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DRAFT REPORT OF THE BUDGETARY AND FINANCE COMMITTEE

Addendum

Rapporteur: Miss Mariam AL-AWADHI (Kuwait)

Attached is the draft report on agenda items:

- 5 (b)(iii) UNDP assistance in response to
natural disasters
- 7 (f)(i)(b) Assistance to drought-stricken countries
in Africa and follow-up to the United Nations
Conference on Desertification

Budgetary and Finance Committee

Draft Report

UNDP assistance in response to natural disasters

Consideration by the Budgetary and Finance Committee

1. The Budgetary and Finance Committee had before it document DP/432, which was referred to it by the Plenary to the Budgetary and Finance Committee for the Committee's consideration of the financial implications of the Administrator's proposal on criteria for UNDP's response to natural disasters. The Committee was informed, with respect to a draft decision before it, that two further paragraphs were to be added: one limiting UNDP assistance to instances of natural disasters; and the other requiring that any allocations for disasters from the programme reserve, which were not expended (obligations plus disbursements) within 24 months after approval of the relevant project document, revert to the unallocated balance of the Programme Reserve.
 2. In response to questions raised by members of the Committee, the Acting Assistant Administrator, Bureau for Programme Policy and Evaluation, stated that the proposal to increase the initial allocation for immediate relief assistance from \$20,000 to \$30,000 was made to achieve conformity with the authority given to the Secretary-General by the General Assembly to provide assistance from UNDR0 resources. He said that this initial allocation of \$30,000 would be included within the limit of \$1 million per disaster. This limit was based on UNDP experience in responding to natural disasters, while the annual ceiling of \$2 million per country was based on the fact that there were unlikely to be more than two natural disasters in any one country in a year.
 3. As a result of its review of this question, the Budgetary and Finance Committee endorsed the financial arrangements proposed in paragraphs 21(b) and 21(d) of document DP/432, as well as the additional proposal that any allocations from the Programme Reserve which were not expended (obligations plus disbursements) within 24 months after the approval of the project document should then revert to the unallocated balance of the Programme Reserve.
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ASSISTANCE TO DROUGHT-STRICKEN COUNTRIES IN
AFRICA AND FOLLOW-UP TO THE UNITED NATIONS
CONFERENCE ON DESERTIFICATION

DRAFT REPORT OF THE BUDGETARY AND FINANCE COMMITTEE

1. Following a decision and referral by the Council, the Committee had before it for consideration and for the formulation of relevant financial recommendations to the Council the following documentation under agenda item 7(f)(i)(b):

DP/494, Plan of Action to Combat Desertification in the Sudano-Sahelian Region: Financing of Administrative Costs; DP/GC/XXVII/CRP.6, Implementation of the Plan of Action to Combat Desertification in the Sudano-Sahelian Region; and DP/GC/XXVII/BFC/CRP.12/Rev.1, Note by the Secretariat.

2. Introducing the item, the Deputy Director, United Nations Sudano-Sahelian Office, provided background information on the origins of UNSO's two mandates: to assist the eight drought-stricken countries of West Africa in the implementation of their medium and long-term rehabilitation and development programme; and to assist, on behalf of UNEP, the 15 countries of the Sudano-Sahelian Region in the implementation of the Plan of Action to Combat Desertification, under a UNDP/UNEP joint venture. He noted that the issues raised were first to specify the source of funding for the previously authorized contribution by UNDP of its share of the administrative costs of the joint venture; and second, to recommend the amount and the source of the increase in UNDP's share of the administrative and programme costs of the joint venture, for which UNEP was to provide equal contribution.

Summary of the discussion in the Committee

3. One delegate asked if UNEP had as yet contributed its share of the increase in the administrative and programme costs under the joint venture. The UNSO Deputy Director responded that the UNEP Governing Council had authorized the inclusion of the three countries among those to be assisted by UNSO under the joint venture, but that time had not yet permitted consultations between the UNEP Executive Director and the Administrator on the matter of UNEP's contribution to the joint venture, which would be as equal shares of the administrative and programme costs.

4. One delegate referring to the devastating effects of the prolonged drought on the concerted efforts of the countries to sustain economic growth and to improve the standard of living of their peoples, expressed his great appreciation

for the assistance received from donors. He also recommended the approval of the increase over the currently approved budget of the UNEP/UNDP joint venture to be provided either from the Programme Reserve or from the interregional IPFs. He concluded with an expression of hope that donors would continue to make available to UNSO increased resources for programme and project implementation.

Recommendation of the Committee

5. Following consideration of the financial aspects of the item, the Committee authorized the expenditure of not to exceed \$316,000 (net) in 1980-1981 to be allocated from UNDP resources under a separate budget line, similar to the line item for sectoral support. The Committee took this decision on the understanding that UNEP will decide to pay its equal share of the increased costs for 1980-1981 and that, in any event, UNDP would not pay more than one-half of the total costs for administrative (institutional) support and programme (operational) support for the joint venture.