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SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 718th MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Tuesday, 16 June 1981, at 10 a.m.

President: MR. ABDULAH (Trinidad and Tobago)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

UNITED NATIONS FUND FOR POPULATION ACTIVITIES (continued)

- (i) REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR ON 1980 ACTIVITIES AND THE FUTURE PROGRAMME (DP/527, DP/528, DP/529)
- (ii) THE FUTURE ROLE OF UNFPA (DP/530)
- (iii) LARGE-SCALE PROJECTS AND PROGRAMMES (DP/FPA/12 and Add.1-17)

1. Mr. LATOUR MANCILLA (Cuba) said that the documentation on population activities should be briefer and more concise. Despite the high priority given to that important question by the richest countries and by the developing countries, UNFPA was experiencing not only a resource and fund scarcity but also uncertainty about the future. Some planned and ongoing activities would have to be postponed. In his delegation's view, the bulk of resources should go to the most needy countries. Accordingly, reviewing the priority system periodically seemed appropriate, as long as it was done with a view to increasing, not reducing the assistance provided. For that purpose, the necessary financial resources had to be available. As to UNFPA's flexibility, his delegation believed that it was a necessary instrument which the Executive Director should wield extremely cautiously.

2. His delegation endorsed the targets for the next quinquennium set out in document DP/530, as well as the strategy described in chapter IV of that document. No developing country should be denied the opportunity to benefit from UNFPA, and his delegation accordingly attached special importance to paragraph 49, and was confident that appropriate measures would be taken to prevent any ongoing programme from being paralysed as a result of the reclassification of countries. The future of CELADE was of special concern in that regard, since its programme was of great use to the countries of the Latin American region.

3. Another cause of concern was the question of time-limits. Although it seemed logical that at some point Governments should assume and continue activities under a given project, the status of the project should be analysed and, when the time-limit was applied to a project whose implementation had been lagging behind, a Government should not be penalized for any inefficient and dilatory action by the executing agency.

4. Mr. KOLBY (Norway) said that there had been remarkable achievements in the field of family planning and population for which UNFPA could not take sole credit. The developing countries deserved most of the credit, for they had faced the threat to economic and social development caused by rapid population growth and the health hazards resulting from frequent pregnancies. During the 1970's the great demand for family planning services had been clearly demonstrated. The birth rate had gone down, to an impressive extent in some countries. However, there was no room for complacency. The population of the world would double before it levelled off. Less than 20 per cent of the couples who needed family planning

(Mr. Kolby, Norway)

services had access to such services, and the number of couples needing them was expected to double in the next 20 years.

5. The task ahead was formidable, and the time element was crucial. All development issues were pressing but, as the population continued to grow, it became more difficult to solve other development problems. The need to expand family planning programmes had far outstripped available funds. The Jakarta statement asked countries providing development assistance to increase their support for population programmes from the current level of 2.1 per cent of development assistance to at least 5 per cent. His country would continue to earmark 10 per cent of its total official development assistance for family planning and population programmes.

6. His delegation agreed with the statement in document DP/530 that a major goal for UNFPA was to increase awareness and understanding of population problems and issues. Another world population conference in 1984 would certainly contribute to such an awareness. His delegation also supported the other major goals set forth in the document. Higher priority should be given to the provision of services at the grassroots level. His delegation endorsed the reference to the greater need to build up self-sufficiency in the developing countries, especially in such fields as census-taking and demographic expertise, and welcomed the shift away from ad hoc and short-term projects to more planned efforts to build national institutions.

7. Although his delegation understood the reasons for setting firm indicators for the selection of priority countries, it believed that the choice of countries and projects might become too mechanical. In view of the limited financial resources, he favoured Alternative Three described in the annex to document DP/530, but exception should be made for countries in the Alternative Four group, provided finances were available and the programmes were sound. It was regrettable that allocations for priority countries had declined from 55.62 per cent in 1979 to only 42.2 per cent in 1980. That trend had to be reversed, and for that purpose his delegation recommended that the proposed level of global and intercountry programmes should be reduced. UNFPA must maintain its flexibility and ability to act swiftly. On the other hand, more care should be exercised to ensure that individual projects were sound, viable and had a lasting effect.

8. The document should have discussed more fully projects involving women. Firmer operational criteria had to be developed regarding projects aimed specifically at improving the status of women, and his delegation would welcome a separate policy document on that matter. The question of youth and sex had to be studied in more detail, and there should have been a fuller discussion of co-operation and division of labour between UNFPA and the other United Nations agencies. Particularly with respect to the extent to which UNFPA should support maternal and child health care, a discussion of co-operation between UNFPA and WHO, as well as bilateral donors, might simplify the issue. The documents created the impression that UNFPA operated in undue isolation. After all, family planning and population issues could easily be inserted into other projects, not only in the field of health but also in such areas as education, employment and co-operatives.

(Mr. Kolby, Norway)

9. He commended the UNFPA budget proposal, which reflected a genuine effort to contain administrative costs, but had reservations regarding some of the proposed post reclassifications and organizational changes. There must be a clear structure of authority in UNFPA's top leadership; all its organizational units must report to the Administrator and his deputy. The proposed organizational chart would not make that possible without the creation of a new post of Deputy Executive Director. His delegation could not accept that under the present economic circumstances and requested the Executive Director to revise the organizational chart. He further recommended that an organizational study be undertaken and discussed at the Council's next session.

10. Ms. SUTHERLAND (Canada) agreed with the Swedish and Danish delegations that high priority should be attached to goals emphasizing demand and supply creation with respect to fertility, mortality and morbidity reduction. In attaining those objectives, particular attention should be given to measures that stressed training and service delivery. UNFPA should devote more of its resources to the provision of maternal and child health care and family planning integrated with other components of primary health care, as well as to improvements in logistical systems for delivering such services. Management systems deserved special attention in that connexion. More attention should also be paid to improvements in project design and evaluation. The co-ordinator's role was vital to that process, and all possible back-up support should be provided from headquarters as well as in the field.

11. Activities in the fields of migration and aging should be kept to a minimum. Special programmes for women were an integral part of the five core areas, however, and UNFPA's record with respect to those programmes was good. The largest portion of funds should be allocated to family planning and maternal and child health, including provisions for immunization. Her delegation would be in favour of increasing substantially the share of UNFPA financial resources devoted to that areas, and endorsed the figure of 60 per cent suggested by the representative of Denmark. UNFPA should seek ways and means of improving co-ordination and collaboration with other agencies involved in developing programmes and projects that overlapped with that area - notably UNICEF, the World Bank and WHO, and in that respect she endorsed the statement made by the representative of Norway.

12. More efforts should be made to learn from experience accumulated with respect to basic data collection and population dynamics, so that the real needs and prospects for success of programmes in those areas could be appraised more exactly.

13. With respect to the programming approach, her delegation supported the concept of a priority system for allocating resources, but believed that more information was required on the reasons for the original system's failure. Otherwise, elements which had hampered the application of the old system might be built into the new. It would also be helpful, as the representative of the United Kingdom had suggested, to have a list of priority countries corresponding to each alternative. She agreed with the representatives of Denmark, Sweden and Norway regarding the

(Ms. Sutherland, Canada)

importance of qualitative criteria in the selection of priority countries. There was a danger in basing a priority system solely on relatively arbitrary and crude demographic and economic indicators. The use of additional criteria would ensure the cost-effectiveness of programmes elaborated from basic needs assessments and free scarce resources which could not be absorbed at a particular moment. Her delegation required more information on the five alternatives and could not present endorse any of them.

14. Her delegation believed that the guidelines for regional, interregional and global activities adopted at the twenty-sixth session were not adequate. It could not accept the proposal for a 25 to 30 per cent ceiling without a review of those guidelines, and would like such activities to be frozen at 20 per cent of total programme resources in order to avoid further encroachment on programmes at the country level, which had priority in resource allocation.

15. The current policy whereby a fixed percentage of the allocation for intercountry activities was earmarked for contraception research was not satisfactory. Such research was of higher priority than most of the other projects being funded under that category, and should not be linked to allocations for intercountry activities. In the long term, the entire area of contraception research required a co-ordinated approach by all agencies active in the field: WHO, World Bank, IPPF and private foundations. Accordingly, she wished to draw the Executive Director's attention to the World Bank's proposal to establish a joint board for health research, and ask him to explore with the Bank and other agencies whether such a board could provide guidance and ultimately financial backing for contraception research, as it did for tropical disease research.

16. Mr. BARK (Netherlands) said that in general his delegation endorsed the proposals in document DP/530, especially the increased emphasis on priority countries in the allocation of funds. It accepted the recommendation to update the list of priority countries for UNFPA assistance, partly based on raising the per capita GNP indicator from \$400 to \$500. His delegation approved Alternative Four, and suggested that the indicators be reassessed periodically.

17. It endorsed the objective of promoting the full participation of women in all aspects of population and development. UNFPA would benefit considerably if it worked not only for but through women. He commended the high percentage - 36 per cent - of women forming part of UNFPA's professional staff.

18. UNFPA's activities had proved their worth, but a cautious financial policy was required. In that respect his delegation welcomed the establishment of an operational reserve. It was to be hoped that the projected 12 per cent increase in new resources in 1981-1982 and 15 per cent increase thereafter would materialize, but the Executive Director should not rely fully on traditional donors in order to realize his targets. UNDP's more realistic programme approach could serve as an example in that regard.

(Mr. Bark, Netherlands)

19. It was encouraging that there were 22 new donor countries and that multi-bilateral projects had increased. He drew attention to his country's multi-bilateral contribution of 2 million guilders for Bangladesh and \$450,000 for Nepal.

20. With respect to the division between country programmes and intercountry projects, he wondered whether the Executive Director agreed that the results obtained in 1980 deviated from the 75/25 per cent guideline recommended by the Council and, if he did, whether he could explain the reason for that development. He also wondered how much had been allocated in 1981 for the WHO Expanded Programme on Human Reproduction.

21. The Netherlands generally approved the work done by UNFPA, and hoped it would remain a driving force in the future, for its contribution to the development process was a crucial one.

22. Mr. GOKCE (Turkey) said that the information provided by the World Fertility Survey was of inestimable value for policy-making in developing countries, often being the only reliable data available. The survey carried out in his own country had provided valuable data at a very useful time for its economic and social development planning.

23. However, such a survey was not sufficient in itself; periodic sample surveys of the level of fertility, together with continued technical assistance, were required, as well as a continuing programme of data analysis. The specialized expertise provided by the World Fertility Survey should be preserved, and his delegation strongly supported the proposal to continue assistance to the Survey. In particular, it warmly supported the recommendation made in document DP/FPA/12/Add.16 to extend the project, through an arrangement with the International Statistical Institute, from July 1981 to June 1982.

24. Mr. FARASHUDDIN (Bangladesh) said that the apparent lack of objective criteria for allocating resources between programmes perhaps explained why the Fund's allocation of resources had not always complied with Council decision 80/13. For example, the share of programmable resources allocated to the priority countries had fallen in 1980; but, if the Council's recommendations regarding reductions had been followed, the cut would have been made across the board rather than in just one area.

25. The share of UNFPA resources allocated to intercountry projects had increased in 1980, contrary to the decision taken by the Council at its twenty-sixth session to limit that share to 25 per cent. Whilst that clearly could not be achieved immediately, it would never be brought about by an actual increase at the expense of resources which should go to the priority countries.

26. In order to protect country programmes from a shortfall in resources, programming should be restricted to the level of income which UNFPA was reasonably assured of receiving. The frustrating and complicated practice of funding part of a programme by multi-bilateral arrangements should be restricted to supplementary

(Mr. Farashuddin, Bangladesh)

programmes, which were necessary since the UNFPA country programme could not and should not be expected to cover all the needs of even the priority countries. The failure to obtain the multi-bilateral funding, amounting to half the total resources, required for the second country programme for Bangladesh had placed the population programme in his country in serious jeopardy at the worst possible time.

27. His delegation welcomed the useful discussion of priority criteria in document DP/530, and accepted the Executive Director's recommendation of "alternative four". However, those criteria should be used not only to identify priority countries but also as an objective basis for the allocation of UNFPA programmable resources among the countries concerned. Such criteria should be established for the fourth cycle, and the Executive Director should take guidance from the comprehensive principles followed, on the Council's recommendation, by UNDP.

28. In conclusion, his delegation wished to commend the very high rate of implementation achieved by UNFPA in 1980.

29. Mr. LIPTAU (Federal Republic of Germany) said that UNFPA had achieved remarkable success in many areas in 1980 and his Government wished to reaffirm its untiring support for the Fund as a strong instrument of United Nations policy in the field of population and development. It was pleased, since it had co-sponsored General Assembly resolution 34/104, that UNFPA was currently participating actively in the work of ACC and its subsidiary bodies.

30. A number of delegations had already expressed dissatisfaction with certain decisions taken by UNFPA in 1980, in particular in connexion with the declining percentage of total resources allocated to priority countries. Despite the warnings given by his delegation when the Council had met the previous year, the situation appeared to have worsened. Whilst certain factors, such as fluctuations in the value of currencies in which contributions were made, were beyond the control of the Executive Director, nevertheless a tighter allocation policy for intercountry and global projects could have substantially lessened the downward trend with regard to priority countries.

31. The decrease of 5 per cent over the year in allocations for family planning programmes, forecast in document DP/530 to continue in the 1980s, gave rise to serious concern, and was inconsistent with recent developments, such as the demands expressed at the Conference on Family Planning held in Jakarta. An explanation of the rationale behind that and of possible action to reverse the trend was required.

32. The increased level of intercountry programmes conflicted with the decision taken by the Governing Council at its twenty-sixth session. There was also a contradiction in the report of the Executive Director for 1980 (DP/527), which on page 4 stated that a total of 74 new interregional and global projects had been approved in 1980 and on page 5 claimed that that increase was due primarily to commitments made prior to 1980. The 25 per cent target was unlikely to be reached by the end of 1982, and the Executive Director should explain what steps he intended to take to comply with the Council's decision. In particular, the

(Mr. Liptau, Federal Republic of Germany)

suggestion in DP/530 that the level should be set between approximately 25 and 30 per cent was not convincing; two thirds of the remaining 75 per cent were intended to be reserved for priority countries, but in 1980 allocations to those countries had amounted to only 28 per cent of UNFPA's total allocations.

33. The most difficult problem was the piling-up of commitments for the Fund's resources. UNFPA's predicted failure to implement more than part of the submissions to the current Council within the period 1982-1985 was the result of an over-optimistic forecast of contributions and financial forward-planning. The Council required a comprehensive and detailed breakdown of commitments on an annual basis in order to decide how to ensure the manoeuvrability which the Fund required. An integrated financial planning system, such as the Integrated Systems Improvement Project used by UNDP, would probably yield better results.

34. His delegation appreciated the efforts to clarify the scope of the Fund's mandate in the 1980s, especially in view of the growing tendency to overlapping and duplication within the United Nations system. His delegation firmly supported the decision not to broaden the mandate, together with the view that the three new areas mentioned in paragraphs 51 to 55 of DP/530 would not have a major effect on the distribution of UNFPA allocations within the core programme. Alternative Four (DP/530, para. 46) should be preferred, but further consideration by the Council was required to decide on allocation policies. UNFPA should prepare a report on the subject for the twenty-ninth session of the Council.

35. His delegation proposed that allocations for basic data collection should be reduced and those for family planning programmes, integrated into basic health services, be increased substantially. His Government approved in principle the steady increase in government execution of UNFPA-supported activity. However, direct financing was justified only where the quality of the programme would not suffer owing to a recipient Government's lack of the necessary technical and administrative expertise.

36. His delegation had already expressed serious reservations with regard to the prolonged existence of the World Fertility Survey, which had admittedly yielded some significant results, but at very high cost. Since the evaluation report concluded that it had been successful in meeting its objectives, it should be possible to terminate the activities listed in paragraph 18 of document DP/FPA/12/Add.16 within the next 12 months and certainly within the next two years. His delegation's approval of the recommendation in paragraph 27 was subject to a statement to that effect by the Executive Director.

37. His delegation concurred with the recommendations concerning assistance to Selected Major Inter-country Programmes (DP/FPA/12/Add.17), but with reservations concerning the proposed programme for the United Nations Population Division (paras. 5-13), which appeared rather to be part of the normal tasks of the Population Division and should therefore be financed from the regular United Nations budget and not from voluntary contributions to the operational activities of UNFPA.

38. Mr. BENEDICK (United States of America) congratulated UNFPA on its careful preparation of the background documentation, particularly as regards its extensive consultations with Governments over the past year. The results of United States co-operation with UNFPA had been very positive and justified continued confidence in the Fund.

39. The statement of the future goals of UNFPA contained in document DP/530 was very useful, but some of those goals were more deserving of priority than others. Among the central priorities should be that of attaining desired family size and spacing births, and redoubled effort to promote contraceptive development. The Fund's report to the next session of the Council on its support for the WHO special programme on research into human reproduction should be part of a comprehensive review of the needs and possibilities of research into contraception, including natural family planning methods. His delegation supported UNFPA's proposals on family planning assistance and on the limitation of assistance to health programmes, to ensure that they were consistent with the primary aims of family planning. It also approved support for local salaries, equipment and construction and would urge greater co-ordination with such bodies as the multilateral development banks. As to contraceptive procurement, his delegation agreed with the representative of Canada that assistance must be continued until the domestic supply system was well established; forward planning was necessary to avoid serious shortfalls in supplies.

40. His delegation agreed that intercountry programme allocations should be limited to a maximum of 25 per cent of total resources but, unlike Federal Republic of Germany, believed that the World Fertility Survey had a valuable part to play and should receive continued support.

41. The bulk of UNFPA's resources was allocated to executing agencies and one of the major questions was therefore that of the relationship between direct funding through non-governmental organizations and the role played by the specialized agencies. It might be a good idea for UNFPA to convene a technical meeting to ensure high-quality proposals from executing agencies which would comply with the Council's guidelines as to the future role of UNFPA, especially as his Government's review had revealed cases where agencies were using UNFPA support to carry out their own mandate, often in conflict with the guidelines laid down by the Council. Closer examination of that relationship was therefore necessary, and he would be happy to take part in a working group on the question. His delegation was in favour of expanding the use by UNFPA of non-governmental and voluntary organizations, especially when Governments were reluctant to promote publicly-sponsored projects.

42. UNFPA had made a very welcome effort to reduce or stabilize staffing needs, but the effective implementation of the priorities set for the 1980s might in fact require an increase in staff and his delegation would encourage the Fund to examine the question, especially from the point of view of operating levels, and to report on the implications for any new guidelines.

(Mr. Benedick, United States)

43. His delegation shared the confusion reflected in the comments of a number of delegations, concerning the priority country system, since the definitions involved were not clear. Any list of criteria should include a country's absorptive capacity, its Government's level of commitment, and its population in terms of absolute numbers rather than simply rate of increase. It would be unfair to criticize UNFPA for its failure to set a fixed target for priority countries while the concept itself remained unclear. A set of ground rules was necessary, but it should be flexible; rather than an arbitrary list of criteria, what was needed was an assessment of which countries needed resources most and could use them most effectively.

44. In connexion with the problem of over-programming, and the new projects submitted for approval, his delegation would be reluctant to discard outright new projects, many of which contained useful components. It might be useful to set up an informal group to consider the problem; what was needed was a technique by means of which the new projects proposed could be collated with the backlog of outstanding projects, so that the Fund could reappraise them all and establish a reduced programme, for approval at next year's Council meeting.

45. Mr. FILIMONOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that demography played an important role in the policies of most Asian, African and Latin American countries. He could not agree with those delegations which seemed to wish to limit the Fund's activities. On the contrary, he felt that population control was an important factor in solving the over-all social and economic problems of the developing countries.

46. He drew the attention of the Council to the courses on demography held in the Soviet Union to train specialists from developing countries. Those courses, whose value was widely recognized, were financed by rouble contributions from the USSR, so proving that such contributions could indeed be used. Indeed, the Soviet Union planned to increase its contributions over the coming years and he hoped that the Fund would be able to use those extra contributions to finance the courses on demography. Soviet organizations for their part would spare no effort to provide specialists from developing countries with comprehensive training in the subject.

47. Mr. LEWIN (France) said that the fact that his delegation was speaking for the first time on the activities of UNFPA was a mark of the French Government's intent to co-operate more actively with the Fund. He pointed out that the basis for that co-operation had been laid some months previously, with the invitation extended to the President of the Council to visit France in order to discuss the organization of certain UNFPA activities in France and other possibilities.

48. The growth in contributions to UNFPA since its inception 11 years previously reflected the confidence of the international community in the Fund and the general interest in population problems. The figures alone were not sufficient to reflect the importance of the Fund's contribution, which was to make developing countries

(Mr. Lewin, France)

aware of the importance of population in the development process. That growing interest could be seen in the large number of requests for assistance from UNFPA in the course of 1980. He noted that even the more developed of the developing countries had submitted such requests to the Fund.

49. Turning to the report of the Executive Director for 1980 (document DP/527), he said that his delegation was disappointed that the Fund had not met its targets for aid to the priority countries. It was similarly regrettable that the division of resources between country and intercountry activities did not comply with the apportionment decided by the Council.

50. While supporting the budget estimate for UNFPA administrative services for 1982, his delegation hoped that attention would be paid to the comments made by ACABQ in document DP/532. His delegation also regretted that, for 1981, it was necessary to authorize additional appropriations which amounted to more than 15 per cent of the budget already adopted for that year.

51. Data collection should remain one of the programme's basic activities, as it was the foundation of any demographic policy. His country, which assisted many other countries in that field, would strive to develop its co-operation with UNFPA.

52. The Fund's role had to be examined in the light of the population problems which the world would face in the coming decades. Document DP/530 generally reflected the concerns of his delegation. The eight goals set forth in that document appeared to correspond with what developing countries had the right to expect from UNFPA. He stressed the importance of co-operation with other agencies in the United Nations system. For example, he considered that it was the task of WHO to take the necessary steps to reduce infant mortality, the sixth goal set forth in DP/530. He agreed fully with the Executive Director that those goals should not become rigid directives, since it was for the developing countries themselves to define their policies and priorities.

53. The concept of priority countries was essential when it came to allocating resources. His delegation had studied the proposals of the Executive Director regarding the need to revise the current list of such countries. He felt that there should be no increase in the number of such countries if UNFPA was to retain a measure of selectivity in allocating its resources.

54. He stressed the importance of strengthening programme evaluation activities in the years to come. The representative of Canada had highlighted their current short-comings and he hoped that the Executive Director would take his comments into account.

55. Finally, his delegation appreciated the opportunity which the Council had to consider the future of UNFPA in the 1980s, especially as that decade would be marked by the world population conference envisaged for 1984. He had high hopes of that conference and was confident that the Executive Director would prepare for it efficiently.

56. Mr. SALAS (Executive Director, UNFPA) announced that, in response to comments made by some delegations concerning the role of executing agencies and UNFPA's relationship with them and the guidelines on activities for women, he would recirculate the information notes on those two subjects for the benefit of members of the Council.

57. Mr. CHIKELU (Observer for Nigeria) stressed the timely nature of the comprehensive population programme of assistance to Nigeria by UNFPA, for which \$75 million would be provided by the Government of Nigeria. The areas of activity included demographic data collection and analysis, population research and training, population policy formulation, integrated maternal and child health and family planning, and population information, education and communication. His country fully supported the programme, which was an integral part of the national development plan, and would ensure that it was effectively implemented. The programme would provide the necessary demographic data to enable planners in his country to integrate a comprehensive and detailed population policy into their development plan. The greater attention given to population questions in Nigeria was reflected in the creation of a National Population Commission, which was represented at the current session of the Council.

58. The size of Nigeria and the development challenges which it faced required the deployment of large amounts of financial and other resources in various sectors and activities, including population. Domestic resources had increasingly been found to be inadequate to meet those challenges. Therefore, he felt that the provision of only \$17.3 million by UNFPA for Nigeria was rather small. A substantial increase in that figure, when the resource situation improved, would help his Government in its efforts to improve the level of living of millions of Nigerians and would strengthen the growing co-operation between UNFPA and Nigeria.

59. Population policy had various aspects, which should be tackled in a co-ordinated manner. While not disputing the importance of family planning or fertility reduction, he said that population dynamics also affected a wide range of socio-economic issues, that required the generation and dissemination of large amounts of statistical data and other relevant information. It was important to guard against undue concentration of limited resources in a single area, at the expense of other important aspects of population policy. What was required was a judicious allocation of UNFPA resources so that no important activity was neglected.

60. His delegation had taken note of the importance of population needs assessment missions which UNFPA had sent to some countries. Those missions should be continued, as they represented a reliable way of ensuring that all aspects of population questions were carefully examined jointly by UNFPA and national officials before a programme was finalized.

61. His delegation fully endorsed the proposal to hold a world population conference in 1984.

(Mr. Chikelu, Observer, Nigeria)

62. With regard to the criteria to be used in determining priority countries, he considered that Alternative Four recommended by the Executive Director should be adopted. It would enable some countries which had only recently begun to implement population policies and to use UNFPA resources to make a good start.

63. In view of the shortage of resources with confronted UNFPA, all countries should give greater support to the Fund. It might be necessary for the Executive Director to make a direct appeal to individual countries. Because of the shortage, UNFPA should be given greater flexibility to adjust programmes in the light of resources available.

64. The short-fall in the resources available to UNFPA also strengthened the case for UNFPA to concentrate on national programmes and gradually reduce intercountry commitments. For the same reason, the Fund should limit the length of time during which it supported a particular project before it was taken over by the country concerned. That would be quite consistent with the declared policy of self-reliance on the part of many developing countries.

65. Mr. AMOKO (Uganda) paid a glowing tribute to UNFPA for its commendable assistance to the developing countries in their efforts to get involved in population activities. Uganda noted with appreciation UNFPA's strategy for the 1980s. While not necessarily agreeing with the content of paragraph 2 of document DP/530, his delegation urged the developed countries to render increased assistance so as to enable UNFPA to achieve its targets for the decade. Uganda, for its part, would continue to co-operate fully with UNFPA.

66. Uganda was keen to develop a coherent population policy and sought UNFPA assistance in implementing it. In the past decade, Uganda had had a severe problem of under-employment and unemployment. It was, however, well endowed with natural resources. While population density was far from being critical in relation to the physical resources available, the lack of data made it difficult to determine the maximum size of the population and the trend of population growth. The Government was seeking to lower the population growth rate from 3 to 2.6 per cent per annum and to improve the quality of life. Keeping in view the social and cultural background of the people, it intended to pursue a national population policy designed to regulate fertility and reduce the morbidity and mortality rates. The integration of population education into all levels of education would be assigned high priority. The Government felt that it could effectively check population growth by increasing public awareness and by ensuring that sufficient attention was paid to the delivery of basic social services to the people. The Government intended to strengthen family planning systems and fully integrate them into the national health programmes. It proposed to strengthen the capacity of the national university to train more population experts, and might, in the long run, establish an institute for population and the environment.

67. His delegation agreed with UNFPA that special attention should be paid to strengthening the technical capability of planners and policy-makers in developing countries so that they eventually attained self-reliance. It also endorsed the

(Mr. Amoko, Uganda)

priority given by UNFPA to the development of data systems to collect reliable population data and the development of national capability to conduct research and training programmes in population to ensure that Governments would arrive at informed decisions with regard to population issues.

68. His delegation was delighted to note UNFPA's recognition that the acquisition of equipment and supplies for the promotion of population activities by the developing countries made a heavy demand on foreign exchange. Uganda would co-operate with UNFPA in its endeavours to help the developing countries to acquire the capability to produce contraceptives. That would help to curb the tendency to use the developing countries as dumping-grounds for contraceptives that had been found harmful and rejected elsewhere. The Governments would exercise closer scrutiny of locally produced contraceptives.

69. Uganda fully supported the recommendations contained in document DP/530 and would strive to strengthen its capability with regard to population statistics and surveys. It would also put great emphasis on the training of middle-level cadres. With respect to the alternatives proposed in figure 1 of the annex to document DP/530, his delegation was inclined to support Alternative Five, or failing general support for that alternative, Alternative Four.

70. Uganda attached prime importance to all human beings, the aged and the newly-born alike. It rejected the cynical view that the root-cause of poverty in the developing countries was the continual increase in the birth rate. The rate of population growth must be perceived within the context of the global imbalances and disparities in the economic situation. Until all social and economic injustices were eliminated, the current population problems would continue to constitute a menace.

71. Mr. BALASUBRAMANIAM (Sri Lanka) said that in 1980 there had been as many as 23 first-time donors to UNFPA. The Executive Director was to be commended on his initiative in bringing the total number of donors to 97, achieving an implementation rate for 1980 of over 90 per cent and keeping administrative costs consistently low. Sri Lanka was particularly pleased to note the admission of UNFPA to membership in the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination, which was a recognition of UNFPA's growing importance.

72. The imbalance between resources and demand had created programming problems for UNFPA. His delegation endorsed the Executive Director's proposal that UNFPA should be given the necessary authority to exercise flexibility in order to ensure fair treatment for all recipient countries. With regard to the future role of UNFPA, his delegation commended the proposed new directions, which would adequately take into account the changes in population issues and trends. It welcomed the proposal that UNFPA should concentrate on a few goals rather than dissipate its energies on a wider area.

73. Various suggestions had been made regarding the incorporation of different qualitative criteria in the determination of priority status. In the selection of countries to be included in the priority list, special consideration should be

(Mr. Balasubramaniam, Sri Lanka)

given to such factors as countries' demonstrated political commitment to the establishment of population policies, their absorptive capacity and their own contribution to population programmes. Special consideration should also be given to developing countries which had invested in programmes that had brought about significant reductions in the fertility rate. It was important that the international community should recognize that achievement and that UNFPA should provide greater assistance in such cases.

74. Sri Lanka was pleased to note that several delegations had spoken in favour of the convening of a world population conference in 1984. Such a conference would serve a useful purpose in reviewing the implementation of the World Population Plan of Action and in deciding on action to make effective the integration of population and development policies.

75. With regard to the administrative budget of UNFPA, his delegation commended the proposal contained in document DP/531 concerning the reclassification of some posts in the Fund. It also commended the Executive Director's recommendation that the programme for Sri Lanka for the period 1982 to 1985 should be adopted by the Governing Council.

76. Mr. MIWA (Japan) said that his Government attached great importance to international efforts to solve the problems posed by rapid population growth. That position was reflected in its bilateral and multilateral development co-operation activities. It was intensifying its efforts to extend various forms of technical co-operation to several Asian countries which had designated a comprehensive population policy as a national priority. The sum of \$29.5 million had recently been authorized as Japan's contribution to UNFPA for the fiscal year 1981. That amount, representing a 25.5 per cent increase over the contribution for 1980, was very clear evidence of Japan's growing concern with the population issue.

77. Document DP/529 did not provide any detailed explanation regarding the income projections for the period 1981 to 1985. Given the current world economic situation, in particular the budgetary constraints in major donor countries, there was little room for optimism with regard to UNFPA's future income. The UNFPA secretariat should indicate how it saw the financial future and how it justified the prediction of a 15 per cent increase in income between 1982 and 1985.

78. While his delegation appreciated the downward revision of the work plan, it felt that the plan should be adjusted further in accordance with the proper estimate of income. The secretariat should also provide financial information relating to UNFPA for the past 10 years or so. Inasmuch as almost 60 per cent of the world's population was concentrated in the Asia and Pacific region, Japan fully endorsed the secretariat's proposal to allocate to that region during the period 1982 to 1985 a greater share than in 1980.

79. UNFPA's implementation rate in 1980 had been 92 per cent, a substantial improvement over the 1979 performance. His delegation highly appreciated that improvement and felt that an analysis of the reasons behind it would help UNFPA to

(Mr. Miwa, Japan)

maintain a high implementation rate and achieve the 94 per cent target during the period 1981 to 1985. The resources allocated for the priority countries had decreased from 55.6 to 42.2 per cent. Whatever the reason for that decrease, his delegation felt that the situation should be watched closely.

80. It was stated in document DP/530 that greater attention would be paid to the absorptive capacity of recipient countries in the future. His delegation fully endorsed the secretariat's efforts to enhance the effectiveness in the use of resources and the self-reliance of the recipient countries. It also supported the proposal that the emphasis in programme areas should be shifted from the collection to the utilization of data. Care should be taken not to affect adversely the country programmes of the priority countries. The allocation to the intercounty activities should therefore be maintained at the 25 per cent level.

81. A revision of the criteria for the selection of priority countries was proposed in document DP/530. His delegation considered that, generally speaking, special treatment in favour of the priority and border-line countries was still justified. The secretariat should indicate which countries were to be included in or excluded from the list of priority or border-line countries. Those countries to be excluded should receive special treatment for some time, lest they should suffer a sudden reduction in the support received from UNFPA. Border-line countries should receive more attention than before. His delegation endorsed the secretariat's proposal for a revision after five years.

82. As to the large-scale projects and programmes, his delegation supported the projects to be carried out in Asia, such as the proposed assistance projects for Bhutan, Pakistan and Sri Lanka.

83. The population problem was distinct from the other development problems; it was related in a very complicated manner to the economic situation, social welfare, the social structure and the cultural tradition of the developing countries; a comprehensive approach covering all those areas was therefore required in the search for a solution. The population problem could be genuinely solved only by individuals who were in a position to make real decisions. The Government of every developing country which had a serious population problem had a primary role to play in that process; external assistance was no substitute for the efforts of the Government itself. Most of the successes had been achieved in countries where the Governments involved had been actively and persistently engaged in the issue.

The meeting rose at 12.55 p.m.