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SUMMARY RECORD OF THE SECOND PART */ OF THE 20th MEETING

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva
on Wednesday, 15 June 1988, at 6 p.m.

President: Mr. MANGWAZU (Malawi)

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Annual report of the Administrator for 1987 (continued)

*/ The summary record of the first part of the meeting appears as document DP/1988/SR.20.

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ANNUAL REPORT OF THE ADMINISTRATOR FOR 1987 (agenda item 3) (continued)
(DP/1988/18 and Add.1, DP/1988/18/Add.2, Parts I and II, DP/1988/18/Add.35,
DP/1988/18/Add.6, Parts I and II)

1. Mr. NGO HAC TEAM (Observer for Democratic Kampuchea) welcomed the impressive achievements of UNDP as a whole and expressed his delegation's full support for the extra emphasis being given to emergency assistance efforts in Africa.

2. When the existence of the people of Kampuchea had been threatened by a foreign invasion in December 1978, UNDP had responded to the international appeal to participate in emergency aid operations for that people, thus helping it and its culture to survive. Although much of the aid had been diverted by the occupant for its troops, some of it had reached the Khmer population and been gratefully received by millions of his compatriots. That assistance foretold an important role for UNDP in the reconstruction of Kampuchea after it recovered its independence.

3. For his people, it was more obvious than ever that the most important of its primary needs was to recover its basic inalienable rights to independence and self-determination in order to proceed with the peaceful reconstruction of its country.

4. The occupation of his country had been continuing for nearly 10 years, at an estimated cost of \$2 billion per year, which represented a colossal waste of resources of all kinds. The disastrous consequences for both countries spoke eloquently of what happened when the basic laws governing international co-operation were flouted. Those funds had cost the lives of more than one and a half million Khmers and hundreds of thousands of young Vietnamese, whereas it could have done much to reduce misery in the occupier's own country. Unfortunately, it was far from certain that the occupier's expansionist strategy would cease. The 10 years of occupation had completely destroyed his country. Over one million of his compatriots had emigrated abroad; every possible weapon, including chemical weapons had been used by the occupier.

5. If they survived the occupier's raids, many regions fell victim to food shortages, if not to outright famine. For 10 years the occupiers had been systematically looting the resources of Kampuchea - a country which had once been an exporter of rice, fish, rubber and precious woods, among other tropical products. Malnutrition was chronic, and as a result endemic diseases wrought havoc, especially among the women and children.

6. His countrymen who had either been massacred or driven from the country had been replaced on the rich lands of Kampuchea by over 700,000 armed Vietnamese settlers. New ones arrived every day, ultimately threatening the demographic balance of the country. It was in that most tragic of situations that the national resistance had to resolve the innumerable social and health problems of the refugees in the liberated zones of the country. Needs were many and resources few.

7. After 10 years of stubborn resistance, however, his people had begun to reverse the situation and to cause the occupying force to become heavily bogged down. One significant fact was that, during the preceding dry season,

the occupier had been forced to import 30,000 tons of rice to feed its troops in Kampuchea whereas, in previous years, the troops had been able to eat rice looted from Kampuchean peasants, part of which they had sent back to Viet Nam. For that reason, President Norodom Sihanouk in his message of 18 May 1988 had requested the heads of State and Government of donor countries to the humanitarian assistance programme for Kampuchea not to give aid, even humanitarian aid, to the occupiers as long as they refused to implement the United Nations resolutions on Kampuchea.

8. His delegation welcomed the fact that the ministers for foreign affairs of ASEAN and the EEC had come out firmly for the withdrawal of foreign troops from Kampuchea and had reaffirmed that no aid should be given to the occupier that might support and encourage its occupation of Kampuchea. Another important fact was that the occupier had announced on 26 May 1988, for the seventh time, a "partial withdrawal" of its troops, whereas it was in fact relentlessly pursuing its military efforts in the field. At the same time, in the diplomatic sphere, it was making every effort to relieve international pressure through manoeuvres aimed at having its actions accepted as faits accomplis.

9. That was why the people and Government of his country called on the international community to raise its voice to make reason prevail and ensure that the relevant United Nations resolutions were implemented, i.e. foreign troops fully withdrawn from Kampuchea and the right of its people to self-determination respected. It was high time that Vietnamese and Kampuchean leaders negotiated for a peaceful political settlement of the problem.

10. Mr. KHERAD (Observer for Afghanistan) said that, at its thirty-fifth session, the Governing Council was dealing with matters that were important not only for current co-operation activities but also for the future of UNDP. According to the Charter, the United Nations was to promote peace, security and social and economic progress for all, and UNDP was its main instrument for fulfilling the second part of that mandate. It was both a practical instrument for economic and social development and an important instrument for peaceful co-operation. It therefore deserved special attention as a central body for the financing and co-ordination of multilateral technical co-operation within the United Nations system, a task it could not fulfil unless the basic principles of the universal and voluntary nature of the Programme were continually respected, in conformity with the 1970 Consensus and the resolution on new dimensions of technical co-operation.

11. His delegation shared the views expressed in the Administrator's annual report on the areas that should be given priority to enable the system fully to meet the needs of the developing countries. It supported efforts to extend UNDP activity in the areas of women's role in development, the United Nations Volunteers, technical co-operation among developing countries and the promotion of pre-investment activities.

12. UNDP must be prepared to react to a growing number of requests for technical co-operation in the areas of economic planning, marketing, information relating to manpower, staff management, the adaptation of appropriate techniques and the setting up of institutions to strengthen and extend the technical skills acquired and to ensure the most effective use of resources for the development of the developing countries.

13. Experience had shown that it was in the poorest and particularly the least developed, countries that UNDP assistance could and should have the greatest impact. Some of the serious difficulties faced by the least developed countries were a very low per capita income, insufficient agricultural productivity, a low level of export income, a low share of manufacture in total production, a low rate of activity in rural areas, high urban unemployment, a lack of skilled personnel, low literacy rate and extremely weak infrastructure, added to which, in some cases, there were major geographical or climatic handicaps. Those countries needed increased resources from co-operation and technical assistance and increased flexibility at the level of co-operation modalities, policies and procedures.

14. His delegation appreciated the efforts made by UNDP to aid the developing countries and its essential role in lending assistance to Afghanistan, a land-locked least-developed country, in particular its role of principle agency in carrying out the Substantial New Programme of Action adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in December 1982. His Government thus confidently awaited a future increase in UNDP assistance.

15. Recognizing that the developing countries had the main responsibility for their overall development, the Republic of Afghanistan had made energetic efforts to fulfil its obligations at the national level. National resources had been mobilized to the full, and every effort had been made to improve the people's standard of living and to create an economy capable of sustained growth. Planning had been intensified and resources mobilized towards socio-economic development in order to break the vicious cycle of poverty in the country. The goals and objectives of the programme and projects in Afghanistan were prepared in accordance with the rules and principles established by UNDP and based on the priorities and objectives of the country's 1986-1990 socio-economic development plan.

16. Despite those efforts, however, the funds available were inadequate to satisfy the country's needs, which could be met only through external aid and the strengthening of international co-operation. Such external assistance was a vital element in the development plans, and failure to receive it would cause serious delays in them.

17. Operational activities for development should contribute effectively to the implementation of the international development strategy which, together with national plans and programmes, formed the framework of those activities. In that connection, his Government had appealed to the world community, donor countries and international financial institutions for the aid needed for the country's rehabilitation and economic and social development. It had stated its willingness to receive delegations from the community of donors to examine practical subjects relating to the completion of previously-suspended assistance projects and the granting of further aid.

18. As the Administrator had said in his preliminary statement, the co-ordinated response of the United Nations system to the emergency needs in the Republic of Afghanistan was a good example of inter-agency co-operation. Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan, the Co-ordinator for United Nations Humanitarian and Economic Assistance Programmes relating to Afghanistan, had recently visited the country to discuss the modalities of the United Nations co-ordinated programme and the granting of aid by international organizations

for the rehabilitation of Afghanistan. In the light of the Geneva agreements that had opened the way for the normalization of the situation in the country and neighbouring areas, that humanitarian and economic assistance was a decisive contribution towards repairing the damage caused to the country's economy and relieving the people's suffering.

19. He was confident that the appeal by the Secretary-General of the United Nations to the donor community to contribute to the co-operative effort with regard to Afghanistan would be heeded, thus showing that international solidarity was not empty rhetoric but a practical example of how the members of the international community could work together.

20. Mr. NAMFUA (Observer for the United Republic of Tanzania) said that UNDP had remained a unique symbol of an international venture for co-operation in development. Its technical co-operation activities in the developing world made it an instrument that came into contact with the grass-roots population.

21. Innovation within UNDP had allowed it to respond to the changing economic, social and political environment within which it delivered its programme. That would not have been possible, however, without the generous contributions of donors from both developed and developing countries. All were encouraged to learn from the Administrator's report that resources for 1987 had amounted to \$US 1 billion and that extra funds had become available as a result of the low exchange rate of the dollar against the currencies of the major UNDP contributors. His delegation hoped that such supplementary funds for the fourth programming cycle would be allocated in accordance with Council decision 85/16 and in full respect for the 1970 Consensus.

22. The private sector was an increasing area of activity for UNDP. The peasants of many developing countries constituted the bulk of the population and earned a significant share of foreign exchange earnings through agriculture. Thus if UNDP wished to have an impact on the role of the private sector in countries such as Tanzania, its target should be the rural peasant population. Even more urgent in his country, however, was the task of putting into productive use the labour force resulting from the large number of primary and secondary school-leavers. The peasant had remained marginalized in terms of his impact on the economy through capital accumulation, owing to weak supportive infrastructure - roads, transport, credit, training and social overhead capital in general.

23. The complementarity between the public sector and the private sector could best be enhanced by intensifying support to the rural communities through increased productivity. In that connection, his delegation welcomed the Administrator's intention to highlight at the Council's next session the issues relating to the role of women in development and science and technology; those issues had a significant bearing on efforts for rural transformation and raising productivity levels.

24. However, it would be unfortunate if resources for operational activities in the United Nations system were to be allocated on the basis of preconceived ideas regarding the economic efficiency of one sector or the other. That would seriously undermine the conscious and autonomous choice of priorities by sovereign Governments, which UNDP had hitherto respected.

25. Structural adjustment had been made to appear as a new development doctrine, although economies both big and small had, in fact, to undergo such adjustment as an inevitable response to change. To some key players, the structural adjustment programme had come to mean a substitute for medium- and long-term planning, instead of its underpinning. Developing countries, and particularly the weakest among them, had undertaken some painful adjustments, and generating development impulses in those economies through economic reform had always been impeded by the adverse global economic environment, over which they had no control. However, the subject of adjustment had also attracted many actors with more emphasis on content of adjustment programmes than resources to implement them. He hoped UNDP would place more emphasis on the latter as it had done in the past.

26. He also hoped that the establishment of a management facility would not tempt UNDP to shift its emphasis towards policy formulation and analysis. That type of capacity should have been a natural product of years of UNDP involvement in technical co-operation activities in the third world. The fact that such a crucial gap remained would suggest the need for a critical look at the technical assistance projects to find out why, after two decades of technical assistance, UNDP had yet to build a core of management skills capable of managing a developing economy. Although the task was an enormous one, if the management facility failed to address that key question, it might become an ivory tower. Increased co-operation with the World Bank would be welcome only if it strengthened, rather than eroded, the execution of UNDP's basic mandate.

27. His delegation appreciated the role UNDP continued to play in the implementation of the SNPA, through its round-table mechanism. It looked forward to a thorough evaluation of that mechanism and the extent to which it had been able to secure additional resources for the implementation of the SNPA.

28. He noted with satisfaction the active UNDP role in the implementation of the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development and agreed that the resources available did not match the task. He hoped the Council would approve the supplementary budget the Administrator had proposed.

29. Tanzania, for its part, had every reason to feel satisfied with its co-operation with UNDP as a development partner over the years. It had seen its IPF grow from \$15 million during the first cycle to \$51.8 million in the fourth programming cycle. It had demonstrated its appreciation and support for UNDP efforts by making a small contribution to its resources, which the Administrator had been kind enough to mention in his statement. In conclusion, his delegation thanked the Administrator for sharing his vision of the UNDP role in the coming years. The questions the Administrator had raised deserved serious reflection by the Council.

30. Mr. EKBLÖM (United Nations Environment Programme) said the concept of sound environmental management for durable development was not a new one: what was currently being called "sustainable development", pastoralists and small farmers had, for centuries, been calling common sense. They had known that survival and growth depended in the long run on the continued well-being of the environment - soils, vegetation, water and species.

31. The modern world, however, was much more complex, and competition for natural resources was growing at a time when the biosphere was approaching the limits of its resilience. The pace of population growth, the patterns of global development, the systems of international trade, the temptations of new technologies and the dangers of obsolescent ones often had adverse effects on the environment.

32. In the face of those challenges, human beings must remember that if they were to survive and prosper, they must adapt their expectations of progress to what the environment would allow. Without environmental health there could be no sustained economic growth. However, it was clear from desertification, deforestation, water crises and pollution that that principle had often been ignored.

33. UNDP and UNEP both had the same global goal of sustainable development, to which UNEP had often repeated its own commitment. The World Commission on Environment and Development report had reaffirmed UNEP's role in catalyzing action among Governments and development organizations throughout the world. The 1987 report on the Environmental Perspective to the Year 2000 and Beyond stressed the imperative of sustainable development. Slowly, but surely, the message of both reports was being heeded and more and more Governments were incorporating environmental considerations into development planning projects. Sustainable development had been accepted as the recipe for real and equitable growth. The future task was to help apply the principles of sustainable development in practical economic policies and actions.

34. The United Nations General Assembly had adopted the Environmental Perspective and endorsed the WCED report. That indicated that Governments were ready to implement environmentally sound development. Thus the United Nations system had the duty and responsibility to assist Governments with guidance in the design and implementation of their policies, plans, programmes and projects. It was clear that UNDP and UNEP had a special and joint role.

35. In the past, the United Nations system had addressed various aspects of sustainable development separately. The time had come to make a concerted effort in its economic work. The Environmental Perspective provided a workable basis for action by Governments and by the United Nations system. Co-operative efforts also had to be intensified for rehabilitative and corrective action to deal with existing environmental degradation, which was undermining natural resources and the life-support system, e.g. deforestation, land degradation and desertification, acidification, loss of biological diversity and air and water pollution, in developed and developing countries alike.

36. The development agencies were being called upon for commitment at the highest levels to environmental protection and improvement; in many cases changes of attitude would be necessary. Population growth and the reduction of natural resources demanded radical responses. In 10 years there would be another billion people in the world, but the resource base would not have increased at all. If carefully used, it could support a stable population; if damaged, it would be unable to sustain even those numbers that were currently using it.

37. UNEP and UNDP had been co-operating for many years to ensure that the environment was taken into consideration in development decisions. The country programmes UNDP helped to develop were regularly forwarded to UNEP headquarters at Nairobi and to UNEP's regional offices. In Africa, the two organs co-operated through the United Nations Sudano-Sahelian Office to assist countries severely affected by desertification. The arrival of sustainable development as a goal of the United Nations, authorized at the highest level, meant that more than ever, the goals of the two organs were complementary and inseparable.

38. UNDP and UNEP could together ensure that the environment-development relationship was emphasized in the process of programme and project formulation. UNEP regional representatives and UNDP resident representatives would be the key figures in such co-operation.

39. The PRESIDENT said that the general debate on the annual report of the Administrator for 1987 had ended. Since the representative of UNHCR had been unable to deliver his statement personally, the text of that statement would be circulated to the members of the Governing Council.

The meeting rose at 7.35 p.m.