This addendum provides members of the Governing Council with a summary of the assessment of UNDP's round-table process in three regions. (Haiti, the only least developed country (LDC) in the Latin American and Caribbean region, has not adopted the round-table process for its country reviews). Detailed reports on the evaluation of the experience with round-table conferences in the African and the Asian and Pacific regions are available to Council members in English.
I. THE EXPERIENCE IN AFRICA

1. There are 26 LDCs in Africa. Twenty-three are in the UNDP Africa Region for which the UNDP Regional Bureau for Africa (RBA) is responsible. Of these, 19 */ have chosen the round-table process as a means of regular consultations with the donor community on development assistance. Two LDCs (Uganda and the United Republic of Tanzania) opted for consultative group arrangements sponsored by the World Bank. The remaining two LDCs (Botswana and Ethiopia) are as yet undecided.

2. The RBA has undertaken a full-scale assessment of its experience with round-table conferences in the region, the results of which have played a major role in forging UNDP policy towards future round-table conferences. For evaluating the experience in its area, RBA throughout the exercise stressed the importance of three groups of factors:

   (a) The differing priorities, expectations and "agendas" of the donors and LDCs;

   (b) The world economic trends that influenced the outcome of the process;

   (c) The short time elapsed since the Paris Conference in September 1981, which made it difficult to judge the effectiveness of the round-table process in bringing about changes in domestic adjustments in the recipient countries and in donor policies.

3. From all preliminary indications it was clear that in the African LDCs progress towards the attainment of the objectives of the Substantial New Programme of Action for the 1980s for the Least Developed Countries (SNPA) thus far had been limited. The African LDCs were in crisis because of the convergence of several adverse factors, among them severe droughts and other natural disasters which caused serious food shortages; depressed commodity markets; the high cost of fuel imports and critical balance of payments situations; high interest rates and worsened debt service burdens; and, importantly, delays in adopting and implementing needed reforms in domestic policies and programmes. Despite the much greater need of LDCs, the recent world economic recession had curtailed the willingness and ability of donors to provide assistance; net official development assistance (ODA) flows had decreased.

4. The assessment of the experience in Africa with round-table conferences has helped to identify a number of weaknesses in that process. They include:

*/ Benin, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cape Verde, the Central African Republic, Chad, the Comoros, Equatorial Guinea, the Gambia, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Lesotho, Malawi, Mali, the Niger, Rwanda, Sao Tome and Principe, Sierra Leone and Togo.

/*
(a) The lack of the necessary incentives to conduct an open economic policy dialogue with the donor community for the adoption of measures which would improve LDCs utilization and management of development resources; moreover, in many cases governments had been unable to present an adequate macro-economic framework to back up their requests for aid;

(b) Periodic review meetings with key donors were not a firmly established mechanism in all countries; in addition, the ongoing multilateral consultations necessary to facilitate co-ordinated activities at the sectoral and programme levels and to enhance the effectiveness of aid needed to be better institutionalized within the framework of the national planning and round-table processes;

(c) Insufficient opportunities had been instituted for major donors to engage in constructive, businesslike dialogue before and after the round-table conference;

(d) Donors' pledges were not sufficiently firm at the time of consultations between donors and a recipient Government, causing uncertainty about the support the latter could receive for its proposed programmes and policies; also, opportunities were reduced for better co-ordination and linkage of inputs; pledges of assistance had not been in accord with the commitment to substantially increase aid to LDCs;

(e) Capabilities of the recipient government were often inadequate to cope with the broadened scope of the planning, managing and co-ordinating functions of the new generation of round-table activities; sufficient technical assistance had not yet been programmed;

(f) The Regional Bureau's role as lead agency was not sufficiently effective nor uniformly active enough.

5. The African study has once more brought out the need for effective co-ordination. In the context of the round-table process this would imply:

(a) The establishment of a clearly defined, unambiguous framework as a prerequisite for the initiation of round-table activities;

(b) The establishment of a continuing process with multi-purpose functions;

(c) the strengthening of government capabilities in recognition of the Government's central responsibility;

(d) The strengthening of effective linkages to national planning;

(e) the modification and strengthening of the process to better fulfill donors' and developing countries' objectives;

(f) the improvement of the effectiveness of UNDP's role as lead agency and as provider of critical, technical co-operation; and,
(g) the extension of the process throughout Sub-Saharan Africa.

6. After having determined the past weaknesses of the round-table process, the Regional Bureau, through a well-prepared and carefully conducted process of broad consultations involving, inter alia, the recipient Governments and the donor community, developed a revised approach to the Round Table process, which has been endorsed by the Administrator as a model for the conduct of donor consultations on a Programme-wide basis. This approach is to be put into effect in 1985.

II. THE EXPERIENCE IN ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

7. Seven LDCs fall within the Asian and the Pacific region of UNDP, five of which have chosen the UNDP-organized round-table process (Afghanistan, Bhutan, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Maldives and Samoa), while for two (Bangladesh, Nepal) the consultative group arrangements established earlier by the World Bank are being continued.

8. The five Asian and Pacific LDCs chose the same venue for their round-table meetings (Geneva) which were held simultaneously in May 1983. The arrangement was adopted with the following advantages in mind: logistic convenience, budgetary savings, access to wider donor participation and a greater impact on donors and media. They looked upon the Round Table meeting primarily as an opportunity to open up a wider range of contacts with the donor community. However, the five LDC governments which chose the round-table process were faced from the outset with a number of problems which were clearly reflected in the attendance at the round-table meetings.

9. Significant in this respect is that the five LDCs concerned barely rate as "priority" countries on the lists of the conventional major donors; Afghanistan, Bhutan and Maldives do not appear on any priority list of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD); the Lao People's Democratic Republic appears on two and Samoa on three OECD priority lists. On the other hand, of the two LDCs with a consultative group arrangement Bangladesh is on the priority list of 13 member Governments of OECD, and Nepal on six. In the case of Afghanistan and the Lao People's Democratic Republic the prime development partners did not attend the Round Table meeting.

10. Not all invited donors attended, and of those that did few actively participated in the discussions. The nature of the participation usually is indicative of the usefulness of the Round process to the LDCs concerned. These have often been criticized for the lack of a frank discussion of macro-economic issues and questions touching on economic and structural reforms, and inadequate preparation has often been cited as the cause of this lack of dialogue. Yet there have been instances where, notwithstanding the quality of the preparation, a constructive dialogue did take place, if not with all donors and potential donors, at least with the firmly established development partners. There was a frank discussion at the Samoa round-table meeting, for example, because established donors, as well as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), put forth questions and viewpoints; Bhutan's principal donors made substantive and
frank comments at the Bhutan round-table meeting; and the Lao People's Democratic Republic was given a straightforward critique of some of its development strategies by its established partners. Other donors which had as yet no substantial funds to offer could hardly be expected to ask probing questions or recommend significant actions by LDCs.

11. The level of the donor delegates to the round-table meetings was mixed and relatively modest. Significant exceptions were the World Bank, IMF, and the Asian Development Bank which had sent senior representatives.

12. The level and nature of participation by the LDCs were admirable. Their high-level representatives handled substantive presentations and provided answers to the questions of donors with competence and authority.

13. The agencies of the United Nations system, which attended as observers, generally limited their interventions to information on their respective sectoral involvement in LDCs.

14. The necessary follow-up action taken by the Asian and Pacific LDCs was reviewed at a special session of the representatives of these countries who were attending the regional meeting of aid co-ordinators at Bangkok in May 1984. The Asia and Pacific experience in the follow-up phase has reflected the positive and negative factors that characterized the round-table meetings themselves. The negative aid climate still affects the follow-up in terms of major increases in aid flows from donor capitals. On the other hand, particular projects are being picked up, many but not all by established donors and the banks. At the time of preparation of this report, Samoa had decided to hold a second round-table meeting in early 1986 while the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Bhutan and Maldives were considering similar action.

15. While the 1983 round-table discussions have not yet led to notable additionality of ODA flows from established and new donors and, although LDCs have not yet experienced improvement in terms of aid, the round-table exercise has had some positive results:

(a) To a greater extent than ever before, LDCs have consolidated their macro-economic strategy and presented it for external consideration;

(b) To do so they have mobilized and strengthened the co-ordination of their own machinery, obligating close co-operation between sectoral, financing and planning bodies;

(c) Contacts with traditional donors have been strengthened and new contacts, which was a primary raison d'être for the round-table meetings, have been explored;

(d) The round-table meetings started the process of sensitizing donors to special requirements for aid terms peculiar to each country;
(e) LDCs were able to demonstrate to the donor participants the soundness of their planning process and development strategies and have thereby increased the donor community's confidence in them;

(f) They have improved their position to adjust their economic strategies to renewed evidence of the harsh realities of the global economic situation, the practicalities of external resource mobilization therein, and the special donor interests which need be taken into account in future round-table preparations;

(g) LDCs have, for the first time, appeared in the news media and their situations have received broader international exposure.

16. The Regional Bureau for Asia and the Pacific (RBAP) also identified lessons to be learned from the round-table experience thus far:

(a) Full-scale round-table conferences should not be scheduled until there is a clear willingness by a sufficient number of donors to seriously discuss development issues and assistance to the country concerned;

(b) A stronger system of prior consultations is needed, focused in particularly on more systematic meetings between LDC Governments and prospective donors at the donor capitals and in the region;

(c) The next series of round-table meetings will have to be confined to the target participants or, alternatively, they will have to be divided into two sections: a generalized discussion with potential donors; and a more focused one with committed and established donors;

(d) In appropriate cases, there should be provision for sectoral discussions based on special documentation;

(e) Aid modalities and, as appropriate, trade patterns should be discussed within the context of the individual country sessions;

(f) Machinery for advance consultation with the international financial institutions, and perhaps major donors as well, must be organized in a more formal way than before;

(g) The in-country co-ordinating role of UNDP vis-à-vis the utilization of aid and resource mobilization should become a more seamless part of the ongoing round-table exercise;

17. The RBAP intends to launch a series of consultations in 1985 and 1986 organized in three phases: (a) a first round would be with the donors in order to ascertain their commitment and willingness to "target" certain LDCs prior to the holding of new round-table conferences; (b) this first round is to be followed by a discussion with the LDC Governments concerned of the outcome of the consultations with the donors and by a decision on the round-table process to be adopted; and (c) the RBAP would consult with LDCs and donors on dates and venues for the various meetings to be organized.

/...
III. EXPERIENCE IN THE ARAB STATES REGION

18. Five LDCs (Democratic Yemen, Djibouti, Somalia, the Sudan and Yemen) fall within the Arab States region. Of these, Djibouti has chosen the round-table process as the means for consultations with the donor community on development assistance, while for Somalia and the Sudan, consultative group arrangements sponsored by the World Bank are in existence. The remaining two LDCs, Yemen and Democratic Yemen, have decided not to have round-table consultations for the time being.

19. The Arab States have so far held only one round-table meeting which was regarded as one of the more successful ones. This was the round-table meeting convened in Djibouti in November of 1983. The Djibouti experience has led to the conclusion that:

(a) The success of donor conferences depends largely on the quality of the groundwork done for their preparation;

(b) The holding of a round table meeting prior to the donor conference can be considered indispensable as it leads to a better understanding among the potential donors to the development efforts of LDCs;

(c) The preparation of a round table conference requires active and continuous involvement of a team of qualified government officials as well as appropriate inputs from outstanding international consultants; and

(d) The follow-up to a round-table meeting requires deliberate action on the part of the Government concerned, for which adequate mechanisms have to be set up.
## Annex

### Tentative schedule of round-table meetings as follow-up to SNPA
(As of May 1985)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Formal reply to Note Verbale of UNDP/UNCTAD of Nov. 1981</th>
<th>Government focal point</th>
<th>Consultative mechanism/lead agency</th>
<th>Date and venue of round-table-related meeting</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>AFRICA</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Benin</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Ministry of Planning, Statistics and Economic Analysis</td>
<td>Round-table(RT) UNDP</td>
<td>RT held from 28 February to 4 March 1983, Cotonou</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Botswana</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Ministry of Planning</td>
<td>Continuation ongoing bilateral exercises, round-table UNDP</td>
<td>Undetermined</td>
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<tr>
<td>Burkina Faso</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Ministry of Planning</td>
<td>Round-table UNDP</td>
<td>RT planned for Nov. 1986; venue to be determined</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country</td>
<td>Formal reply to Note</td>
<td>Government focal point</td>
<td>Consultative mechanism/lead agency</td>
<td>Date and venue of Round Table–related meeting</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cape Verde</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Secretary of State for Co-operation and Planning</td>
<td>Round-table UNDP</td>
<td>RT held from 21 to 23 June 1982 at Praia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central African Republic</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Haut Commissariat au Plan, aux Statistiques et Coopération Internationale, Présidence de la République</td>
<td>Round-table UNDP</td>
<td>RT To be held later in second half of 1986 in Europe Sectoral consultations in Rural Development planned for November 1985 in Bangui</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chad</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Ministry of Planning (Commissaire au Plan)</td>
<td>UN/OAU meeting on the reconstruction of Chad; Round-table</td>
<td>Held from 29 to 30 November 1982 in Geneva RT to be held late 1985 in Europe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comoros</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Ministry of Planning</td>
<td>Round-table UNDP</td>
<td>RT held from 2 to 4 July 1984 at Moroni; periodic review planned for October 1985 in Paris</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equatorial Guinea</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Presidency</td>
<td>Round-table UNDP</td>
<td>RT held from 19 to 21 April 1982 in Geneva and periodic review planned for late 1985 in Malabo</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Formal reply to Note Verba1e of UNDP/UNCTAD of Nov. 1981</th>
<th>Government focal point</th>
<th>Consultative mechanism/lead agency</th>
<th>Date and venue of Round Table-related meeting</th>
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<tr>
<td>Ethiopia</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Ministry of Planning</td>
<td>Undetermined</td>
<td>Undetermined</td>
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<td>Czmbia</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Ministry of Planning</td>
<td>Round-table UNDP</td>
<td>RT held from 27 to 30 November 1984 at Banjul; and sectoral consultations (Fish., Agr. Water) planned for June, and Oct 1985 at Banjul</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guinea</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Prime Minister's Office</td>
<td>World Bank Consultative Group</td>
<td>To be determined</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lesotho</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Ministry of Planning</td>
<td>Round-table UNDP</td>
<td>RT held from 14 to 18 May 1984 in Maseru</td>
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<tr>
<td>Country</td>
<td>Formal reply to Note</td>
<td>Government focal point</td>
<td>Consultative Mechanism/lead agency</td>
<td>Date and venue of Round Table-related meeting</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mali</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Ministry of Planning</td>
<td>Round-table UNDP</td>
<td>RT held from 13 to 16 December 1982 at Bamako; periodic review with sectoral emphasis on food strategies planned for 10-12 Dec. 1985 at Bamako</td>
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<tr>
<td>Niger</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Ministry of Planning</td>
<td>Round-table UNDP</td>
<td>Planned for 1986 Venue to be Determined</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rwanda</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Ministère des Affaires Etrangères et de la Co-operation</td>
<td>Round-table UNDP</td>
<td>RT held from 1 to 4 December 1982 at Kigali. Consultations with NGOs planned for June 1985 and Sectoral Consultations in Education planned for mid-1986 in Kigali</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sao Tome and Principe</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Ministry of Planning and Co-operation</td>
<td>Round-table UNDP</td>
<td>RT To be held in October 1985; in Brussels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Togo</td>
<td></td>
<td>Ministry of Planning</td>
<td>Round-table UNDP</td>
<td>Preliminary cons-ultations for RT and country review held in January 1985 at Paris; RT/country review scheduled for 26-28 June 1985 at Lomé</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country</td>
<td>Formal reply to Note Verbale of UNDP/UNCTAD of -Nov. 1981</td>
<td>Government focal point</td>
<td>Consultative Mechanism/lead agency</td>
<td>Date and venue of Round Table-related meeting</td>
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<tr>
<td>Uganda</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Not specified</td>
<td>World Bank Consultative group</td>
<td>Held from 24 to 25 January 1984 at Paris</td>
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<tr>
<td>United Rep. of Tanzania</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Ministry of Planning and Economic Affairs</td>
<td>World Bank consultative group</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ARAB STATES</td>
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<tr>
<td>Democratic Yemen</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Ministry of Planning</td>
<td>Round-table UNDP</td>
<td>RT to be held later in 1986</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Djibouti</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Ministry of Foreign Affairs</td>
<td>Round-table UNDP</td>
<td>RT held from 21 to 23 November 1983 at Djibouti</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somalia</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Ministry of National Planning</td>
<td>World Bank consultative group UNDP assisted preparations</td>
<td>Held from 24 to 26 October 1983 at Paris</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sudan</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Ministry of Planning</td>
<td>World Bank Consultative Group</td>
<td>Held in January 1983 at Paris</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country</td>
<td>Formal reply to Note Verbale of UNDP/UNCTAD of Nov. 1981</td>
<td>Government focal point</td>
<td>Consultative Mechanism/lead agency</td>
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<tr>
<td>Yemen</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Central Planning Organization</td>
<td>Second Yemen International Development Conference.</td>
<td>Held in April 1982 at Sana'a</td>
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</table>

**ASIA AND THE PACIFIC**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Afghanistan</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>Department of Foreign Economic Relations of the State Planning Committee</th>
<th>Asian/Pacific round-table meeting for each country, at a common site with UNDP as lead agency</th>
<th>Held from 9 to 18 May 1983 in Geneva</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bangladesh</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Ministry of Finance, External Resources Div.</td>
<td>Donor consultative arrangement with World Bank</td>
<td>April 1984 in Paris</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bhutan</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Economic Div. Ministry of Foreign Affairs</td>
<td>Asian/Pacific round-table meeting for each country, at a common site with UNDP as lead agency</td>
<td>Held from 9 to 18 May 1983 in Geneva. RT planned for April 1986 in Geneva</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country</td>
<td>Formal reply to Note Verbale of UNDP/UNCTAD of Nov.1981</td>
<td>Government focal point</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lao People's Democratic Republic</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Ministry of Foreign Affairs</td>
<td>Asian/Pacific round-table meeting for each country, at a common site with UNDP as lead agency</td>
<td>Held from 9 to 18 May 1983 in Geneva. RT planned for April 1986 in Geneva</td>
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<tr>
<td>Maldives</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>External Resources Section of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs</td>
<td>Asian/Pacific round-table meeting for each country, at a common site with UNDP as lead agency</td>
<td>Held from 9 to 18 May 1983 in Geneva. RT planned for April 1986 in Geneva</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nepal</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>Ministry of Finance</td>
<td>Donor consultative arrangement with World Bank</td>
<td>Held in December 1983 in Paris</td>
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<td>W. Samoa</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Prime Minister's Office</td>
<td>Asian/Pacific round-table meeting for each country, at a common site with UNDP as lead agency</td>
<td>Held from 9 to 18 May 1983 in Geneva. RT planned for April 1986 in Geneva</td>
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**LATIN AMERICA**

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<tr>
<th>Country</th>
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<th>Government focal point</th>
<th>Consultative Mechanism/lead agency</th>
<th>Date and venue of Round Table-related meeting</th>
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<tr>
<td>Haiti</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Secretariat of State for Planning</td>
<td>Joint Commission for External Co-operation Programmes in Haiti</td>
<td>Held from 1 to 2 February 1984 in Haiti</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Attended the joint session of the Asian/Pacific round table meeting.*