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Twenty-eighth session

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 719th MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,  
on Tuesday, 16 June 1981, at 3 p.m.

President: Mr. ABDULAH (Trinidad and Tobago)

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

OTHER FUNDS AND PROGRAMMES (continued)

(a) UNITED NATIONS FUND FOR POPULATION ACTIVITIES (continued)

- (i) REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR ON 1980 ACTIVITIES AND THE FUTURE PROGRAMME (continued) (DP/527, DP/528 and DP/529)
- (ii) THE FUTURE ROLE OF UNFPA (continued) (DP/530)
- (iii) LARGE-SCALE PROJECTS AND PROGRAMMES (continued) (DP/FPA/12 and Add.1-17)
- (iv) OPERATIONAL RESERVE (DP/534)

1. Mr. GORITZA (Romania) said that his delegation had been extremely gratified to learn from the introductory statement by the Executive Director of UNFPA and from the various UNFPA documents that, despite its limited resources, UNFPA had continued in 1980 to make an active contribution to the implementation of the 1974 Bucharest World Population Plan of Action. The volume and implementation rate of UNFPA programmes were highly satisfactory, as was the fact that almost 40 per cent of UNFPA's professional staff were women, one of the highest percentages in the United Nations system.
2. In 1980, UNFPA had continued to give due attention not only to sectoral, regional and country programmes and projects but also to interregional activities. Such activities included the programme carried out by the United Nations-Romania Demographic Centre, which was financed jointly by the Romanian Government and the Fund and in 1980 had continued to implement training and research programmes in the field of population and socio-economic development. The Centre showed how one developing country could assist other developing countries from other regions in the field of population and socio-economic development. Since its inception in 1974, the Centre had trained approximately 300 fellows from 40 developing countries, issued 25 surveys and publications to 300 institutions, mostly from developing countries, and provided technical assistance to several countries. In that time, the Romanian Government had contributed the equivalent of over \$10 million to the Centre. At its most recent session, the Governing Council of the Centre had at the proposal of the representative of the Under-Secretary-General for Technical Co-operation for Development, decided to recommend to both the United Nations and the Romanian Government that steps should be taken to extend their current bilateral agreement.
3. The UNFPA Work Plan for 1982-1985 described in document DP/529 appeared to be well balanced. Since the Fund's budget estimates had been reduced to the minimum level of \$56 million, he hoped that the Governing Council would approve the Work Plan in its latest revised form. His delegation endorsed the Executive Director's recommendations as contained in section IV of the document. The United Nations-Romania Demographic Centre would be able to participate in the

(Mr. Goritza, Romania)

implementation of the interregional population activities envisaged under the Plan. His delegation also endorsed the Executive Director's proposals contained in other UNFPA documents and all his recommendations with regard to the Fund's assistance to individual countries.

4. Romania had again been a pledging country in 1980 and his Government would continue to contribute to the Fund in order to help implement its programmes.
5. Mr. SALAS (Executive Director, United Nations Fund for Population Activities) said that, in response to requests by several delegations, he wished to propose that an open-ended working group should be established to consider the following items and report thereon to the plenary: resource projections and commitments; guidelines for reassessing UNFPA's over-all programme, including the distribution between intercountry and country projects and priority and non-priority programmes; UNFPA's future mandate, including qualitative criteria and substantive areas and their implications; and proposals for submission to the twenty-ninth session of the Governing Council.
6. Mr. WORKY (Observer for Ethiopia) said that UNDP was the world's main multilateral co-operation organization and had achieved unparalleled success. Since UNDP was the main source of technical assistance to developing countries, the international community must ensure the Programme's further growth so that it could sustain the development efforts of developing countries.
7. His delegation shared the concern expressed about the uncertain financial situation of the third UNDP programming cycle. It would be tragic if that cycle failed to be implemented because major donors had reduced their contributions. Despite its own colossal economic problems, his country had regularly increased its contribution to the Programme and it therefore appealed to all countries, particularly the industrialized countries, to ensure that the third cycle received the expected resources.
8. On the question of population activities, his delegation was gratified to learn that countries were now sufficiently aware of the gravity of the population problem, as evidenced by the fact that resources for population activities now fell far short of the demand for such activities. The interest in population activities should be encouraged and he therefore appealed to the international community to give UNFPA unreserved support and expressed the hope that the Governing Council would approve the Fund's administrative budget and country projects.
9. The population problem was so vast and complex that it would be unrealistic to expect one institution to solve it completely. UNFPA should therefore order its priorities, and his delegation endorsed the goals which UNFPA had set itself for the 1980s. The eight goals outlined in document DP/530 were particularly adapted to the needs of disadvantaged population groups, especially those in the poorest countries, for whom the international community had a special responsibility.
10. His delegation commended the strategy adopted by UNFPA in identifying those developing countries which required special attention in the allocation of its

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(Mr. Worky, Observer, Ethiopia)

resources; most of the countries concerned were in Africa. Since the economic plight of those countries could be attributed in part to rapid population growth, it could be alleviated through population control. His delegation therefore endorsed the Executive Director's recommendation that alternative four in the annex to document DP/530 should be adopted.

11. Ethiopia was the third most populous country in Africa and clearly a priority country for UNFPA assistance. The Ethiopian Government had pledged the equivalent of \$73 million for population activities over the coming five years, almost five times the amount of assistance requested from UNFPA, reflecting its commitment to population activities. Its population programme was based on the findings of the needs assessment mission that had visited Ethiopia in January 1981 and involved a variety of population projects.

12. The Ethiopian Government supported and encouraged all family planning activities and the distribution of contraceptives, and also encouraged training in family planning in connexion with the operation of government and private health clinics. As a least developed country which had fallen victim to a variety of disasters, however, it could not achieve its population objectives unaided and clearly required UNFPA assistance. It therefore hoped that the Governing Council would approve unanimously the projects submitted by the Fund on its behalf.

13. Mr. ASRANI (India) commended UNFPA on the greatly improved quality of the documentation which it had submitted to the Council.

14. His Government had long attached the highest importance to the problem of population growth, as reflected in its over-all development planning and most recently in the sixth five-year plan which allocated \$1.25 billion to family planning. However, as the Prime Minister of India had stated to the thirty-fourth World Health Assembly, although India was among the very few developing countries where food grain production had increased at a greater rate than population, it was becoming increasingly difficult to meet the demand for consumer and other goods and housing, given the rate of population growth. India had been one of the first countries to incorporate family planning into official government policy, yet the Government was now facing an alarming population increase which could be attributed only in part to greater longevity. Improved research into contraception was also needed, for until a safe, and preferably oral, drug which both men and women could take was developed, no amount of government commitment or political determination would suffice to solve the population problem.

15. His delegation was gratified to learn that the major contributors to UNFPA shared India's concern about population problems, but it was therefore all the more baffling that a fund like UNFPA should be allowed to go without adequate resources. The Fund's approval authority for 1981 had been reduced and actual income had still fallen short of the revised approval authority. India was only one of the countries whose programmes would be affected by the rephrasing necessitated by that lack of funds.

(Mr. Asrani, India)

16. Some delegations had expressed the view that the figures in the revised Work Plan, which were based on an increase in income of 12 per cent in 1982 and 15 per cent in subsequent years, were optimistic. With an inflation rate of 12.5 per cent per annum, however, his delegation failed to see how such figures could be regarded as optimistic and instead considered that more rather than less must be done if existing programmes were to be continued and new projects undertaken.
17. With regard to the future role of UNFPA, document DP/530 had generated many valuable comments reflecting delegations' concern to focus attention and resources on the most important goals, namely reducing fertility and infant and maternal mortality, expanding family planning services and developing new contraceptives for men and women. His delegation shared that concern and agreed that, while the goals mentioned in document DP/530 were all desirable, priorities might be established among them.
18. His delegation was aware of the difficulty of arriving at objective criteria for selecting priority countries. While alternative four in the annex to document DP/530 seemed the most practical, it would also be necessary to keep in view certain additional criteria such as absorptive capacity, proven commitments and established population programmes. His delegation agreed that a review of the priority country list and criteria should be undertaken after five years, but believed that such a review should not lead to a sudden withdrawal of support and that commitments to major country programmes should be fulfilled. His delegation also believed that, in view of the Fund's current lack of resources, it would be preferable to emphasize the core programmes rather than special programmes. Priorities among core programmes should also be governed by the perceptions of recipient countries.
19. The Executive Director had suggested that support for local cost components should have low priority as it might hamper the full integration of population programmes into national development plans. If certain other components such as training facilities and manufacturing and packaging facilities for contraceptive supplies were to be emphasized, however, those areas might also include local cost components. Flexibility must therefore be maintained, especially in the case of low-income countries.
20. He again urged major contributors to match their support for UNFPA with increased contributions so that the various UNFPA programmes already under way would not be disrupted.
21. Mr. AKIBO-BETTS (Sierra Leone) observed that, in the years since UNFPA's establishment, the need to achieve the Fund's objectives had become increasingly obvious. The world population had risen by almost 1.5 billion over the past 25 years, even though fertility levels had declined in the 1970s, particularly in the developing countries. It was forecast that the world population would increase by a further 1.5 billion by the year 2000, with nearly 90 per cent of that increase occurring in the developing countries, particularly Africa and Asia, where family

(Mr. Akibo-Betts, Sierra Leone)

planning had as yet made little headway. The Executive Director's report had indicated that most developing countries would register an annual population growth of 2 or even 3 per cent in the 1980s and that their share of the total world population would have increased from 74 to 80 per cent by the year 2000, with the main increases being registered in the poorest countries which were least equipped to deal with the problem.

22. While his delegation welcomed the growing awareness in developing countries of the seriousness of the population problem it was deeply disappointed at the critical financial situation of UNFPA. If the Fund was to play a leading role in the United Nations in promoting population programmes, it must have adequate financial resources.

23. Document DP/530 provided a very useful basis for discussion. His delegation agreed fully with the view expressed in paragraph 6 that there was a need for increased financial and political commitments in order to deal with population problems, as recommended by the report of the Brandt Commission, the World Bank's 1980 World Development Report and the International Conference of Parliamentarians on Population and Development, which had called for an annual target of \$1 billion in international population assistance to be achieved by 1984.

24. With regard to the goals which UNFPA had set itself for the 1980s, his delegation approved the recommendation (DP/530, para. 5) that the first major goal should be to increase awareness and understanding of population problems and strengthen the commitment of developing and developed countries to deal with them. It welcomed the progress made in that area but believed that, in order to implement population policies successfully, such policies must reflect the priorities of the countries concerned. The African countries had seen the need to integrate family planning into their national development plans, in accordance with the Bucharest and Lagos Plans of Action. They were also aware of the need to increase their self-reliance in order to deal with their own population problems. For the time being, however, assistance from United Nations agencies and non-governmental organizations remained essential. Research activities and the training of local staff, including women, would be required for future family planning programmes but, at the current stage, developing countries did not have sufficient experience to dispense with outside technical and financial assistance for implementing core programmes of UNFPA assistance.

25. His delegation could not go along with the Executive Director's proposal that financial assistance for the purchase of census equipment should be curtailed. Since in most developing countries such equipment was obsolete and produced inaccurate census data, it must be replaced. If UNFPA were to abandon certain projects at the current juncture, the results could prove devastating, particularly for developing countries such as his own.

26. With regard to document DP/534 on the operational reserve, his delegation agreed in principle to the establishment of such a reserve in order to guarantee UNFPA's financial liquidity and the integrity of its programmes and to offset its uneven cash flow. At a time when future commitments far exceeded available

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(Mr. Akibo-Betts, Sierra Leone)

resources, however, the recommendation that 25 per cent of annual pledges should be earmarked for the operational reserve by the end of the next four-year Work Plan seemed excessive and would be feasible only if donor countries, in particular the 13 major donors, pledged generous future contributions. Only when UNFPA was placed on a sound financial footing, by means of increased contributions and commitments, should the operational reserve be determined at the level of anticipated annual pledges. His delegation was not opposed to the operational reserve, but it believed that the Governing Council should determine the percentage of annual pledges to be earmarked for the reserve until such time as the Fund's financial situation improved. It therefore urged donor countries to increase their contributions to the Fund and to the other United Nations agencies involved in executing population programmes.

27. Mr. RANIGA (Fiji) said that recent projections indicating that the world's population might stabilize by the year 2110 were a credit to UNFPA and the Governments of countries in which population programmes were being implemented. However, there was little room for complacency. With South Asia and Africa accounting for 60 per cent of the global population in 2110, developing countries would have crippling burdens to bear, particularly in terms of food production, and the consequences of delaying a decrease in fertility would be tragic.

28. In 1980, his country had made its first donation to the Fund as a token of the importance it attached to population activities. It was concerned at the meagre financial resources at UNFPA's disposal, and requested all Governments to contribute or increase their contributions to population activities, so that resource constraints would not impede the implementation of programmes and projects in developing countries.

29. His Government, believing that overpopulation or underdevelopment was a function of the use made of available resources and the number of people in the area concerned, had integrated population policy into its social and economic programmes. For real economic growth to take place, economic output must not simply be consumed by population growth. In recent years, the country had conducted family planning and other population activities very successfully on a voluntary basis, and limiting population growth to 2 per cent per annum was general policy.

30. After the recent UNFPA mission to Fiji to assess the country's needs, he was optimistic that the Fund could assist his country in the formulation of projects going beyond those it had supported in the past. It was to be hoped that the greater selectivity in assistance forecast in document DP/530 would not mean that countries would be given priority on the basis of their population size alone. High priority should be given to strengthening managerial capability for population programmes, and continued emphasis on the expansion of family planning services was required. His delegation concurred with the views expressed in the report regarding research into contraceptive technology. At the country level, the services of resident co-ordinators should be more fully utilized than at present.

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(Mr. Raniga, Fiji)

31. His delegation was in favour of the proposal to convene a second world population conference in 1984, with a view to furthering the Plan of Action adopted at the Bucharest Conference.
32. Mr. ERAPOHJA (Observer for Finland) said that UNFPA had been very successful in promoting awareness of the social, economic and environmental implications of national and international population problems, in addition to creating effective administrative machinery through its global field network. It was regrettable, however, that only 42.2 per cent of the total programme in 1980 had been allocated to the priority countries: the Fund should do its utmost to correct the situation and adhere to the agreed policy of concentrating on priority countries.
33. The core programme, as described in document DP/530, left his delegation wondering whether the Fund was trying to do too many things in too many areas. His delegation believed in selectivity and concentration rather than in broadening and diversifying the scope of UNFPA activities, and in that connexion strongly supported the view that the Fund's relationship to other United Nations agencies should be thoroughly clarified. His delegation also had some misgivings over the radical enlargement of the group of priority countries proposed by the Executive Director, even though the statistical data presented in support of the proposal seemed quite objective. The existing system provided a good basis for selection, being based on fixed and measurable indicators; his delegation would suggest that all necessary efforts be made to strengthen the absorptive capacity of the existing priority countries.
34. The population centres had fulfilled their tasks excellently, but some seemed to have adopted too sophisticated an approach, thus becoming somewhat isolated. His delegation would encourage increasing support for existing national statistical and demographic institutions and the establishment of new institutions, to promote recipient countries' self-reliance in assessing their needs and formulating their national population policies.
35. The Fund's record in integrating women into all levels of the development process was highly commendable; his delegation found the proposed policy guidelines fully acceptable. In the case of other, non-traditional activities in areas such as population distribution, aging, and migration, it would favour a very cautious approach. It also felt that there were other means of contributing to the implementation of the World Population Plan of Action than by organizing a big conference: consideration should be given to ideas such as holding a special session of the Economic and Social Council, or a special day during the General Assembly devoted to population questions. In any event, the role of UNFPA in the financing of any such activities should be clarified. In the light of the budgetary constraints currently facing the Fund, greater caution was called for in planning future activities and commitments.
36. Mr. BLAIN (Gambia) said that UNFPA's activities aimed at promoting awareness of population trends had been as valuable as its rate of programme delivery had been impressive, while its continuing efforts to diversify the sources of its



(Mr. Blain, Gambia)

financial support were equally praiseworthy. Developing countries were disturbed, however, by the fact that the strong moral support given to the Fund was hardly matched by the level of financial contributions, which continued to lag far behind targets. As a result, the Fund was being compelled to reschedule and postpone the implementation of its country programmes and projects, and that would inevitably have an adverse effect on the population sector of developing countries' national development plans. He hoped that the future voluntary contributions of the United States to the Fund would clearly reflect that country's renewed interest in population activities and that, accordingly, there would be an expansion and intensification of UNFPA activities in Africa, where the highest number of priority countries were situated.

37. His Government looked forward to the successful execution of the UNFPA maternal and child health project in the Gambia. The objective of reducing infant mortality in the least developed countries to 120 per thousand by the end of the current decade could be realized only through comprehensive maternal and child health care in the rural areas of those countries. Additionally, his delegation believed that the Fund had a significant role to play in the International Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation Decade. Family planning programmes could not be treated in isolation from the attendant socio-cultural factors related to maternal and child health. He could not, therefore, support the Swedish proposal to devote 75 per cent of the Fund's resources to family planning activities, believing that the Fund should seriously consider devoting more attention to promoting women's participation in all aspects of development programmes, to population redistribution and migration in relation to rural development, to population policy formulation and basic data collection, and to mass education and human rights. As far as women's participation in development was concerned, his delegation fully endorsed the views and proposals contained in document DP/530, paragraphs 21 and 22. He also took the opportunity to solicit the Council's support for the UNFPA comprehensive population programme in the Gambia, as outlined in document DP/FPA/12/Add.3.

38. Human rights should be accorded a special place in UNFPA activities, and mass education in the rural areas of developing countries should also feature prominently in the Fund's future activities. His delegation welcomed the convening by UNFPA of a symposium on population and human rights, and would support the implementation of any constructive recommendations emanating from the symposium.

39. His delegation would support the proposal to hold a world population conference in 1984. It hoped, finally, that France's recently announced intention to double its official development assistance would not only provide a shining example for other traditional major donors to emulate, but also signal a new era in North-South relations.

40. Mr. KABA (Guinea) said his delegation was pleased to note that at the current session the Council would be considering the recommendation by the Executive Director of UNFPA concerning assistance to Guinea in the amount of \$5.4 million (DP/FPA/12/Add.2). As stated in paragraph 7 of that document, one of the principal

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(Mr. Kaba, Guinea)

concerns of his Government in regard to population was the reduction of morbidity and mortality by strengthening health care services. His country would be grateful for any assistance it received from the international community that would enable it to implement its population programmes. The proper use of such assistance would be ensured by the nation-wide network of local administrative services and local social services established pursuant to the policy of the Guinean Democratic Party. Furthermore, the Government, being keenly aware of the impact of population on over-all development, had established a National Population Commission adapted to the country's needs, whose functions would include the carrying out of a nation-wide census. The existing organizational structure would facilitate the work to be done in the field of population, but modern technical facilities were lacking. The Government therefore attached the utmost importance to the assistance it hoped to receive from UNFPA.

41. Mr. GIOVANNINI (Switzerland) said that demographic problems were a major factor in the imbalances which existed in developing countries; the solution of those problems would depend on development in general and the development of health and educational systems in particular. Switzerland contributed to UNFPA in accordance with its respect for the sovereignty of nations and individual liberty.

42. Concerning the alternatives for designating priority countries described in the annex to document DP/530, his delegation opted for alternative four, which had the advantage of covering a much larger number of people than alternatives one, two or three. However, the selection of that alternative would require additional efforts to concentrate UNFPA's resources on priority countries. Moreover, UNFPA should intervene only if the recipient countries were really determined to make substantial efforts themselves.

43. The section of the report dealing with goals in each area of activity was not completely satisfactory, giving too little indication of the priorities to be assigned among the many praiseworthy ideas discussed. UNFPA's activities should be predicated on the idea that family planning was by now broadly established and that many women wished to practice birth control but lacked the means to do so. The task, therefore, was not so much to convince women as to provide them with the necessary means under integrated maternal and child health systems. UNFPA should concentrate much more than in the past on family planning activities and on supporting research aimed at developing reliable and inexpensive contraceptives.

44. His delegation was reluctant to support the proposed increase in UNFPA activities in such areas as population redistribution, migration, changes in the population pyramid or the promotion of women's participation in the development process, not because it considered those areas unimportant but because it considered such activities did not fall within UNFPA's special province and could be undertaken by other development agencies. UNFPA's resources should be concentrated on those problems which it alone could tackle effectively. Similarly, he was not convinced by the arguments adduced to justify the failure to reduce interregional and global demographic activities to 25 per cent of total resources. Efforts in that direction should be redoubled.

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(Mr. Giovannini, Switzerland)

45. Switzerland believed that a permanent, systematic and neutral evaluation system was a vital element of any effective programme. UNFPA should develop its evaluation activities and notify the Council of the outcome.

46. While his comments might seem rather negative, his country's over-all assessment of UNFPA was broadly positive, and it particularly welcomed the Fund's emphasis on the development of human resource, local community participation and autonomous development.

47. Mr. RYKIRA (Rwanda) said that the documents under consideration highlighted the important issue of world population growth in the face of an uncertain international economic future. International development problems could be solved only through co-operation, particularly North-South co-operation. To that end, the rich countries should pay less attention to their own economic difficulties and co-operate more fully in restructuring the international economy. In that spirit his delegation endorsed the Executive Director's call in paragraph 6 of his report (DP/530) for increased political and financial commitments to deal with population problems effectively, as well as the one billion dollar annual target set by the International Conference of Parliamentarians on Population and Development, a target which the International Conference on Family Planning had recently suggested should be raised to \$3 billion.

48. If, as some believed, economic development problems could not be solved unless population problems were solved simultaneously, then all the donor countries should take account of that fact and grant increased financial assistance to UNFPA. In that connexion, he hoped that the Council would react positively to the needs as set forth by the Executive Director of UNFPA in the various documents.

49. UNFPA assistance to his country, particularly with respect to the population census and post-census survey, as well as the ongoing family planning and maternal and child health care projects, was much appreciated, and his Government wished to emphasize its willingness to continue co-operating actively with UNFPA, particularly through the recently established National Population Office, which would be responsible for undertaking a large-scale programme with a view to harmonizing population growth with the country's national economic, social and cultural development plan.

50. His delegation unreservedly supported the continuation of evaluation activities, the justification and merits of which were explained clearly in paragraphs 30 to 32 of the report (DP/530). To deny the value of or the need for such evaluation would be purely and simply to doom the UNFPA assistance programme.

51. Finally, he drew attention to the fact that Africa as a whole had received only a very small percentage of UNFPA allocations for population projects during 1980. With the serious and urgent population problems it faced, it should be given priority treatment. The 14.2 per cent allocation was far too low for so large a region facing problems such as the flight from the countryside, unemployment, lack of social, family and moral guidance for young people, and declining agricultural production. Those factors should be taken into account in UNFPA's goals for the next decade.

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52. Mr. MITO-BABA (Observer for Benin) said that, as a result of UNFPA co-operation, his Government had been able to conduct the first population census ever held in Benin. As part of the World Fertility Survey, preparations were under way for a national survey and, following the sending of a mission to assist the Government in defining its population needs, it was hoped to launch a programme of action and projects to be carried out in the coming years with UNFPA support. He had no doubt that other projects to be submitted to the Council would meet with its approval.

53. The virtual unanimity of donors in favour of increasing contributions to UNFPA was evidence of the growing awareness of the importance of population problems in economic development and of the lack of means available to the countries most in need of such programmes and activities.

54. His delegation supported the Executive Director's recommendation in paragraph 46 of his report (DP/530) concerning the adoption of alternative four. However, he drew the Council's attention to the fact that although the agencies which had drawn up the statistics might be trustworthy, the data on which they were based was not so reliable. Indeed, if it were, there would be no further need for many UNFPA activities. It therefore supported the Executive Director's view that some margin should be accepted for the thresholds and that the needs of the borderline countries should be considered to be as great and as well-founded as those of the priority countries. The same should apply to the least-developed countries which, unless given sustained attention and priority treatment, would be incapable of collecting the basic data without which a development programme was inconceivable. His Government continued to have full confidence in UNFPA and to support its population programmes.

55. Mr. AHMAD (Pakistan) observed that the case for the planning and development of human resources was universally recognized as an integral element of the development process and that population planning could not, therefore, be isolated from the need for the accelerated development of developing countries envisaged in the new International Development Strategy for the Third United Nations Development Decade. The need for a balanced, integrated approach to the question of population and resources should not be overlooked, and neither should the fact that the level of economic well-being was a crucial determining factor of fertility rates and, therefore, of population growth.

56. Over the past decade, the UNFPA record of effective management and successful implementation of population programmes had been appreciated by recipients and donors alike. By the end of 1980 it had completed 1,135 projects and was assisting a further 1,831 around the globe; its cumulative resources had reached over \$700 million. It had evolved effective machinery for need assessment, planning, programming and implementation of population policies and projects, and the impact of its activities, combined with the national efforts of the developing countries themselves, was perceptible in the slow change in demographic trends, with the steady improvements in birth, death and infant mortality rates, and in other indicators.

(Mr. Ahmad, Pakistan)

57. The launching of a new development decade would seemingly be the logical time for UNFPA to enter a new phase in order to meet the expanding needs of the 1980s. Yet, despite universal acclaim for its impressive results, it appeared to be in the familiar predicament of the entire United Nations development system. In real terms, its resources for 1980 had stagnated compared with 1979, and its projected growth had been reduced from 25 to 15 per cent. The resources made available in 1981 had in fact not exceeded \$131 million and, taking into account the effects of exchange rates, that figure had been further reduced to \$127 million, representing a shortfall of \$20 million from the approval authority given by the Council in 1980. UNFPA had therefore been forced to rephrase its programmes to absorb the effects of the severe reduction in its resources. However, his delegation did not entirely agree with the criteria used for rephrasing, which had resulted in a disproportionately heavy burden being placed on the priority countries, the percentage of resources allocated to them during 1980 dropping to 42.2 per cent as against the target of two thirds of total UNFPA country programme allocations established in 1979. He hoped that the principles of the rephrasing would be revised and applied flexibly in order to preserve the country programmes and projects in the priority countries to the maximum extent possible.

58. With respect to over-all resources, he pointed out that all the unused resources available at the beginning of 1980 had been fully utilized; the implications were grave. If UNFPA was not provided with adequate resources in 1981 there would be a substantial decline in real terms in actual field expenditures, the future implications of which could be even worse with the whole programme having to be scaled down considerably as indicated in the Work Plan for 1982-1985 (DP/529). His delegation therefore fervently appealed to all countries and Governments to review the situation dispassionately and to make a genuine effort to provide UNFPA with the level of resources needed to meet the requirements of the 1980s. A modest increase of 12 per cent in 1982 and 15 per cent thereafter had been proposed and he hoped that those projections would not only be realized but exceeded.

59. Turning to the Executive Director's report (DP/530), he said that his delegation endorsed the eight major goals outlined in paragraphs 4 to 27. However, the achievement of those objectives hinged on the availability of adequate resources. The International Conference of Parliamentarians on Population and Development had called for an annual target of 1 billion dollars in international population assistance to be achieved by 1984; in comparison with the needs, that was by no means over-ambitious.

60. He commended the efforts of the Executive Director to control administrative expenditure, and noted that the budget estimates and supplementary appropriations for 1981 had been kept to an absolute minimum, inflation accounting almost entirely for what little growth there was. No new posts had been requested and ample justification had been given in paragraphs 10 to 15 of document DP/531 for the reclassification of a minimum number of essential posts, which would have only minor financial implications. His delegation endorsed the Executive Director's reclassification proposals and hoped that the Governing Council would take a positive decision on them at the current session.

(Mr. Ahmad, Pakistan)

61. Finally, he said that his Government was deeply appreciative of the assistance it had received from UNFPA over the years for its national population plans and programmes. It was expecting direct assistance of some \$30 million for its ambitious population welfare programme under the five-year plan covering the period 1980-1984. The programme contained a number of core projects for which assistance was being sought from UNFPA and from the international community as a whole; it was hoped that the programme would not suffer from any over-all curtailment of UNFPA resources.

62. His Government had consistently supported the work of UNFPA over the years and, despite its severe economic and financial constraints, had been a regular contributor. For 1981 it had decided to increase its contribution by 10 per cent to \$275,000.

63. Mr. ELFAKI (Observer for the Sudan) expressed his delegation's appreciation of the enormous achievements of UNFPA worldwide and of the assistance UNFPA had rendered to his country since the early 1970s. Under the Sudan's current six-year development plan, priority was being given to improving nutrition, sanitation, control of epidemic and endemic diseases, and the extension of maternal and child health and family planning services, especially in rural areas. The plan also aimed to eradicate illiteracy, to extend secondary and higher education, especially for women, and to involve women to a greater extent in economic and social development.

64. The Sudan was also very much concerned about population-related problems, such as the lack of demographic data required for planning. His delegation was happy to note that paragraph 23 (h) of document DP/530 emphasized the needs of disadvantaged groups and trusted that UNFPA would do its utmost to alleviate their plight, placing particular stress on those living in poor countries, particularly the least-developed.

65. The long-term objective of the ongoing co-operation between the Sudan and UNFPA was to build up the country's capacity for effective socio-economic planning and to promote the inclusion of population-related policies and action programmes in economic and social development plans. It welcomed the further expansion of population data collection and analysis under three projects approved by the Council at its twenty-seventh session. Efforts to integrate population programmes into socio-economic planning and development activities would be further enhanced by the project to establish a population studies centre at the University of Gezira, and the strengthening of manpower and population activities at the Ministry of National Planning and relevant governmental units in the southern region. The training of teachers and community-based health workers would be intensified simultaneously with the expansion of the maternal and child health and family planning services. His Government would do its utmost to maximize co-operation with UNFPA and other executing agencies.

66. In conclusion, he said that it was very heartening to note the expansion of UNFPA's programmes and activities and its success in promoting awareness of

(Mr. Elfaki, Observer, Sudan)

population problems and securing the commitment of developing countries to population programmes as vital components of economic and social development. However, international support for population policies had to be substantially increased, and his delegation therefore joined in the Executive Director's appeal for more financial support for UNFPA; it hoped that donor countries would be more responsive than they had been in the past.

67. Mr. CABRERA (Mexico) said that population policies were closely interrelated with development and human rights, and his country was proceeding on that basis. It had learned that to consider birth control as the solution to all population problems was artificial and superficial. In any general analysis of the population phenomenon, birth rates and volume were taken into account but important aspects, such as population distribution and structure, as well as migration, were often overlooked. However, those aspects were both cause and effect in terms of development. It was said that by the year 2000 there would be one billion more people on earth, but the significance of that figure surpassed mere numbers, for those people would also represent a labour force, and would be a source of demand for goods and services. To fail to analyse those aspects of the problem would be to lose sight of the goal of population policies and of family planning.

68. His country was executing one of the largest family planning programmes in the world, with support from UNFPA. However, to achieve its goals, it was necessary to change attitudes, to ensure respect for the individual decisions of couples, and to recognize that programmes should be inductive. If UNFPA did not take such an approach, the consensus already reached on its programmes could be affected. In addition to providing health services and distributing contraceptives, his country's family planning programme included national programmes on social communication, and sex, population and family education. All those activities were integrated with efforts to provide at least minimum standards of health, food, housing, and employment for the population, as well as with the study of natural phenomena such as mortality and birth rates.

69. The population problem was one of the factors which could either favour or hinder the development process at both the world-wide and national levels and was certainly affected by North-South relations. Migration and population distribution were important aspects of that problem. It was impossible to retain, redirect or re-attract population unless the necessary social and economic measures were taken. In his delegation's view, UNFPA should in future play a role in solving migration problems. Imbalances in population distribution could not be corrected merely by reducing fertility. They had to be attacked on the two fronts of fertility and migration.

70. The future role of UNFPA should follow the path laid down at Bucharest. UNFPA should give even stronger support to the integration of population policies with development as a basis on which to conduct activities in favour of development in an institutionalized and programmed manner.

71. Turning to the question of evaluation and of the need to generate statistical

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(Mr. Cabrera, Mexico)

data, he questioned whether evaluation machinery of proven effectiveness already existed, and whether the human resources were available to determine policy and to evaluate and analyse results. In his delegation's view the answers to those questions were neither totally positive nor totally negative. There were infrastructural shortcomings which UNFPA should certainly consider in terms of the support it could offer.

72. Lastly, his delegation fully supported the holding of a world population conference in 1984, particularly since its basic goal would be to determine what actions were needed to bring about more effective integration of population and development.

73. Mr. N'KIET (Gabon) expressed some disquiet at the contrast between the quantity of projects proposed and the attitude of donors in reducing the funding available to UNFPA. It was difficult to imagine how UNFPA could fulfil its functions effectively in such circumstances, particularly in the face of the alarm that had been sounded about the growth of the world's population. His delegation therefore welcomed the steps being taken to solve what was a very knotty problem.

74. However, when considering the global issue of over-population, account should also be taken of the individual circumstances of countries like his own. According to the latest census figures it had a population of only 1,232,000; that posed a serious problem in terms of its agricultural and industrial development. His delegation supported the proposals for closer links between UNFPA and other competent United Nations agencies for the purpose of studying matters such as infant mortality, health, life expectancy and sterility, and also urged UNFPA to evaluate its programmes with a view to adapting its specific activities to the local conditions of the countries concerned.

The meeting rose at 5.35 p.m.