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GOVERNING COUNCIL

Twenty-seventh session

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 696th MEETING

held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,  
on Tuesday, 17 June 1980, at 3 p.m.

President:

Mr. POPESCU

(Romania)

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

STATEMENT BY THE SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE LEAGUE OF RED CROSS SOCIETIES

1. Mr. BEER (League of Red Cross Societies) said that the non-governmental organizations had made an important contribution to development, not only in the matter of manpower, supplies and money for action in the health, agricultural and other fields, but also with regard to information and motivation. They had played a role in their individual countries and abroad in promoting public and governmental appreciation of the development efforts of the United Nations and their own organizations. For that purpose, the organizations needed close contacts, and exchanges of material, ideas and projects. In that connexion, a special non-governmental organization working group, of which the League was an active member, had been convened to prepare for the forthcoming special session of the General Assembly on the international development strategy for the 1980s.
2. The administrator of UNDP and its regional organizations and resident representatives had co-operated very helpfully as advisers and promoters of projects managed by non-governmental organizations within the general activities of UNDP.
3. The Red Cross had established a development programme which was modern in form though following general guidelines established over 20 years previously. The object of the programme was to work in a limited field, which he hoped complemented the general activities of UNDP, using its own machinery (the Red Cross, Red Crescent, and Red Lion and Sun Society in each country) to assist Governments in such fields as health, welfare, relief and youth activities. Some of the national societies were still young and relatively weak and it was for the League secretariat in Geneva and the more affluent national Red Cross societies to support the weaker societies in their development efforts. The League was therefore concentrating its efforts in the developing countries, giving priority to the poorest.
4. The League had initially spread its central efforts too thinly, and had made the mistake of trying to find attractive projects which would be readily accepted by donors and where a good feedback could be expected, but that approach had created the problem, not unknown to UNDP, that efforts became directed not to the poorest and weakest regions but to those where good results could be attained in a short time. Such an approach created dependence instead of encouraging self-reliance, so that the League had for a long time insisted that outside support could only complement efforts from within.
5. Another initial error had been to encourage the development of projects in countries where there was no administrative framework to handle them. Efforts were now being concentrated where they were felt to be most needed. In the southern African countries, for example, the League was engaged in the major task of creating the necessary administrative framework for the initiation of the so-called attractive projects, and it was insisting that such efforts should be the result of common planning with Governments and international organizations such as UNDP.
6. A major effort being undertaken in co-operation with WHO and UNICEF concerned primary health care, the purpose being to foster people's interest in simple health problems, particularly in villages remote from large cities, by giving simple health education, identifying local leaders and creating a spirit of responsibility so that the resources which could be provided by central and local authorities could be put to proper use. United Nations statistics showed that the majority of the world's population did not profit from the billions being invested in health measures; that was a situation which must be changed.

7. The Red Cross had only limited resources; its strength lay in its 230-240 million volunteers and, notably, in the active members who had been trained to take responsibility in community service. It was intensifying its efforts in primary health care, which in many countries would become a part of the activities of UNDP.
8. Disaster relief was another basic Red Cross activity; indeed, during the last 20 years a disaster relief appeal had been issued every third week. It was a sign of the times that while the frequency of natural disasters did not change, the frequency of man-made disasters was increasing. There was no competition between the voluntary efforts of the Red Cross and those of the United Nations. The Red Cross had excellent co-operative relations with United Nations agencies such as UNDRO, and excellent contacts with the resident representatives. Disaster relief, together with disaster preparedness, which was also partly the responsibility of UNDP as the representative of UNDRO, was a natural field for co-operation, though there were many others.
9. The League of Red Cross Societies had finally received a mandate to take part in the work of family planning and was continuing pioneer efforts for the training of para-medical personnel adapted to local conditions.
10. The Red Cross was putting a major emphasis on youth, notably in countries where more than half the population was under 20 years of age, with the basic aim of creating the means of carrying out humanitarian tasks. He appreciated the support already given by United Nations development machinery and hoped that it would become even more extensive. Resident representatives might remember that a national Red Cross, Red Crescent or Red Lion and Sun organization could be used more often within the framework of co-operation in the field. UNDP plans had also been of great assistance in working out developmental strategy for the coming decade.
11. He hoped that UNDP as the basic instrument for economic and social development, which included humanitarian work, would be given the resources to continue and expand its work, and that it would continue to appreciate the role of the voluntary organizations and expand its use of their capacities.

OTHER FUNDS AND PROGRAMMES (agenda item 7) (continued)

(a) UNITED NATIONS FUND FOR POPULATION ACTIVITIES

- (i) THE REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR ON 1979 ACTIVITIES AND THE FUTURE PROGRAMME (DP/464 and Corr.1, 465 and Corr.1, 482, 483, 493, 497)  
(continued)

12. Mr. MULDER (Netherlands) said that, during 1979, UNFPA had made allocations totalling \$149 million; the implementation rate had increased; unallocated resources had been largely eliminated and programme delivery accelerated. There had been a further increase in contributions to the Fund, to an unprecedented total of \$112 million; there had also been a broadening of the resource base. UNFPA was undoubtedly a success story.

13. Nevertheless, the increase in population, particularly in the developing countries, where the social and economic situation was often desperate, called for policies to stabilize or decrease population growth. He agreed with the

Executive Director that the world community must not falter in its support for national efforts at a time when global fertility rates were beginning to decline following a decade of successful population assistance to countries in need.

14. The Fund therefore continued to have an important role to play in supporting national population policies and his Government intended to increase its participation in multilateral efforts through UNFPA by another 10 per cent in 1981.

15. It was essential for UNFPA's continued success that it should remain an integral part of the multilateral development effort. He reiterated his support for the Fund's main policy orientations in accordance with the guidance given by the Governing Council, the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly. The core programme focusing on the most essential problems, and the priorities established in the allocation of the Fund's resources must remain unchanged. He therefore welcomed the increase in the proportion of UNFPA funds allocated to the priority countries in 1979 and the expected further increase to reach the target of two-thirds.

16. Although administrative costs had risen, UNFPA had succeeded in keeping them within 10 per cent of its budget. That was commendable but continued vigilance was needed. Although there had been an increase in the implementation rate, it continued to be relatively low.

17. The documentation before the Council did not give a clear picture of the pattern of expenditure through executing agencies over a number of years but his delegation had the impression that UNFPA was taking on more and more executing functions itself instead of using more appropriate agencies such as WHO and UNICEF. Moreover, with the expansion of UNFPA field staff, the transfer of funds-in-trust to UNICEF in respect of the population components of UNICEF activities had been discontinued. That was regrettable because such population components fitted very well into UNICEF's integrated activities and into those of other executing agencies. The Executive Director should bear in mind the original functions of UNFPA, namely, a modest executing task of its own and a pragmatic use of existing channels and organizations for execution. Too much emphasis on UNFPA's own executing role would undermine the integrated approach to population and development and increase administrative costs.

18. He appreciated the candour with which UNFPA's evaluation had been carried out, though it did not give an optimistic picture. However, project evaluation generally was in an experimental and preliminary stage and he recommended that UNFPA should share its experience with other organizations and work with them in trying to overcome the difficulties.

19. His delegation accepted the additional approval authority requested by the Executive Director in document DP/482, but trusted that it would not adversely affect the implementation rate. He also recognized the need for an increase in UNFPA staff and a reclassification of posts, in so far as that was compatible with good management and fiscal responsibility. The action taken in such matters must do justice both to the need to expand operations in the light of increased resources and the need to limit the executing role of UNFPA in accordance with its original functions. The concern for fiscal responsibility reflected in the report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Question on the Fund's budget estimates (DP/497) was as legitimate as the Fund's task in meeting the needs of recipient countries.

20. His delegation concurred with the proposed country projects and programmes as contained in documents DP/FPA/11 and Add.1-26. He welcomed the renewed relationship of UNFPA with India and Indonesia and the new programme for China.

21. Mr. ADANDE (Observer for Benin) said that the significance of population questions within the general framework of development had become increasingly evident in recent years. There could be no development planning without some indication of the dimensions of the population problems likely to arise and without a policy to assess their magnitude. For those reasons, the Government of Benin attached great importance to the work of UNFPA. His Government's attention was at present concentrated on three areas: the collection of basic data, the formulation of demographic programmes, which of course was only possible when population trends were known, and the general work of communication and education. With the assistance of the Fund, Benin had carried out a population census and made a study of vital statistics, though the bulk of the work programmed under those heads had yet to be carried out. The Government's aim was to establish satisfactory statistical systems and to carry out surveys that would make it possible for the major demographic indicators to be evaluated. For all those activities there was an obvious need to train staff.

22. The Government of Benin was also concerned with maternal and child health and family planning; UNFPA aid was sought in providing training facilities as well as in improving preventive medicine in order to assist those most in need of aid: children, mothers and young people. In consultation with the Fund, it wished to establish an over-all programme of Benin's needs and had therefore asked for a basic needs assessment mission to be sent to the country. He hoped that the mission would arrive soon.

23. He appreciated the work of UNFPA and desired to see its funding placed on a solid footing, so that the requirements listed in table 6 in document DP/464 could be fully met. He urged donors to increase their contributions so that resources could be allocated sufficiently far in advance for recipient countries to know what funds they could count on.

24. It was time for a reasonable increase in FPA staff, particularly in the field; and in that connexion he would like to see the appointment of a co-ordinator for Benin who would work in co-operation with the UNDP resident representative.

25. Miss AL-AWADHI (Kuwait) expressed appreciation of the activities of UNFPA in the Mediterranean, Middle East and Europe, where the Fund was strengthening the capacities of Governments for data collection and analysis and for the conduct of accurate censuses, so important in planning economic and social development. She also noted with satisfaction the results of missions dispatched to Bahrain, Jordan, Morocco, Somalia and the Syrian Arab Republic. Although large-scale programmes for a number of Arab countries had been approved by the Governing Council in 1979, others were still awaiting approval. Special attention should be given to the formulation of the programme for Bahrain, an island developing country, the population of which was expected to double by the year 2000. Almost 78 per cent of the population was concentrated in urban areas. The country had known a rate of population increase of almost 0.5 per cent during the last nine months of 1977 and faced a declining GNP owing to depletion of the oil reserves which were its only natural resource. Such factors should be given due weight in drawing up the programme.

26. She appreciated UNFPA's pioneer work in issuing publications and audio-visual aids in Arabic. That would certainly assist Governments and news media to make the people more aware of population and development issues.

27. The Executive Director's request for increased staff and for reclassification of the posts of chiefs of the Africa and Mediterranean and Middle East branches was fully justified by the magnitude of the programmes in those regions and should be approved. Such a decision would be in accordance with the Council's previous decision to reclassify similar posts for Latin America and Asia. The post of Assistant Executive Director and chief of the Programme Division should be reclassified to the level of Assistant Secretary-General.

28. She attached particular importance to the World Conference of the United Nations Decade for Women to be held in Copenhagen in July 1980 and appreciated the support that the Fund had given to the preparatory work for the Conference.

29. Mr. CAVALCANTI (Brazil) said his delegation welcomed the capacity UNFPA had displayed to meet the diversified needs of developing countries in the field of population activities. His Government attached particular importance to its role in the area of socio-economic demographic research, and viewed the strengthening of that activity as essential for the proper incorporation of population variables in plans for socio-economic development. In that connexion he expressed particular satisfaction with a UNFPA-funded project in population studies currently being executed for the regional development of a northern state of Brazil. The satisfactory results of that project made his Government optimistic about the possibility of further UNFPA support for some Brazilian programmes in population dynamics. He hoped therefore that the current trend towards increased allocations of UNFPA resources for family planning programmes would not preclude the Fund from providing adequate assistance in other sectors that were no less important for the establishment of a more coherent general approach to questions of population in developing countries.

30. With regard to the execution of TCDC activities within UNFPA, it would be useful if the Governing Council could be provided with fuller information on the utilization of the capacities of developing countries in the Fund. It would also be useful to know how the Executive Director viewed the prospects of increasing the TCDC element in the Fund's activities. He would welcome a report on the subject at the Council's next session.

31. Mr. CHOWDHURY (Bangladesh) congratulated the Executive Director and his colleagues on reducing the unallocated resources from \$26 million in December 1978 to less than \$8 million in 1979, as well as on the implementation rate of 84 per cent for the planned programme in 1979. He was gratified that Bangladesh continued to be considered a priority country for UNFPA assistance. His delegation noted with satisfaction that 55.6 per cent of the Fund's resources had been allocated to priority countries in 1979, an increase of 7.9 per cent over 1978. It would, however, like a target date to be established for the allocation of two-thirds of the Fund's resources to those countries. It would also like to know what share of those resources would be committed to the priority countries at the end of 1980, once the new country programmes had been approved by the Council.

32. In general, his delegation was satisfied with the progress of the process of evaluation, as described in paragraphs 26-29 of document DP/464. That was a sound process, which established the Executive Director's accountability to the Council. However, the recipient country concerned should be associated with the evaluation of UNFPA-funded projects.

33. The Bangladesh delegation endorsed the list of activities being accorded priority in programming the Fund's resources (DP/464, para. 22). Basic data collection was also a very important activity for many least developed countries. He was glad to report that UNFPA was providing substantial assistance with the population and housing census to be carried out in Bangladesh in 1981. Although his delegation welcomed the increased number of donors to the Fund, it was deeply concerned at the slackening in the rate of growth of contributions, particularly at a time when, in many countries, the persistent efforts of the recent past had paved the way for the implementation of effective population planning programmes. The comments quoted from the Brandt Commission report were particularly true of Bangladesh, where considerable efforts had been needed to obtain official recognition of family planning practices. He was glad to inform the Council that the over-all implementation rate of Bangladesh's first UNFPA country programme had been 86 per cent, one of the highest for individual countries and above UNFPA's implementation rate as a whole. The population growth rate in Bangladesh had decreased to 2.5 per cent per annum as family planning practices had become generally acceptable. In the country's second five-year plan, which was to start on 1 July 1980, population planning had been accorded one of the highest priorities. It was expected that, by the end of that plan, the population growth rate would have declined to 1.5 per cent per annum.

34. In the light of experience of a decade of population planning, his Government had formulated some realistic projects under the second UNFPA country programme. The largest, with an estimated cost of \$14.7 million spread over five years, was aimed at a significant expansion of the maternity and child health and family planning services, including the strengthening of administrative, data collection, logistic, supervisory and sterilization services. If the projects already approved or in the process of approval were to be implemented, disbursements for 1980 and 1981 would have to be at least \$11 million and \$16 million respectively. His delegation was therefore greatly concerned that UNFPA had been finding it increasingly difficult to raise resources for funding the multilateral and bilateral component of the second country programme. Any shortfall in resources would spell disaster for his already overpopulated country. He therefore fervently appealed to donors to enable Bangladesh to sustain the momentum already gained in its population activities.

35. The association of China with UNFPA augured well for the future. His delegation also supported the increasing participation of non-governmental organizations in the Fund's population projects.

36. Mrs. MENA (Cuba) welcomed the concern shown by the Executive Director for the countries and population groups most in need. The Fund's operational flexibility and dynamic approach to the implementation of projects were also noteworthy, as well as its respect for the population policy of the individual Governments. The Fund should pay increased attention to population problems, in particular, maternal and child health in the least developed countries, and co-ordinate such activities with UNDP country programmes, regional programming and the co-operation provided to those countries by the various United Nations specialized agencies.

37. Further study should be given to the Fund's research programme in order to improve the quality of information provided. The evaluation of those projects should be carried out more rigorously and under stricter supervision. It was encouraging to note that those points had been raised by the Fund itself.
38. Her delegation fully supported the Fund's intercountry activities and the projects submitted for Africa, Asia and Latin America, especially those for Mexico, Nicaragua and Ecuador. The Fund should continue to identify the needs of non-priority countries, in the light of their own endeavours to solve their population problems.
39. Her Government greatly appreciated the Fund's programme for Cuba, which had achieved positive results and benefited the population groups most in need. Several African countries had professed an interest in the results of that programme. Her Government would maintain its contribution to the Fund and was ready to increase it, if necessary.
40. Mr. MARTIN (United Kingdom) said his country strongly supported UNFPA's programme objectives and commended its success in helping to increase the number of projects directly executed by the recipient countries themselves.
41. His delegation welcomed the increase in the proportion of UNFPA resources allocated to priority countries. It assumed that the figure of 55.6 per cent was a proportion of those resources allocated for individual country programmes rather than of the total. It would like to know when the target of an allocation of two-thirds of resources to those countries was expected to be met and to have more details about the process of periodically reviewing the list of priority and borderline countries, mentioned in paragraph 11 of document DP/464.
42. Despite the statement in paragraph 16 that resources had continued to be switched from intercountry activities to country projects in 1979, allocations for intercountry programmes had still represented 29.7 per cent of all project allocations. Careful appraisal of intercountry activities was needed to decide which could most easily be curtailed. For example, although his delegation had supported in 1979 the International Conference of Parliamentarians on Population and Development, it had doubts about UNFPA's involvement in an ongoing commitment to underwrite future interparliamentary activities, such as the funding of parliamentary missions from donor countries.
43. Although a substantial proportion of intercountry activities had been concerned with support of research, the analysis of the research projects showed considerable scope for improvement. The conclusions of the evaluation mission (DP/493) were a matter for some concern in view of the sums of money allocated to research which could otherwise have been allocated to effective country programmes.
44. His delegation reaffirmed its full support for the World Health Organization's Special Programme of Research Development and Research Training in Human Reproduction, and endorsed the decision taken by the Governing Council in 1979 to increase UNFPA support to \$2 million by 1982.
45. It was gratifying to note that unallocated resources had declined from \$26 million as at 31 December 1978 to less than \$8 million by the end of 1979 and that unallocated funds should be totally eliminated by 1981. The increase in the programme implementation rate to 84 per cent in 1979 was also encouraging. It was to be hoped that UNFPA would continue to be able to make full use of its funds while avoiding the danger of over-programming.



46. The Executive Director's forecast that contributions to UNFPA would almost double in 1984 seemed somewhat optimistic, since it assumed that contributions for 1981 would be 25 per cent higher than in 1980 and would show an increase of 15 per cent each year thereafter. It was necessary to bear in mind that contributions to UNFPA in 1979 had only been about 11 per cent higher than in 1978, and that several donor countries, including his own, would be unable to respond financially on the scale the Executive Director would wish. The consequences were easy to foresee if programme planning was not based on realistic forecasts of income. UNFPA would be faced with a choice either of bringing certain projects to an end or of spreading them over a longer period, which would be most unsatisfactory.

47. Given the likelihood that resources in the coming years would be scarce, it was even more important that projects selected for implementation should be in priority areas and sectors. Resources should be allocated primarily to the core activities of UNFPA, such as family planning, communication and education projects. The gradual increase forecast for family planning programmes, especially in the African region, was therefore encouraging. Activities for the training, utilization and impact of traditional birth attendants provided a good example of a project to which the United Kingdom attached particular importance. On the other hand, it felt that, in the case of certain projects listed in document DP/465, the link with UNFPA's main responsibilities seemed particularly tenuous. In principle, his delegation welcomed programmes on the status of women and the integration of women in development in view of the positive implications for family and, ultimately, community life. Resources should not, however, be diverted from more urgent tasks in fields where UNFPA was the lead organization.

48. Miss SUTHERLAND (Canada) said that the world's awareness of the gravity of problems associated with under- and over-population was growing. The greatly increased demand for population assistance was a testimony that UNFPA had played an active role in that respect.

49. Her delegation's suggestion that a separate three-day period should be allotted for an in-depth review of UNFPA activities should not be construed as an attempt by Canada, as a donor to the Fund, to scrutinize the national population policies of countries with which the Fund co-operated. Rather, the suggestion had stemmed from a requirement by the Canadian financial authorities that there should be full accountability for all grants which Canada made annually to international institutions. Her delegation's prime concern was with the manner in which the Fund developed and applied its policies, as reflected in the country programmes, which ultimately represented the most important single aspect of UNFPA's activities.

50. Her delegation believed that, by dealing systematically with some of the issues, a true consensus on important issues could be reached. That had not always been the case, even with such questions as an increase in the Executive Director's approval authority or the waiving of the requirement for four-year programmes to be referred back to the Governing Council at the end of the second year. Failing a clear consensus, it was open to question whether the Governing Council was really acting responsibly with respect to the management of the Fund.

51. The Canadian delegation felt obliged to take exception to the Fund's decision to postpone discussion of its future. That was the fundamental issue, on which depended the adequacy of resources to meet current and future requests for assistance.

52. Her delegation was encouraged by the increase in first-time donors and hoped that they would continue to put their trust in the Fund. On the other hand, the statement that the total number of donors now numbered 118 was misleading. That was a cumulative total and did not reflect the fact that the number of donors had actually dropped from 56 in 1974 to 40 in 1979.

53. The Canadian delegation supported the trend towards direct execution by Governments as well as the continued use of the appropriate specialized agencies and non-governmental organizations. It would continue to use its best efforts in the governing bodies of those institutions to ensure that collaboration in population activities was a two-way process.

54. With regard to infrastructure support, the Canadian delegation had not interpreted the proposal made in the document before the Working Group on Support Costs as being automatically applicable to UNFPA. It would be interested to hear the Executive Director's view and to know why he had not raised the matter in the Working Group. Although her delegation wished to see UNFPA's administrative costs remain low, it believed that the Fund should bear those costs which were rightly associated with its programmes.

55. Despite the decision taken by the Governing Council in 1979 to reduce the proportion of intercountry activities to 25 per cent, the share of those activities seemed in fact to have increased from 27 per cent in 1978 to 29 per cent in 1979. She would like to know when the ceiling of 25 per cent would be reached and if it would be possible in future years to present a report on global and regional projects showing how they fitted into the guidelines which the Governing Council had accepted for them. She would like to know if the list of allocations in document DP/465 provided the only opportunity for a review of projects costing less than \$1 million.

56. Her delegation welcomed document DP/493 on evaluation of UNFPA projects. The frankness of the assessment of the appraisal process for research requests was exceptional and did great credit to the maturity of UNFPA. In times of scarce resources, an organization which could demonstrate the effectiveness of its projects and programmes would considerably improve its chances of attracting resources. Evaluation was an integral part of any project and programme planning process and UNFPA should therefore place greater emphasis on it.

57. UNFPA and the Inter-Parliamentary Union were to be commended for organizing the International Conference of Parliamentarians on Population and Development in Sri Lanka, which would produce long-term benefits. In view of the assurance given by the Executive Director in 1979 that the expenses of no parliamentarians from developed countries would be defrayed from UNFPA funds, she would like to know exactly how many delegates from developed countries had in fact been paid for by UNFPA, what the costs had been and whether those figures were included in the total costs of the Conference, as shown on page 32 of document DP/465. She would also like an assurance from the Executive Director that the costs of delegates from developed countries would not be borne by the Fund for other conferences.

58. The work plan for the period 1981-1984 was ambitious, as it assumed a 25 per cent increase in contributions for 1981. Despite the strongly demonstrated demand for larger resources and the increased world awareness of population issues, her delegation was not convinced that the expected level of contributions would be forthcoming. The increase during the past two years had been in the region of 9 per cent. Unless the Executive Director could provide strong evidence to the contrary, she considered that the UNFPA work plan and related approval authority should be based on realistic estimates of income, say on the assumption of a 7 per cent increase in contributions.

financial forecasting was imperative in times of scarce resources. In that connexion, the documents presented to the Council could benefit from a clearer presentation of financial information. At present, possible commitments above approval levels could easily pass unnoticed. Her delegation would particularly like to see comparative tables presenting firm commitments in addition to actual approvals by calendar year. Any unexpended project balances should also be clearly indicated.

59. The Canadian delegation had been glad to note a slightly increased implementation rate and was particularly encouraged by the 7.1 per cent increase in allocations to priority countries. She would like to know whether the new target date of 1981 for the allocation of two-thirds of programme resources to priority countries was still valid and whether a breakdown of actual disbursements to those countries in 1979 could be provided. Canada had always strongly supported the concept of priority countries, but believed that the time had come to assess the validity of the criteria applied for allocating resources. A frank discussion of that approach might be useful at the next session of the Governing Council.

60. The acceleration in programme delivery was to be applauded, but it also brought the priority system into question. In view of the fact that large projects were being carried out in non-priority countries, she wondered whether that policy should not be reviewed. The Fund could not operate with a policy providing for more exceptions than rules.

61. Her delegation welcomed the fact that a substantial number of basic needs assessments would be completed by the end of 1980. Those assessments had been valuable for establishing a framework of country-specific population assistance programmes and appeared to have greatly facilitated programming. At future sessions of the Governing Council, it might be interesting for the course of a country programming project to be traced from the basic needs assessment to the specific proposal submitted to the Council. That would provide a greater insight into the UNFPA planning process and the complexities of its programming.

62. Canada had a very high regard for UNFPA, and 90 per cent of its support for population activities were provided through multilateral channels, namely UNFPA and the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF). It intended to continue its active role in the work of the Fund.

63. Mr. ABELIN (Observer for Sweden) said that the record of UNFPA's first eleven years was in many ways impressive. He welcomed the fact that the implementation rate had risen to an unprecedented 84 per cent, that allocations had amounted to almost \$40 million more than in any prior year, that there were virtually no unallocated resources and that allocations to priority countries had increased. Some progress had also been made towards limiting support for intercountry programmes to 25 per cent of resources. He approved the Executive Director's idea of inviting the staff of the Fund to give their views on its role in the 1980s.

64. With respect to the organization of work at the Governing Council's annual sessions, he recalled that as a result of the dissatisfaction expressed by some delegations the previous year regarding the discussion of Fund matters, the General Assembly had adopted resolution 34/104, recommending the Governing Council to devote a specific period of time during its sessions to adequate and separate consideration of items relating to UNFPA. It was in the Fund's own interest that the resolution should be implemented literally. A well-structured agenda worked out in

good time would make it possible for delegations to prepare their contributions and benefit from those of others. In Sweden, as in other countries, the era of unquestioned support for population activities was over, and that made it all the more essential for the opportunities for dialogue provided by sessions of the Governing Council to be used to the full.

65. With regard to the documentation provided, the Executive Director had referred to his report (DP/464) as a condensed version of UNFPA's printed report. It was unfortunate that such an important document should have been the victim of the stringent new rules on the length of documents. It was indeed scanty, over-optimistic on financial issues and somewhat confusing or even misleading. It should be improved in future years. The documentation also laid too much emphasis on the resources needed for programme development in the future and not enough on the utilization of the funds provided in previous years. It was disturbing to find no reference in the Executive Director's report or in his introductory statement to the fact that population activities were concerned with people. Too much stress was laid on the viewpoints of Governments and legislators. That too should be corrected in the future.

66. He had been surprised to note from the Executive Director's introductory statement that it had been decided to postpone discussion of certain questions relating to the future of the Fund to the Council's twenty-eighth session, since he had understood that the Council had decided to examine policy issues at the current session. Pending that discussion, he would mention some problems in need of clarification.

67. It seemed to him strange that there was so little discussion of policy issues in the documents before the Council. He had found it almost impossible to distinguish clear-cut principles applying to the list of projects to which allocations had been made in 1979. Funds had been distributed to three types of country - priority, borderline, and "other". The first ten countries in the last category had received slightly more than \$18 million between them, whereas the 14 borderline countries had received \$22 million or slightly less per country. He concluded that either the priorities or their application needed changing or study.

68. The eight work plan categories were also confusing. The special programmes and multi-sectoral activities were ill-defined and the areas of basic data collection and population dynamics, and family planning programmes needed further elaboration, with a definition of the Fund's exclusive field of interest. It might well be that, as a result of the changing outlook on health and the introduction of concepts such as primary health care, UNICEF and WHO might be better suited to deal with the family planning component of population activities. Due attention should be given to that matter in the document which he hoped would be submitted well in advance of next year's session of the Governing Council.

69. The Fund was in the curious position of depending financially and administratively on the Governing Council but in matters of programme and policy on the Economic and Social Council, a situation that might well involve constraints. The priorities given to research and intercountry activities needed to be reviewed.

70. With respect to the special activities mentioned by the Executive Director in his introductory statement, he pointed out that the Colombo Declaration on Population and Development, calling for increased international population assistance, had been issued by a conference of parliamentarians who came from a limited number of countries and did not speak on behalf of their Governments. The status of the Declaration had to be evaluated accordingly.

71. It was not clear to him whether a decision to support the International Conference on Population and the Urban Future, to be held in September 1980, had already been taken or whether the Governing Council was now being requested to take a decision. He also wished to know what the total cost of that Conference would be. In his view, it could not be considered a high priority activity. Would funds at the disposal of UNFPA be used to pay for mayors and city planners from developed countries to attend the Conference? Moreover he wondered why the number of countries expected to have a population exceeding 5 million by the year 2,000 seemed to have risen from 40 to 60 between April and June 1980. He also wished to know what were the grounds for UNFPA support for the International Forum on Active Ageing, what the cost would be, and whether a decision had already been taken on participation. Those three conferences all seemed to come under the heading of intercountry activities, to which, however, it had been decided to allot not more than 25 per cent of resources. He asked for clarification in that respect.

72. He had understood from last year's session of the Governing Council that the Secretariat was to provide guidelines on UNFPA support for work on the spatial distribution of population, a sensitive area that had been little studied. He wondered why a document on the subject had not been submitted.

73. With respect to UNFPA support for research on ageing, he did not think that such problems should be of primary concern to the Fund.

74. He would also welcome information on how the Fund proposed to deal with projects to meet the needs of women and youth.

75. He hoped that some of the issues that he had raised would be analysed in the document on the Fund's future role to be submitted to the Governing Council in 1981.

76. Mr. ASRANI (Observer for India) said that India, as a recipient country, appreciated the respect paid by UNFPA to the sovereign right of each nation to formulate, promote and supplement its own population policies. Document DP/464 made it clear that, in making use of the experience of the developing countries in TCDC, UNFPA had increasingly relied on the expertise, training and research facilities of those countries; that an increasing number of population activities supported by UNFPA were being executed by the developing countries themselves; and that more than two-thirds of UNFPA's assistance to intercountry activities in 1979 had been in support of projects falling within the scope of the Buenos Aires plan of action. He would be happy to provide the representative of Brazil with the information he had requested regarding TCDC.

77. His delegation welcomed the fact that in 1979 the implementation rate had reached 84 per cent and was the highest to date, with actual expenditure being 37.5 per cent higher than in 1978. It was a matter for regret that the rise in

contributions had not matched the substantially increased level of allocations in 1979. His delegation supported the Executive Director's appeal for an increase in contributions of 25 per cent in 1981 and 15 per cent annually for the subsequent years of the work plan.

78. His delegation agreed with those speakers who had emphasized that population activities represented one of the most important elements in development. In view of the sensitive nature of the issue in a number of countries, population activities were well suited to multilateralization through a fund such as UNFPA. He therefore appealed to countries with resources to give priority to increasing their contributions to UNFPA.

79. It was not surprising that the three programme submissions for India, China and Indonesia accounted for 56 per cent of the total new submissions before the Council, since a substantial proportion of the total population of the developing countries was located in those countries.

80. India was a priority country for UNFPA assistance and had a history of successful projects executed in close co-operation with UNFPA. His Government's own input into programmes during the following five years would be \$850 million. The Indian programme took into account the findings and recommendations of the needs assessment mission sponsored by UNFPA in 1978 and comprised a plan of action designed to attack the problem in all its aspects in a comprehensive and balanced manner. It paid attention not only to family planning per se but to related health problems, in particular, the health of mothers and children, as well as to contraception, training of personnel, construction of health centres and strengthening of the national capacity to promote demographic studies and the evaluation of family planning activities.

81. His delegation supported the revised work plan for 1981-1984 as well as the proposal that the Executive Director should be granted increased approval authority for the second and third years of the plan period. His delegation also supported all the proposed country programmes contained in document DP/TPA/11/Add.13 and Corr.1.

82. Mr. SALLAH (Gambia) said that after a successful decade of intensive UNFPA population activities, his delegation believed that the time had come for a close look at the Fund's population activities in Africa in relation to development objectives. The size and quality of a country's population was by far its greatest asset, and UNFPA had a vital role to play in assisting nations to use their human resources to the full for development.

83. His delegation believed that the major donors should continue to provide the resources needed for UNFPA to expand its activities and achieve a higher level of project implementation in the developing countries. The diversity of the Fund's activities was very impressive; in particular his Government had greatly appreciated the Fund's contribution, in the form of the provision of training facilities and funds, to the successful Gambian population census in 1973.

84. The Gambia had a comparatively high infant mortality rate - 217 per 1,000 for the country as a whole, 52 per 1,000 for the capital. Only 55 out of every 100 live-born children in rural areas survived to the age of five. His delegation naturally attached paramount importance to the Fund's maternal and child health programme. The Government was firmly committed to increasing the national survival rate to 80 per cent by 1985. In that connexion, he hoped that the Council would approve the financing of the child health and family planning project for the Gambia.

85. His delegation believed that UNFPA programmes should lay greater stress on the education, training and general orientation of the population of developing countries in order to accelerate national development, sustained economic productivity, and individual and collective self-reliance. Attention should also be given to training skilled and semi-skilled labour for national and regional industry and identifying regional markets in relation to population densities. Moreover, UNFPA should make every effort to ensure that human rights featured prominently in the World Population Plan of Action, and that the people enjoying UNFPA assistance were properly educated in an awareness of their basic entitlements as human beings.

86. His delegation looked forward to a greater degree of rationalization and integration of the programmes of the United Nations executing agencies in orienting and formulating interrelated projects for the entire continent of Africa.

87. Mr. LAURIDSEN (Denmark) said that population policies and family planning were still controversial subjects in many countries. It was accordingly important that, within countries, acceptance of family planning should be voluntary. Access to family planning services must, however, be provided and it was permissible to use incentives for that purpose. Frank dialogue and an analysis of the links between population growth on the one hand, and economic development and the quality of life on the other, were essential.

88. During the past decade there had been a growing awareness of the interrelationship between population and other development policies. Family planning efforts had proved to be far more efficient if they formed part of projects aimed at the general improvement of health and/or if they were linked to efforts to improve the lot of women and to raise educational standards. Poverty and population were closely linked and it was crucial to emphasize that economic development benefiting the poorer sections of the population must be combined with improved education.

89. The need for coherence between the various aspects of development policy was of particular importance in the field of population activities. The close relationship between UNDP and UNFPA must therefore be maintained; close co-operation and co-ordination with other donors, both multilateral and bilateral, was also important. His delegation was surprised that there had been so little reference to the significant programmes of IBRD.

90. An important principle of his Government's development assistance policy was that the countries most in need should benefit most from development co-operation. His delegation therefore welcomed the increased emphasis laid on priority countries and the shift from intercountry activities to country projects. An active population policy was of paramount importance in large and densely populated countries like India, China, Indonesia and Bangladesh; the consistently high population growth rates of Africa also gave cause for concern.

91. His delegation considered that the programmes for the coming years were somewhat over-optimistic, bearing in mind that the administration did not yet have any information concerning significant contributions from non-traditional donors. The question of establishing new posts and reclassifying existing posts should be approached with caution. His delegation also had reservations regarding the distribution of UNFPA resources between different types of activity. It was clearly important to support basic data collection but the relative priorities of basic data collection, family planning programmes, and communication and education were not clear. To take another example, the use of highly sophisticated technology might be justified in certain circumstances, but thorough cost-benefit analyses would first have to be carried out.

92. His delegation supported the comments made by the representative of Canada and the observer for Sweden regarding the International Conference of Parliamentarians on Population and Development.
93. Mr. CABRERA (Mexico) said that his country's relationship with UNFPA dated back to 1973 when Mexico had first adopted a population policy designed to harmonize population growth with development for the purpose of raising living standards. The National Population Council had been established and had defined demographic policies within the context of economic and social planning. In association with UNFPA, programmes had been drawn up in 1973 covering the areas of family planning, maternal and child care, communication, and sex education. Goals established in 1977 had aimed at an annual population growth rate of 2.5 per cent by 1982 and 1 per cent by the end of the century.
94. Migration represented an important element in Mexico's demographic policy. Different regions of the country had different levels of culture as well as of resources and his Government had therefore designed an internal migration policy with a view to establishing a better balance between the human and natural resources of the different regions and thus achieving a better spatial distribution of the population. Goals had been set at the regional as well as the national level and his Government had embarked on a series of appropriate programmes in consultation with regional authorities.
95. In 1979 Mexico had received a high-level UNFPA mission which, in consultation with the Government, had examined basic needs and set priorities in all sectors concerned with the integration of population and development policy. Population censuses had shown a decline in fertility since 1970. Mexico lacked high-level technicians in the integrated fields of population and development and was accordingly considering a training programme which would emphasize the country's needs in human resources. Questions of maternal and child health, communication and the integration of women in development were also receiving the Government's attention as matters of priority.
96. A five-year UNFPA programme for Mexico covering the years 1980 to 1984, if approved, would provide \$16 million in UNFPA aid and would assist the Government to further strengthen and institutionalize its demographic policy. His delegation hoped that the dialogue between Mexico and UNFPA would continue during the crucial 1980s.
97. Mr. BA-ISSA (Democratic Yemen) said that the interrelationship between demographic factors and development had been demonstrated clearly in the work of UNFPA. His delegation welcomed the higher implementation rate. It was also encouraged by the growing number of donors but it was to be hoped that there would be a real increase in the resources available to UNFPA, allowing for inflation and other adverse economic conditions, so that the Fund could continue to make its important contribution towards the goals stressed in the Colombo Declaration on Population and Development. His delegation also hoped that the Governing Council would do everything possible to assist the Executive Director to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the Fund, including adoption of the recommendations on recruitment and post reclassifications.



98. His delegation was concerned by the alarming forecasts, which had indicated that, by the end of the century, there would be a further increase in the numbers of the poor and consequently in human misery. Urgent practical measures were therefore necessary to improve living conditions in the areas which were most in need. UNFPA's role in contributing to the establishment of the new international economic order was therefore important.

99. As a priority country, Democratic Yemen appreciated the assistance it had received from UNFPA, starting with the country's first population census. Following the needs assessment mission in 1979, a programming mission had helped with the preparation of detailed project documents, which covered inter alia population data collection and analysis, maternal and child health, family planning, population education, communication and information. A number of projects had already been launched. UNFPA's role covered a broad range of activities in the development process and his delegation wished to assure the Executive Director of its continued co-operation and support.

100. Mr. KUNIGI (Japan) said that his delegation welcomed the recognition which had been given to UNFPA as a viable entity within the United Nations system and the fact that its status as a subsidiary organ of the General Assembly had been affirmed by General Assembly resolution 34/104, of which his Government had been a sponsor.

101. His delegation had been favourably impressed by the Fund's success over the years in promoting a wider recognition in developing countries of the crucial importance of an integrated approach to population issues as a key component of development policy. With increased operational effectiveness, the Fund would certainly continue to play a central role in the population field in the future. His delegation welcomed the Declaration adopted at the International Conference of Parliamentarians on Population and Development, which contained positive elements meriting serious consideration at the next session of the Governing Council, when his delegation proposed to raise a number of questions regarding the Fund's future.

102. His Government had continued to support the operations of the Fund and, during the current year, would make a contribution of \$23.5 million, representing a 21 per cent increase over its contribution for the previous year.

The meeting rose at 6 p.m.