placed directly at the disposal of the specialized agencies. That was coupled with the uncertainties surrounding the replenishment of IFAD resources and the extremely low level of IDA resources.

92. Supplementary financing for IDA and IFAD was particularly important in view of the crucial role they played for low-income countries. He drew attention to the fact that, in November 1984, 21 developing countries had announced increases in their contributions, despite their difficult circumstances. India itself had increased its pledge by 22 per cent, or a rise of 13 per cent in United States dollars. It was discouraging that a country with a level of per capita income as low as India contributed more for technical assistance programmes than several industrialized countries, and he urged all countries, particularly those whose contributions were relatively low in relation to their capacity, to be more forthcoming.

93. The operational activities of the United Nations system were not only the most tangible manifestation of international co-operation; they also represented the

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international community's determination to translate its commitments into action, and it was that standard by which it was judged. When the illustrative IPFs were set for the fourth UNDP programming cycle, the needs of the developing countries must be taken into account, together with the internationally expressed targets and commitments for official development assistance. It was important not to be satisfied with continuing to operate at slightly more than 50 per cent of the illustrative IPFs.

94. His delegation also noted with concern the increasing trend towards the tying of contributions to procurement in donor countries. That trend should not be allowed to alter the basic multilateral character of United Nations operational activities. Similar caution should be exercised in connection with proposals for co-financing with the private sector. Of course, flexibility and imagination were needed in order to mobilize every possible source, but that must not be achieved at the expense of the underlying principles of multilateral financing. His delegation wished to stress the need to adhere fully to the principles adopted by consensus at the UNDP Governing Council in 1970 and to the principle that political factors should not be allowed to influence the decisions taken in that field. Any deviation from that principle would lead to a breakdown of the entire system.

95. Referring to the question of efficiency, he drew attention to the wide variations in the ratios of administrative costs to programme delivery among the different executing agencies. The data presented on that subject in the report were useful, and he expressed the hope that, in the future, they would be presented in a more directly comparable form.

96. It was also important to assess technical co-operation and related operational activities in the context of the development plans and priorities of the recipient countries. Moreover, it was necessary to establish a close connection between research and analysis in the system and in its operational activities and to ensure that Governments assumed more rapidly the responsibility for the execution of projects. That was what had been done in India itself, with excellent results, and that aspect should be actively encouraged.

97. His delegation had been happy to note that, for the first time, the report of the Director-General had included information on procurement and sub-contracting. Such information should continue to be provided in future and should contain a more thorough analysis of the procurement pattern, together with explanatory notes on major deviations. It would be particularly cost-effective to use experts and equipment from developing countries, whenever possible. Furthermore, greater emphasis should be placed on the importance of adapting expertise to the real needs of the developing countries.

98. His delegation appreciated the manner in which the funds and programmes had tried to maintain and improve delivery, despite severe resource constraints. It was also reassuring to see the flexible and dynamic way in which they had continued to adapt to changing circumstances. India attached particular importance to the activities of UNFPA and to its role in implementing the World Population Plan of

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(Mr. Malik, India)

Action and felt that that agency should continue to be supported. UNICEF, which sought to ensure child survival and development, also deserved the full support of the international community. It was desirable, to say the least, to expand the resource base of UNICEF to the fullest extent possible, because it represented an essential feature of the United Nations system of operational activities, namely, an investment in the future of mankind. Of course, that depended on acceptance of the fact that "the child was father of the man", and he expressed the hope that that humanitarian element had not yet become the victim of the cynicism which might well one day dismantle the system of multilateral aid.

99. Mr. DE ROJAS (Venezuela) reminded members of the fact that, at the thirty-eighth session of the General Assembly, resolution 38/201, entitled "Liquidation of the United Nations Emergency Operation Trust Fund and allocation of the remaining balance", which his delegation had sponsored, had been adopted by consensus, despite major differences of opinion, thanks only to the good will of all the participants and to well-defined objectives. However, in recent months and weeks, his delegation had heard reports and rumours about developments which would not only violate the letter of resolution 38/201 and the will of the Assembly but would also raise doubts about the existence of the good will which Venezuela had taken for granted.

100. Paragraph 1, subparagraph (c), of the resolution in question specified that 12 per cent of the funds would be channelled through the United Nations Development Programme for the purpose of economic and technical co-operation among developing countries and that those funds would be allocated to activities in economic and technical co-operation of critical importance to developing countries, according to the priorities set by them. Moreover, the preamble of the same resolution drew attention to the terms of the Caracas Programme of Action for economic co-operation among developing countries. There was thus no doubt that that reference concerned the countries of the Group of 77. It seemed obvious to Venezuela that the basic goal was to use the sum in question to promote South-South economic and technical co-operation activities. That was precisely what had been provided for in the Caracas Programme of Action and confirmed at the annual meetings of the Intergovernmental Follow-up and Co-ordination Committee of the Group of 77 because it would be very difficult to obtain similar funds through other means. In discussing the question with other interested countries and with the Secretariat, particularly with UNDP officials, his delegation had obtained assurances on more than one occasion that that was in fact the only way of interpreting and implementing the resolution and that it was not necessary to clarify it further. However, it seemed that attempts were now being made to present another interpretation of the will of the General Assembly, something which, in Venezuela's opinion, was neither possible nor proper.

101. The developing countries that were sponsoring the draft resolution, whose contributions, as a whole, accounted for more than half of the initial funds, had envisaged other alternatives; one was to deposit the sum intended for South-South co-operation in a UNDP account, which would be managed directly by the Chairman of the Group of 77 in his capacity as central co-ordinator responsible for the

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(Mr. de Rojas, Venezuela)

implementation of the Caracas Programme of Action, instead of entrusting it to UNDP. Another possibility was, after the Trust Fund was liquidated, to return the balance to the initial donors in proportion to their contributions. If that solution had been adopted, his country would have received \$8.5 million, for it had paid 20 per cent of the initial amount. It could then have considered giving back that amount in order to set up a fund for activities relating to economic co-operation among developing countries. His delegation had therefore proposed enthusiastically that 20 per cent should be allocated for South-South co-operation but finally, in order to facilitate consensus, it had agreed to the reduction of that percentage to 12 per cent, the figure that appeared in General Assembly resolution 38/201. He was reminding the Committee of those facts to explain why it was even more difficult for his delegation to agree to the suggestion that the amount, which had already been reduced, should be used for other purposes.

102. The recent elaboration and adoption of the first project - on the establishment of the Global System of Trade Preferences among Developing Countries - to be financed from the Special Account and to be executed by UNCTAD, was an encouraging element of the entire process. The project had been well prepared and he hoped that it would also be well executed.

103. Throughout the process of identifying, clarifying and formulating the project on the Global System of Trade Preferences, members of the Group of 77 had remained in close contact with one another; their Chairman, representative and spokesman had also kept in close touch with the UNDP authorities. Members of the Group felt that that was the only way to work in submitting, considering, approving, following-up and evaluating projects relating to South-South co-operation to be financed from the Special Account. The Administrator of UNDP must not consider any project whatsoever unless it was submitted by the Chairman of the Group of 77, on behalf of the Group and in the interest of many members of the Group, in accordance with the Caracas Programme of Action; those ECDC and TCDC projects would necessarily have to be either interregional or global. His delegation had contacted the other delegations which had sponsored General Assembly resolution 38/201 and other members of the Group of 77 in order to evaluate the situation and decide what was the right action and once it had decided it would act accordingly.

104. His delegation deplored the fact that, in view of the stagnation and paralysis of international economic co-operation, yet another element of frustration was being added, that merely went to prove that some people appeared to be more interested in obstructive and negative enterprises, that simply diverted attention and energy from the really important questions that needed to be considered, than in working constructively and positively to find solutions to the very serious problems facing the international economic order.

105. He appealed to all parties present to find a solution that would satisfy all interested parties, without violating either the letter or the spirit of resolution 38/201, and avert an unnecessary and painful confrontation which could only adversely affect the climate of discussions in the Committee.

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106. Mr. AL-GHAILANY (Oman) said that he had carefully studied the documents on the item under consideration and had followed with interest the statements made by the Director-General and the executive heads of the Funds involved in operational activities for development. There was no doubt that those activities were a positive aspect of United Nations activities in the field of multilateral international co-operation. The note by the Secretary-General (A/39/417), presenting the main points of the annual report of the Director-General, stressed the urgent need to accelerate the growth of the developing countries, to halt the downward trend in the mobilization of resources and to promote co-ordination of the assistance provided to developing countries.

107. It was unfortunate that the efforts were not commensurate with the needs and requirements of the developing countries. The latter were encountering extremely serious problems. That was true, as the Director-General had pointed out, of the countries in the Sudano-Sahelian region where the drought and various economic difficulties were having a severe impact on the population. It was necessary to provide food aid to those countries as a matter of urgency and to help them overcome the problems stemming from the drought.

108. His delegation welcomed the measures taken by the Administrator of UNDP to improve the effectiveness of the regional offices of UNDP. It should be noted, however, that other developing countries which had particular need for assistance were giving it up, either because of the high cost of the services provided by the Organization or because those services did not always meet their needs. Although Oman covered an area of more than 300,000 square kilometres and had a population of 1.5 million, it had not engaged in economic and social development planning until 1970. A temporary economic development plan should be prepared for each country, based on the number of inhabitants, size of the country and the financial resources needed to ensure the success and continuity of United Nations operational activities for development.

109. The role of the Resident Co-ordinators must be strengthened so as to improve operational activities for development and to co-ordinate those activities with the programmes of the host countries. It was also necessary to enhance the role of UNDP at the regional level and to improve evaluation for that would facilitate the more rational utilization of available financial resources. Operational systems must be strengthened and co-ordinated at the regional level. In order to avoid unnecessary expenditure, that task could be given to the Resident Co-ordinator who would work in close co-operation with the Governments concerned. It was also necessary to ensure co-ordination between, and complementarity of, activities carried out by the various agencies of the United Nations system. In order for the recipient countries to benefit to the fullest extent, both qualitatively and quantitatively, from the assistance provided by the various United Nations bodies, it was necessary to establish co-operation between those bodies and the various Government services of the recipient countries.

110. He paid tribute to the activities carried out in Oman by various United Nations bodies, particularly the United Nations Fund for Population Activities, UNICEF, the World Food Programme and other development programmes. Those activities were contributing significantly to Oman's development.

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111. Mr. BABGYE (Bhutan) recalled that the growth rate of the developing countries, particularly the least developed countries, was way below the targets set in the International Development Strategy for the Third United Nations Development Decade. The developed countries should allocate 0.7 per cent of their gross national product to official development assistance. The report of the Secretary-General on the review and appraisal of the International Development Strategy for the Third United Nations Development Decade (A/39/115-E/1984/49) contained a comprehensive study of the questions relating to social development in light of the aims of the Strategy - namely, the reduction and elimination of poverty, the fair distribution of the benefits of development, the eradication of hunger and malnutrition, the achievement of full and productive employment, longer life expectancy and better health, education, literacy and shelter for all. The Strategy also called for equality for women in both principle and practice and for the integration into society of vulnerable population groups. The international community must endeavour to achieve those objectives.

112. He pointed out with concern that the erosion of multilateral economic assistance, especially operational activities, was affecting the developing countries, particularly the least developed among them. As the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Bhutan had said, the structural imbalances that plagued the world economy in general had led to an erosion of standards of living in the developing countries. The situation was most desperate in the least developed countries. While developing countries themselves bore the main responsibility for their development, external resources had a vital role to play in complementing the national efforts.

113. Bhutan received assistance from programmes of UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA, UNCDF and the United Nations Volunteers Programme all of which played an important role in the transfer of technical know-how to the developing countries and in the development of human resources.

114. UNDP-financed programmes in Bhutan focused largely on training and advisory services to strengthen the Government's technical and managerial capacities. To meet the country's technical personal requirements, United Nations volunteers and other international staff, including teachers, doctors and other specialists, were made available. One third of total UNDP resources provided for the period 1982-1986, approximately \$US 7 million, would be utilized for training national personnel. UNDP was also assisting in establishing the physical infrastructure of the country, and in facilitating capital investment.

115. Projects executed by UNICEF had brought about qualitative changes in most regions in the fields of child health and nutrition, drinking water supplies and sanitation, prevention of infant mortality, development of pre-primary and primary education, manpower training and the promotion of development support communications.

116. In the framework of the agricultural credit scheme executed by UNCDF, the Government of Bhutan was seeing to it that farmers appreciated the value of loans and became accustomed to the cycle of borrowing and repayment. In most parts of the country, loans were made in kind while repayments were largely in cash. UNCDF

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(Mr. Babgye, Bhutan)

was also executing an irrigation project of about \$2.6 million and was involved in the construction of many suspension bridges to link the new road system or provide safe access to various communities.

117. UNFPA was integrating population education concepts in general education programmes and elaborating projects that were in continuity with national development programmes.

118. Since 1976, WFP had been providing food aid worth \$11.7 million in all to seven development projects focused on five priority areas of economic and social development: improvement of the nutritional status of vulnerable groups; development of education; improvement of agricultural resources through the development of new settlement areas and the expansion of irrigation facilities; rural development through the construction of link roads, suspension bridges and mule tracks; and forestry development.

119. A large number of developed countries had not attained the agreed targets with respect to their contributions to operational activities even though they possessed the capacity to do so. On the other hand, developing countries had gradually increased their voluntary contributions despite the absence of any significant improvement in their economic situation. The current financial difficulties affected all development activities but operational activities were affected the most. As the Secretary-General had pointed out, contributions to UNDP, excluding cost sharing - which represented 50 per cent of total contributions to the United Nations Pledging Conference for Development Activities - had stagnated for the fourth consecutive year at around \$700 million. That situation was serious for the least developed countries but was particularly serious for Bhutan since international assistance was part and parcel of the country's overall development plans. Bhutan's development had already been affected adversely by the result of the previous pledging conference which had led to a reduction in programme delivery of almost 50 per cent.

120. His Government fully agreed with the Administrator of UNDP who had recently emphasized the importance of human resources development in the developing countries. In Bhutan, a substantial portion of UNDP resources were devoted to human resources development for the Government believed that that was a crucial component of the drive to attain self-reliance. Human resources development depended on foreign technical assistance for it was clear that the developing countries suffered from a shortage of trained manpower. However, they would not be able to rely forever on United Nations volunteers to fill the gaps. Bhutan hoped that the international community would assist it, in conformity with its spiritual and cultural traditions, not by giving it fish but by teaching it to fish.

121. Mr. HUSSAIN (Afghanistan), exercising his right of reply, said that his country was aware of the pressure being exerted on UNDP to prevent it from adopting the country programme for Afghanistan. It had been said that if the programme was adopted the level of contributions by major Western countries to the UNDP budget would be affected.

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(Mr. Hussain, Afghanistan)

122. He reminded the representative of the United States that the limited contingent of Soviet troops stationed in Afghanistan had been sent at the request of the legitimate Government of that country to stop the military aggression orchestrated by the United States and the undeclared war against Afghanistan in which the United States was playing the main role. As could be seen from the article published in The New York Times on 28 November 1984, in the past fiscal year, \$280 million had been earmarked for covert military aid to the Afghan rebels; that did not include the aid provided by Saudi Arabia and other Arab countries, China and Israel. American dollars were used to purchase Soviet-made arms from Egypt, China and Israel; the arms were shipped through Pakistan with the agreement of the CIA. Pakistan controlled operations on the ground for it ran the greatest risk of possible Soviet military retaliation. In addition, United States financial assistance would for the first time, include cash to purchase food on the Afghan markets.

123. By continually increasing its aid to the Afghan counter-revolutionaries, the United States was demonstrating that it did not want peace to return to Afghanistan and it was interfering in the domestic affairs of that country.

124. The CHAIRMAN announced that one of the Vice-Chairmen of the Committee, Mr. de la Torre, would be holding informal consultations on the letter from the Chairman of the Fifth Committee to the Chairman of the Second Committee (A/C.2/39/13) concerning the proposed revisions to the medium-term plan for the period 1984-1989. He reminded the Committee of the deadlines which the General Assembly had set for the submission of draft resolutions with financial implications and those without.

125. The following countries were joining in sponsoring the following draft resolutions: Mozambique, A/C.2/39/L.20; the Congo, A/C.2/39/L.49 and L.64; Canada and Mozambique, A/C.2/39/L.70; Bangladesh, A/C.2/39/L.73; the Ivory Coast and Burkina Faso, A/C.2/39/L.77.

The meeting rose at 5.35 p.m.