GOVERNING COUNCIL

Special meeting

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 3rd MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Tuesday, 15 February 1983, at 10.30 a.m.

President: Mr. SLIM (Tunisia)

CONTENTS

Country and intercountry programmes and projects (continued)

(b) Trends and problems in the country programmes (continued)

(c) Implementation of selected country programmes (continued)

(d) Consideration and approval of country programmes (including requests for extension) (continued)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.50 a.m.

COUNTRY AND INTERCOUNTRY PROGRAMMES AND PROJECTS (continued)

(b) TRENDS AND PROBLEMS IN THE COUNTRY PROGRAMMES (continued)

(c) IMPLEMENTATION OF SELECTED COUNTRY PROGRAMMES (continued)

(d) CONSIDERATION AND APPROVAL OF COUNTRY PROGRAMMES (INCLUDING REQUESTS FOR EXTENSION) (continued)

African States

1. Mr. SCHMID (Austria) said that the country programming exercise lay at the very heart of UNDP's work. It was imperative that the Council should be more closely concerned with that procedure and should be able to check on the content and implementation of country programmes. The question had been discussed at length in the Working Group of the Whole and there appeared to be a tendency in favour of more thorough consideration of country programmes by the Council. The Council was simply not in a position to examine the whole range of country programmes, and the exercise of approving those programmes was purely formalistic and provided no real opportunity to consider their content. The general willingness of Member States to commit ever-increasing resources to UNDP was closely linked to the possibility of at least overseeing in broad terms the utilization of those resources. UNDP was in constant competition with other channels of technical assistance; if it was not possible to satisfy financial authorities and Parliaments of donor countries that the funds committed to UNDP were being used in the best possible way, those funds would be committed through other channels. His observations were made in a general spirit of trying to ensure an increased flow of funds to UNDP.

2. There were a number of ways of improving the Council's procedure for approving country programmes and in general his delegation agreed with the suggestions put forward by the Canadian delegation. The Council as a whole was too unwieldy to consider country programmes one by one and the wholesale approval of country programmes was not effective and cost UNDP valuable good will; his delegation had therefore suggested that approval of country programmes should be entrusted to smaller working parties of the Council. Those working parties should have a global membership but should be composed mainly of countries which volunteered because of their special interest in the relevant region or country. The working groups should provide a real possibility of putting questions to the Administration and voicing opinions on the general composition of country programmes.

3. While it was the sovereign right of recipient countries to use funds in accordance with their priorities, it was also the right of donor countries to be fully informed and to be able to ask questions about the utilization of their contributions to UNDP. One criterion to be used would be a general check on whether country programmes were fully in line with the development objectives of the individual developing countries for which they were intended. Secondly,
it could be ascertained whether individual country programmes bore any relation to global priorities as formulated by the international community. That approach did not represent an attempt to force policies on developing countries; it must be ensured that global priorities were respected since they were the result of world-wide consensus reached at specialized conferences or an outflow of constant work in the United Nations and specialized organizations. It was not enough to argue, as indicated in paragraph 32 of document DP/DC/2, that those priorities were already being provided for under other programmes; it was unsatisfactory that UNDP should finance what was left over from bilateral or multilateral donors since UNDP's role was to be at the centre of the development effort of developing countries.

4. It was gratifying to note that a very thorough exercise of preparation had preceded the formulation of the second country programme for Cape Verde (DP/CP/CVI/2). The Round Table of Development Partners of Cape Verde, in which Austria had participated as a bilateral donor, represented a very sensible attempt to co-ordinate bilateral and multilateral assistance efforts and an example which could be followed by other developing countries. Austria had a commitment to Cape Verde because the islands were almost devoid of natural resources and Cape Verde was one of the countries which most needed technical assistance. Austria fully supported the national priorities of the Cape Verde Government and believed that Cape Verde was an example of the co-ordination of national objectives and world-wide priorities as adapted to the particularities of an individual case.

5. In connection with the third country programme for the Upper Volta (DP/CP/UPV/3) Austria had a long-standing involvement with the Upper Volta, mainly in the field of technical education. It supported the long-term development objectives of the Government of the Upper Volta as described in paragraph 12 of the country programme and believed that they related to the Upper Volta's real needs. However, it would have liked to know whether UNDP felt that there was any need to adapt the programme to any priorities identified after the change of Government. The document mentioned a number of visits of delegations from agencies to the Upper Volta and characterized them as very positive; however, the amount of preparatory and follow-up work required from the Government of the Upper Volta might well be beyond its capabilities and it was to be hoped that the constant inflow of delegations would be co-ordinated by the UNDP Resident Representative.

6. His delegation was fully prepared to support the third country programme for Togo (DP/CP/TG/3). In the light of document DP/1983/2/Add.1, annex VI, however, it could be seen that most of the global priorities to which donor Governments and other Governments attached importance did not appear in the country programme for Togo. The argument that those global priorities were not necessarily being overlooked and might be covered elsewhere was not altogether satisfactory.

7. Mr. CHIKELU (Observer for Nigeria) said that his Government regarded the second country programme for Nigeria (DP/CP/NIR/2) as an integral part of the process of planned economic development in Nigeria and an indispensable part of its development plan. The first country programme, for the period 1975-1979, had been geared to the implementation of the third national development plan, 1975-80.
The second country programme was geared to the implementation of the fourth national development plan, for the period 1981-1985. His Government had deliberately delayed the preparation of the country programme until the formulation of the national development plan had been finalized, as its policy was that only projects included in the national plan should be included in the country programme.

8. The fourth national development plan was the most ambitious development plan so far and involved the expenditure of 82 billion naira, as compared with the expenditure of 2.3 billion, 3 billion and 30 billion naira, respectively, in the three previous plans. The keynote of the plan was self-sufficiency, especially in agriculture and with particular reference to food production. Nigeria spent over 1 billion naira a year on food, even though it had ample land and favourable soil and climatic conditions; with good planning it should be possible to achieve self-sufficiency in food production and have a surplus for export. Priority was also given to education, with a view to producing the skilled manpower on which sustained development depended. Other priorities were industry, housing, health and water, all of which had a direct impact on the welfare of the common man. Another objective was to diversify the economy and reduce dependence on petroleum. Since a shortage of financial resources could hamper the effective implementation of the plan, the plan envisaged a resource guard of 16.8 billion naira or 24 per cent of the public sector programme. The requirements for most categories of high-level technical manpower far exceeded existing capacities, and clearly could not be met through local training efforts; Nigeria had had to rely heavily on bilateral and multilateral technical assistance. Nigeria had concluded economic co-operation agreements with some 50 countries and its co-operation with UNDP was of primary importance.

9. The structure of the country programme reflected the priorities of the fourth national development plan; some 20 per cent of resources were earmarked for agriculture, which was the first priority; industry received 16 per cent of resources and education, 9 per cent; thus those three sectors accounted for over 50 per cent of the country programme resources. By approving the country programme the Council would be taking a very important step towards the implementation of the fourth national development plan.

10. The Nigerian economy had undergone a serious depression since the launching of the fourth national development plan because of developments in the international oil market; the plan had been prepared at the time of an oil boom, when Nigeria was producing over 2 million barrels of oil a day and selling it at $40 a barrel; currently, it was producing under 1 million barrels of oil a day and selling it at $35.5 a barrel. That situation had greatly reduced the financial resources available to the federal, state and local governments. Nevertheless, the Government was determined to achieve the objectives of the plan and it was absolutely essential that bilateral and multilateral agencies should come to its assistance to ensure that the momentum of development was sustained. Nigeria was fully aware of the problems being experienced by UNDP and hoped that, with good will, they would in time be overcome. It would request an upward revision of Nigeria's indicative planning figure as soon as the situation warranted it because
of Nigeria's size and the magnitude of its development problems. The relationship between the $130 billion committed under the national development plan and the indicative planning figure of $15 million was completely lopsided. His Government, for its part, would continue to co-operate fully with UNDP through increased cost-sharing arrangements, despite financial constraints and austerity measures. He therefore requested the Council to approve Nigeria's country programme.

11. Mr. AKAO (Japan) said that his delegation was prepared to endorse the country programmes submitted to the Council which, in general, were well co-ordinated with the development plans of developing countries in accordance with the priorities defined.

12. In connection with the second country programme for Cape Verde (DP/CP/CVI/2), the current five-year development plan had two major targets, food self-sufficiency and import substitution industries. Under the country programme, over 60 per cent of UNDP resources were committed to rural development programmes, and it would have been preferable if similar emphasis had been placed on import substitution industries, to which only about 7 per cent of resources were allocated.

13. His Government fully supported the country programme for Mauritania (DP/CP/MAU/2), which emphasized agriculture, especially food production, infrastructure and human resources, in line with his Government's own overall development policy.

14. The second country programme for Nigeria (DP/CP/NIR/2) emphasized agricultural production in line with the green revolution which the Nigerian Government was currently pursuing, and industry as another important area. It was very important that UNDP should provide assistance and advice in those two fields, which were of great importance to Nigeria's economy in the long run, especially in view of the decline in Nigeria's oil revenue. Efforts in those areas should therefore be encouraged and the advice of UNDP experts fully utilized.

15. The total resources committed under the second programme for Sao Tome and Principe (DP/CP/STP/2) were very small; in the past the indicative planning figure had been spread over too many projects instead of being concentrated on a few priority areas. That need had been recognized in the country programme, which placed special emphasis on agriculture, and his delegation hoped that that approach would be continued in future.

16. Mr. WORKU (Observer for Ethiopia) said that his country was exceptionally satisfied with the monumental efforts of UNDP to help the developing countries with their economic and social development. It was hardly necessary for him to remind Council members of the economic malaise which had affected Africa during the past 10 years. The economic crisis had had an especially severe effect on the agricultural sector: not only had per capita production declined, but in some countries a variety of disasters had combined with the economic situation to prevent them from achieving previous production rates. The number of undernourished people had doubled in Africa since 1960. The problem was
particularly acute among least developed countries, of which Ethiopia was one. To confront that problem, the African countries as a group had spelled out their objectives with regard to food supply in the Lagos Plan of Action.

17. However, the international community's response to the request by African countries for resources to help them meet those objectives had not been commensurate with the magnitude of the problem. The unilateral reduction by 45 per cent of resources for UNDP programmes would not help developing countries, and especially those in Africa, to solve their problems. In the case of his own country, Ethiopia would be prevented from expressing its commitment to improving the life of its people. Moreover, under present conditions, Ethiopia would receive only $8 per inhabitant for assistance, whereas other developing countries were receiving $22 per inhabitant. The reduction in UNDP resources had forced the Ethiopian Government to cut programmes and projects in all sectors. However, while the Government had taken some steps aimed at promoting self-reliance, Ethiopia was not in a position to bear a share of development costs. He nevertheless hoped that his country's efforts would be a source of encouragement to the international community. He also requested the Council to endorse the country programme for Ethiopia, in its entirety. In that connection, he pointed out that although Ethiopia had made the development of agricultural resources its first priority its considerable potential must be exploited in order for the country to achieve results.

18. Mr. GOODMAN (United States of America) said that the analysis of trends and problems in country programmes contained in document DP/1983/2 constituted a valuable tool for programme review. He commended the fact that most UNDP country programmes fell within the framework of national development plans and the methods used to assess needs in preparing those programmes. The continuing efforts to co-ordinate UNDP activities with multilaterally and bilaterally funded projects would help to avoid wasteful duplication and overlapping of projects. Furthermore, increased complementarity between multilateral and bilateral programmes was an effective way to make the best use of limited development resources.

19. He expressed satisfaction at the continued emphasis on the use of UNDP resources to meet development objectives in such vital sectors as food, training, institution-building and the development of technology. He also commended continued UNDP involvement in areas to which its activities were uniquely suited, including development planning, public administration and educational curriculum development. He called for concerted efforts to increase both the integration of women in development and technical co-operation among developing countries. The Programme should also continue to emphasize pre-investment activities.

20. With regard to the equipment component of country programmes, he acknowledged the difficulty in forecasting accurately what equipment might be needed for a country programme when the programme was being considered for approval. His delegation therefore hoped that, if the equipment component of any programmes should increase significantly over current estimates, the Council would be informed of the matter during subsequent reports on programme implementation.
21. With regard to the programmes for African States, the emphasis given to improving food security and self-sufficiency and to water supply in the countries of the Sahel was appropriate. However, while the implementation of small projects in many different sectors might have catalytic value, his delegation welcomed efforts to concentrate Programme resources in fewer and higher priority areas, as had been done with the country programme for Sao Tome and Principe, for example. More emphasis should also be given to training and the promotion of the private sector, as had been done in the country programmes for Mali and Nigeria, respectively. He noted that projects in a number of areas had received assistance from both USAID and UNDP, and he urged that such co-ordination should be strengthened further.

22. Mr. KIBANDA (Central African Republic) expressed his delegation's regret at the departure of Mr. Doo Kingue from the post of Director of the UNDP Regional Bureau for Africa and said that the post should be filled as soon as possible if the best interests of the African States were to be served.

23. Since its inception, UNDP had consistently adapted itself to the pressing realities of a perpetually changing world, the better to fulfil its role. At present, as a result of that remarkable adaptability, and despite the numerous financial difficulties it was experiencing, it remained a significant factor in the promotion of economic and social development.

24. Given the financial difficulties which threatened to hamper its effectiveness, UNDP must seek ways to achieve its objectives as well as resolve the current crisis. The world economic crisis affected developing and rich nations alike, but its adverse effects had diminished the solidarity between those groups of countries and reduced the contributions from developed countries. His delegation felt, however, that the rich countries must make greater sacrifices on behalf of the poorer countries in the name of ethics and social justice. Moreover, the reduction in Programme resources was excessive and heavily penalized the least developed countries, whose economic situation continued to give cause for serious concern. That reduction in fact threatened to wipe out the social progress they had made. The reduction should be applied selectively in order not to jeopardize the implementation of programmes drawn up by least developed countries. In any event, his Government did not accept that reduction because of the serious consequences it would have for the efforts undertaken by the Central African Republic, which was a least developed country. He was thus convinced that the members of the Council would understand his Government's concerns and either annul the reduction or at least make it a more reasonable one. Activities financed by UNDP should be co-ordinated with those financed by other agencies as closely as possible; such co-operation was all the more necessary during the current period of economic crisis, when UNDP was beset by serious financial difficulties.

25. Since the World Bank was a specialized agency of the United Nations, it should provide United Nations bodies, specifically UNDP, with all the necessary support, and should avoid any tendency towards politicization. UNDP must continue to assist the least developed countries in organizing round tables as called for by the Paris Conference. His delegation endorsed the decision of the Administrator to extend 28 programmes that had not been completed in 1981 and fully approved of the programmes scheduled for 12 African countries, since they corresponded to those countries' priority needs.
26. Mr. HARE (Canada) said that his delegation fully supported the concept of recipient Government involvement in country programming, which was a fundamental principle of UNDP. However, his delegation believed that the Council had strayed from certain aspects of its consensus with regard to the general principles of country programming. Although the sovereign rights of recipient countries were indisputable, the Council had agreed that country programmes should be submitted to it for consideration and approval. He therefore wanted to know what concerns Council members wished to address in considering programmes for approval and under what, if any, circumstances they would withhold approval.

27. He wished to focus attention on the programmes for the African region for a number of reasons. Firstly, that region received much attention and financial assistance from UNDP, as a result of the Programme's commitment to the poorest countries, a commitment which his delegation strongly supported. Secondly, half the country programmes and nearly three fourths of the financial resources involved in the 25 programmes submitted to the Council for its consideration concerned the African region. Finally, Canada had much experience with Africa as the result of its bilateral assistance programmes.

28. When his delegation had earlier called for better information on the nature, purpose and objectives of individual projects within a programme, it had been concerned with a more judicious balance of information rather than an indiscriminate addition of details. Such a balance would reflect the relative complexity and financial size of individual projects. For instance, a project costing nearly $4 million, such as ETH/78/013, warranted greater attention and a more detailed justification than another project in the same country, ETH/79/011, costing only $120,000. It was important that the financial implications of each project should be known to the greatest extent possible. For example, the programme documents for Mali, the Niger and the Upper Volta gave little indication of the cost of individual projects. Even estimates of project costs would be more useful than no indication at all. He did not, however, intend to question those or any country programmes submitted at the current meeting, but suggested that future programme documents should contain such essential information.

29. He noted with pleasure that some programme documents, such as those for Senegal and Nigeria, were good examples of attempts to make out a case to the Council, which was being asked to consider and approve them, and expressed the hope that others would use a similar format in the future. His delegation was interested in having more explicit analyses of the sectoral structure of country programmes, particularly when major shifts in sectoral focus occurred within a programme. He noticed, for example, that in many African country programmes (e.g., those of Nigeria, Ethiopia, Mali and the Niger), there had been a shift away from projects in the transport and communications sector, which appeared intriguing in the midst of a United Nations Decade for that sector in Africa. While he trusted that there was a valid explanation for that situation, he wished to observe that misperceptions could be avoided by some clarification of the structural aspects of a programme in the relevant programme documents or the relevant notes by the Administrator.
30. In general, the focus in the country programmes adequately reflected the priority needs of individual countries, particularly in a continent where self-sufficiency in food was an important concern. The IPFs used also adequately reflected the needs of individual countries and their capacities to carry out development projects. In the case of the country programme for Nigeria, paragraph 2 of the Administrator's note (DP/CP/NIR/NOTE/2) referred to recent evaluations of UNDP projects and programmes; if the Council had been provided with the results of those evaluations, he would have been in a better position to assess the programme, especially since it was undergoing substantial modification and 60 per cent of its projects were new. Paragraph 11 of the Administrator's note referred to a budget reform activity which should receive particular support, since it was an excellent example of an area where multilateral institutions, by virtue of their neutrality, had a decisive role to play. He welcomed the candid description of the elimination of projects in paragraph 19, but wanted to know on what grounds the Government had considered those projects weak or redundant. He noted also that only a small proportion of all projects were to be carried out in the northern States, which represented the least-developed part of the country, and wondered what technical reasons might be responsible for that.

31. With regard to the country programme for Ethiopia (DP/CP/ETH/3), he observed that, once again, knowledge of the main conclusions of the evaluations which had been conducted in the selection of the projects contained in the programme would have assisted the Council in its consideration of the programme. Such information might also reveal information applicable to UNDP assistance in specific sectors in that country or other countries and yield benefits for the planning of bilateral assistance to that country. He had been pleased to note the emphasis given to environmental protection in paragraph 27 and stressed the relevance of that issue to many other countries, particularly those in the Sahel.

32. He had been interested in paragraph 17 of the third country programme for Senegal (DP/CP/SEN/3), which indicated that all specialized agencies of the United Nations system had been asked to propose projects which entailed little recurrent expenditure, would help to overcome the balance-of-payments deficit and related to a productive sector. That was an approach which should be encouraged among the specialized agencies working in the field in the Sahelian subregion and in low-income countries in general.

33. He hoped that, in its implementation of the programme for the Niger UNDP would take account of the conclusions of two important seminars held at Zinder on issues relating to the decentralization and restructuring of decision making at the level of the local population.

34. His delegation welcomed UNDP's initiative, noted in paragraph 17 of the note by the Administrator on the country programme for the Niger (DP/CP/NER/NOTE/3) on holding a pledging conference in 1983.
35. He noted that the resources of the Niger's National Investment Fund for the financial year 1983 had fallen sharply. That would mean a drastic reduction in the Niger's share of the financing of projects sponsored by various donors, a factor which UNDP ought to take into account, adjusting the implementation of its programme accordingly.

36. He was puzzled by the fact that the country programme for Mali did not envisage any concrete assistance for the implementation of Mali's food strategy, even though UNDP itself had initiated the activities of that strategy, which was a crucial factor in the development of the food sector in Mali. There were relatively few new projects in the field of integrated basic development in Mali. He wondered whether that indicated a change in the underlying thinking of the programme, or whether it reflected the lessons which UNDP had learned from its experience, adverse or successful, in the implementation of the previous country programme.

37. His delegation wished to indicate that CIDA would be interested in sharing with UNDP its experience relating to the UNDP pilot project entitled "Fund for assisting community initiatives" (MLI/80/012) and the pilot project "Small-scale interventions" which CIDA was executing in Kaarta as part of its activities relating to integrated rural development.

38. Mr. BOHNET (Federal Republic of Germany) said that his delegation welcomed the emphasis in the African country programmes before the Council on food security as a fundamental objective, that was a vital area in countries which were experiencing increasing difficulties in maintaining food production at a level that could meet the needs of their growing populations. The programmes also rightly stressed water resource development and environmental projects, including the control of desertification. In general, the financing by sector was heavily weighted towards the area of agriculture and his delegation believed that that was the course which should continue to be taken in the future.

39. He concurred with the representative of Canada in his reference to the absence from certain country programmes of individual project costs. That should be rectified in the future.

40. His delegation was pleased to see some country programmes combining UNDP assistance with aid from other sources; that was true particularly of the Ethiopian and Gambian programmes and was an example which could usefully be followed in other countries.

41. The third country programme of Mali seemed well-adapted to the country's development aims and adjusted well with the global development priorities. Prominence was rightly given to food self-sufficiency, water resource development and livestock management, and his delegation fully endorsed UNDP's introduction of new elements in the areas of integrated basic development and increased participation in the development process on the part of the local population. However, it had certain doubts as to whether the high level of investment in the development of mineral resources was justified and would urge the Administrator...
to look very closely at the question of high recurrent expenditure before finalizing his plans in that area. In the field of livestock management, it would be most helpful to step up UNDP's co-operation with other programmes financed by his country.

42. Mr. MI Guojun (China) noted that most of the 12 countries whose programmes were before the Council were least developed countries and therefore crucially in need of assistance. Since the world-wide economic crisis had hit those countries especially hard, he hoped that UNDP would do everything in its power to ensure that the programmes directed towards meeting their needs suffered as little as possible from the projected drastic reduction in UNDP resources.

43. The 12 country programmes under consideration had major characteristics in common: they all gave first place to agriculture, food security and education, while also stressing the importance of development in the energy, transport and industrial sectors. The countries of the Sudano-Saharan area faced crippling natural disasters in addition to their normally adverse natural conditions. Consequently, the programmes quite rightly promoted water supply, control of desertification and environmental conservation, and their activities accorded well with national, regional and subregional development objectives. His delegation fully supported all 12 programmes.

44. His Government had always attached great importance to the development of economic and technical co-operation with the countries of Africa. In particular, during his recent visit to 11 African States, the Chinese Premier had explored various possible new forms of co-operation which would break new ground in Sino-African co-operative relations. His country also recognized the value and the necessity of working through UNDP to expand "South-South" co-operation among developing nations.

45. Mr. Gompertz (France) said that his delegation welcomed the large share of the activities and resources of the African country programmes devoted to agriculture. It was somewhat disturbed, however, to see how little attention was being given in those programmes to the health sector, which in many programmes received only about 2 per cent of available resources. He wondered whether that was a deliberate choice on the part of the Government or on the part of UNDP or whether it was the result of planned or actual division of labour between UNDP and WHO.

46. The representative of Canada had made an important point about the way in which country programmes developed from one programming cycle to the next. The documentation did not always give full information regarding what appeared to be changes of fundamental approach underlying such developments. It might be very interesting and useful, for example, to understand what kind of thinking lay behind the fact that the most recent country programmes for Mali and Mauritania gave a greatly reduced share of resources to administrative reform and infrastructure and laid far greater stress than in the past on food self-sufficiency and agriculture.

47. It would in some cases be useful to know the real expected duration of a project and at what point, in UNDP's view, it would be appropriate to pass the work...
over to other agencies or to the Government. He noted that one project on the compilation of agricultural statistics, initiated in 1968 and originally intended to end in 1976, was still ongoing, the latest phase being scheduled to run from 1982 to 1986. Such extensions seemed rather excessive for a project of that type.

48. He noted that the country programme for Togo (DP/CP/TOG/3) indicated that there was a possibility of an appropriation from the Special Measures Fund for the Least Developed Countries if its application for least developed country status was approved. Since the General Assembly had recently taken a decision to that effect and an evaluation mission had been dispatched to Togo to select projects that might receive assistance, it would be useful to have any available information on the results of that mission and its implications for the country. It would also be helpful to know how the Special Measures Fund selected projects and how its methods and criteria related to those used more generally by UNDP.

49. Mr. KAABACHI (Tunisia) observed that the country programmes under consideration rightly focused on vital sectors of the economy, in particular the agricultural and industrial sectors. It was particularly gratifying to see that the priorities had been selected by the recipient countries; it was crucial for international aid to serve as a complement to national efforts and respect local development objectives.

50. The needs in the agricultural and food production sectors in Africa required urgent attention from the international community and especially from UNDP. That was an aspect which the General Assembly had stressed, and both bilateral and multilateral donors should step up their efforts to help. UNDP's role was particularly useful in that its assistance acted as a catalyst.

51. With reference to the comment made by the representative of France concerning the fact that less attention was being given to the health sector in the current country programmes, he felt that it was important for the countries themselves to be free to decide on their own priorities.

52. His delegation fully endorsed the 12 country programmes for Africa and hoped that they would be adopted by the Governing Council.

53. Mr. SANGARE (Mali) observed that his delegation had already stressed his Government's concern at the drastic reduction in IPF resources for the current programming cycle. The third cycle country programme represented a major part of the financing of Mali's 1981-1985 development plan, the goals of which were in perfect harmony with the areas of intervention recommended for UNDP at the meeting of resident representatives of the Sahelian subregion in 1981. Five main areas had been selected as major development objectives in the countries of the Sahelian subregion: food self-sufficiency and integrated basic development, diversification of the economies of the Sahelian region, water management, human resource development, and infrastructure or development administration. Those priorities were reflected in the country programme in terms of the percentage of resources allocated to them. The opening up of Mali, both internally and in terms of communication with the external world, was one of the major priorities of the development plan.
54. He thanked the UNDP secretariat, and especially the Regional Director for Africa, for their aid in the preparation of documentation.

55. Mr. ROHNER (Switzerland) said that in considering the country programmes the Council should in no way usurp the place of the Government which had prepared the documentation with the aid of UNDP. It was important to understand how the different programmes were devised, what their underlying objectives were and how they related to the global development priorities. There was a need to learn the lessons of the experience of earlier programmes and to understand how UNDP played its role as the co-ordinator of multilateral technical co-operation, a field in which much remained to be done. In order to promote understanding of that role and to increase UNDP's effectiveness and impact on technical co-operation in general it was vital to strengthen the dialogue between donor and recipient countries, both at the national level through round tables, which were a very important step in the right direction, and through the Governing Council, in which context the creation of a programming committee was almost indispensable.

56. His delegation was happy to be able to review the 12 African country programmes together, since the countries involved, especially those of the Sahelian subregion, undoubtedly had many problems in common. It was rather disappointing that the secretariat had not seen fit to prepare a synopsis of the problems affecting the Sahelian area, its priorities and the measures being taken or planned by UNDP and the specialized agencies.

57. He supported the comments made by some delegations concerning the lack of specific information on the costing of individual projects. In addition, one of the major problems in the context of the Sahelian region was the financing of recurrent expenditure, which he felt had not been dealt with sufficiently fully in the country programmes.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.