GOVERNING COUNCIL

Thirtieth session

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 21st MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York
on Tuesday, 14 June 1983, at 10.30 a.m.

President: Mr. SLIM (Tunisia)
later: Mr. SZEREMETA (Poland)

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Any corrections to the records of the meetings of this session will be consolidated in a single corrigendum, to be issued shortly after the end of the session.
(v) Consideration of regional programme

(vi) Global and interregional projects
The meeting was called to order at 10.40 a.m.

PROGRAMME PLANNING: THE THIRD PROGRAMMING CYCLE, 1982-1986 (continued)

(b) COUNTRY AND INTERCOUNTRY PROGRAMMES AND PROJECTS:

(iii) IMPLEMENTATION OF SELECTED COUNTRY PROGRAMMES (DP/1983/62, DP/1983/65)

(iv) CONSIDERATION AND APPROVAL OF COUNTRY PROGRAMMES (INCLUDING REQUESTS FOR EXTENSIONS) (DP/CP/SYR/3)

(v) CONSIDERATION OF REGIONAL PROGRAMMES (DP/RAB/1)

(vi) GLOBAL AND INTERREGIONAL PROJECTS (DP/PROJECTS/REC/11, DP/1983/39)

1. Mr. KIRDAR (Secretary of the Governing Council) said that the Budgetary and Finance Committee had completed its consideration of document DP/1983/39 entitled "UNDP support to the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) of the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR)". The President had received a letter from the Chairman of the Committee dated 10 June 1983 recommending that the cost of UNDP support to that programme, which for the period 1984-1985 amounted to $900,000, should continue to be charged against the UNDP biennial budget rather than be considered as programme expenditure and that it should in future be included in the biennial budget under a separate appropriation line.

2. The PRESIDENT invited the Council to adopt the draft decision contained in document DP/1983/39, with the amendment recommended by the Budgetary and Finance Committee.

3. It was so decided.

4. Mr. MASHLER (Senior Director, Division for Global and Interregional Projects) referred the Governing Council to the Administrator's recommendation concerning project GLO/78/003 (DP/PROJECTS/REC/11). That was the only global project submitted to the Council for approval at the current session.

5. UNDP's global and interregional programme had five major objectives: increased food production; improvement of health; efficient exploitation and management of developing countries' energy resources; achievement of more equitable international economic relations and closer economic co-operation among developing countries; and development of selected categories of human resources. There was a consensus that those five areas not only were critical to the development of most countries, but also were areas in which broad international co-operation was needed. The activities which had been developed within each area and the results achieved were described in the recently issued brochure entitled Unfinished business. Special efforts had been made during the past two years to expand the energy component of the global and interregional programme, to broaden the health component, to increase support for drinking water supply and sanitation projects, and to expand training elements in all projects and programmes.

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6. In the energy sector, UNDP had made substantial progress, in co-operation with the World Bank, in implementing the joint energy sector assessment programme. That programme was designed to assist 60 developing countries to diagnose their major energy problems and evaluate options for solving them. Assessment reports had already been completed or were being completed for over 30 countries. The response to the programme had been so favourable that the number of countries requesting assessments had grown to almost 80. UNDP had also made substantial progress in initiating with the World Bank an energy sector management programme to assist Governments in implementing the short-term, high-priority technical assistance recommendations made in the assessment reports. Some 22 small-scale but vital activities had already been undertaken.

7. The two UNDP/World Bank programmes were contributing to improved planning and management of the energy sector in the developing countries and to better co-ordination of the technical assistance and capital investment being provided to those countries by bilateral agencies and development banks. The support provided by the donor community through the Energy Account and other multi-bilateral arrangements was deeply appreciated by UNDP and the developing countries.

8. Three large-scale interregional projects designed to assist countries in achieving the goals of the International Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation Decade were well under way, in co-operation with the World Bank and other multilateral and bilateral agencies. The first of those projects involved the testing and development of rural water supply hand pumps. Sixteen countries were currently participating in that project, which was intended to identify the types of hand pumps best suited to the diverse ground-water conditions and socio-cultural preferences of communities in the developing countries. Under the first phase of the project, improvements had already been made in the design and manufacture of several hand pumps in developed and developing countries. Research had also been contributing to the improved design of low-cost pumps that could be easily maintained by villagers. In the important field-testing phase, the project was receiving substantial support from many Governments and United Nations agencies, particularly UNICEF. Recently, the Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit of the Federal Republic of Germany had joined in supporting a major irrigation pump programme in China. The Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) was about to approve support for the work by UNDP, the World Bank and other agencies in Bangladesh, Ghana, the Ivory Coast and Sri Lanka.

9. Under the second project, which was aimed at the development and implementation of low-cost sanitation investment programmes, a multidisciplinary advisory team had already assisted some 19 countries in designing and constructing low-cost sanitation systems as an alternative to conventional capital-intensive, water-borne systems. The project was helping countries such as India, Brazil, the Philippines and the United Republic of Tanzania to introduce those systems, which represented potential savings of at least $230 per capita in comparison with conventional sewerage systems. Engineers and other technicians from developing countries were receiving training in the design of low-cost sanitation projects. Major follow-up investments were expected in the years ahead.
10. As a complement to those two projects, UNDP was co-operating with the World Bank, the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements, the National Film Board of Canada, UNICEF and WHO in preparing information materials for the Governments of recipient countries and their personnel on viable low-cost alternatives to traditional water and sanitation systems. Initial support for that third project had been provided by CIDA. Other agencies had pledged support for the preparation and field testing of the materials and for their distribution among developing countries.

11. In addition to those three projects, there was a project designed to promote women's participation in the International Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation Decade. Despite resource constraints, UNDP had taken the initiative, with the generous support of the Government of Norway, to launch the preparatory phase of the project, which was being executed in close co-operation with WHO, UNICEF and other agencies. UNDP was providing technical backstopping and administrative support and was ensuring that the project was closely linked to its other programmes. Although the preparatory phase had just begun, many developing countries and members of the donor community had expressed interest and support for the initiative.

12. In connection with the Decade, the Division for Global and Interregional Projects had been given the responsibility of chairing the Inter-Bureau Standing Committee, which had been set up to ensure adequate co-ordination within UNDP of Decade-related activities. UNDP was providing support to 123 projects connected with water supply and sanitation. The total UNDP contribution was $133.5 million.

13. A major effort had been made in recent months to mobilize resources for the establishment of the World Maritime University. With the co-operation of the International Maritime Organization, those efforts had borne fruit. The University would be formally dedicated in early July 1983. UNDP wished to acknowledge the support of many members of the donor community and the support of the developing countries themselves. Each developing country which was planning to send one or more trainees to the University had managed to make available $10,000 per trainee per academic year from its country IPFs, from other multilateral and bilateral assistance programmes or from its own resources. The private sector and, in particular, the shipping industry in a number of countries had also shown much interest in the establishment of the University. Formal arrangements for co-operation between the University and the private sector were at the planning stage.

14. Support had continued to be provided for other ongoing activities under the global and interregional programme. A fuller account of those activities was given in the brochure Unfinished business. One important new dimension of the agricultural research component of the programme was the increasing emphasis that was being placed on research into methods of enhancing the natural nitrogen fixation capability of food crops. UNDP was supporting research into nitrogen fixation for rice, sorghums, millets and food legumes.
15. Research into legumes was being conducted at two centres, one of which was the International Center for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas, in the Syrian Arab Republic. One of the objectives of the project (GLO/78/003) was to improve the use of soil water under the arid conditions prevailing in countries of West Asia and North Africa. Research had thus far been limited primarily to the Syrian Arab Republic. The encouraging results obtained under the project warranted an extension of its coverage to other countries. UNDP's current support for the project would end in June 1983. The Administrator was requesting approval for a supplementary allocation of $850,000 for a two-year extension of the project. The end-result was expected to be significant increases, within a relatively short time, in the production of crops being grown under conditions of very limited rainfall. Specialists in the region would be trained in relevant aspects of the research programme.

16. The new directions in which UNDP had moved during the previous two years had strengthened the global and interregional programme while maintaining its cohesion. There was reason for concern, however, about its future. For one thing, the resources available for the remainder of the third programming cycle were unlikely to be sufficient to maintain the programme's momentum and sustain existing activities at an adequate level. Moreover, it was not known whether the Governments of the participating countries would undertake the actions required at the national level to ensure that the research and development activities would in fact contribute to national development.

17. Because of the resource crisis, a number of activities under the global and interregional programme had had to be eliminated, and several major projects on which preparatory work had begun had been postponed. UNDP had had some success, however, in obtaining complementary support for a number of its programmes.

18. The primary aim of the global programme was to help to build up, in co-operation with other donors, networks and systems which would permit a co-ordinated international approach to research and development in areas of critical importance to developing countries. Many such systems were in operation. The network of agricultural research centres supported by the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) included 13 first-rate institutions, most of them in developing countries. Under the special programme for research and training in tropical diseases, jointly sponsored by UNDP, WHO and the World Bank, an entirely new approach to such research had been developed. A similar approach was being adopted with regard to research into and control of diarrhoeal diseases and for the low-cost water and sanitation programmes. While UNDP's financial stake in the creation of those networks was in some cases only a minority one, its support, both moral and financial, had played a significant role in generating support from other sources. The research networks that had been developed represented a truly unique instrument for international co-operation, and it was of paramount importance that they should be maintained intact. For that reason, it was essential that UNDP's global and interregional programme resources should be maintained at a level which would permit the programme to provide continued support.
19. It was also essential that UNDP's partners should recognize the need for sustained support to the various centres and programmes. Moreover, the Governments of developing countries would have to take specific concomitant measures at the national level if the activities supported under the global and interregional programme were to contribute significantly to national development. The results of research and the new technologies developed had to be applied, and supplementary national research was often required for the purpose of testing and adapting the results in specific situations. Extension services needed to be strengthened, and critical inputs such as credit, pesticides, drugs and logistic support had to be provided.

20. Fortunately, that kind of complementary action in the area of agricultural research was already very promising. An outstanding example was the international rice-testing programme, which had been assisted by UNDP under the global programme since 1974. Some 70 countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America were supporting that programme. In many countries, however, greater efforts needed to be made to strengthen agricultural extension services, provide credit to farmers and improve marketing and storage arrangements.

21. If the health research currently under way was to have any major impact on the health of people, Governments would have to make important decisions. The new drugs and vaccines could be made available on the scale required only through community health workers, rural health services and other support measures, properly co-ordinated within the framework of a well-organized primary health care system. Important research results had been achieved under the programmes relating to tropical diseases, diarrhoeal disease control and immunization, and more could be expected to follow in the relatively near future. It was time for Governments to strengthen and, where necessary, reorient their health delivery systems, particularly in rural areas; budget allocations of 5 per cent or less for health were not enough. Similar considerations applied to UNDP assistance in the energy sector and to the low-cost water supply and sanitation programmes.

22. In connection with the mid-term review of the third-cycle programme to be held in 1984, it would be very helpful to the Division for Global and Interregional Projects if Governments would carefully consider what measures they needed to adopt in order to ensure that the global and interregional activities in which they were participating would have the desired impact on their countries. They might also assess their country programmes to determine how the various levels of UNDP assistance could be more closely harmonized. He was fully aware that developing countries faced severe resource constraints and were coping with many urgent and competing needs. No needs were more basic, however, than food, water, health and energy. Governments which had made strenuous efforts, despite the obstacles and difficulties, to concentrate on vital issues had been rewarded with outstanding successes in economic welfare and increased social stability.

23. The PRESIDENT invited the Council to approve the supplementary assistance for a global project recommended in document DP/PROJECTS/REC/11.

24. It was so decided.
25. Mr. ZAANOUNI (Regional Director, Regional Bureau for Arab States), introducing the first regional programme for the Arab States (DP/RAB/I) and the third country programme for the Syrian Arab Republic (DP/CP/SYR/3), said that the regional programme for the Arab States for 1983-1986 was the product of years of experience in project programming and execution and was based on Arab, African and international consultations, on the resolutions of the General Assembly concerning the Third United Nations Development Decade and on the development objectives proclaimed in many international forums. Its preparation had, of course, been governed by the principles of the 1970 Consensus and by Governing Council decision 80/9, concerning the regional programming process. The summary on the first page of the programme document (DP/RAB/I) outlined the consultation process which had preceded the submission of the programme.

26. The regional programme document contained a review of the regional activities of the Arab States in the period 1977-1981 and of those for 1982, the first year of the third cycle. Until 1978 the activities had been part of the regional programme for Europe, the Mediterranean and the Middle East. The experience gained during the first and second programmes' cycles had undoubtedly provided useful guidance for the selection of projects and priorities. For the four-year period 1983-1986, therefore, the main emphasis would be on food security, the development of human resources, the expansion of regional development co-operation, energy planning and research, industrialization and the social, cultural and environmental aspects of development.

27. The needs of the countries served by the Regional Bureau for Arab States far exceeded available UNDP resources, and the programmed activities would make only a small contribution to their development. It was to be hoped, however, that they would lead to effective results and would encourage activities complementing those of UNDP.

28. The gap between the food requirements of the Arab States and their agricultural production was growing from year to year for technical, administrative, and other reasons. It had therefore been decided to concentrate on food security and agricultural development by sponsoring studies and activities in that field. The activities for the development of human resources would cover training activities in such fields as civil aviation, telecommunications, educational planning, science, statistics, industrialization and Arabic terminology.

29. The third country programme for the Syrian Arab Republic for 1983-1986 had been prepared in close consultation with the Government and the executing agencies, under the leadership of the UNDP Resident Representative in Damascus. The programme reflected the priorities of the five-year Development Plan for the period 1981-1985, which was primarily based on the expansion of the agricultural sector. The aim was to promote the horizontal and vertical expansion of agriculture in order to achieve self-sufficiency in food. The Development Plan concentrated on identifying and executing projects with an assured economic return.

30. The reduction of programme resources to 55 per cent of IPFs, by making it necessary to re-examine priorities, had caused the postponement of submission of
the Syrian country programme until the thirtieth session. The modified programme before the Council concentrated on selected problems in the fields of agriculture, education, industry, communications and health. One of the features of the programme was the combination of UNDP and bilateral resources in the financing of most projects. Another feature was its concentration on a small number of large-scale projects, such as strengthening agricultural extension services, mechanization of agriculture, technical education, and strengthening national capacities to prepare investment projects. The programme reaffirmed the complementarity of technical assistance and development investment projects, as in the case of the agricultural development project in the southern region and the complete reorganization of technical, vocational, agricultural and health education in the country. Other vital sectors had had to be excluded owing to the limited financial resources available. Discussions were continuing between the Government and the Resident Representative on the possibility of mobilizing additional resources for the financing of projects in other vital sectors through third-party cost sharing.

31. Two other country programmes for the third cycle, those for Lebanon and Qatar, were expected to be submitted to the Governing Council at the following session. In spite of difficult circumstances, UNDP had been able to continue its activities in Lebanon, if only on a restricted basis. It had continued its close co-operation with the Government of Lebanon in order to determine priorities and evaluate projects requiring the technical assistance of the Programme, and a draft country programme had been completed. The Government of Qatar had prepared a draft country programme in consultation with the Resident Representative and the executing agencies. The Government would finance the entire cost of the programme; Qatar had voluntarily relinquished UNDP allocations since 1977. A reduction in the Government's oil revenues had, however, caused the Government to re-examine its development programmes in the light of changed financial circumstances, and the submission of the country programme had accordingly been delayed.

32. The Regional Bureau had begun to concentrate on monitoring the implementation of country programmes and improving the quality of project preparation and design. The Bureau had begun to compile its first annual report on programme implementation. It had, in that connection, proposed a new format for the annual reports of the Resident Representatives. The Bureau had also compiled information on project and programme results for incorporation into the annual report of the Administrator to the Council.

33. A point to which the Bureau paid great attention was consistency between UNDP programmes and the development priorities of the recipient country. Many country programmes in the region were relatively new, with 12 of the 19 countries having begun implementation of their programmes during the previous 12 months and five country programmes having been approved by the Council in February 1983. All of the programmes would end in 1986. The third programming cycle coincided almost exactly with the development plan cycles of the recipient countries, with no more than one year's difference in any case. As a result, programme priorities were unlikely to change.
34. Most programme resources during the current cycle had been allocated to projects carried over from the previous cycle and, in general, priorities had remained the same: training, research institutions, agricultural and industrial productivity, and the building up of administrative and technical systems. Financial constraints within UNDP made it difficult to allocate the necessary sums for projects aimed at encouraging investment. Most of the country programmes also contained projects dealing with planning, transport and communications, and industry. Only two Governments had changed their programme priorities after their country programmes had been approved: the Yemen Arab Republic had, because of the recent earthquake, decided to redirect its activities towards reconstruction and rehabilitation, and in Democratic Yemen severe damage from floods had imposed new requirements.

35. Among recent trends was a growing interest in activities relating to sources of energy, water resources, and specialized training in the fields of human settlements and the environment. A number of projects were aimed at the provision of basic services to remote areas and at advancing the status of women.

36. At two meetings held at Riyadh in early 1983 - one on the regional programme for the Arab States and the other of Resident Representatives - programming, review procedures and programme content had been discussed. A strategy had also been discussed for improving project quality. The two meetings agreed, in general, that greater attention should be paid to project feasibility and cost-effectiveness. He was himself interested in that subject and would in coming weeks hold talks with executing agencies on those matters.

37. The cut in expenditure levels at the end of 1982 had not greatly affected nine of the States served by his Bureau, since the bulk of their project financing was provided by the States themselves under the cost-sharing formula. The degree to which the remaining 10 States had been affected varied. Five of them - Democratic Yemen, Egypt, Iraq, Morocco and the Sudan - had heavy financial commitments, particularly for 1984-1986. The programmes of the 10 States affected were being reviewed with a view to their modification. In the case of the Yemen, it had been hoped to secure additional financing from various countries, to supplement the amounts provided by UNDP, under third-party cost-sharing arrangements, but economic difficulties in the region of the Gulf and elsewhere had led to the postponement of the expected contributions.

38. With regard to the Sudan, the expenditure of an amount greater than its first and second cycle allocations had been allowed because of the special circumstances of that country. Commitments had continued at a high level and, because of the reduction in expenditures, a number of ongoing projects were being cancelled. In Lebanon, actual expenditures had been less than those programmed during the second cycle and balances had been carried forward to the third cycle. However, that country's rehabilitation and reconstruction needs had led the Government to request UNDP to conduct a campaign to mobilize additional resources through third-party cost sharing for a number of priority projects.
39. The report on the implementation of selected country programmes for Arab States (DP/1983/62) did not include project results and achievements, given that country programmes were new to the region and only beginning to be implemented. Part II of the annual report of the Administrator for 1982 (DP/1983/6/Add.2) did contain information on the achievements of UNDP-supported projects in the Arab world which clearly reflected the effective role of UNDP in the development activities of the countries concerned.

40. Most of the Arab countries were in a position to pay for the technical assistance they needed and did so, but the world economic crisis had diminished their ability to continue that practice. Other Arab countries of very limited capacities, such as the Sudan, Djibouti, Yemen and Egypt, could not cover even a small part of the cost of the technical assistance they needed from their own resources, and for them UNDP was the major agency financing technical co-operation activities. As matters stood programmes in those countries were being curtailed below the necessary minimum to achieve effectiveness.

41. Mr. Szeremeta (Poland) took the chair.

42. Mr. KAABACHI (Tunisia) expressed support for the recommendations adopted by the intergovernmental meeting for the Arab States regional programme 1983-1986. His delegation appreciated UNDP's efforts to identify the appropriate mix between ongoing and new activities, bearing in mind that projects should promote co-operation without necessarily perpetuating activities indefinitely. It agreed that a major criterion in the selection of new projects should be the contribution that they could make towards achieving regional integration and enhancing economic co-operation among the Arab States (DP/RAB/I, para. 10).

43. Satisfactory results had been achieved in the implementation of the programme for the Arab States, which attached great importance to the more than 100 regional projects launched. While his Government appreciated the active support given by UNDP in a variety of sectors, it noted that the industry, science and technology, and health sectors had received only limited UNDP support, as table 1 in document DP/RAB/1 showed. It was gratifying, however, to find that agriculture, forestry and fisheries had accounted for 26.2 per cent of IPF expenditures during 1977-1981.

44. As to the regional programme for the third programming cycle, his delegation agreed that the emphasis should be on the promotion of co-operation and integration at the regional and subregional levels and on the identification of bottle-necks and other obstacles to the development of the Arab States. It supported the list of programme priorities contained in part II, section C, of the regional programme document (DP/RAB/1). His Government supported the regional programme as a whole and the country programme for the Syrian Arab Republic. It believed that cost-sharing contributions should be made only by States which had the necessary resources and wished to make such contributions.

45. Mr. ABDEL-GHAFFAR (Observer for Egypt) said that he was gratified by the references made by the Regional Director in his statement to the collective
involvement of Governments in the regional programme for the Arab States and co-operation with the regional economic commissions. Egypt attached great importance to the development of human resources and was doing everything possible to ensure the success of all projects related to that subject in the Arab world and in Africa.

46. A number of projects which were being financed under the country programme for Egypt were of interest to other Arab and African States and could be incorporated into the regional programme. They included projects concerning a naval training academy in Alexandria, which served all Arab and African countries; the development of fisheries in the Red Sea; a centre for rural development; and a center for training in hotel work. Another interesting project concerned a training symposium for Arab doctors on liver ailments. A first session of the symposium had been held at Cairo on the initiative of an association of victims of liver ailments and had been attended by representatives from many Arab countries; it was hoped that the Programme would finance the second session. Another project in the health sector was the establishment of a centre for the diagnosis and treatment of bilharzia and the training of doctors in methods of treating it. Bilharzia was very prevalent in Arab and African States, and the project was for the moment concerned primarily with bladder cancer resulting from bilharzia.

47. It was clear that the crucial problem facing the Programme was the decline in available resources. It was to be hoped that that problem would shortly be overcome through increased contributions from donor countries, both developed and developing. His delegation endorsed the decisions reached at the Riyadh intergovernmental meeting. It stressed the need for increased assistance to be provided to the Palestinian people so as to enable them to overcome all the obstacles facing them.

48. Mr. ZLATANOV (Bulgaria), referring to the third country programme for the Syrian Arab Republic (DP/CP/SYR/3), said that his delegation was convinced that the implementation of that programme would help Syria to achieve the goals of its fifth five-year Plan. An important feature of the programme was the co-ordinated and integrated approach to technical co-operation through the combined use of UNDP and bilateral resources. His delegation supported the country programme for Syria, a country with which Bulgaria had maintained fruitful economic co-operation for many years.

49. His delegation fully supported the Administrator's request for authority to continue to approve assistance to projects submitted by the Government of Lebanon pending the approval of the second country programme.

50. Mr. EL GHAOUTHE (Mauritania) said that his delegation wholeheartedly supported the projects in the regional programme for the Arab States, especially the projects for those States that were being subjected to aggression by the terrorist Zionist State, which was not only killing mothers and children but also destroying all economic activity. A typical incident had occurred only a few days earlier when the Israeli army had burned forested land and destroyed bridges in Lebanon; some of the States he was referring to were also afflicted by natural disasters.
51. He asked whether the Regional Director intended to report on what was being done to assist the Palestinian people.

52. Mr. POTVIN (Canada) said that the first regional programme for the Arab States was a very good start; the regional meetings to determine priorities had been very successful and the priorities selected took adequate account of world concerns and the areas of competence of UNDP. The programme document (DP/RAB/1) provided a very good description of the problems identified during the second cycle and the conclusions drawn for the preparation and implementation of the regional programme. The analysis was very thorough and should be applied as broadly as possible. However, there was no information about specific projects or the allocation of resources between different sectors of assistance. Such information would have been useful to enable the Council to take an appropriate decision, and as a point of comparison when reviewing future programmes. Nevertheless, his delegation supported the regional programme.

53. Mr. MASRI (Observer for the Syrian Arab Republic) said that Syria believed that the priorities in any national development plan should be agriculture and the industrial sector, and from that perspective it supported all the proposals and priorities approved at the intergovernmental meeting held at Riyadh. It believed that technical and scientific aspects should be given special attention in the development process in the Arab region. Moreover, a significant improvement in developmental activities could be ensured by making better use of human resources, through the provision of training in the disciplines needed to promote development in the Arab world.

54. The third country programme for Syria was in complete harmony with its fifth five-year Development Plan. That Plan gave highest priority to food security and agricultural development. Syria attached special importance to the participation of women in the development process and, under the fifth five-year plan efforts were being made to expand the participation of women in development. Priority was also being given to scientific and technical development, without which no development plan could achieve positive results.

55. Mr. QUINLAN (Australia) said that the Observer for Egypt had referred to two projects in the medical field. While prime responsibility rested with the World Health Organization in many cases, greater UNDP assistance to some of the projects mentioned by Egypt would nevertheless be welcome, especially in relation to the liver diseases which took such an appalling toll of human lives in the Arab and African States. The region offered many important opportunities for key research into liver diseases and other debilitating diseases, and his delegation would welcome a strengthening of UNDP's activities in that field.

56. Mr. ZAANOUNI (Regional Director, Regional Bureau for Arab States) said, in reply to the question asked by the representative of Tunisia concerning the relatively small allocations made to certain sectors, that the projects included in the regional programme had been selected with the agreement of the Governments concerned. No project in the regional programme could be implemented by executing...
(Mr. Zaanouni)

agencies unless the agreement of at least three States of the region was obtained. The programme document did not purport to be an exhaustive list of projects. Not mentioned, for instance, was an important industrial project and there were other industrial and agricultural projects which had not been included. Similarly, there was an ongoing joint project with the Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development, on the financing of pre-investment and investment studies.

57. UNDP was very interested in the health sector, and there were plans to organize and finance a number of symposia at which representatives of Arab and African States could exchange experience, views and achievements in the field of health. The symposia would initially be organized for Arab States and would later be expanded to include African States. UNDP was trying to involve as many Arab States as possible in the existing regional projects so as to make good use of the experience and expertise gained.

58. The subject mentioned by the representative of Mauritania would be discussed in the context of the agenda item concerning assistance to national liberation movements and the Palestinian people.

59. In reply to the representative of Canada, he said that the regional programme for the Arab States (DP/RAB/1) did not refer to many specific projects. The reason was that the timing of the intergovernmental meeting held at Riyadh at the end of January 1983, at which priorities had been identified, had made it impossible for the Regional Bureau to submit a detailed list of projects at the current session.

60. Mr. ADJALI (Observer for Algeria) said that his delegation was pleased that the priorities identified at the Riyadh meeting had been taken into account, especially those relating to the advancement of Arab women, and problems of emigration; the children of Arab emigrants to Europe often faced enormous difficulties in adapting to a foreign environment. His delegation had proposed at that meeting that the project for water resources in the Maghreb should be extended since it could produce excellent results.

61. One problem discussed at the Riyadh meeting had been the monitoring of the regional programme: It appeared that the Regional Bureau for the Arab States was not fully apprised of progress in ongoing regional projects. The regional programme was a direct complement to country programmes and fully coincided with the national interests of countries of the region; it should therefore be accorded greater importance. Interregional projects should also be encouraged; for example, the problem of migratory locusts affected both the sub-Saharan and the Middle East regions and the existing projects in North Africa and in the sub-Saharan region should be co-ordinated or combined.

62. Mr. Slim (Tunisia) resumed the Chair.

63. Mr. ZAANOUNI (Regional Director, Regional Bureau for Arab States) said that a number of projects which had been mentioned at the Riyadh meeting were to be extended in the third cycle. They included not only the project on water resources...
in the Maghreb, but projects on production of olive oil, and of honey, and certain fisheries projects. The problem was simply one of resources; UNDP would try to obtain contributions from countries under the system of third-party cost sharing.

64. On the question of interregional projects, he said that the migratory locust project had been in existence for nearly 20 years. There were other projects of interest to both the Arab States and Africa, for example a nine-country project concerning the development of the Nile Basin; UNDP was awaiting the agreement of the countries concerned so as to be able to organize that project.

65. In reply to the comments concerning the monitoring of regional programmes, he said that Resident Representatives and the countries concerned had been urged to take more interest in regional projects, and a meeting was being arranged with a view to enabling them to follow the projects more closely. UNDP was trying to ensure that the same attention was accorded to regional projects as to country projects.

66. The PRESIDENT suggested that the Council should take note with appreciation of the report of the Administrator on the implementation of selected country programmes for Arab States (DP/1983/62).

67. It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 1.05 p.m.