



SECOND COMMITTEE
51st meeting
held on
Tuesday, 27 November 1984
at 10.30 a.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 51st MEETING

Chairman: Mr. HARLAND (New Zealand)

later: Mr. KAABACHI (Tunisia)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.50 a.m.

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)
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1. Mr. DOLJINTSEREN (Mongolia) said that his country attached great importance to the operational activities of the United Nations system. The key role in those activities belonged to UNDP, whose guiding principles should be those of universality, voluntariness and respect for the sovereignty of recipient countries. His delegation wished to reiterate its support for the provisions of the Consensus reached by the Governing Council of UNDP in 1970. The efforts which UNDP was making to assist national liberation movements could make a substantial contribution to implementing those provisions.

2. In evaluating UNDP activities, considerable importance naturally attached to such positive practices as the close linking of aid projects with the development priorities of individual countries and the extensive use of local resources. However, some very dangerous trends had recently appeared: a number of leading Western Powers were trying to use UNDP for their own ends to interfere in the internal affairs of sovereign States, as had been shown by their prevention of the adoption of the UNDP aid programme for Afghanistan. His delegation resolutely condemned that action, expressed its full solidarity with Afghanistan, and demanded that the aid programme for Afghanistan should be approved at the next session of the UNDP Governing Council in 1985.

(Mr. Doljintseren, Mongolia)

3. His delegation agreed with other speakers that it was important to increase the efficiency and rationalize the activity of UNDP. But the recent establishment of a Committee of the Whole of the Governing Council did not serve that purpose. His delegation was also against expanding UNDP ties with the World Bank and IMF, which were often used by Western transnational corporations to penetrate the economies of developing countries.

4. In conclusion, he wished to emphasize that the operational activities of the United Nations system could only be conducted successfully in conditions of stable peace and international security. The current world situation threatened mankind's very existence and vast resources which were essential for development, international economic co-operation and aid for developing countries were being wasted on the arms race. That was why the member States of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA), at their meeting in Havana in October 1984, had called for the implementation of genuine measures to curb the arms race. As a member of CMEA, Mongolia always strove to promote economic co-operation between States with different social systems and the restructuring of international economic relations, as was evidenced by the proposals which it had made concerning various topics on the Committee's agenda.

5. Mr. MORENO-SALCEDO (Philippines) said that the United Nations could claim real achievements in the area of operational activities for development. His own country had benefited in particular from the activities of UNDP, the United Nations Fund for Population Activities, UNICEF and other bodies, which accounted for a significant part of its development programmes.

6. The various reports under consideration showed that there had been a considerable improvement in the availability of resources, increasing use of cost-effective ways of implementing programmes and intensified efforts at co-ordination among United Nations organizations and international financial institutions. In addition, there was a growing awareness of the need to review the principles governing the allocation of development assistance and to pay greater attention to developing human resources in promoting technical co-operation.

7. Although total contributions to the various United Nations funds and programmes had stopped declining in 1983, those made to major programmes had remained virtually stationary and extra-budgetary resources provided for operational activities had fallen for the first time. While it was encouraging that special purpose and trust fund arrangements had grown at an average annual rate of 10 per cent since 1979, the proliferation of such special arrangements might undermine the universality and impact of development activities. The drop of \$US 82 million in contributions for refugee, humanitarian and special economic assistance programmes and disaster-relief activities between 1982 and 1983 was a particular cause for concern.

8. In view of the drop in per capita expenditures on operational activities in 1983, the only way to improve programme delivery was to increase efficiency, but the reports under consideration did not provide enough information on the subject. The wide spread in the ratios of support costs to total technical co-operation project expenditures for the various agencies, ranging from 8.1 per cent to

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(Mr. Moreno-Salcedo, Philippines)

34 per cent, suggested that some programmes might be examined with a view to reducing administrative costs. At current levels, such an exercise could increase programme delivery by no less than \$US 50 million in one biennium.

9. Turning to the activities of UNDP, his delegation was encouraged by the signs that operational activities designed to meet human and development needs directly had reached a new beginning. However, the expected increases in resources were only a fraction of what was required. Over the next two years, UNDP had the important task of formulating guidelines and policy measures for the next programming cycle. In that connection, it was essential to reaffirm the validity of country programming as the central feature of UNDP operations. The share of inter-country programmes should not exceed 18 per cent of UNDP resources if the primacy of country programmes was to be maintained. The criteria for classifying recipients of Indicative Planning Figures, in particular the cut-off level for low-income countries, which had been set at \$US 500 per capita, should also be re-examined. The cut-off level should be increased, in line with the International Development Association norm on which it had been based, to \$US 800 per capita.

10. On the subject of the Fund for Population Activities, his delegation was pleased that project implementation had declined only slightly in 1983 and there was hope for improvement in 1984. It endorsed the emphasis placed on family planning and population education and hoped that, in view of the growing need for assistance, changing demographic situations and population policies would be taken into consideration. It also hoped that the World Bank's recommendation of \$US 2 billion annually for population assistance by the year 2000 could be achieved.

11. Turning to UNICEF, his delegation shared the concern expressed about the consequences for mothers and children of the economic crisis in developing countries. In the Philippines, the work undertaken by UNICEF supplied essential services, in three main areas - child health and nutrition, early childhood and elementary education, and emergency relief - which were especially welcome at a time of severe budgetary constraint. The support it provided was integrated in a national primary health care programme, and a number of government and private voluntary agencies were working with UNICEF to promote early education, particularly for children from poor families.

12. In conclusion, he hoped that collective support for operational activities for development would continue to increase in the years to come.

13. Mr. CHEKAY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that the operational activities of the United Nations system were increasingly out of line with the tasks set by the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States, the Declaration and Programme of Action on the Establishment of a New International Economic Order, and other major United Nations documents on restructuring international economic relations, because Western countries had set out openly to use United Nations technical assistance programmes for their own mercenary aims. Those countries were striving to turn UNDP into a commercial institution with stronger ties to IMF, the World Bank and other financial organizations that were controlled by the West and used to pursue its policy of consolidating the exploitation of developing countries by monopoly capital. It was no coincidence that the share of concessionary aid in

(Mr. Chekay, USSR)

operational activities was falling as UNDP co-operation with the Bank and IMF increased.

14. The increasing tendency to use UNDP to impose prescriptions for economic growth on developing countries was reflected in the efforts being made to direct its aid to the private sector of recipient countries while General Assembly resolutions on the need to assist their State sector were neglected. His delegation opposed the experimental Committee of the Whole set up in UNDP, which had shown itself in practice to be a means of bringing pressure to bear on developing countries.

15. Persistent attempts were also being made to use the resident representatives, under the pretext of discharging the role assigned to them by the 1970 Consensus of co-ordinating assistance, to interfere in the economic relations of recipient countries. They were even encouraging the imposition on developing countries of ways of using multilateral as well as bilateral loans. His delegation drew attention to the illegality of increasing the powers of resident representatives to the detriment of the sovereign rights of the Governments of recipient countries.

16. The West's real intentions in UNDP had been shown by the provocative action taken, as a result of the Western policy of undermining the sovereignty and disrupting the unity of the developing countries, against the third programme of assistance for Afghanistan. His delegation was deeply concerned by the dangerous trends in the activities of UNDP, whose authority and future depended on it following the principles laid down in the 1970 Consensus. Violation of those principles would seriously impede the activities not only of UNDP but of the United Nations technical assistance system as a whole. His delegation therefore insisted, as before, on the implementation of resolution 37/228 and on the preparation of a report on the role of qualified national personnel in the social and economic development of developing countries. In addition, administrative and other unproductive expenditures should be reduced, and all available resources should be used to implement the fundamental principles of UNDP activities, including the principle of equitable geographical distribution of post at Headquarters and in the field.

17. Soviet organizations were prepared to increase their participation in various fields of United Nations operational activities, including training. Unfortunately their offers did not always meet with due support from the UNDP leadership. The Soviet Union's participation in United Nations operational activities was part of its multilateral aid to developing countries, an area in which it continued to do more than any developed capitalist country to strengthen the real economic independence of developing countries.

18. The Soviet delegation approved of UNICEF operations to help mothers and children in developing countries, and was making a constructive contribution to them. In carrying out its tasks, UNICEF should not lose sight of the basic question on which the life and well-being of children depended, namely that of safeguarding peace. His delegation's point of view was clearly set out in the appeal adopted by the UNICEF National Committees of the Socialist Countries and circulated in document A/39/292.

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(Mr. Chekay, USSR)

19. In recent years, there had been positive changes in the activity of the Department of Technical Co-operation for Development, which was using Soviet contributions to the regular programme of technical assistance fully and effectively. However, there were still many difficulties and shortcomings, and his delegation shared the Department's concern at the tendency to erode the demarcation lines between institutions, and particularly at the involvement of the UNDP Office of Projects Execution in the Department's work. His country had opposed the idea of abolishing the Geneva section of the Technical Assistance Recruitment and Administration Service, which would impede the recruitment of experts. He hoped the Department's leaders would take more effective measures to reduce administrative expenditures and strengthen the auditing function. The interests of all countries should be taken more fully into account in the Department's activities; in particular, the significant underrepresentation of the USSR among its staff could not be considered normal.

20. The effective continuation of the operational activities of the United Nations system was often linked with attracting additional resources. His delegation quite understood the interest of developing countries in seeking new sources of funds for development purposes, but the Soviet Union and other socialist countries proposed that the most realistic way of solving the problem would be a transition to practical measures for real disarmament and the reduction of military expenditures. That would free huge resources for socio-economic development, including assistance to developing countries. All United Nations technical assistance bodies should participate actively in efforts to strengthen international peace and security and, in that context, should evolve specific measures in implementation of General Assembly resolution 38/188 J.

21. Mr. MURIITHI (Kenya) said that, as the major source of technical co-operation between the United Nations system and the developing countries, UNDP was deeply involved in promoting self-reliance and human resource development in those countries. The expansion in the activities of UNDP over the years was encouraging, as were its continuously improving resource situation and the positive response of both developed and developing countries at the recent Pledging Conference for Development Activities.

22. The Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly had, rightly, been giving special attention to the economic and social crisis affecting African countries. As the co-ordinator of United Nations assistance, UNDP should, in consultation with recipient Governments, seek medium- and long-term solutions in the vital areas of food and agricultural and livestock development, desertification control including afforestation and soil conservation, water resource development, health, industrialization, transport and communications, education and manpower development. To that end, greater resources would have to be allocated for sub-Saharan Africa.

23. The UNDP Administrator had referred to the decision of the six drought-stricken countries of Eastern Africa to establish an intergovernmental body to deal with drought problems. In that connection, the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.2/39/L.73 hoped that the resolution would be adopted by consensus.

(Mr. Muriithi, Kenya)

24. As a developing country with a high rate of population growth, Kenya appreciated the activities of the Fund for Population Activities. The Government, realizing that rapid population growth tended to frustrate its efforts to meet the basic needs of the Kenyan people, had integrated population issues in the Five-Year Development Plan 1984-1988, and increased support from the Fund would enable Kenya to realize its objectives. The International Conference on Population had been one of the most business-like United Nations conferences to be held in recent times; the Fund had a crucial role to play in the implementation of its recommendations, and would require additional voluntary resources to fulfil that role.

25. Mr. DAMA (Burkina Faso) expressed concern at the steady erosion of multilateralism, which was reflected in the decline, caused both by the economic crisis and by the arms race, in the flow of resources to United Nations operational activities for development and in the increasing amounts of tied aid being channelled through multilateral programmes. The international community must take urgent steps to support the efforts being made by the African peoples to cope with their critical economic and social situation, which was accentuated by the continuing drought and resultant grain shortage. The United Nations Sudano-Sahelian Office, the United Nations Capital Development Fund and the other organizations of the United Nations system were all making commendable efforts to help, but in order to be able to do so they must have sufficient financial and logistic support.

26. The new Government of his country had worked out a people's development programme designed to meet some of the immediate concerns of the population and to pave the way for the five-year plan 1986-1990. It comprised three aspects: a basic programme, consisting of sectoral projects discussed at the village level; a support programme, consisting of projects designed to provide support for the basic programme; and a large-scale project programme, consisting of overdue projects for the construction of dams and of a railway line from Ouaga to Tambao. The success of the programme would depend to a large extent on foreign aid, and he called on the international community to act speedily to provide the operational organizations of the United Nations system with the necessary funds.

27. Mr. NGUYEN XUAN ANG (Viet Nam) noted with satisfaction that considerable progress had been made in the field of development activities during the past year and that the United Nations system had demonstrated increased flexibility in handling assistance programmes. He welcomed UNDP Governing Council decision 84/4 on measures to be taken to meet the changing technical co-operation requirements of the developing countries.

28. The activities of the World Food Programme were in conformity with the long- and short-term requirements of the developing countries, and his delegation endorsed the point of view that food aid must be viewed in the context of development. Indeed, much of the assistance provided in 1983 under operational activities for development had concentrated on the African countries suffering from famine and natural disasters. He expressed concern at the erosion of the principle of multilateralism, which was increasing the dependence of the developing countries, and at the attempts of some countries to politicize operational activities for development. The inability of the Governing Council to reach

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(Mr. Nguyen Xuan Ang, Viet Nam)

consensus on the approval of the proposed country programme for Afghanistan had been due entirely to political reasons.

29. He expressed regret at the growing tendency to tie financial contributions to the procurement of goods and services in donor countries. Recipient countries had a sovereign right to determine their own development plans and should be free to choose the technologies that were best suited to their needs. He expressed appreciation for the assistance the various international organizations had provided to Viet Nam, and reaffirmed his Government's support for them.

30. Miss COURSON (France) said that there were encouraging signs of progress in implementing the action in respect of operational activities for development recommended by the Economic and Social Council in 1982. The response of the United Nations system to the crisis in Africa had also been encouraging. The results of the latest Pledging Conference were however far from satisfactory, although they would seem to indicate that the steady decline in resources for operational activities was slowly being reversed. It was disturbing to see, from paragraph 13 of the report of the Director-General for Development and International Economic Co-operation (A/39/417, annex), that 10 countries had provided over three quarters of total contributions for all operational activities for the period 1982-1983. Some developed countries continued to contribute far less to operational activities than they were capable of doing, and it was regrettable that their advocacy of multilateral co-operation was not reflected in substantial financial support in convertible currencies.

31. It was also unfortunate that contributions for technical co-operation activities channelled through UNDP had declined, while contributions to trust funds managed by UNDP continued to increase - a trend also apparent with respect to UNICEF and population activities. The fragmentation of resources into many sectoral or trust funds would eventually lead to the questioning of UNDP's central co-ordinating role in development activities and would affect the multilateral character of assistance. The increase in the proportion of contributions going to sectoral funds was largely due to lack of transparency in and co-ordination of United Nations development activities, with resultant duplication of effort.

32. Donor countries attached great importance to the need to increase co-ordination at the country level so as to enhance the effectiveness of development co-operation. The primary responsibility for such co-ordination lay with the developing countries themselves. However, there was need for increased co-ordination at all levels - central, regional and grassroots - and all parties - recipient countries, organizations of the United Nations system, financing institutions, bilateral donors and non-governmental organizations - must work together to that end, for co-ordination was an ongoing process. The resident co-ordinators' role in inter-agency co-ordination at the country level was of prime importance. It was unfortunate that some organizations were more hesitant than others to pursue possibilities for collaboration. The Secretary-General should clearly define the co-ordinators' responsibilities and relationships vis-à-vis organizations of the United Nations system.

(Miss Courson, France)

33. Her delegation attached great importance to preparations for and follow-up of the round-table conferences being organized with the support of UNDP or the World Bank. Such meetings, by enabling Governments to outline and defend their overall economic policy and to identify their development priorities, could play an important role in promoting co-ordination. Follow-up activities were also very important, for a continuing dialogue should be established between the recipient country and donor countries, dialogue inter alia through the establishment, within the local administration, of units responsible for supervising follow-up operations and periodic meetings between local representatives of donors and between them and representatives of international institutions. Her delegation welcomed with interest the co-operation arrangements and agreements between various international organizations, referred to in paragraphs 72 and 73 of the report. The collaboration instituted between UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF and WFP through the Joint Consultative Group on Policy (para. 74) was very encouraging and other organizations should follow their example.

34. The annual reports requested of resident co-ordinators could do much to improve the effectiveness of the programmes, provided that successes and failures were faithfully recorded. They would then afford an opportunity for open discussions between UNDP, the recipient Government, executing agencies and even donor countries.

35. She was pleased to note from paragraph 99 of the report that UNDP and other organizations had succeeded in holding down increases in administrative costs. Any needed cutbacks should be made in headquarters expenditures rather than in field operations. The search for a unified method for evaluating administrative costs must continue. The increasing use being made of national officials to implement projects was also commendable, to the extent that it helped provide quality services at a lower cost. The reduction in the amounts spent on experts recruited in the customary manner was also welcome. Efforts must also be made to increase UNDP co-operation with non-governmental organizations, and with the private sector in general.

36. The Central Evaluation Office established in UNDP would be really beneficial only if the recipient countries shouldered full responsibility for evaluation. The capacity of an institution to evaluate and criticize itself was a sign of its vitality, and evaluation must necessarily result in improvement in the operation of the organizations. Finally, she endorsed measures taken by the Administrator in the area of human resources development, particularly the establishment of a task force on the subject.

37. Ms. HILTON (United Kingdom) said that her delegation strongly supported United Nations operational activities for development, and noted the steps the various organizations involved were taking, within resource constraints, to improve their effectiveness. In view of the many new challenges raised by developmental and humanitarian needs, particularly in Africa, close co-operation and the best possible utilization of resources were more necessary than ever.

38. Despite the fact that the downward trend in voluntary contributions for operational activities had stabilized at the 1984 Pledging Conference, there was

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(Ms. Hilton, United Kingdom)

increasing evidence that the central role of UNDP continued to be eroded and that its share of technical co-operation was decreasing, due in no small part to the proliferation of special funds which detracted from the role of UNDP as defined under the Consensus. UNDP should control a large proportion of United Nations funds for technical co-operation, thereby providing a means of assessing the relative value of technical co-operation programmes requested by individual countries.

39. While multilateral aid was not always better than bilateral aid, its main advantage was its untied nature. Her delegation regretted the continuation of tied aid to three funds agreed to at the 1984 session of the UNDP Governing Council, and hoped that it would cease at the end of the experimental period.

40. She was encouraged to learn from the Director-General's report that efforts to co-ordinate aid had been intensified. However, the United Nations could still do much to modify its procedures in order to respond more flexibly to changing needs. There were two main areas in which UNDP should be involved in such co-ordination; one of them involved the resident co-ordinators, whose role was particularly important because inter-agency co-operation was especially vital in the field. However, the responsibilities and relationships vis-à-vis other United Nations organizations and their representatives should be clarified. The Secretary-General's initiative for Africa, which placed particular emphasis on the need to improve co-ordination mechanisms, had helped improve the process of consultations between Governments and aid agencies at the country level, and her delegation noted with approval that further measures, including closer co-operation between resident co-ordinators and the World Bank, were contemplated in selected African countries. On a related subject, the trend towards increasing co-operation between United Nations agencies and the World Bank should be welcomed.

41. The other area in which UNDP co-ordination was significant concerned the Programme's round tables, which should constitute part of a continuing process through which Governments could present their own assessments of their development needs and priorities and discuss programmes and policies with potential donors. Increased attention to the preparation for and follow-up to round-table meetings was vital to ensure that their results could be widely disseminated.

42. Her delegation welcomed the agreement among the agencies which constituted the Joint Consultative Group on Policy to undertake co-ordinated programming and looked forward to progress reports on their efforts on collaboration in the area of health and nutrition.

43. The decision concerning a 7 per cent increase from 1982 to 1983 in the share of resources for country and regional programmes in Africa, which was a healthy sign of the system's flexibility of response to needs, supported her delegation's view that problems should be met not with new funds and programmes, but through more effective utilization of existing resources. The need for such flexibility must be borne in mind as discussions on the fourth programming cycle began, particularly since some of the difficulties which UNDP had faced during the third cycle had resulted from unrealistic planning decisions. UNDP was to be commended for having streamlined its activities and having implemented all the projects to

(Ms. Hilton, United Kingdom)

which it was committed during the current cycle. However, targets should not be used in planning for the fourth cycle; instead, projects beyond the scope of IPFs, which could be undertaken if additional resources became available, might perhaps be identified.

44. Noting that a small group of donors provided most of the resources for operational activities, she called on all delegations in a position to do so to make their contributions for such activities in readily utilizable currencies. She also expressed the hope that more countries would become net donors during the fourth programming cycle; UNDP should not find itself locked into a pattern of constant donors and recipients. In that context it was to be hoped that the "floor" principle would increasingly be perceived as outmoded, and eventually phased out: the countries in question should continue to receive technical co-operation, but on a reimbursement basis, which would free a greater portion of UNDP resources for its work in the poorest countries.

45. Her delegation supported the Administrator's proposal to expand the country programming process to cover all technical co-operation provided by the United Nations, had found the various ideas proposed to improve country programming to be of interest, and hoped that the Governing Council would play a more active role in improving the quality of programming. Evaluation and monitoring were a vital part of improving programme effectiveness. The work of the Central Evaluation Office was progressing well, and her delegation hoped that further progress could be made, with UNDP assistance, in strengthening the evaluation procedures of developing countries. The establishment by the UNDP Administrator of a Human Resources Task Force was also welcome; however, her delegation did not agree that a conference on human resources development was necessary, particularly since UNDP already constituted an appropriate mechanism to deal with problems in that area.

46. In concluding her remarks on UNDP, she announced that, subject to parliamentary approval, the United Kingdom would contribute £20 million to the Programme in 1985.

47. UNICEF, the Fund for Population Activities and other organizations engaged in operational activities for development also had a vital role to play. The extra responsibilities UNICEF had taken on in Africa in 1984 had led her country and many others to provide additional funding. The flexibility UNICEF had demonstrated and the emphasis it placed on the poverty-stricken had resulted in considerable achievements in the area of maternal and child health. The Fund for Population Activities had contributed greatly to increasing the perception of population as a crucial development issue; now it must promote understanding of the impact that the annual increase of approximately 78 million people in the world population would have, and translate that understanding into effective population programmes. The increase in the number of contributors to the Fund, the decrease in administrative expenditures and the progress made on evaluations and project review were encouraging, and the Fund's increased spending on family planning and its allocation of two thirds of country programme resources for the most needy priority countries were particularly welcome.

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48. Mr. FLEMING (United States of America) said that the effective use of multilateral resources to improve the quality of life in the third world was of primary importance to his Government; consequently, his delegation strongly supported all objective efforts to improve evaluation and monitoring of the operational activities of the United Nations system.

49. The question of aid co-ordination had become a major one in the context of United Nations operational activities, and the Director-General's report presented some of the impediments to such co-ordination. He agreed with many of the conclusions it drew, particularly the notion that local aid representatives must be backed up by their respective agency headquarters to ensure that the co-ordination process was effective. In that connection, he looked forward to the JIU study on the field structures of various organizations.

50. The importance of co-ordination had been emphasized recently by the international community's response to the situation in Africa. As the most senior member of the United Nations system in a recipient country, the resident co-ordinator was the representative of the Secretary-General and should help recipient Governments overcome obstacles to the efficient and timely delivery of foodstuffs, supplies and services. While the resident co-ordinator did not need to become an expert in food aid or emergency assistance, he should help to forge common operational goals among the relevant United Nations agencies in the field.

51. His delegation also agreed that the harmonization of donor procedures would facilitate aid co-ordination, and would welcome more information regarding the specific proposals being prepared by UNDP and WHO, referred to in paragraph 78 of the report.

52. His delegation supported the approach to the relationship between programme delivery and administrative costs suggested in the report. While resource-intensive organizations such as the World Bank and WFP understandably had lower administrative costs than those whose primary role was the delivery of services or technical assistance, most of the other operational agencies had no unique features that would affect the ratio of administrative costs to programme delivery. Given that no development assistance procedures should not differ significantly within the United Nations system, neither should budgeting and accounting procedures. The development activities of most agencies were not unduly complex; consequently, such agencies might be able to use standardized accounting software which was readily available. In the absence of standardized procedures, his Government would continue to calculate its own estimates of administrative and programme costs for some agencies on the basis of what it believed were more accurate assumptions than those used in various United Nations documents.

53. Agencies funded by voluntary contributions obviously needed analytical data on resource flows, and must adopt a marketing approach towards maintaining and improving their resource positions. It was encouraging that voluntary contributions appeared to have risen over the past two years; however, so much emphasis had been placed on programme input that it was often difficult to obtain a clear picture of the results. After more than 30 years of involvement in operational activities, the United Nations should be able to know what lessons had been learned from those activities and what specific economic and social benefits

(Mr. Fleming, United States)

had been derived from the system's programmes and projects. The increased interest of the developing countries in evaluation was therefore welcome, and United Nations programmes designed to encourage and respond to that interest, particularly the efforts of the resident co-ordinators to develop a strategy with United Nations agencies and other donors for building up the evaluation capability of recipient countries, merited full support. It was to be hoped that future reports on operational activities would provide much more information about the benefits of United Nations programmes in the least developed countries.

54. His delegation was concerned at the trend towards the provision of contributions to trust funds for development activities subject to specific conditions, the most common of which was procurement in the donor country or countries. Such conditions were sometimes appropriate; it was better to have resources provided on that basis than not at all. However, the effects of such conditions, in terms, for example, of quality of goods and services provided, must be carefully examined. The outcome of the consultations with interested organizations regarding tied contributions would therefore be of interest.

55. His delegation also supported the efforts of United Nations organizations to publicize their services and facilities for the implementation of bank-financed technical co-operation, and believed that such competition with the private sector was healthy as long as such technical co-operation was represented at its true monetary cost and did not compete on a subsidized basis against the private sector.

56. His Government's support for UNDP, the Fund for Population Activities and UNICEF had been clearly demonstrated by its contributions to those organizations in 1984 and the pledges which it had recently announced for 1985. He shared the concern expressed by the representative of Sweden at the organizational disputes between FAO and WFP.

57. With regard to the allegations made by the representatives of several Eastern European countries concerning the role played by the United States at the thirty-first session of the UNDP Governing Council, he noted that the Governing Council's actions had reflected the international community's concern over the possibility of any complicity on the part of UNDP in the military occupation of Afghanistan by the Soviet Union. Secondly, the Governing Council had been concerned at the effect which the security situation in Afghanistan might have on the delivery of United Nations programmes to poor people in the rural areas of that country. Finally, it could be shown that officials of the Soviet Ministry of Education intended to use UNDP educational programmes to spread propaganda through the Afghan educational system.

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

59. Mr. NIE Hualiang (China) said that in a situation in which the developing countries - whose combined population accounted for three quarters of the world's population - were experiencing tremendous economic difficulties, and in some cases severe famine, the international community must mobilize more resources to help them. The results of the latest Pledging Conference were somewhat encouraging, but contributions continued to lag far behind the growing needs. Countries which had

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(Mr. Nie Hualiang, China)

not been able to announce their pledges at the Conference should do so very soon, and those whose pledges did not reflect their real capacity to pay should increase their contributions.

60. No satisfactory solution had yet been found to the question of co-ordination of United Nations operational activities for development. The problem appeared to be lack of co-ordination between the assistance policies, procedures and modalities of the various agencies and the fact that those policies did not really meet the growing needs of the developing countries.

61. In order to improve co-ordination, priority should be given to the interests of the developing countries, and efforts to improve co-ordination should respect their sovereignty. Assistance policies should be geared more towards satisfying the specific needs and situations of the recipient countries. Inter-agency co-ordination should be guided by the ideas set forth in the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council. Continuity of co-ordination between the recipient countries and the United Nations development system as a whole should be ensured, and steps should be taken to improve the co-ordination activities of recipient Governments inter alia by establishing focal points for co-ordination at the government level. The modalities of co-operation should also be improved for the needs of each developing country were continuously changing.

62. Many developing countries were giving priority to the development of human resources and several had already replaced international project managers by their own project managers. A very high degree of flexibility in project programming and execution was needed to ensure that the specific needs of the different countries could be met. Finally, executing agencies should be selected by the recipient countries as they were best qualified to evaluate the quality and efficiency of the services provided by such agencies.

The meeting rose at 1.25 p.m.