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Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Monday, 22 June 1981, at 10 a.m.

President: Mr. ABDULAH (Trinidad and Tobago)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.25 a.m.

PROGRAMME OF IMPLEMENTATION (continued)

(b) ASSISTANCE TO THE NATIONAL LIBERATION MOVEMENTS RECOGNIZED BY THE ORGANIZATION OF AFRICAN UNITY (DP/513) (continued)

(c) ASSISTANCE TO THE PALESTINIAN PEOPLE (DP/514)

1. Mr. BROWN (Deputy Administrator), introducing document DP/514, said that it showed that the Council's 1979 decision on the programme of assistance to the Palestinian people was being carried out extremely successfully. The list of projects being implemented (para. 4) should be amended to include one more: a project entitled "Specialized Training Programme in Agricultural Development". Furthermore, the two projects listed for implementation beginning July 1981 would be fully under way before the end of June. Implementation of the project in the Syrian Arab Republic would also begin soon.

2. Negotiations and consultations with all the parties concerned had required considerable time, effort and goodwill, and it was heartening that UNDP-supported assistance was about to be delivered. Orders were already being placed for equipment and supplies, fellowships were being arranged and awarded and contracts were being drafted for the construction of required buildings.

3. Actual experience in the field had provided a whole range of new insights concerning the most effective and valuable use of project funds under conditions which could not be fully appreciated from distant observation. For that reason, as explained in paragraph 7, the Administrator was asking the Council to authorize him to adjust upwards, in justified cases, the amounts allocated for certain of the projects, on the understanding that over-all expenditures would remain within the total allocation from the programme reserve of \$3.5 million previously authorized by the Council. The draft decision in paragraph 8 reflected that recommendation, which he hoped the Council would approve.

4. Mr. GQOBOSE (Observer, Pan Africanist Congress of Azania) said that, despite the anxiety over the decline in UNDP financial resources and its effect on projects, the liberation movements were pleased to note from document DP/513 that the major donor countries were favouring them in respect of ongoing projects.

5. PAC was fully committed to self-reliance and regarded it as both a principle and a method of struggle. That was especially true in the field of humanitarian assistance, where his country faced the consequences of an abominable racist régime. Although armed struggle was necessary in order to free the people from that disgraceful ideology, PAC did not intend to use UNDP funds for that purpose. At the current stage of the struggle in Azania, there was an ever-increasing exodus of people who needed humanitarian care. It was in that aspect only that PAC appealed to UNDP and other United Nations agencies to continue to assist and even increase their aid to the liberation struggle being waged in Azania by the

(Mr. Gqobose)

two liberation movements recognized by OAU: PAC and ANC. People belonging to other liberation organizations were also involved in the exodus, and PAC and ANC were responsible for attending to their humanitarian needs as well, for they were victims of the same non-violent struggle. It was therefore proper that, in requests for increased assistance from UNDP, the humanitarian needs of those Azanians should be taken into account, especially since their organizations were associated with PAC or ANC.

6. PAC took care of no less than 1,000 people throughout the front-line States. The numbers varied as they left South Africa and then left the front-line States for various types of training. There were always those who remained behind, however, for reasons of health, age, etc., and it was they who would benefit from self-reliance projects. There must be a chain of such projects, beginning in the front-line States and continuing throughout Africa, so that people leaving South Africa could pass through a relay system. In the long run, that would relieve the United Nations agencies, especially UNHCR, of the need to provide financial assistance long after people had left Azania. For that reason, PAC advocated intensive self-reliance projects with increased assistance to liberation movements so as to cope properly with the humanitarian needs of their members in the front-line States.

7. It was gratifying to note from the introduction to document DP/513 that arrangements would be made before the end of the year on the entire question of review and the proposals of the African liberation movements, and that the interagency meeting would provide UNDP with information to allow further assistance to African liberation movements recognized by OAU to be planned for 1982-1986. His organization welcomed those arrangements, especially since UNDP inputs into the educational assistance project (PAC/77/001) had already been exhausted.

8. PAC appreciated the help received from UNDP both in funds and expert advice from executing agencies such as FAO, UNESCO and Habitat. The local representatives of those agencies co-operated well with the liberation movements and good working relations had been established. He welcomed the efforts made by UNDP to convince donor countries of the needs of liberation movements.

9. He fully endorsed the comment made by the representatives of SWAPO that one-man delegations to the Council's meetings were not sufficient. Notwithstanding UNDP's financial constraints, he hoped that in the near future the number of representatives for each movement could be increased to at least two.

10. Mr. CZARKOWSKI (Poland) said that his delegation supported the important humanitarian aspect of UNDP's assistance to national liberation movements recognized by OAU, because those activities were fully consistent with the basic and universal principles and goals expressed in the Charter and confirmed in United Nations resolutions on the situation in southern Africa. All the projects mentioned in document DP/513 were well prepared and consistent with United Nations objectives. Consequently, his delegation agreed with the conclusion in paragraph 20 of that document.

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11. Mr. TORAASEN (Norway) said that the projects mentioned in document DP/513 covered a wide field of activities, such as health, education, food and agriculture, fisheries and participation of women in the development process. As at 31 December 1980, the IPF commitments for national liberation movements had been nearly \$16 million, with \$5 million for Namibia. His delegation hoped that uncommitted funds for the second cycle could be fully utilized.
12. His Government stressed the importance of UNDP assistance to the national liberation movements recognized by OAU and gave full support to that programme as proof of its solidarity with the peoples of southern Africa. It had decided to contribute Nkr 16.25 million, about \$3 million, to the national liberation movements in southern Africa for 1981, of which Nkr 10 million would go to SWAPO. That represented an increase of Nkr 2.25 million. It would continue to support UNDP assistance to the national liberation movements recognized by OAU, and would also contribute bilaterally to them until the peoples of southern Africa had achieved full freedom.
13. Mr. CHEN Xingnon (China) said that his delegation welcomed the assistance rendered by UNDP and other organizations of the United Nations development system to the national liberation movements recognized by OAU. That assistance had certainly supported their efforts to overcome poverty and backwardness, improve the lives of their peoples and provide humanitarian assistance. China had noted the OAU appeal, at the Nairobi conference in July 1980, for UNDP and other organizations of the United Nations development system to continue and increase their assistance to SWAPO, ANC and PAC, and hoped that they would respond favourably to that appeal and make an effort to mobilize other possible sources of funds in order to allow the national liberation movements to participate more actively in African regional and subregional development activities. During the current financial crisis, the provision of assistance to Namibia and the national liberation movements for the third cycle should be ensured, in so far as possible.
14. Assistance from UNDP and other organizations should be aimed at strengthening the capacity of the indigenous peoples to manage their own affairs. The joint activities of the national liberation movements would increasingly promote the achievement of independence and the liberation of the African peoples.
15. Mr. POPOV (Bulgaria) expressed his delegation's full support for activities aimed at providing assistance to national liberation movements recognized by OAU. The activities and execution of projects described in document DP/513 were noteworthy, and his delegation welcomed them. However, it hoped that UNDP would continue to provide more effective financial assistance to the national liberation movements. In expressing its support for the programme, his delegation expected the assistance provided to be administered by the organizations and movements recognized as the sole representatives of their peoples.
16. Mr. FILIMONOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that his delegation unswervingly supported the struggle of the peoples of Africa for national liberation and against the forces of imperialism and racism. Acting in violation of the Charter and United Nations resolutions and ignoring the demands of most States in the world, the racist régime of South Africa, with support from abroad,

(Mr. Filimonov, USSR)

pursued its policy of apartheid and mass terror. It illegally subjugated Namibia and carried out innumerable acts of aggression against neighbouring States. Together with the independent African States, the members of the non-aligned movement, the socialist States and all countries committed to the strengthening of peace and détente and the defence of the sovereign rights and freedoms of peoples had resolutely called for sanctions against South Africa. The Soviet Union had provided and would continue to provide support for the just struggle of the Namibian people, led by SWAPO, for freedom and the immediate settlement of the Namibian question in accordance with United Nations resolutions and the demands of OAU.

17. The Soviet position with respect to the provision of assistance to national liberation movements recognized by OAU was based on the need to expand the use of UNDP resources for the provision of aid to the peoples and countries struggling for freedom and independence and against colonialism, racism and apartheid. Efforts for that purpose were extremely important and reflected the goals and tasks proclaimed in the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples and in other important resolutions of the General Assembly and United Nations agencies.

18. His delegation welcomed the information contained in document DP/513 concerning resources available for assistance to the national liberation movements and co-operation with SWAPO in carrying out programmes financed by the IPF for Namibia. It believed that the question of the expansion of technical assistance to national liberation movements recognized by OAU should be duly reflected in the relevant UNDP programmes and projects. Special attention should be given to assistance provided through SWAPO to the Namibian people.

19. Referring to document DP/514, he said that his delegation welcomed the progress made in carrying out the programme of assistance to the Palestinian people launched by Council decision 79/18. Although the needs of the Palestinian people were far greater than the assistance provided through UNDP, it seemed that that assistance would be of some use in their struggle. His delegation supported the Administrator's recommendations contained in the document.

20. Mr. EL FAKI (Observer for the Sudan), referring to documents DP/513 and DP/514, said that his delegation was pleased at the continuous efforts being made by UNDP and the executing agencies, and hoped that the momentum would be sustained in order to help the struggling peoples of southern Africa and Palestine attain freedom, independence and dignity. His delegation supported the Administrator's efforts to obtain more assistance for those liberation movements and appealed to all donor countries to continue and increase their aid. It went without saying that his Government supported the struggle of the African liberation movements and of the heroic Palestinian people.

21. Mr. POPESCU (Romania) said that his delegation wished to stress its support for UNDP assistance to national liberation movements recognized by OAU. It had taken note with satisfaction of the assistance furnished by UNDP to SWAPO,

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(Mr. Popescu, Romania)

ANC, PAC and Namibia. In view of the urgent needs of the national liberation movements, his delegation fully supported the projects described in document DP/513 and the conclusion reached at the Nairobi meeting between OAU and the organizations of the United Nations system that UNDP should pursue its efforts to mobilize more funds to facilitate the implementation and possible expansion of ongoing programmes of assistance to the national liberation movements.

22. Mr. MOUMOUNI (Niger) said that his country would fully support the national liberation movements recognized by OAU until Africa was liberated from the yoke of colonialism. Accordingly, it fully endorsed documents DP/513 and DP/514, supported UNDP's efforts to assist the movements in their struggle and invited donor countries to increase their assistance to UNDP for that purpose. His delegation supported the conclusions of the Nairobi meeting between OAU and the organizations of the United Nations system concerning aid to national liberation movements.

23. Mr. AMOKO (Uganda) said that his delegation was grateful to UNDP and other United Nations organizations for their continuing efforts to assist the national liberation movements of southern Africa in their struggle to end colonialism, racism, apartheid and foreign domination. The peoples of South Africa and Namibia must intensify their struggle to demolish the racist and colonial apparatus, and the national liberation movements must receive the backing of the international community.

24. The representative of SWAPO had requested that Namibians should be allowed to work as programme officers in UNDP offices in Luanda and Lusaka, and had appealed to UNDP to increase SWAPO representation at international meetings. The United Nations had already taken a firm position with regard to the preparation of the Namibian people for independence. Namibian students in Lusaka were being sent to various countries to acquire practical experience in government ministries. Such projects should be encouraged by the Governing Council, which should accede to the modest requests made by the representative of SWAPO and grant similar facilities to the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania and the African National Congress.

25. His delegation intended to introduce a draft decision that would authorize UNDP and other United Nations agencies to allow South African and Namibian nationals recommended by SWAPO, the African National Congress and the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania to work in their regional offices in southern Africa, so that they could acquire the necessary skills.

26. Mr. HAGGAG (Egypt) said that his delegation attached great importance to the assistance provided by UNDP to the national liberation movements recognized by OAU. It was essential to increase assistance to the people of Namibia and to follow up the decisions of the Nairobi meeting between OAU and the organizations of the United Nations system.

27. Mr. ALAKHAA (Yemen) said that his delegation fully supported UNDP assistance to the national liberation movements recognized by OAU and to the Palestine Liberation Organization. It supported the relevant recommendations contained in documents DP/513 and DP/514.

- (d) ACTION TAKEN IN RESPONSE TO DECISIONS ADOPTED BY THE COUNCIL AT ITS TWENTY-SEVENTH SESSION (DP/516)
- (e) EVALUATION
- (f) ACTION TAKEN IN RESPONSE TO GOVERNING COUNCIL DECISION 79/48 (DP/558 and Corr.1)

28. Mr. BROWN (Deputy Administrator) said that document DP/558 had been prepared pursuant to decision 79/48, in which the Governing Council had invited the Administrator to review existing UNDP guidelines on government execution. In its resolution 35/81, the General Assembly had reaffirmed that Governments and institutions of recipient countries should be increasingly entrusted with the responsibilities for executing projects.

29. The global meeting of resident representatives held in Tunis in the summer of 1980 had considered why the experience with government execution had been so poor, and why only 73 projects with a value of some \$33 million had been approved for government execution. The slow progress was partly due to the complicated procedures of the United Nations system, which were difficult for Governments to follow. Whereas an executing agency was provided with support costs from a separate budget line and not from the project budget, a Government was required to cover the extra costs involved in executing the project either from its own resources or, in some instances, from its IPF. Governments therefore often had little interest in undertaking the execution of projects.

30. So long as the more sophisticated Governments had control of the substance of projects, they had every incentive to let the United Nations system pay from its own budget the administrative and other costs involved. That had been one of the reasons why many Governments had not agreed to undertake execution. There were many Governments which received UNDP assistance but managed very large national budgets and many complex national projects; it would be very difficult to argue that they did not have or could not obtain the capacity to manage projects for which external technical assistance was required. There were two aspects to technical assistance: the substance of the assistance itself and the organization of such assistance. When UNDP referred to support costs, it meant the organization of technical assistance. Thus, government execution did not imply that Governments did not require technical assistance. It implied that they did not always need someone else to organize that assistance for them. Nor did it imply that Governments had all the foreign exchange needed to pay for external technical assistance. It was therefore not inconsistent that a Government with the capacity to organize technical assistance should require such technical assistance as well as financial assistance to pay for it.

(Mr. Brown)

31. On the other hand, there were Governments which did not have the capacity to organize and monitor technical assistance. The United Nations system had a clear mandate to provide the training and facilities necessary to enable those Governments to develop that capacity, because that was an essential part of the development of self-reliance. UNDP proposed to compensate Governments for extra work which had to be done and for which they had to pay to organize their technical assistance. They would be compensated on the basis of a percentage of project costs, which could not exceed 13 per cent. There were no financial implications other than the possibility of saving resources under the budget line dealing with support costs.

32. With regard to the question of assisting Governments with training and providing them with the capacity to undertake execution, UNDP proposed that such assistance should be regarded as normal technical assistance, because the training which the Governments then received would be of relevance in administering not only technical assistance projects, but also their own operations. Since the cost of such training would come from the IPFs of the countries concerned, there would be no financial implications for the administrative budget.

33. In those countries where the capacity to organize technical assistance was not available, the field offices might have extra work and might therefore have to be strengthened. Any extra costs involved in strengthening the offices would be more than covered by the difference between the full 13 per cent normally paid for project execution and the amount which would be paid to Governments requiring reimbursement only for the extra costs involved in monitoring the projects.

34. The UNDP administration considered government execution first and then eliminated that option if it was clearly inappropriate. On that basis, not all projects or even 25 per cent of projects would qualify for government execution. UNDP was assuming that the General Assembly wanted to make government execution one of the options always considered. Under the present arrangements, government execution was regarded as an exception.

35. Under government execution procedures, a Government could be designated as the executing agency and could then arrange to have a United Nations agency carry out 50, 70 or 80 per cent of a project as specified in the project document. Before a decision was taken on government execution, the Government would have to agree to have a particular part of the project carried out by an agency. Initially, a very substantial part of projects would be subcontracted to agencies, which would be brought in as co-operating agencies, receiving full reimbursement on the value of the inputs they handled. There were therefore various modalities that could be followed under the government execution arrangement.

36. Yet another issue was the tendency in the United Nations system to measure what was done by the amount of expenditure on a project, subject to evaluations carried out from time to time. The fact was that the success of a project was determined from the time it was identified; from the time the project was designed,

(Mr. Brown)

the objectives were determined and the decision taken as to how those objectives would be achieved. One of the most important contributions which the United Nations system could make was to assist Governments and UNDP in that fundamental process of making the right decision during project identification. If the right decision was made at that stage, project execution was likely to be much more successful. Even under a system of full government execution, therefore, the United Nations would continue to play a most vital role in respect of the projects.

37. Section II of document DP/558 provided information on progress in the area of government management of projects. It described initiatives to improve certain aspects of the current project cycle, including the formulation of project documents, the appraisal process and the preparation of up-to-date project work-plans. It presented the conclusions of an analysis of the monitoring and evaluation system and described expected changes in policies and procedures.

38. Section III responded specifically to paragraph 3 of Governing Council decision 79/48. Considerable progress had been made in the use of national professional staff as an alternative to internationally recruited staff. Further progress had also been made in the increased use of resident nationals for service in their home countries. UNDP had sponsored a programme in eight countries to facilitate the return to their home countries of highly qualified scientists, engineers and managers residing abroad. In addition, it had developed a working relationship with the Intergovernmental Committee for European Migration.

39. Section IV provided information obtained from the agencies on recent measures taken to improve the recruitment and management of internationally recruited project personnel.

40. Mr. BRECHER (United States of America), reaffirming his delegation's general support for Governing Council decisions 79/48 and 80/22, said that the bulk of the proposals in document DP/558 would strengthen the UNDP programme delivery system. The United States supported the concept of government execution and was satisfied with the model arrangements proposed. It wished to stress, however, that government execution of projects should continue on an experimental basis. It agreed with the Governing Council's emphasis on the need to proceed on a carefully selected basis (DP/558, para. 4). UNDP's experience with regard to government execution was insufficient to justify the recommendation that such execution should become a preferred approach. While endorsing the general content of the draft decision in paragraph 55 of document DP/558, his delegation would be inclined to modify it so as to ensure that government execution did not become the mandatory mode of execution.

41. His delegation endorsed the Administrator's efforts to strengthen the project management capacity of Governments and supported UNDP's renewed instructions for the designation of a single individual with responsibility for project co-ordination and management. A decision by the Government to appoint a national co-ordinator frequently resulted in much stronger support for the project by government officials. The appointment of a national co-ordinator or even a national co-manager could provide an added assurance that the project objectives would be achieved.

(Mr. Brecher, United States)

42. His delegation supported the Administrator's efforts to strengthen the project design and project formulation capabilities of UNDP, the agencies and Governments. It also commended the Administrator on his recommendations for the improvement of the tripartite review procedures. It warmly supported the suggestions for improving UNDP's mid-term and ex-post evaluation procedures, suggestions which afforded further proof that UNDP was taking its evaluation responsibilities seriously. The United States looked forward to the incorporation of the suggestions in the Policy and Procedures Manual.

43. The evaluation process was severely handicapped by the assignment of insufficient full-time staff to evaluation work. There could be little consistent training of staff in evaluation without full-time supervision in that technical area. Taking into account budgetary constraints, UNDP should develop a multiyear evaluation programme to provide for more systematic coverage of programmes, countries and field personnel and to develop the training of government personnel.

44. Mr. HUTTON (Canada) agreed with the representative of the United States on the need to proceed cautiously and on an experimental basis until more experience had been gained with regard to government execution. The Deputy Administrator had made a particularly valid point regarding the two aspects of technical assistance. Canada did not believe that Governments with the capacity to organize technical assistance should necessarily be paid for organizing such assistance. It felt too that there would probably be administrative difficulties with regard to the level of support costs which UNDP would pay to Governments executing projects. The Deputy Administrator had stressed that only extra costs would be reimbursed. His delegation suspected that such costs would vary considerably from country to country.

45. Canada certainly wished to see government execution on an equal footing with other modes of execution. With government execution, UNDP would move into stronger contractual arrangements with Governments, along the lines of arrangements entered into by international financial institutions. That could result in a tightening, rather than a simplification of procedures.

46. Mr. LEIKVANG (Norway), speaking on behalf of the delegations of the Nordic countries, recalled that, when the concept of government execution had been considered by the Governing Council in 1979, those countries had criticized the Administrator's reluctance to propose more decisive steps in that direction and had felt that the guidelines proposed retained an element of paternalism. He was therefore extremely gratified that the new proposals of the Administrator in document DP/558 were quite close to the views of the Nordic countries as expressed at the twenty-sixth session of the Council, and that there appeared to be a genuine attempt to translate the relevant General Assembly resolutions into positive action. The Nordic countries agreed with the Administrator that government execution should be the preferred approach in the implementation of UNDP assistance and fully supported the proposals on the subject in document DP/558. Such a departure from previous UNDP policies was long overdue, since it was six years since the General Assembly had adopted the "New dimensions" resolution.

(Mr. Leikvang, Norway)

47. He also agreed with the Administrator's proposal in paragraphs 17 and 18 of DP/558 regarding compensation to Governments for administrative costs incurred in connexion with executing UNDP financed projects. That was consequential and necessary if the concept of government execution was accepted as a serious proposition. Since Governments as executing agencies had been treated differently from United Nations agencies with respect to compensation for added administrative costs, there had been a considerable built-in incentive for recipient Governments to pass on those costs to United Nations agencies and, together with them, responsibility for the execution of the projects. The small number of projects implemented by Governments demonstrated clearly that the guidelines currently being used did not provide sufficient incentive for government execution. The proposed new guidelines should make government execution a real choice for Governments.

48. There did, however, seem to be a lack of experience regarding the appropriate level of support costs to be paid to Governments. He did not think that the rate paid to Governments fully executing projects should exceed the standard rate of 13 per cent paid to United Nations agencies. Indeed, he hoped that there would be genuine savings in that connexion, especially since the additional burden on UNDP field offices could lead to additional administrative costs for UNDP. That aspect was a source of concern to the Nordic delegations, which would like the Administrator to report on that matter when he felt some experience had been gained. Governments should be subject to the UNDP financial regulations and rules, just like any other executing agency. He also felt that paragraph 8 (d) of document DP/558 should be borne in mind.

49. In general, he supported the proposals regarding project monitoring and evaluation made in section C of chapter II of document DP/558. In particular, he agreed that tripartite reviews should give more emphasis to the attainment of the project objectives and less to the mere delivery of inputs. He noted that in document DP/558 project monitoring and evaluation were described as management tools; it would be logical if the leading role in the planning and use of those tools was played by the Government concerned, since it would have management responsibility for the project. However, no such role was visualized in DP/558. That aspect should be brought out more clearly, in line with the new policy on government execution.

50. In conclusion, he said that it would be desirable for the revised guidelines on project monitoring and evaluation to be issued jointly by UNDP and the Governments concerned, perhaps in a standard agreement between UNDP and Governments.

51. Mr. ASRAMI (India) said that his Government strongly supported the Administrator's proposals on government execution contained in document DP/558, especially as regards the support costs to be paid to Governments executing UNDP-financed projects. The justification for such payment had been well described by the Deputy Administrator and was underlined by the lack of projects being executed by Governments. The reasons for the inadequate number of such projects

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(Mr. Asrani, India)

had also been clearly set forth by the Deputy Administrator. The payment of support costs would in fact go only part of the way towards overcoming those problems. There was no danger of all United Nations agencies being suddenly deprived of projects, most of which would involve a mixture of government execution and execution by United Nations agencies.

52. He noted that the representative of the United States was in favour of rewording the draft decision concerning government execution of projects. His delegation was prepared to consider such a rewording.

53. Mr. WINDSOR (United Kingdom) said that his delegation supported the principle of government execution on the basis of earlier guidelines. He recalled that, when measures for greater participation by Governments in the execution of UNDP-assisted projects had been proposed as part of the "New dimensions" resolution, his delegation had welcomed them on the understanding that concern for the quality and efficiency of the Programme would remain the basic criteria of project selection and implementation. There had also been a general feeling, expressed particularly at the twenty-second and twenty-third sessions of the Governing Council, that a cautious, gradual and selective approach should be adopted towards government execution, with due account being taken of the maintenance of efficiency and quality as well as the multilateral nature of the Programme. Those concerns had been clearly expressed and accounted for in the present policy guidelines drawn up by the Administrator and set out in paragraph 7 of document DP/558. Since the actual experience of their application had been very limited, his delegation doubted the desirability of the radical change advocated in document DP/558. It must be remembered that the central theme of the original change in the system had been a gradual move towards government execution.

54. The proposals in paragraphs 12 to 18 of document DP/558 would remove the element of choice regarding methods of project execution embodied both in decision 79/48 and in recommendation 34 in document JIU/REP/78/3. That would be unacceptable to many delegations. General Assembly resolution 35/81 had recognized that moves towards government execution should be a gradual process, by highlighting the need for the United Nations system to provide training for personnel in the recipient countries so that they could become "increasingly entrusted with the responsibilities for executing projects". It was therefore surprising that no reference had been made in chapter I of document DP/558 to such training for project execution.

55. He regretted the lack of basic information in the document on the number of projects rejected by the Administrator for government execution, the reasons for his decision or the time-scale involved. He would also like to know how many projects had been approved since the 1979 guidelines had come into operation. Such basic data would furnish the Council with an indication of any emerging trends and would help it to judge whether the present guidelines did, as suggested in paragraph 19, represent obstacles to government project execution or whether, as his delegation believed, they represented a sensible and pragmatic series of yardsticks against which to introduce such execution. He looked forward to hearing the views of the representatives of the specialized agencies on the matter.

(Mr. Windsor, United Kingdom)

56. The radical change proposed by the Administrator might convert the Programme into little more than a source of foreign exchange or a vehicle for budgetary support - something quite contrary to its present multilateral technical co-operation character, the uniqueness and importance of which had been stated by the Administrator himself on many occasions. A hasty change in the existing balance in the tripartite relationship between the Government, UNDP and the executing agencies could harm the present structure of multilateral technical co-operation and UNDP's effectiveness, thus reducing the Programme's appeal to recipients and donors alike.

57. Against that background, his delegation believed that it would be unwise - and in some cases positively harmful - to give immediate effect to the radical proposals for government execution set out in paragraphs 12 to 18 of document DP/558. The application of such proposals would have exactly the effect that the Administrator stated, in paragraph 14, that he was seeking to avoid: it could actually "impose an undesirable solution" on developing countries which did not feel able to undertake such activities. Rather than reducing the administrative costs of project implementation, those proposals could increase them, particularly in cases where UNDP would provide additional inputs to strengthen execution capacity. Indeed, the Deputy Administrator himself had admitted that in his statement. The additional workload placed on the resident representatives would come at a time when they were already fully stretched and would, in many cases, also be acting as the United Nations system's resident co-ordinators. He was concerned about the adverse effects that might have on the effective administration of UNDP assistance in particular and United Nations development assistance in general.

58. Government execution appeared to be in danger of becoming an end in itself, irrespective of the appropriateness of the concept for the widely differing circumstances of developing countries. The existing sensible, structured guidelines should continue in operation and be reviewed, if appropriate, midway through the third programming cycle. Such a course of action would be entirely in keeping with the "new dimensions" spirit, General Assembly resolution 35/81, Governing Council decision 79/48 and discussions at earlier sessions of that Council. After all, recipient Governments already had the choice of government execution and his delegation felt that no immediate changes should be made.

59. Turning to operational concepts and procedures, he said that his delegation welcomed the information contained in paragraphs 20 to 32 of document DP/558. It was important that the progress of the measures proposed in paragraph 29 for main project formulation by the operational level should be monitored closely. The capabilities of project management would differ from project to project so that the operational level might not always be the most appropriate in main project formulation.

60. He endorsed the comments in paragraphs 33 to 39 on monitoring and evaluation as well as the factors, set out in paragraph 40, to be employed in determining in-depth evaluations. Identification of projects for in-depth evaluation would involve tripartite consultations, but the impetus to evaluate a specific project

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(Mr. Windsor, United Kingdom)

in depth should come from UNDP itself, since it was best able to determine the project's importance in the context of the UNDP programme as a whole. Such an approach would correspond to the situation currently obtaining on thematic evaluations.

61. His delegation endorsed the recommendation in paragraph 2 of the draft decision (DP/558, para. 55). As for the recommendation in paragraph 3 (a), concerning the use of qualified national professional staff, his delegation stressed that the system should continue to be in a position to choose the best advice and expertise available, and suggested that an addition should be made to that paragraph to reflect that principle.

62. Mr. GIBSON (New Zealand) said that the proposals on government execution of projects contained in document DP/558, although a sudden reversal of recent practice, were no more than the application of a policy decided by the Council and endorsed by the General Assembly in 1975. The current instructions on Government execution, issued in January 1979, did not fully reflect the new dimensions and the Council was simply being asked to agree to a fuller implementation of the 1975 resolution. The delay in implementing that commendable resolution had meant that the Programme's operations had not been as effective as they could have been. His delegation, like others, had certain reservations about the new proposals, but felt them to be flexible and realistic. It had every confidence in the good sense of the Administrator and his field officers to see that government execution fulfilled its objectives without cost increases or loss of efficiency.

63. With regard to chapter II of DP/558, he said that management and project design, monitoring and evaluation were all necessary if the objectives of projects were to be achieved, if the efficiency and effectiveness of project execution was to improve, if agencies and Governments were to benefit from the lessons of experience, and if there was to be growing self-reliance in developing countries. Although those items had been regularly discussed by the Council and the Administration, there did not seem to have been as much progress as might have been hoped since the Joint Inspection Unit had published its first report on evaluation in the United Nations system. The Council should now be studying how to ensure that the evaluation system, in all its aspects, strengthened the ability of the Programme to contribute to self-reliant development. Unfortunately, document DP/558 showed that progress towards establishing a good evaluation system had not been too impressive. The document also showed that there were acknowledged short-comings in the way projects had been implemented. It commented, among other things, on the poor design of projects. The lack of practicality of some UNDP project documents was also disappointing.

64. In the field of monitoring and evaluation, it was clear that, unless the objectives of a project were precisely defined in operational terms, with built-in performance criteria, project output would be seriously compromised and its impact diluted. Any steps which UNDP might take to introduce greater precision into its project documentation would therefore be worthwhile. He endorsed the principle of

(Mr. Gibson, New Zealand)

simplification, provided that it was not of the operations management kind, something which was seldom done sufficiently well. Management studies, operations planning and training programmes in management should certainly not be skimped.

65. Any inefficiency in project design or administration was clearly something that needed to be overcome. At a time when the funds available were inadequate to meet urgent needs, a special effort had to be made to ensure that the money was used to the best effect and that new projects were better designed and managed more efficiently. The 1981 Joint Inspection Unit report had commented on short-comings in evaluation activities of the Bureau for Programme Policy and Evaluation. While there might have been changes since that paper was prepared, it did appear that more emphasis should be placed on individual project evaluation. If that meant that thematic evaluations had to take second place and that resources had to be found from elsewhere in UNDP to make it possible to strengthen the evaluation system within a reasonable period, then that would only reflect a proper sense of priorities.

66. Mr. S. KAHN (Pakistan) reiterated his delegation's support for the concept of government execution as the preferred approach and one of the key means of promoting self-reliance. That concept had been advocated in many resolutions and decisions since the 1970 Consensus. The policy directive of the General Assembly on the subject was also very clear and had been given in the light of experience and the development of government capabilities. The Assembly clearly felt that insufficient progress had been made towards government execution of projects and that something had to be done to expedite matters. His delegation saw the Administrator's report in document DP/558 as a response to the General Assembly's policy directive and felt that the Governing Council should attempt to implement it at the operational level.

67. Although some delegations had said that the guidelines were only recent, the fact was that a long time had passed with little progress. Generally speaking, government execution of projects was an exception and did not appear in the normal range of options. The new recommendations were flexible, operational and took due account of the capacity of Governments to execute projects, considering such aspects as costs and the possibility of combining the efforts of Governments and agencies in various ways.

68. In view of the unsatisfactory experience of the previous 10 or 11 years, it was essential to give fresh impetus to the concept of government execution of projects. The proposal to compensate Governments for additional expenditure through payment of support costs was a very valuable incentive; that approach could be reviewed midway through the third programming cycle. Alterations might be made to the wording of the recommendation, if delegations so desired, but the important point was to ensure that government execution of projects became a genuine option, rather than an exception.

69. Mr. PREUSS (Federal Republic of Germany) said that his delegation supported the principle of extending government execution. He welcomed the report in document DP/558, and particularly its explanation of why so little progress had so

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(Mr. Preuss, Federal Republic of Germany)

far been made. However, his delegation had been worried in the past by reports of a considerable number of failures by Governments to meet UNDP stipulations; it would have been interesting to see a more detailed analysis of the difficulties faced by Governments in that regard. Such an analysis was necessary before any decision was taken to continue the scheme.

70. The recommendations in document DP/558 involved radical changes in the arrangements for government execution, as well as in financial arrangements, and also implied that more staff might be necessary. In the light of experience so far, the time had not yet come for such far-reaching decisions; it was essential first to know exactly where the difficulties lay, to what extent the financial arrangements needed to be changed, and what additional costs might be involved for field offices, as well as the nature of the responsibilities of the additional field staff envisaged.

71. The guidelines for increased government execution had been laid down only in 1979, and experience had thus been short. Before any radical change in approach was made, there must first be a thorough analysis of the short-comings of the system, and an assessment of the role which would remain for UNDP.

72. Mr. DAHLQUIST (World Health Organization) replying to the United Kingdom representative's question about the policies of the specialized agencies in the matter of government execution, said that the promotion of self-reliance and the increased use of national professional staff were among the basic aims of his organization in all co-operation programmes. The complexities involved were well-known, and progress had been slow in most countries; consequently, building up expertise in the country concerned was an integral part of WHO programmes.

73. Mr. BERINGER (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations) said that there was a need to broaden the range of machinery available for the implementation of technical assistance. His organization had set up a Field Programme Committee to study in detail the implications of the new dimensions (General Assembly resolution 3405 (XXX)) and, in particular, the practical modalities involved. It was actively seeking practical solutions which would benefit developing countries. However, at the same time, it regarded the specialized agencies as reservoirs of valuable experience and knowledge, which should be used effectively and be at the disposal of its member States.

74. He agreed that there was a need to make progress on the issue, and for a flexible approach, and hoped that an appropriate procedure would be found.

75. Mr. FARASHUDDIN (Bangladesh) said that his delegation saw government execution as an important element in the development of self-reliance, and had been greatly encouraged by the UNDP Administrator's view that it should be the rule rather than the exception.

76. The recipient countries had to assume some responsibility for the lack of progress towards self-execution due largely to their lack of experience and of competence. There was an additional problem, in that Governments would be required to pay for projects in advance and then seek reimbursement by way of compensation.

(Mr. Farashuddin, Bangladesh)

The UNDP proposals were not radical, but involved reasonable and timely measures to promote government execution; they represented a bare minimum if the General Assembly's instructions on the matter were to be implemented.

77. Paragraph 18 of document DP/558 outlined three ways to support government execution. The first - support for the administrative capacity of Governments from IPF resources - was essential to any substantial measure of government execution; the second, involving compensation for Governments through the payment of support costs, was also very welcome, and created a real possibility of savings, since some Governments might apply for less than the percentage of costs agreed on. Also, progress towards government execution would be slow and steady at best, and the executing role of the organizations within the UNDP system would not be greatly curtailed. The third method, concerning an additional strengthening of the field offices, was largely hypothetical, and was unlikely to be necessary.

78. His delegation supported the draft decision in paragraph 55, but stressed that, unless the reasonable measures proposed were actually implemented, the whole discussion would remain hypothetical.

79. Mr. GONZALEZ (Argentina) said that his delegation agreed with the view expressed in document DP/558 concerning the primary role of recipient Governments in the process of implementing UNDP projects, together with their freedom to decide national development priorities. However, it would not be advisable to go beyond the selective approach towards government execution originally approved by the Council. The decision to apply the new arrangements for execution was the exclusive concern of the Government concerned, which would evaluate each case in terms of its operational feasibility. There should be a gradual advance towards government execution, on the basis of appropriate machinery and procedures. In that context, he supported the view expressed in DP/558 (para. 24 (a)) concerning the need to simplify the formulation of project documents. Those documents were essentially the responsibility of Governments, which could seek assistance as necessary from the international agency involved.

80. He welcomed the Administrator's recommendations concerning improvements in project evaluation, as well as reductions in the number of missions, which should be subject to the approval of the recipient countries. However his delegation was not in favour of setting up any reserve funded from IPFs for that purpose, since it was for Governments to allocate their IPFs in accordance with their development plans.

81. It was desirable to promote recruitment of national professional staff, whatever the method of project execution being used, and there was a need for guidelines to expedite that process.

82. Mrs. VERVALCKE (Belgium) said that her delegation broadly shared the views expressed by the representatives of the United States and of the Federal Republic of Germany. The principle of government execution was an excellent one and should be one of the aims of the Council. However, the results achieved could be assessed

(Mrs. Vervalcke, Belgium)

only in terms of each country's situation, and the role of UNDP and its resident representatives should be to consider, in consultation with Governments, how best to assist them in developing their own executing capacity. Immense progress would have to be made before all Governments receiving UNDP assistance were capable of executing development projects alone.

83. The proposals in DP/558 were too radical, and did not entirely fulfil their underlying aims. Paragraphs 16 to 19 raised various questions: for example, with reference to paragraph 18 (b), UNDP should not compensate Governments for responsibilities which they should be able to assume themselves with the minimum of delay. UNDP resources were limited and threatened, and likely to continue so over the next few years and they should be used to the maximum extent to provide the basis for the main responsibilities of UNDP.

84. As the representative of Argentina had said, the best way to encourage the principle of government execution was by advancing gradually. The document would offer food for thought and for discussion: it was necessary to give further consideration to measures which could be introduced gradually to promote a better and broader implementation of the principle.

85. Mr. HAVET (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) said that UNESCO had always respected the ultimate responsibility of Governments in the execution of projects, and had evolved a process of continuing consultation, so that projects were genuinely joint ventures, the final decisions resting with the Government concerned. Thus UNESCO was strongly in favour of further progress towards government execution, provided that the system used was an effective one. That proviso was not intended as a restriction; the situation could, however, vary according to the country, the time of implementation, and the nature of the project involved.

86. National organizers of projects should not be cut off from the intellectual assistance and guidance of the international community, based on its experience in the field. That experience was not to be found directly in the agencies; they were the points of contact with the best expertise in the international community in specific technical fields, and could make that expertise available to projects when and where appropriate. Any new procedures introduced must maintain that important contact.

87. Mr. BROWN (Deputy Administrator) said that, although the instructions to promote government execution had been renewed in 1979, they had originally been issued in May 1976. Thus UNDP experience in that area had been longer than had been claimed; the need for modifications in the original instructions had become apparent.

88. If the Council were to accept the recommendations contained in document DP/558, it would be possible to take certain measures immediately. Others, however, required the specific approval of the Council itself: for example, the strengthening of field offices through the addition of new posts would require the approval

(Mr. Brown)

of a budget request. Thus the Governing Council would retain control of any expansion. Similarly, any changes in the financial arrangements would also have to be submitted to the Council for its approval.

89. In reply to the representative of Belgium, he stressed that there would be no additional costs involved in the proposals. If payments were made to Governments in support of additional costs which they had incurred, those payments would be in lieu of payments made under normal executing arrangements.

90. The PRESIDENT suggested that those delegations which had expressed views on the recommendations in DP/558 should meet informally, under the chairmanship of the Vice-President, in order to seek a consensus.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.