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SPECIAL ECONOMIC AND DISASTER RELIEF ASSISTANCE

Implementation of the medium-term and long-term recovery and rehabilitation
 programme in the Sudano-Sahelian region

Report of the Secretary-General

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* A/35/50.

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The present report is submitted in accordance with paragraph 8 of General Assembly resolution 34/16 of 9 November 1979.
2. In that resolution, the General Assembly, inter alia, noted with satisfaction the decisive role played by the United Nations Sudano-Sahelian Office in helping to combat the effects of the drought and to implement the medium-term and long-term recovery and rehabilitation programme adopted by the States members of the Permanent Inter-State Committee on Drought Control in the Sahel, and in mobilizing the necessary resources to finance priority projects. The Assembly also expressed its gratitude to the Governments, United Nations agencies and other intergovernmental organizations, private organizations and individuals who have contributed to the implementation of the medium-term and long-term recovery and rehabilitation programme in the Sudano-Sahelian region, and urged all Governments, United Nations agencies, intergovernmental organizations, private organizations and individuals to continue to respond favourably, either bilaterally or through the United Nations Sudano-Sahelian Office or any other intermediary, to requests for assistance from the Governments of the States members of the Permanent Inter-State Committee and from the Committee itself. In addition, the Assembly reaffirmed the role of the United Nations Sudano-Sahelian Office (UNSO) 1/ as the central point and principal body responsible for co-ordinating the efforts of United Nations agencies to help the countries of the Sahel to implement their recovery and rehabilitation programme, and invited that Office to continue to co-ordinate the efforts of the specialized agencies and other organizations and programmes of the United Nations system with a view to ensuring an effective contribution by the United Nations system to the implementation of the recovery and rehabilitation programme for the countries of the Sahel and to increasing its own ability to respond adequately to additional requests for assistance from the Governments of the States members of the Permanent Inter-State Committee on Drought Control in the Sahel and from the Committee itself. The Assembly further invited the Office to continue its close co-operation with the Permanent Inter-State Committee with a view to the implementation of the recovery and rehabilitation programme and of priority projects.
3. Since 1973, when the plight of the drought-stricken countries of the Sudano-Sahelian region was considered by the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council, those bodies have adopted resolutions which have consistently supported the rehabilitation and development efforts of the countries concerned, at both the national and regional levels, and have responded favourably to the requests for assistance from the Governments in the region, namely, Chad, the Gambia, Mali, Mauritania, the Niger, Senegal and the Upper Volta, which were

1/ Formerly called the United Nations Sahelian Office. Following the adoption of General Assembly resolution 33/80, the name was changed to the United Nations Sudano-Sahelian Office to reflect more accurately the enlarged geographical scope of its responsibilities.

joined by Cape Verde in 1975. In this connexion, the Assembly adopted the following resolutions: 3054 (XXVIII), of 17 October 1973; 3153 (XXVIII), of 14 December 1973; 3253 (XXIX), of 4 December 1974; 3512 (XXX), of 15 December 1975; 31/180, of 21 December 1976; 32/159, of 19 December 1977; 33/133, of 19 December 1978; and 34/16, of 9 November 1979. The Economic and Social Council adopted the following resolutions: 1759 (LIV), of 18 May 1973; 1979 (LV), of 11 July 1973; 1834 (LVI), of 14 May 1974; 1874 (LVII), of 16 July 1974; 1918 (LVIII), of 5 May 1975; 2103 (LXIII), of 3 August 1977; 1978/37, of 21 July 1978; and 1979/51, of 2 August 1979.

4. During the thirty-fourth session of the General Assembly, the Secretary-General submitted a report dated 31 August 1979 (A/34/432) complementing and bringing up to date his earlier report, dated 11 April 1979, on the implementation of the medium-term and long-term recovery and rehabilitation programme in the Sudano-Sahelian region (DP/394), which had been submitted to the Assembly through the Governing Council of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Economic and Social Council, in accordance with Assembly resolution 33/133 of 19 December 1978. Both of these reports provided information on the work of UNSO in support of the medium-term and long-term recovery and rehabilitation programme of the drought-stricken countries of the Sudano-Sahelian region, member States of the Permanent Inter-State Committee on Drought Control in the Sahel, including the results achieved in resource mobilization and the status of the implementation of their priority projects. In addition, document DP/394 furnished information on the modalities agreed upon between UNDP and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) for a joint venture to enlarge the organization and functions of the United Nations Sudano-Sahelian Office 1/ in conformity with Assembly resolution 33/88, of 15 December 1978. In the resolution, the Assembly designated that Office, in addition to its current functions, as the arm of the United Nations to be responsible for assisting, on behalf of UNEP, the efforts of the 15 countries of the Sudano-Sahelian region situated south of the Sahara and north of the equator 2/ to implement the Plan of Action to Combat Desertification (A/CONF.74/36, chap. I). Subsequently, the Assembly adopted resolution 34/16 of 9 November 1979, in which, inter alia, it took note with satisfaction of the report of the Secretary-General and requested him to continue to report to the Assembly, through the Governing Council of UNDP and the Economic and Social Council, on the implementation of the medium-term and long-term recovery and rehabilitation programme in the Sudano-Sahelian region.

II. ACTIVITIES OF THE UNITED NATIONS SUDANO-SAHELIAN OFFICE

5. In 1974, the Secretary-General, pursuant to the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council, established the United Nations Sahelian Office, now called the United Nations Sudano-Sahelian Office, as the primary unit of the United Nations for (a) the co-ordination of the activities of

2/ Cape Verde, Chad, Ethiopia, Gambia, Kenya, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Somalia, Sudan, Uganda, United Republic of Cameroon and Upper Volta.

the United Nations system related to the medium and long-term recovery and rehabilitation of the drought-stricken Sahelian countries; (b) the establishment and maintenance of close and effective working relationships with the Sahelian countries and their regional organization, the Permanent Inter-State Committee on Drought Control in the Sahel; (c) the mobilization of the necessary resources for the implementation of the priority projects identified by the States members of the Permanent Inter-State Committee; and (d) the management of the United Nations Trust Fund for Sudano-Sahelian Activities, established by the Secretary-General for that purpose, and the monitoring of the implementation of projects financed by the Trust Fund. The responsibility for the over-all supervision of UNSO was originally entrusted to the Office of the Under-Secretary-General for Political and General Assembly Affairs. Subsequently, in October 1976, the Secretary-General transferred the responsibility to the Office of the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme, to whom it reports directly.

6. In carrying out its mandate, UNSO has been guided by three main objectives: (a) to mitigate the effects of future drought; (b) to achieve self-sufficiency in food staples; and (c) to accelerate the socio-economic development process. In working towards these objectives, the Office adheres to the following operational principles: (a) each project must be identified, approved and given priority by the Government concerned; (b) the involvement of the United Nations system must be in harmony with the rehabilitation and development objectives of the Governments and the Permanent Inter-State Committee on Drought Control in the Sahel, and with their explicit approval; (c) any involvement of the United Nations must be within the special competence and capacity of the specialized agencies, organizations and programmes of the United Nations system.

7. The results of the efforts of the United Nations Sahelian Office, in accordance with prior collaborative planning with the countries concerned, have been the activation of programmes and projects in several socio-economic sectors which are of fundamental significance in realizing the rehabilitation and development objectives of the countries and the Permanent Inter-State Committee on Drought Control in the Sahel. These results have been concentrated mainly in the development of agricultural production, including the development of hydraulic resources, assistance for the development of irrigation systems, the local manufacture of agricultural tools and equipment, the establishment and operation of seed multiplication programmes, the strengthening of crop protection capabilities and the preparation of plans for the local manufacture of agricultural tools and equipment. In addition, special emphasis is given to the development and strengthening of national and regional economic infrastructure in the fields of feeder-road transport systems, storage facilities, telecommunications and agro-meteorological and hydrological services. Projects have also been undertaken in the development of fishing resources and livestock production. In undertaking these activities, UNSO stressed the supporting aspects of strengthening national and regional institutional capabilities, vocational and managerial training, research and health.

8. The resource mobilization efforts of the United Nations Sahelian Office are aimed at promoting the participation of donors in the rehabilitation and development

programme in the Sahel by (a) undertaking to implement, either bilaterally or multilaterally, a specific priority project or projects; or (b) providing funds to the United Nations Trust Fund for Sudano-Sahelian Activities, established by the Secretary-General for that purpose. Contributions to the Trust Fund may be earmarked for specific projects. Regular reports, and special reports as requested, are provided by UNSO to the concerned donors on the disposition of their contributions to the Trust Fund. Resource mobilization efforts were initiated, at the request of the Governments of the region, in 1975 on 52 priority projects (21 regional, 31 national) with an initial investment requirement of approximately \$153 million. Given the emergence of new economic realities and the dynamics of project planning and implementation, this portfolio has increased to 108 projects (24 regional, 84 national) with an over-all requirement of over \$606 million. Towards this total, confirmation has been obtained on the availability of over \$340 million in financing from either bilateral or multilateral sources, or from the United Nations Trust Fund for Sudano-Sahelian Activities. Of the \$340 million thus mobilized, the Trust Fund itself has provided over \$62 million for 51 of the priority projects, both regional and national, of which 28 have been completed and 23 are currently under active implementation.

9. It should be stressed that the efforts of the United Nations Sahelian Office in resource mobilization should be measured not only by financing provided through the Trust Fund, but also by the total amount of resources it has been instrumental in mobilizing from other sources as well. In regard to bilateral undertakings, the role of the United Nations Sahelian Office has generally been that of a catalyst and information source. On the other hand, UNSO has served as a source of financing and as an over-all co-ordinator where project implementation has been undertaken by the United Nations system through the utilization of Trust Fund resources.

10. The priority projects for which UNSO has been mobilizing resources are an integral part of the First Generation Projects, which were outlined by the working group of the Club du Sahel and adopted by the Heads of State Conference of the Permanent Inter-State Committee on Drought Control in the Sahel, held in Banjul on 21 December 1977, as the only basis for action for the period 1977-1982. Thus, the assistance which has been provided, both technical and financial, has been, and will continue to be, entirely oriented to the priority needs of the Governments and will contribute to the attainment of regional and national rehabilitation and development goals. In the allocation of resources from the Trust Fund to countries and priority projects for purposes of implementation, UNSO consults with the Council of Ministers of the Permanent Inter-State Committee. Such consultation on the use of the Trust Fund is typical of the close working relationship between those bodies and ensures the continuous participation of the member States in all aspects of the rehabilitation and development programmes in the Sudano-Sahelian region. In co-ordinating the efforts of the United Nations system to assist the member States of the Permanent Inter-State Committee and the Committee itself in the implementation of their medium-term and long-term rehabilitation and development programme, UNSO counts fully on the support of UNDP to supervise project execution undertaken by the specialized agencies of the United Nations system. This responsibility requires the active participation of the UNDP resident representative in project planning and in the monitoring and evaluation of project execution. Full co-ordination with the

concerned elements of UNDP headquarters in New York is also maintained by UNSO. Over-all co-ordination and monitoring responsibility is carried on by UNSO in the interest of the effective management of the Trust Fund resources and to assure that these resources are fully applied to meet project objectives as agreed with the Governments.

11. Contributions from numerous sources have been made to the United Nations Trust Fund for Sudano-Sahelian Activities, established by the Secretary-General to facilitate the mobilization of resources. Among the main contributors are the Governments of Canada, Denmark, Germany, Federal Republic of, Iran, Ireland, the Netherlands, Norway, the Philippines, Saudi Arabia, Sweden and the United States of America.

12. In addition to the special resource mobilization efforts carried out by UNSO for the rehabilitation and development of the Sahel, the United Nations system, including the World Bank, has, during the period 1973-1978, through its regular and special programmes, supported approximately 800 country projects and 130 regional and interregional projects involving the eight member States of the Permanent Inter-State Committee, with a total value of over \$975 million. This includes over \$137 million of emergency relief, notably food assistance, provided by FAO and the World Food Programme during this period. A report on these supporting efforts was prepared by UNSO and made available to the concerned United Nations bodies as a means of facilitating co-ordination.

13. During 1979, scarcity and irregularity of rainfall caused severe crop failures, particularly in Cape Verde, Chad and Mauritania. In addition, cereal production in Mali, the Gambia, Senegal and the Upper Volta appears insufficient to meet the needs of these countries. Thus, although they had made vigorous efforts towards self-sufficiency in food staples, the Governments of the region are facing a food deficit crisis. During the Conference of Heads of State of the Permanent Inter-State Committee in Ouagadougou, Upper Volta, in January 1980, the Minister Co-ordinator of the Committee issued an appeal to the international community for emergency assistance to the drought-stricken countries of the Sahel. In his statement, the Minister Co-ordinator said that the cereal needs for the countries amount to 870,000 tons. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), in collaboration with the Governments concerned, carried out assessment missions in Cape Verde, Chad, Gambia, Mali, Mauritania, Senegal and the Upper Volta. The results of these assessments have been presented to a meeting of donors, organized by FAO during February 1980 in Rome. For its part, UNSO has collaborated with FAO and has been ready to assist by disseminating information, and by undertaking, as in the past, projects with medium-term implications which would alleviate the burdens of the drought.

14. The working methods of UNSO, which have been designed to bring flexibility and speed in responding to the changing needs and priorities emerging from new economic conditions in the Sahelian countries, place special emphasis upon the strengthening of national capabilities and engaging national services in direct implementation of projects under a system of full fiscal accountability. Of the 39 national projects implemented with UNSO financing of approximately \$59 million, 25 projects costing more than \$33 million are government-executed or are carried out by government force account arrangement.

15. In this connexion, UNSO, through the resources of the Trust Fund, has initiated a major undertaking for the construction, improvement and maintenance of a region-wide system of all-weather feeder roads essential for the rehabilitation and development of the Sahelian zone and for mitigating the effects of future droughts in Cape Verde, Chad, the Gambia, Mali, Mauritania, the Niger, Senegal and the Upper Volta. The feasibility studies for 3,200 kilometres of these feeder roads had been completed in two phases (August 1976 and May 1977) by the United Nations Office of Technical Co-operation, ^{3/} with the financing by UNSO, in seven countries of the region: Chad, Gambia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Senegal and Upper Volta. This programme was then extended, with UNSO financing, to Cape Verde, to cover strengthening of the capabilities of the Public Works Department and the accomplishment of a feasibility study for 100 kilometres of mountain roads in the island of Santo Antão and São Tiago. The extension of the programme to Cape Verde was executed by the UNDP Office for Projects Execution, which has also assumed the role of executing agency for the construction phase of this large-scale programme. The estimated cost of the construction phase of the programme in all the Sahelian countries is \$110 million, of which \$57 million has been mobilized, either bilaterally or through the Trust Fund. Of this amount, UNSO is providing \$45 million for 1,370 kilometres from contributions to the Trust Fund by Canada, the Netherlands, Norway and Saudi Arabia. This amount also includes contributions of the Federal Republic of Germany and the United States of America under joint action arrangements with UNSO. This phase, which started in 1977, is being carried out for the most part by government public works departments, and provides for road-building and maintenance, equipment and spare parts, operating and other construction costs, technical assistance, a sustained training activity, continuous feeder-road maintenance, and the strengthening of the supporting governmental infrastructure. As at January 1980, approximately 500 kilometres of feeder roads had been constructed and were in use. Further details on the construction aspects of this major programme are in the following country-by-country accounts containing descriptions of the national component feeder-road projects.

16. Through its resource mobilization efforts, UNSO, jointly with UNDP, has also provided strong impetus to the implementation of a major region-wide programme for strengthening agro-meteorological and hydrological services regionally and in Cape Verde, Chad, the Gambia, Mali, Mauritania, the Niger, Senegal and the Upper Volta. This programme, which will have a significant impact on both rehabilitation and development in the Sahelian region, was prepared by the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) with the assistance of UNDP. Funds were provided by UNSO for the preparation of the architectural plans of the regional agro-meteorological and hydrological centre in Niamey, the construction of which has now been completed. An additional \$2.5 million has been provided by UNSO from Trust Fund resources for the further implementation of this region-wide programme. Through the resource mobilization efforts of UNSO, financing for this programme has also been provided by the Governments of Belgium, France, the Netherlands, Switzerland and the United States of America. In addition, UNDP is a major contributor to the financing of this programme, both at the country

^{3/} Now known as the Department of Technical Co-operation for Development.

and regional levels. This programme, which is now being evaluated by WMO and the concerned Governments, is entering a second phase, the purpose of which is twofold: to strengthen the communication system for the utilization of the data gathered through the meteorological and hydrological observation network, in order to make this network fully operational, and to continue to recruit and train personnel necessary for operating the service satisfactorily. The evaluation mission is also considering the future long-term role of the regional training centre.

17. The United Nations Sudano-Sahelian Office has also financed, or co-ordinated the United Nations system in, the implementation of additional projects of regional scope with fundamental implications on the rehabilitation and development of both the region as a whole and of the individual countries of Cape Verde, Chad, the Gambia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Senegal and the Upper Volta. Among these projects is the preparation by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), with UNSO financing, of a detailed plan for the integrated development of continental fishery resources. The plan addresses itself to the problems of production, conservation, marketing, research and training in the fishery sector. The efforts of UNSO to mobilize resources for the further implementation of this important programme continues, in collaboration with the Permanent Inter-State Committee. A region-wide seminar on the development of the forestry sector, also financed by UNSO and implemented by FAO, provided guidance and identified projects in this sector which would have an impact on combating desertification in the Sudano-Sahelian region as well as on the overall sylvo-pastoral problems of the region. By the combined efforts of the concerned Governments, the Permanent Inter-State Committee, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and UNDP, a project was formulated for the establishment and operation of the Institute of the Sahel, which will serve the countries of the Sudano-Sahelian region in the systematic acquisition and diffusion of knowledge concerning socio-economic development. The United Nations Sudano-Sahelian Office, jointly with UNDP, allocated funds for the preparation of the architectural plans for the headquarters of the Institute, located in Bamako, Mali. In addition, UNSO and UNDP jointly provided financing for the organization and implementation, by the Institute, of a post-graduate training programme in pasture management for livestock services personnel of the eight member States of the Permanent Inter-State Committee. The Office has also agreed to finance a project for the provision of consultant services to assist the Institute in the formulation of a plan for the establishment of a Department of Ecology and Renewable Energy Sources and for the development of a work programme for that Department. The Office also financed, and the Department of Technical Co-operation for Development carried out, a feasibility study for the establishment of an inventory of all water points and earth dams in the region. The regional project concerning the study of the utilization of rural telecommunications and radio for rural development purposes was also financed by UNSO and implemented by the International Telecommunication Union (ITU). Under this project, plans were prepared for a rural telecommunications and radio network in each of the Sahelian countries. The concerned Governments have approved these plans and national components are under implementation in the Gambia, Mali and the Upper Volta through bilateral arrangements. In addition, a detailed action plan for a subregional seed

multiplication programme for Chad, Mauritania, the Niger and Senegal was prepared by the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) at the request of UNSO, and a similar plan was prepared by FAO for the Gambia, Mali and the Upper Volta. Plans for the local production of fertilizers and pesticides have also been formulated for the region by the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), which, with the International Labour Organisation (ILO), has also prepared a region-wide formulation project for strengthening local capacity for the manufacture of agricultural tools and equipment. Finally, a prospective study for agricultural development in the Sahelian region has been prepared by FAO.

18. In addition to these regional programmes, UNSO has financed a number of national priority projects, which have been completed or are now under implementation as follows:

(a) Cape Verde. An amount of \$247,000 has been provided for the strengthening of the capabilities of the Public Works Department in this country. This included the detailed formulation of the action required as well as the provision of technical assistance, equipment and spare parts. The implementation of this project has resulted in a major reorganization of the central maintenance workshop of the Public Works Ministry, giving it the capability to install and manage an inventory of spare parts, which was also provided by the project. It also provided extensive on-the-job training for all workshop personnel and developed a strong maintenance capability in the public works service, including the repair of heavy road-building equipment. In addition, the updating of a feasibility study for the construction of 100 kilometres of mountain roads on the islands of Santo Antao and San Tiago has been completed at a cost of \$17,000. The United Nations Sudano-Sahelian Office also provided \$200,000 for the implementation of the second phase of a major project concerning the exploration and development of underground water resources for agricultural production and human consumption. This contribution was made in conjunction with assistance to the project from UNDP, which also financed phase one of the project. Partial financing from UNDP and UNICEF has permitted the initiation of the work in phase three of the project, while UNSO has undertaken to mobilize the additional resources needed. Under this project, extensive test drilling has been undertaken throughout the archipelago, giving an improved knowledge of the underground water resources available. In addition, under this project, a number of wells have been equipped and are producing water for agricultural purposes as well as human consumption. Another completed project, financed by UNSO for \$200,000, and executed by the Office of Special Relief Operations of FAO, provided for the supply and production of improved vegetable seed and equipment for an agricultural experimental station. The assistance activities of UNSO have been fully co-ordinated in Cape Verde with the Office of the Secretary-General, which has a responsibility pursuant to General Assembly resolution 32/99 of 13 December 1977 on assistance to Cape Verde, in which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to continue his efforts to mobilize the necessary resources for an effective programme of financing technical and material assistance to Cape Verde.

(b) Chad. As a result of resource mobilization efforts of the UNSO for this project, two financial agreements have been signed for a total amount of \$7,415,000, including \$16,000 of government contribution, for the implementation of the programme for the construction and maintenance of feeder roads. Road-building equipment and spare parts in the amount of \$2,400,000 have been provided to equip a special mechanized brigade for the purpose of constructing and maintaining approximately 260 kilometres of feeder roads. In addition, UNSO financing provides for all operational costs of the brigade during the life of the project. The project base facility in N'Djamena, as provided for by the project document, has been completed, and the repair of 150 kilometres of existing roads, providing access to the planned feeder road sites, has also been completed. Recent internal events impeded further operations until a full work stoppage was required, pending a resolution of the situation to permit the reactivation of the project. It is now envisaged, as soon as circumstances permit, that the implementation of the project will be resumed and, in that connexion, the United States Agency for International Development has indicated its interest in participating in this project. A feasibility study has also been financed by UNSO, and completed by FAO, for the reconstitution of livestock herds in the Kanem region. The bilateral implementation of the recommendations in this study will be resumed when circumstances permit. In addition, a project for the preservation of animal herds and the strengthening of the national capacity for crop protection was completed by the Office of Special Relief Operations of FAO and financed by UNSO in the amount of \$100,000.

(c) Gambia. Two financial agreements have been signed for a total amount of \$4 million, including \$100,000 contributed by the Government, for the construction of a priority feeder-road project. Over \$1.5 million of road-building equipment and spare parts have been procured internationally and are presently at the work site. The special construction brigade, created by the Government and supported with equipment, technical advisers and operational costs provided by UNSO, is currently operating at the work site. In February 1980, more than 150 kilometres of road had been completed. Moreover, the Federal Republic of Germany has decided to provide further support to this priority project by contributing an amount of DM4 million to the extension of this project. The United Nations Sudano-Sahelian Office is also providing \$856,200 for the financing of a priority project for the drilling and equipment of deep-bore wells to serve as watering points for both humans and cattle. This project, which complements other projects financed by UNDP and UNICEF for the exploration and development of underground water, is being executed by the Department of Technical Co-operation for Development, with direct implementation by a contractor, as requested by the Government. In addition, a project financed by UNSO at a cost of over \$120,000 for the supply of pesticides for crop protection and for the improvement of cereal seeds has been completed under direct Government execution.

(d) Mali. Two financial agreements have been signed for a total of \$16,650,000, including \$1.5 million contributed by the Government, for the implementation of a priority feeder-road construction and maintenance programme in Mali. More than \$5,350,000 of road-building equipment and spare parts have been procured and are presently at the work site. A special brigade created

by the Government, and supported with equipment, technical advisers and operational costs provided by UNSO for the purpose of constructing and maintaining the Didiéni-Goumbou link of 173 kilometres, is in full operation and over 100 kilometres of this link have been constructed. The Ansongo-Anderamboukane link of 307 kilometres is under construction, with the assistance of a private contractor, as requested by the Government, and over 150 kilometres of this link have been completed. An additional UNSO-financed project providing for the improvement of animal herds and crop protection in the amount of \$150,000 has been completed under execution by the Office of Special Relief Operations of FAO:

(e) Mauritania. A feasibility study, financed by UNSO, for the construction and operation of a large-scale grain storage system has been completed and is now moving into the implementation phase. On the basis of this feasibility study, the Government of the Netherlands has decided to contribute to the construction of a system of storage facilities with a total capacity of 20,000 tons. In addition, a joint UNSO/African Development Bank programming mission was carried out and, as a consequence, the African Development Fund has agreed to the parallel financing of this project in an amount of over \$6 million for the additional construction of storage facilities, with a total capacity of 30,000 tons, mainly in rural production centres. In addition, UNSO has also earmarked \$1.5 million from the resources of the Trust Fund for the implementation of the feeder-road construction and maintenance programme in Mauritania. Negotiations are presently under way with the Government of Mauritania and several international sources of financing to finalize an arrangement concerning the implementation of the first phase of this priority programme. Another feasibility study for a project to equip and maintain 36 deep-bore wells in Mauritania has been completed by the Department of Technical Co-operation for Development, with UNSO financing, and the implementation of this project is under way in a joint financing venture by the Government of Mauritania, the African Development Fund (\$4 million) and UNSO (\$1.2 million). An UNSO-financed project, executed by the Office of Special Relief Operations of FAO and the national services concerned, provides for the procurement of improved seeds and for support to the seed multiplication centre in Kaedi in the amount of \$281,000. This UNSO contribution is providing for the improvement of the physical facilities and for the strengthening of the ongoing activities of the centre which was established and has been operating with UNDP support. In addition, the Office of Special Relief Operations of FAO completed a UNSO-financed project concerning the strengthening of the national crop protection and animal health services by the procurement of pesticides and related equipment, as well as a supply of animal vaccines, in the amount of \$150,000.

(f) Niger. In the Tahoua region UNSO is financing, in the amount of \$2,090,000, a project for the local manufacture of agricultural tools and equipment. This project, which is being executed by the ILO, will increase local capacity for the production of these implements by the training of artisans, the provision of manufacturing equipment and the construction of small workshops, and will strengthen the national capability to manage this and similar projects. At present, the workshop has been established, production is under way and the training unit is effectively functioning. Another project, in which

UNSO is participating financially in the amount of \$1,000,000, provides for the construction, directly by the Government, of a major irrigation canal as part of a large-scale project receiving multilateral and bilateral assistance for the hydro-agricultural development of 2,700 hectares in the Birni-N'Konni region. Work has progressed sufficiently in this project so that, during the last planting season, approximately 300 hectares of cultivated land were being irrigated. In addition, UNSO is contributing to the implementation of a feeder-road construction project costing more than \$4 million, of which \$165,000 is being contributed by the Government of the Niger. Over \$1.5 million of road-building equipment will be provided to equip a special brigade for the purpose of constructing and maintaining approximately 100 kilometres of feeder roads forming part of this project. In addition, UNSO financing will be utilized to provide the operational costs of the brigade, including the employment and training of local personnel and technical assistance.

(g) Senegal. The feeder-road construction and maintenance programme is under way with financing in the amount of approximately \$3 million, including \$1,750,000 contributed by the Government in the form of road-building equipment. The construction of the first phase of this programme has been undertaken by the Department of Public Works with technical assistance and supervision by the UNDP Office for Projects Execution. The completion of this phase will be the construction of the Samba Dia-Djifère feeder-road link. An extension to this link is presently envisaged with the collaboration of the Government of the Netherlands. In addition, UNSO has also participated, by providing funding in the amount of \$1.1 million, in the implementation phase of a project for the development of an integrated system for the supply of water to the northern littoral of Senegal. The feasibility study for this project was completed by WHO, with UNDP financing. The project, which also received financial support from the Government of Senegal and UNDP, was executed directly by the national service concerned and the Office for Projects Execution of UNDP. The prompt and effective start-up of this project provided a substantial increase in the water supply for the city of Dakar, thus avoiding a serious urban water shortage for the growing population and industrial interests in the city. Recently, the Government has requested UNSO to assist in the mobilization of resources for the extension of this project to cover the entire country, in order to develop a system for the rational use and protection of the country's aquifers. Meanwhile, UNSO is now financing, in the amount of \$100,000, in a joint endeavour with UNDP, a pilot project for the artificial recharge of an aquifer in a limestone area, which is subject to salt-water infiltration. This project will be an essential contribution to the management of water resources in Senegal. In addition, UNSO has financed, in the amount of \$200,000, a project executed by the Office of Special Relief Operations of FAO for the strengthening of the national crop-protection capability by the procurement of pesticides and related equipment. Funds were also provided by UNSO in the amount of \$200,000 to the ongoing government-executed project for the integrated agricultural development of the Casamance region, which has since attracted additional external support on a bilateral basis.

(h) Upper Volta. The feeder-road construction and maintenance programme has been financed by UNSO in the amount of approximately \$2.8 million and a

contribution by the Government of approximately \$680,000 in the form of road-building equipment, provided by assistance from the Federal Republic of Germany. The construction phase of the programme is now being carried out by the concerned national service. As at February 1980, more than 60 kilometres of road, forming part of this programme, have been constructed. Additional feeder-road construction for this major priority programme has been undertaken through bilateral arrangements with the Governments of Canada and the United States of America. In addition, UNSO is providing \$300,000 for two Government-executed projects for the development of underground water resources: the project in ORD Centre-Ouest has already been completed, while the project in ORD de la Volta Noire is ongoing.

19. In the planning and implementation of priority projects, as well as in resource mobilization, UNSO consults closely with the CILSS Council of Ministers and Executive Secretary of the Permanent Inter-State Committee on Drought Control in the Sahel. This consultation characterizes the close working relationship between UNSO and that Committee and ensures the continuous participation of the member States on all aspects of the rehabilitation and development programme in the Sudano-Sahelian region. From time to time, UNSO and the Committee jointly review the modalities of their relationships to assure continued relevancy and effectiveness. Another aspect of this close collaboration is the active participation by UNSO in the various working groups of the Committee and the Club du Sahel.

20. In carrying out its responsibilities to assist the member States of the Permanent Inter-State Committee on Drought Control in the Sahel and the Committee itself in their programme of recovery and rehabilitation from drought and in strengthening their capacity to cope with future drought, UNSO has been deeply involved with the closely related problem of desertification. Desertification has emerged as one of the most serious problems of the Sahelian region, the manifestations of which have been magnified and accelerated by the recurrent droughts in the region. Accordingly, much of the efforts of UNSO regarding drought management have also had direct applicability to the control of desertification.

21. In its resolution 33/88, of 15 December 1978, on measures to be taken for the benefit of the Sudano-Sahelian region, the General Assembly designated UNSO as the arm of the United Nations responsible for assisting, on behalf of UNEP, the efforts of the 15 countries of the Sudano-Sahelian region to implement the Plan of Action to Combat Desertification (A/CONF.74/36, part one, sect. I). The desertification control role of UNSO in the Sudano-Sahelian region was confirmed by the General Assembly resolution 34/187, of 18 December 1979, on the implementation of the Plan of Action to Combat Desertification in the Sudano-Sahelian region, which reiterated the Assembly's concern over the particular seriousness of desertification in the region and noted with satisfaction the progress made by UNSO in assisting the Governments of the region, on behalf of UNEP, in implementing the Plan of Action to Combat Desertification. A comprehensive report on the activities of UNSO in carrying out its responsibilities under this mandate is available in the report of the Governing Council of UNEP on the subject, which is before the Assembly. The present report will be confined to a brief account of the desertification control activities of UNSO related only to the member States of the Permanent Inter-State Committee on Drought Control in the Sahel.

22. During the first half of 1979, UNSO conducted a series of planning and programming missions to the countries of the region and prepared, in collaboration with each of the Governments concerned, a report on the problem of desertification and a review of ongoing and proposed activities to implement the Plan of Action to Combat Desertification. The concerned agencies of the United Nations system participated in the missions and in the preparation of the reports. Annexed to each of the reports are a number of detailed proposals, each describing a specific priority desertification control project for which the Government concerned has asked UNSO assistance in the mobilization of resources. With regard to the eight member States of the Permanent Inter-State Committee on Drought Control in the Sahel, 77 desertification control projects, with an estimated cost of \$260 million, were delineated. A number of these projects are ongoing and have already been partially financed. Accordingly, of the over-all cost of \$260 million, \$122 million have already been assured by previous financing, leaving an additional amount of \$138 million to be mobilized. These projects are mainly in the fields of afforestation, water management, arid land agriculture, land range management, fuel-wood plantations, sand-dune fixation and institutional support. All of them fall within the framework of the recommendations of the Plan of Action to Combat Desertification.

23. In addition, UNSO has undertaken the implementation of a number of anti-desertification projects in the Sahel, financed from contributions to the Trust Fund. One of these is a large-scale pilot project for the protection and development of the Casamance forests, the last remaining natural forests in Senegal. This project, which has been undertaken with the use of a \$1 million allocation by UNSO from the Trust Fund, made possible by an earmarked contribution from the Government of the Netherlands, is Government-executed and was preceded by an FAO forest survey, undertaken with UNDP financing. It will have a favourable impact on energy resources and desertification control by providing for the protection of the Tabor forest in the Casamance region through (a) the establishment of fire belts and pasture reservations, (b) its natural regeneration by selected cutting of dead and surplus trees and (c) reafforestation with commercial species. The financing of these operations will come from revenues derived from the sale of timber and of charcoal produced from wood which is otherwise unmarketable. At the end of the present phase (two years), the Government will decide whether a national company should be formed to carry on the project activities throughout all the forests of the Casamance region. Another desertification control project, financed by UNSO from Trust Fund resources in the amount of \$200,000 is a large-scale, labour-intensive pilot project employing 200 workers for a series of small-scale irrigation schemes and soil erosion prevention works, which will provide a significant increase in productive land as well as a strong impact on desertification control in Sao Joao Baptista Valley in Cape Verde. This project, which is government-executed, is complementary to, and is closely co-ordinated with, an FAO reafforestation project in Cape Verde. In addition, UNSO is in the process of formulating seven additional institutional support projects in the member States of the Permanent Inter-State Committee on Drought Control in the Sahel. These projects, which have been requested by the countries concerned, will be funded from the resources of the Trust Fund.

24. Most of the desertification control projects, both those planned and under implementation, reflect the close relationship between development and the rehabilitation and maintenance of stable ecological environments. In fact, many of these projects concern integrated development, which intertwines desertification control with the development process, in order to increase the productivity of the natural resources at the disposal of the countries over the long term.

25. With a view to promoting full collaboration between UNSO and the Permanent Inter-State Committee on Drought Control in the Sahel in combating desertification in the member States of the Committee, UNSO financed a meeting at Dakar in November 1979, under the joint sponsorship of the Committee, the Club du Sahel and UNSO and with the participation of representatives from each of the member States of the Committee. The purpose of this meeting was to design a unified UNSO Committee Plan of Action to Combat Desertification in the member States of the Committee. Based on the priority requirements of each of the member States of the Committee, the participants in the meeting formulated a joint strategy unified plan to combat desertification, which provided for the co-ordination of the respective desertification control activities of the Committee and UNSO. The unified plan took full account of the reports of UNSO, on the problem of desertification and review of ongoing and proposed activities in each of the countries of the Sahelian region and will serve as a basis for the further collaborative efforts of the Committee and UNSO.

26. The unified plan to combat desertification in the Sahelian region of UNSO and the Permanent Inter-State Committee on Drought Control in the Sahel was submitted to the Council of Ministers at its 12th meeting at Ouagadougou in January 1980. The Council, in giving its approval to the unified plan, recognized the need to take energetic measures in order to halt the encroachment of the desert. The role of UNSO in the development of the plan and in desertification control activities in the region was presented to the Council of Ministers at this meeting by the Director of UNSO. At the same time, the Director also summarized the activities of UNSO to assist the countries of the Sahelian region in their rehabilitation and development programmes. In his presentation, the Director of UNSO stressed the close relationship and interaction between rehabilitation and development and desertification control.

27. The Conference of the Heads of State of the Permanent Inter-State Committee on Drought Control in the Sahel held its fourth biennial conference at Ouagadougou immediately after the 12th meeting of its Council of Ministers. The Administrator of UNDP, Mr. Bradford Morse, in his address to the Conference, emphasized the importance and effectiveness of the close working relationship between the Committee and UNSO, to which he gave his strong endorsement. At that time, the Administrator also reaffirmed his personal as well as his official commitment to continue to assist and support the Committee and its member States in their rehabilitation and development programmes and their anti-desertification activities.

28. His Excellency, Moussa Traore, President of Mali and current Chairman of the Conference of Heads of State of the Permanent Inter-State Committee on Drought Control in the Sahel, in his closing address to the Conference, expressed the decision of the Conference to intensify efforts in the combat against desertification in the Sahel. His Excellency also stated that the urgency of the work to reverse the desertification process was recognized by all and, in this connexion, he expressed his appreciation that UNSO would continue to assist the Committee and its member States in their desertification control efforts.
