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Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva
on Tuesday, 21 June 1988, at 3 p.m.

President: Mr. MANGWAZU (Malawi)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.

OTHER FUNDS AND PROGRAMMES (agenda item 8) (continued)

(a) REVIEW OF THE UNITED NATIONS VOLUNTEERS (UNV) (continued) (DP/1988/46 and DP/1988/46/Add.1)

1. Mr. PETTITT (United Kingdom) said that his delegation was interested in the use of volunteers by the United Nations family, not just within UNDP and its executing agencies, or UNV in its own projects, but also in UNICEF, UNHCR, UNRWA, the specialized agencies in their own programmes and even the World Bank.
2. It would appear from the Administrator's report (DP/1988/46) that what was needed was clear guidance from the Administrator on the use of volunteers in the system, their possibilities and potential. His delegation would like to hear a statement by the Administrator of his plans for encouraging volunteers in the system.
3. His Government welcomed the review of the United Nations Volunteers (DP/1986/46/Add.1) which had been carried out in 1987 and 1988, and which was on a par with the review of 1969 and 1970. The Governing Council should try to make it the last major review for another decade or so.
4. As for the position of UNV on the use of volunteers in the United Nations system, the evaluation team had stated that the UNV programme had been intended to offer options and opportunities which had not existed before, and not to close off all the existing ones. It had recommended that the UNV programme should provide resources which were in addition to, and not in replacement of, those otherwise available and that the monopoly position must stop.
5. In his report on the review (DP/1988/46/Add.1) the administrator rejected that recommendation. He considered that all volunteer assignments financed by the United Nations family funds should be United Nations Volunteers, so that they could be on the same terms and have the same quality control exercised. Other volunteers working with the United Nations family, he suggested, might still be employed as a Government contribution - in practice as a multi-bilateral donor contribution. The back door would in effect become another means of entry.
6. His delegation wondered whether that was a satisfactory way of dealing with the problem and whether it would lead to the optimum use of volunteers in the system. There must be other ways of ensuring that volunteers were appropriately qualified than putting them through UNV on UNV terms. His delegation was seeking a system which made the use of volunteers easy and natural. If it decided to accept the Administrator's proposals, the Council would have to commend the direct use of bilateral volunteers in the Government counterpart contributions as a normal alternative, i.e., it would have to state that the back door was a normal means of entry. It was also essential to ensure that UNV retained the capacity to give advice to project planners who wished to use that modality and needed help.
7. If the Council accepted the Administrator's proposal that bilateral volunteers could be engaged on United Nations projects only as a Government

contribution, difficulties could arise over the payment of the living allowances. Some volunteer-sending societies required such allowances to be paid by the project, while themselves meeting all external costs. There was a conflict between two principles, and one party had to give in. The commonsensical solution would be for the United Nations project to bear the allowances (if in similar circumstances it would have borne the salary of an expert).

8. The evaluation team and the Administrator implicitly rejected the idea, which his delegation would have been able to accept, that UNV should become a specialist in the provision of volunteers from developing countries. Attention must therefore be paid to ways in which UNV could be more successful in using volunteers from industrialized countries and from countries other than the small number of developing countries from which most of the volunteers came.

9. His Government welcomed the Administrator's proposal to speed up the selection process by stipulating time-limits for clearance by the executing agencies and the host Governments. As shown by the disagreement among the evaluators, however, it was doubtful whether the question of multiple offers was as clear-cut as the Administrator's paper would suggest. Offering three candidates might seem sensible if the three were simply taken from a list of likely people. It was less sensible if each offer required a recruiting society to go out and find a suitable candidate, the normal way in which such societies operated, when they were filling posts other than straightforward teaching ones.

10. The sensible approach was to try the candidate on the requesting authority as soon as a good one was identified. That was what was done in the case of bilateral assignments. A three-offer system was good if it ensured better candidates, but bad if it was used merely to avoid the embarrassment of saying that the candidate must be of a certain age, sex or nationality, or to avoid the necessity of deciding what type of person was required at the moment the indent was submitted. His delegation hoped that the Executive Co-ordinator would take into account the possibilities of speeding up the process of selection, especially where he was using a co-operating sending society with a strong field presence and established links with the user Government.

11. His Government welcomed the Administrator's proposal that the external costs of all volunteers should be borne by the project. That would be an important simplification of procedures which would make for more rational decisions about the use of volunteers. The filling of volunteer posts would no longer have to depend on the availability of money in the Special Voluntary Fund or in the budgets of the national sending societies. If he had understood the proposal aright, the external costs which applied to all volunteers - mainly air fares - would be covered by the project but the costs related specifically to volunteers from industrialized countries, such as language training, resettlement and the like, would continue to be borne by the sending societies.

12. The proposal that a standing charge per volunteer/year be added to project budgets rather than the actual costs was perhaps best discussed in the Budgetary and Finance Committee. The intention was presumably to avoid discriminating in the selection process against volunteers who were likely to

be more expensive. That was an elaborate arrangement, and his delegation suggested that it be dropped if it entailed significant administrative costs. In any case, such transactions should not be handled through the Special Voluntary Fund.

13. The placing of extra burdens on the IPFs of countries by changing the financial system should be avoided. A transitional arrangement was needed to ensure that no difficulties were caused to recipient countries' plans to engage volunteers. The Administrator's proposals involved a small saving to the national sending societies and as their costs were largely covered by Governments through their aid programmes, that would mean a small saving to Governments. His own Government saw no difficulty in recycling that to UNDP, although the amount involved was negligible. In the long run, savings would be made to IPFs and other funding sources by the cost effectiveness of volunteers in the right assignments.

14. The main purpose of the Special Voluntary Fund (SVF) was to finance the estimated costs of volunteers from those developing countries that had no national sending society. Under the proposed arrangement, that requirement would no longer be needed. In the circumstances, his delegation would prefer that the SVF were discontinued, provided that some of the other uses to which the Fund was properly put were protected. A body as potentially innovative as UNV should have some resources for programme development, but it was preferable that such resources should form part of its ordinary budget from UNDP mainstream funds, with the possibility of receiving additional money from contributions specifically for such purposes.

15. His Government would, in fact, like UNV to be able to receive contributions for particular programmes, such as contributions for the supply of volunteers from developing countries to promote TCDC. The replacement of the SVF by some other arrangement whereby the contributor could specify the purpose of the contribution should not lead to great administrative expenditure, if it were properly organized. The fact that the SVF was not allowed to receive money earmarked for a specific purpose had probably caused a loss of potential contributions.

16. When the UNV mandate had been discussed in 1987, it had been necessary to look through various parts of a number of United Nations resolutions, and even then, the "mandate" was not entirely in keeping with the actual situation. That was partly due to the fact that UNV did not, in practice, have a single governing body. His delegation suggested that the Council should ensure that it took control of the development of the UNV mandate, the current mandate being simply set out in an annex to whatever decision was taken. If his proposal was accepted, the endorsement of the General Assembly might be needed.

17. The Administrator's proposal that the provision for UNV headquarters and full administrative expenditure should be related to the size of the UNV programme by a capitation charge for volunteer assignments, a proposal that would, no doubt, be handled mainly in the Budgetary and Finance Committee, struck his Government as a good one. If it were not accepted, the alternative solution should produce the same result. If there were an increase in the number of appropriate volunteer assignments requested, the Executive Co-ordinator should be permitted to increase his administrative expenditure while, if the number went down, he should reduce it. Where it was a question of the provision of staff for United Nations system projects and gap-filling

in the least developed countries there was no sense restricting UNV's effectiveness by rigid controls on its staffing or its administrative expenditure.

18. On a related issue, his delegation wished to announce that the United Kingdom was rejoining the Junior Professional Officers scheme. That did not, of course, in any way imply that his Government intended to reduce its commitment to UNV.

19. Mr. KABADYO (Indonesia) said that, since 1973, a multinational team of over 70 United Nations Volunteers had served in his country in a wide range of development sectors. By the same token, Indonesia had been an important source of grass-roots personnel recruited for Domestic Development Services (DDS) field workers in other Asian countries participating in the DDS programme. So far, however, their experience had been mostly limited to the Asia and Pacific region, and his Government felt it was time to expand the exchange of volunteers to other regions of the world, including the developed regions. Indonesia had an increasing reservoir of talented personnel who were willing to serve as volunteers abroad, and his Government was ready to discuss with UNV the arrangements for Indonesia to become a source of volunteers for UNV's mainstream programme.

20. Although his delegation recognized that, prior to their assignments, United Nations Volunteers underwent a selection process and a briefing on the country of assignment, Indonesia's experience had shown that more orientation on the spot and an intensified local language course were still needed if the assigned volunteers were to perform their work effectively. It went without saying that such orientation and courses entailed additional local cost, in which connection the Special Voluntary Fund was needed, and his delegation appealed to donor countries to increase their contributions to it.

21. His Government felt rather strongly that the UNV practice of submitting a number of candidates from various countries should be maintained. With that consideration in mind, it continued to see merit in the existing practice of channelling all volunteer inputs for United Nations-assisted projects through UNV.

22. With regard to the issue of UNV headquarter's staffing and financing modalities, the Administrator's suggestion as contained in paragraphs 61 and 62 of document DP/1988/46/Add.1 deserved positive consideration.

23. Mr. AGUARONE (Netherlands) said that the fundamental mandate of UNV was to provide volunteers for developing countries. The General Assembly had given UNV other tasks, but it had done so on the premise that those could be performed within the basic mandate. Therefore, such items as the youth and domestic development services programmes should not be separate aims in themselves, and his delegation strongly supported the evaluation team's recommendation 7, that those activities be merged into the overall volunteer programme. That did not mean that the items in question were not important, but the need for cost efficiency and the setting of priorities required that such a structural measure be adopted. That should allow UNV's attention to be transferred to the areas of recruitment, support and guidance of UNVs before and during their assignments.

24. It appeared that the first problem facing the organization when seeking qualified UNVs was to convince them that they were not volunteers. His delegation agreed with the Administrator that using the initials UNV and adding the professional qualification of the person concerned, as in "UNV psychotherapist", etc. was probably the best way out.

25. His delegation did not regard the supply of candidates from industrialized countries as a problem. Since most industrialized countries had volunteer agencies of their own, it was logical that most UNVs came from developing countries. None the less, if it was the Council's wish to improve the supply of candidates from industrialized countries, then the recruitment process would have to be accelerated. That did not mean that the multiple submission system should be abandoned, but that the current chronological length of the recruitment procedure made it inefficient in any fast-moving labour market. Moreover, the "pool" of available candidates might be no more than a mirage, if many candidates on the roster had found other employment in the meantime rather than await indefinitely a hypothetical assignment through UNV. In that context, his delegation supported efforts to encourage the participation of women volunteers and older volunteers.

26. Once hired, the UNV needed to be well prepared for the task ahead in order to soften the blow of culture shock and facilitate rapid insertion into the local community. It was his delegation's understanding that the Regional Conference on International Voluntary Service had recently sent a letter to the Administrator stating that sponsoring agencies which had developed courses for "in-country induction and cross-cultural orientations" were willing to offer the benefit of their experience and their facilities in that field. That was an excellent idea, and his Government would like to hear UNV's and the Administrator's comments on that proposal.

27. Once in the field, the UNV needed a clear perception of what his assignment entailed and continuing guidance and support from the local UNDP office. Theoretically, that was the responsibility of the resident representative but most of them just did not have the time, and would obviously have even less time in the future. In the circumstances, his delegation strongly supported the evaluation team's proposal that a professional staff post for a UNV programme assistant be established in each country where there was a large number of UNVs. The merger of the youth and DDS mandates should make it possible for the necessary funds and manpower to be transferred from headquarters to the field, thus further decentralizing UNV operations. His delegation did not share the view that a professional programme officer would lack credibility as a representative of UNVs in the field.

28. His delegation saw no reason to change the current system of external costs of UNVs from developed countries, which was working satisfactorily. Linking a modification of that procedure to a change in the recruiting system did not enjoy his Government's support. In general, UNV infrastructure must be strengthened in the field, rather than in industrialized countries, or at headquarters.

29. If the current system of financing external costs of UNVs from developing countries out of the Special Voluntary Fund (SVF) was to be modified direct financing from the individual IPFs would have the advantage of reiterating the recipient country's commitment to and interest in the assigning of UNVs. The

amounts involved were very modest, after all. Such a solution would eliminate the need for the intricate financial proposal that the Administrator detailed in his report.

30. As so many delegations wished to address the issue of UNV and the time available was very short, the recent suggestion by the Regional Council on International Voluntary Service that a standing advisory group be set up possibly merited closer consideration.

31. Mr. MUKHERJEE (India) said that the report of the evaluation team had brought the statistical data into focus but had also expressed a number of value judgements. The team had consisted of two members from developed countries and two from developing countries. One of the latter, Lesotho, was not a contributor of personnel to UNV. The other developing country team member, Nepal, was both a beneficiary of and a contributor to the programme. However, the Nepalese representative had been unable to participate in all the team's activities - for example he had not attended the briefing at headquarters. That might partially account for certain deficiencies in the report.

32. In the first place, however, he wished to congratulate UNV on the fact that it had plainly contributed to the fulfilment of one of the UNDP objectives, namely, to help the developing countries to help themselves. It had increasingly drawn on the expertise of developing countries in the application of technology. With regard to the question of universality, if it were the case that UNV had become the monopoly of a small group of developing countries, that must be rectified by creating conditions so that all could contribute. However, some suggestions on that score ran counter to the spirit of UNV's mandate.

33. There were proposals to increase from \$3,000 to \$3,500 the per capita charge to be levied per annum for each volunteer (DP/1988/46/Add.1, paras. 59 and 62) and to charge the external costs to project budgets. It might be inquired in whose interests such proposals were made. A number of recipient and contributor developing countries, such as India and Sri Lanka had not been visited by the evaluation team, and the views of developing countries generally had not been sought. The existing system, whereby external costs were charged to the UNV Special Voluntary Fund (SVF) must be continued. The SVF, in providing resources for the UNV, also offered an opportunity to countries to make voluntary contributions which indirectly boosted technical co-operation among developing countries. The abolition of the Fund would not be in the interests of UNDP programmes as a whole.

34. Furthermore, it would not be in the interests of developing countries to abolish the practice of multiple submissions of UNV candidates for posts: it was desirable to have a wide choice of candidates in order to select the right volunteer in terms of background and qualifications. He had sympathy with the recommendation that candidates chosen by host Governments should report to the duty station by a certain deadline (idem., para. 45), but six weeks was too short a period; three months would be more realistic. He was amazed at the suggestion (idem., para. 49) that agencies should conduct skills-enhancement training for UNVs. They had been selected on the basis of their skills and should not require any further training. A short orientation programme, including language training, was all that was needed.

35. In conclusion, the continuing increase in the numbers of volunteers indicated that they were doing good work to the satisfaction of both the host countries and the donor countries. There was certainly room for improvement, but changes must not kill the spirit of the programme or increase its cost.

36. Mr. NAGARATNAM (Observer for Sri Lanka) said that his country had had a long and mutually beneficial association with the UNV programme. In particular, UNV had provided over 300 medical personnel between 1978 and 1984 to help in the expansion of the Sri Lankan health-care system and to overcome the effects of the brain-drain. Since the persons concerned came from developing countries within the region, they had appropriate expertise and had adapted excellently to local conditions. Their experience with the well developed health-care system in Sri Lanka was also useful to their own countries on their return. The project was an example of the value of the UNV programme in promoting both TCDC and multilateral co-operation for self-reliance. His delegation endorsed the Administrator's support for UNV and agreed that there was a need and a potential for expanding the programme.

37. The UNV had been functioning for nearly 20 years and a review of the programme was thus timely: his delegation concurred with many of the views expressed by the Administrator on the review recommendations as contained in document DP/1988/46/Add.1. However, care must be taken not to lose sight of the UNV's principal objectives. It was a multilateral organization created to provide supplementary operational expertise to developing countries on a cost effective basis. It was currently successful in recruiting from over 100 countries in every region of the world and sending volunteers to some 98 developing countries. Its aims were not to be confused with the promotion of "volunteerism" as such and changes must not alter the fundamental premise of the programme, namely recipient orientation and cost-effective, high-quality expertise.

38. A higher level of participation by the industrialized countries would, indeed, be welcome and he hoped that the special recruitment efforts would remedy the situation without resorting to measures which could have adverse implications for the fundamental principles of UNV.

39. His delegation shared the concern expressed by both developing and industrial countries at the April Consultative Meeting about the proposal to charge UNV's external costs to the recipient country's IPFs. Apart from imposing additional financial burdens on the IPFs, it could lead to inequitable burden-sharing by the developing countries, since external costs would vary according to the source of the volunteers. The narrowing of cost differentials between UNVs and traditional experts could adversely affect the attitude of recipient countries towards using UNVs. Moreover, the volunteer-sending organizations in industrial countries did not seem to have great difficulty in continuing the existing arrangements for meeting external costs.

40. His Government had noted with satisfaction the extension of the DDS programme to the Pacific and African regions, and was happy to offer a testing ground for its first regional project. Sri Lanka had contributed to the Asia-Pacific DDS programme by hosting its headquarters and by receiving a considerable number of DDS trainees from other countries in the region, to benefit from Sri Lanka's experience in grass-root level development. His delegation thus believed that the identity of the DDS must be preserved and

the proposed merger with UNV might not serve the purpose. Ways should be found to equalize the service conditions of the DDS field worker and those of the United Nations Volunteers, without compromising the special characteristics of the DDS.

41. Mr. LI Yang (China) said that, over the years, the UNV had expanded greatly: the hard work and dedication of the volunteers had made them very welcome in the host countries. In recent years, China had co-operated both by inviting UNVs, mainly from the developed countries, to work in China and by sending project technicians to other countries. China had also contributed to the Special Voluntary Fund (SVF).

42. The UNV programme was currently entering upon a new phase and recommendations had been submitted for its future development. Most of the suggestions were constructive but some required further thought. Practices which had been found to be good should be retained. In particular, his delegation was concerned at the suggestion that the external costs of volunteers should be borne by the IPFs of recipient countries. In the case of an island country, the cost of such a proposal might well amount to about one third of the IPF. If the cost of the UNV programme to developing countries increased, it would not maintain its upward momentum. The solution was to increase the resources of the Special Voluntary Fund and he appealed for further contributions to it.

43. His Government welcomed the increasing number of volunteers from developing countries, and would also welcome more volunteers from developed countries, provided the quality of expertise was maintained. It was in favour of the multiple submission of candidates to give host countries a wide choice. The programme should be more flexible with regard to the duration of service. Some projects required only one year's service and if two years was insisted upon, places would be left unfilled. The Secretariat should study that issue because UNDP must show enterprise in responding to the actual needs of developing countries. Lastly, his delegation was not in favour of changing the name of the programme, since that would result in the loss of its established identity.

44. Mr. DAH (Burkina Faso), speaking on behalf of the African Group, said it was difficult to understand the reason for the recommendation that the external costs of all volunteers should be charged to project budgets under the IPF. Such a proposal would constitute an additional financial burden for many countries which was likely to jeopardize their co-operation with the UNV programme. The Special Voluntary Fund should be maintained by contributions from member States, so that it could cover the external cost of volunteers from the developing countries and the recruitment of UNV programme assistants assigned to UNDP field offices. It was clear that the proposed increase in the number of programme assistants to provide administrative support for all the volunteers in each country would be impossible unless the UNV programme had a Special Voluntary Fund.

45. With regard to the recruitment of volunteers, the African Group considered that the current policy and procedure had stood the test of time and that any modification to facilitate the selection of volunteers from one region or another would undermine the right of choice of the recipient Governments. The Group hoped that its co-operation with the UNV programme would be strengthened in the future and that all the member States of the Council would continue to support the Programme.

46. Ms. NIELSEN (Denmark), speaking on behalf of the Nordic countries, said that the emphasis of UNV on TCDC activities was one of the reasons why the Nordic countries supported it. On the whole they believed that the analysis and conclusions of the evaluation report and the Administrator's comments (DP/1988/46/Add.1) were valid. They agreed that the external costs of volunteers should be borne by the project budgets. That did imply an increased burden on the IPFs, but the amounts involved were so small that that consideration should not stand in the way of a more rational financing system.

47. The transfer of the external costs would mean that the SVF could be discontinued, which the Nordic countries also welcomed as it was not rational to have a large number of small funds. To the extent that it was to be continued, expenditure hitherto financed by the SVF and not transferred to project budgets, should be financed out of UNDP general funds. The administrative costs should also be borne by the UNDP administrative budget.

48. The Nordic countries were not unduly worried by the fact that only 15 per cent of the volunteers were recruited from industrialized countries, although the geographical distribution of recruitment might be widened. They were, however, concerned about the time-consuming recruitment procedures. More flexibility might be shown with regard to the practice of multiple submissions of candidates: a case-by-case evaluation of that practice would be justified.

49. They welcomed the recommendation relating to the orientation of volunteers (DP/1988/46/Add.1, para. 49). While skills-enhancement training should not be necessary, orientation programmes were, from the bilateral experience of the Nordic countries, indispensable. They also agreed that the acronym UNV should not be changed but subsumed into the title of each volunteer (idem., para. 4).

50. The Nordic countries welcomed the recommendations relating to an increased role for the resident representative, which was in keeping with their desire for a more co-ordinated and integrated approach at the country level. They regretted that the issue of closer integration of UNV's activities with the programmes of the United Nations development system had not been dealt with. They hoped that the UNV Administration would devote attention to the matter and report at a later stage to the Council on the subject. There seemed to be scope for increased use for UNV since, in many cases, the combination of short-term high-level experts with national experts and/or UNVs appeared appropriate. Experience with volunteers suggested that they could often do as good a job as the more senior experts.

51. Mr. GBEHO (Ghana) said that the United Nations Volunteers essentially represented a technical assistance programme, and the developed countries should provide the necessary framework to enable their nationals to participate in its activities without placing extra burdens on UNV resources. His Government would prefer an arrangement whereby the external costs of all UNVs recruited in industrialized countries would be met by the sending country and not become a charge on the Special Voluntary Fund (SVF).

52. His delegation concurred with the Administrator that it was not necessary to change the recruitment-placement system. The practice of multiple submissions of UNV candidates for posts in developing countries gave the host country the opportunity to choose from a number of candidates the person best

suited to its requirements. The same procedure was followed in nominating experts and consultants. The UNV should therefore be extremely cautious in experimenting with single submissions in special circumstances. The practice of maintaining a roster from which candidates would be selected should continue as it had the advantage of ensuring that nominations were made from the widest possible pool.

53. His Government's experience with UNV dated back to March 1973. Three UNVs were currently serving in Ghana as WFP Field Monitors and a total of 23 UNVs had been sent to Ghana to date. Recruitment was under way for another five, including three engineers to assist in the construction of feeder roads. Ghana was not only a recipient but also an active source of volunteers for other countries; about 91 volunteers had so far been recruited from Ghana in areas of increasing specialization, such as skilled trades, education, health and agriculture.

54. His Government strongly supported the work of UNV because it was cost-effective and also because it was an efficient mechanism for promoting technical co-operation among developing countries. He appealed to donors to increase their support for the UNV in general and the SVF in particular.

55. Mr. KATES (United States) said that, if the UNV programme was to become an even more important source of expertise for developing countries, it would need to evolve in ways that both ensured the welfare of the individual volunteer and improved the cost effectiveness of the programme.

56. The assessment team was to be commended on its superb evaluation of the programme in so far as it had addressed many of the questions which his delegation had raised over the years. He hoped that there would be an opportunity during the current session to discuss the study with the members of the evaluation team.

57. His delegation was pleased that UNDP had accepted the evaluation team's recommendation that the external costs of UNVs be added to the pro forma costs charged to project budgets, as that would significantly improve UNV's accounting procedures. The adoption of a method of accrual accounting would enable the programme to assess better the commitments against existing SVF balances. That would rationalize the budget process of which the goal must be greater transparency as to where funds came from and where they went.

58. His delegation believed that an interim bridging arrangement for the UNV budget process should be put into place in the meantime and that, after UNV's new management had had an opportunity to review the budget process, it should report to the Governing Council, perhaps in February 1989.

59. In conclusion, his delegation would like to reiterate its strong support for the UNV programme and its firm belief that volunteers represented a very valuable asset both to the agencies of the United Nations system and to the countries in which they served. His Government would continue to co-operate fully with the UNDP administration on the UNV programme and give it all appropriate support.

60. Mr. HUGHES (New Zealand) said that his delegation recognized the important contribution made by volunteers to the development process and, in particular, their valuable role in helping to meet the skilled manpower needs of the island developing countries of the South Pacific.

61. His delegation agreed with the thrust of many of the evaluation report's recommendations which were aimed at improving the efficiency and responsiveness of the programme. It differed however with certain other points. It was neither necessary nor desirable that the title of "volunteer" should be changed, as had been proposed in the report. His delegation had no difficulty about modifying the designation of volunteers in countries where the term might inhibit local acceptance of the value of the volunteer. The suggestion by the Administrator (DP/1988/46/Add.1, para. 4) that "UNV", followed by the title of expertise, as in "UNV physiotherapist", should be used seemed appropriate, as it would emphasize the expertise of the volunteer. His delegation wondered, however, whether a universal change of title might not militate against the aim of reinforcing the volunteer ethic and, in particular, of attracting more volunteers from developed countries.

62. His delegation did not agree with recommendation 61 and accepted the view of the Administrator that it was not realistic for UNV recruitment and placement staff to operate on a sectoral rather than a geographical basis.

63. His delegation was also concerned that more than half the volunteers came from only seven countries and welcomed the Administrator's assurance (DP/1988/46/Add.1, para. 10) that he would make greater efforts to recruit more volunteers from other countries. He would welcome a progress report on that issue. In that connection, New Zealand's national volunteer organization, Volunteer Service Abroad (VSA) had proved able to increase markedly the number of New Zealand volunteers recruited for assignments under a co-sponsoring arrangement with UNV. Under that arrangement VSA was able to recruit for specific assignments and not in competition with volunteers on the UNV roster. The success of that arrangement led his delegation to wonder whether UNV's practice of multiple submissions was not counter-productive to the goal of reinforcing the universality of the programme.

64. His delegation also supported the evaluation report's recommendation on ending the "monopoly" of the UNV programme on volunteers for use in United Nations agency projects, while still retaining the co-ordinating role of UNV, Geneva. Though it accepted the Administrator's point in paragraph 14 of the document that the term "monopoly" was, strictly speaking, misleading, his delegation nevertheless welcomed the thrust of the recommendation.

65. His delegation supported the recommendations proposing more active involvement of the resident representative and his staff in UNV programme activities in the field and greater authority for resident representatives with regard to the programme. It also supported the recommendation that the UNV pro forma be increased to cover the external costs of all UNVs, the proposal to adopt accrual accounting and the recommendations aimed at improving the training and orientation of volunteers, especially language training and sensitization to the culture of the host country, particularly in the case of volunteers selected to serve in small and remote communities.

66. His delegation had discussed some of the issues highlighted in the report with a number of recipient country planners, all of whom were in general agreement regarding the effectiveness of the contribution made by volunteers. Such complaints as had been made basically concerned delays in recruitment and of lack of proficiency in the local language on the part of individual volunteers.

67. The review of the programme had been a very useful exercise and his delegation looked forward to a progress report regarding the implementation of its recommendations.

68. Mr. NGO DINH KHA (Observer for Viet Nam) said that co-operation between his Government and UNV had begun only recently, but nevertheless held out the promise of a fruitful future relationship. The recent visit to his country of the Executive Co-ordinator had enabled his Government to develop a better understanding of the role of UNV, of the inherent advantages of the spirit of volunteerism and of the scope and cost effectiveness of their approach. A high-level representative of his Government had participated in the programme's annual consultations in April 1988 and had been able to demonstrate his country's interest in co-operating with UNV both as a recipient and as a provider of volunteers.

69. His delegation favoured the multiple submission of candidates for a given post as it offered the recipient country an optimum range of choice in selecting the best qualified candidate. That procedure gave the executing agencies the possibility of doing likewise, though solely and strictly with regard to the technical aspect. The procedure would also assist the programme to develop its own expertise in the recruitment and posting of volunteers. Quality and efficiency must be the two prime considerations in the choice of candidates. That being said, his delegation would not oppose balanced geographical distribution.

70. The current arrangements for the external costs of recruitment and posting of volunteers should be continued and improved with a view to strengthening the programme's activities, accelerating the decision-making process and encouraging greater participation of the developing countries. The support of the resident representatives was also of crucial importance in enabling the programme to fulfil its mandate in the best possible way.

71. Mr. GIELING (Belgium) said he regretted that no account had been taken of the concern expressed by a number of delegations on the growing number of self-standing volunteers. The basic purpose of the programme was to provide qualified people for projects of the United Nations system at the lowest possible cost. Volunteers working for such projects found themselves working within the framework of existing infrastructures. His delegation considered, however, that UNV as such did not have, and should not have, the capacity to formulate projects.

72. As for the recommendations in the evaluation report, while his Government did not consider it of prime importance to increase the number of volunteers from developed countries, it was not currently financing as many volunteers as it could, probably because people in the developed countries were not sufficiently aware of UNV.

73. His delegation, which would go into greater detail regarding the budgetary proposals in the Budgetary and Finance Committee, hoped that, on the occasion of the proposed modifications to the UNV Special Voluntary Fund (SVF), its terms of reference would be more precisely defined. His Government was currently contributing substantially to the SVF because it believed that its purpose, namely, the financing of the external costs of volunteers from developing countries, was of special importance.

74. His delegation was ready to join the consensus which was developing regarding the charging to the IPF of recipient countries of the external costs of volunteers, estimated at \$2,500 per volunteer/year, regardless of the country of origin. He wished however to point out that \$2,500 did not cover all the external costs of Belgian volunteers and part of the cost of such volunteers would therefore have to be borne by his Government.

75. Mr. ROHNER (Switzerland) said that the evaluation exercise had been a valuable one. It had not covered all aspects of the programme but it had highlighted its strengths and weaknesses. The evaluation team's recommendations should be implemented, particularly with regard to the strengthening of the universal nature of the programme, management, procedures, the orientation of volunteers and the strengthening of the role of programme assistants in the field. His delegation hoped that the specialized agencies would make greater efforts to engage volunteers in the future, in which connection it would welcome the views of those agencies on their use of volunteers.

76. He appreciated the close interest shown by the UNDP secretariat in the programme and in tapping its potential through the Action Committee. In that connection, his delegation would like to know whether UNDP had, to any extent, replaced experts by volunteers.

77. The Special Voluntary Fund had played a useful role, particularly on meeting the external costs of assigning volunteers to developing countries.

78. Ms. LEE (Observer for Australia) said that her delegation welcomed the evaluation report as a valuable contribution towards the reform of UNV; much more remained to be done for UNV to become truly efficient and for there to be a more widespread use of a wider range of volunteers. Her delegation appreciated the efforts made by the Central Evaluation Office, with regard not only to UNV but also to improvement of UNDP's overall evaluation capacity.

79. There was a clear need for the implementation of recommendations 1 and 2, which proposed that UNV adopt a more aggressive posture in achieving a wider geographical representation and improve the supply of candidates from industrialized countries. For example, the Australian Overseas Service Bureau had 250 volunteers working overseas but only seven of them were United Nations Volunteers. Her delegation had also noted that 56 per cent of UNVs were from only seven developing countries and, in that connection, wished to emphasize the need for greater efforts to recruit more volunteers from other developing countries as well as from the industrialized countries. It did not, however, support the idea of quotas. Ways would have to be found to speed up the recruitment and screening process, if the number of UNVs from industrialized countries was to be increased.

80. The reasons given for maintaining the identities of both the domestic development services and youth programmes and keeping them separate from the overall volunteer programme had failed to convince her delegation that those services should not be merged, as recommendation 7 suggested.

81. As regards recommendation 9 to the effect that the Governing Council should explore the possibility of changing the title of "volunteer", her delegation considered that, although the term "volunteer" was no longer entirely accurate, it could accept the Administrator's recommendation that the term be subsumed into the designation of the title of each volunteer.

82. Recommendation 10 proposed that the Governing Council should take steps to eliminate the monopoly of the UNV programme on volunteers for use in United Nations agency projects. In fact, UNV did not have such a monopoly. United Nations agencies already dealt directly with national NGOs to obtain volunteers; for example, the Australian Overseas Service Bureau had provided volunteers directly to United Nations agency projects in the Asia/Pacific region, with the assistance of relevant NGOs in the recipient countries. The Governing Council should clearly acknowledge that UNV did not have a monopoly.

83. Recommendation 13 proposed that the Governing Council reassess its rules on the use of the UNV Special Voluntary Fund to permit payment of the external costs of UNVs from industrialized countries while recommendation 50 proposed an increase of \$2,500 in the pro forma costs of UNVs. Her delegation was opposed to the pro forma cost proposal, as a simpler and more rational method would be to charge all the costs of volunteers to project costs. That would eliminate the need for the SVF.

84. Her delegation would like to encourage formulation of practical and concrete steps to ensure implementation of recommendations 14 and 15, namely that UNV develop special strategies to increase the number of women and older people in the programme.

85. It agreed with the decision of the Administrator not to support recommendation 31 which had suggested upgrading the posts of UNV programme assistants to regular staff posts, as it opposed any unnecessary increase in staffing costs.

86. Her delegation welcomed the Administrator's promise to act upon recommendations 43 and 44 which proposed an evaluation of UNV activities at least every three to five years and his separate proposal for strengthening the Central Evaluation Office.

87. Mr. SAHLMANN (Federal Republic of Germany), having endorsed the United States proposal that informal discussions be held with the evaluation team during the current session of the Governing Council, said that the UNV mandate should concentrate on the main task of fielding volunteers and on giving additional support to the domestic development services (DDS). He agreed with the Administrator's view (DP/1988/46/Add.1, para. 28) that the DDS should not be merged into the overall volunteer programme; the financial arrangements in particular should not be equalized, because that would undermine the DDS programme, which was of special importance to self-help, grass-roots development.

88. His delegation's views on recruitment were identical with those of the United Kingdom representative.

89. The training of volunteers in the local language and their orientation concerning the economic, social and political background of the host country were of crucial importance, and seemed so far to be weak points in UNV's development efforts. He supported recommendations to find ways of improving the orientation of volunteers, and agreed with the Administrator that professional skills should be assured by the selection process for volunteers and that skills-enhancement training was unnecessary.

90. As his delegation had already stated in the high-level segment on future financing of UNV programmes, clear-cut responsibilities should be laid down for the Executive Co-ordinator, the resident representative and the Administrator so as to give UNV a more rational and solid financial basis and orient it to the needs and requests of the developing countries. For that reason all the direct project-related costs of volunteers should be borne by the project budget, whereas all administrative costs, including UNV offices and the resident representatives' offices, should be charged to the administrative budget of UNDP. There should be no rigid control on staffing if the programme was to maintain its dynamic development. To maintain UNV's cost effectiveness, if and when UNV programme officers replaced UNV (volunteer) programme assistants in the resident representatives' offices, local officers should be used as far as possible. Details of the financial arrangements would have to be discussed further in the Budgetary and Finance Committee.

91. As for the Special Voluntary Fund (SVF), of its three purposes, (a) financing the external cost of volunteers from developing countries, (b) financing the internal costs of UNV programme assistants assigned to UNDP field offices in the least developed countries, and (c) financing UNV programme development and promotional activities, only the last purpose should remain valid in the future, the first two purposes having been placed on a much more solid foundation. However, the SVF might provide additional funding for the DDS.

92. Mr. DMOWSKI (Poland), having stressed the importance of the evaluation team's recommendations 1, 2, 12 and 13 (DP/1988/46/Add.1, paras. 6-8), said he welcomed the fact that the UNV programme had been focused on such basic sectors as agriculture, education, health and the promotion of social justice, and had continued to give priority to the least developed countries.

93. Poland had joined the UNV programme rather late, beginning its activities only in 1985. Its aim had been above all to assist the developing countries, especially the poorest which could not afford to hire expensive experts. All the central institutions of Poland had been informed of the need for candidates and the conditions of their recruitment.

94. So far UNV headquarters had on its roster 83 Polish candidates who were waiting for offers of work. The fields of specialization represented by the Polish candidates fitted the needs of UNDP and included: agriculture, forestry, fisheries, medicine and health protection, teaching, computer science, and many others. So far 17 Polish volunteers had been engaged through UNV, and the engagement of seven others was being prepared.

95. That number was likely to increase, since Polish volunteers had a good reputation in the countries that employed them, as evidenced by the extension of their contracts and the assessments made of their work. Despite the low salaries and the difficult working and climatic conditions, Polish volunteers were ready to bring specialized assistance to developing countries in support of development and the raising of living standards.

96. On the basis of the past experience of Polish volunteers, his delegation requested that more extensive and more practical information be given to volunteers about the countries in which they were to work and that the costs of their children's education be paid.

97. Mrs. RAPOLAKI (Observer for Lesotho) said that substantial technical assistance had been provided to her country through the UNV programme. Since 1972, 200 UNVs had served in sectors such as health, agriculture, and government services. Five UNVs were currently serving in the country. She supported UNDP's efforts to expand the resource base and lessen the burden on developing countries by negotiating pre-funded programmes and projects, as well as the idea of a balanced representation of all nations within the programme. The recipient Governments should have ample opportunity to choose for themselves those volunteers best suited to their development needs from a multiple submission of candidates, from both industrialized and developing countries, for each post. Her delegation was against the idea of quotas.

98. She fully agreed that no volunteer should be sent to a country without that country's explicit request or approval, since that would amount to a type of conditionality, which would not be in conformity with UNV principles of technical assistance.

99. The proposal to transfer the external costs of UNVs to IPFs would be detrimental to the development efforts of the developing countries, which were already experiencing budget deficit problems. It would deprive developing countries of effective technical assistance appropriate to their economic status and would also weaken and jeopardize TCDC.

100. She rejected the allegation that volunteers were cheap labour; they were effective personnel relevant to the needs and conditions prevailing in most developing countries. The cost effectiveness of UNDP should not be interpreted to mean cheap labour.

101. Mr. CABEIRO-QUINTANA (Cuba) said he fully shared the views expressed by the delegates of India, Burkina Faso and several African countries. In terms of geographical distribution, 85 per cent of United Nations Volunteers came from the developing countries and 15 per cent from the industrialized countries whereas, for the totality of experts participating in United Nations programmes in all parts of the world, the proportions were just the opposite: 15 per cent from developing countries and 85 per cent from industrialized countries. UNVs represented only 7 per cent of all the volunteers in the voluntary organizations of the industrialized countries. His delegation therefore could not accept recommendations 13 and 50 (DP/1988/46/Add.1, paras. 8 and 34) to add the external costs of UNV projects to the pro forma costs charged to IPFs, which for many countries would represent 30 to 50 per cent of their IPFs. Those costs should be borne by the Special Voluntary Fund, and he appealed to the international community to contribute more to it.

102. He agreed with the observer for Lesotho that several candidates should continue to be presented to the developing countries for them to make their selection and that volunteers should be sent only with the agreement of the Government of the receiving country.

103. Mr. KRSTAJIC (Yugoslavia) said that his country had joined UNV in 1982 and had so far provided a significant number of candidates, six of whom were currently serving in developing countries, while a further 23 were on the UNV roster. Yugoslavia would continue to improve its co-operation with UNV both in quantity and in quality; steady expansion of UNV activities both sectorally and geographically was one of the outstanding features of UNDP's multifaceted input into the development co-operation process.

104. He welcomed the upward trend in the participation of developing countries as a cost-effective input which enabled those countries to share knowledge and experience among themselves and he supported a further utilization of that potential on a more diversified geographical basis, with respect to both developing and developed countries.

105. He also supported the concrete measures adopted by UNDP and UNV to strengthen the staffing and funding capacity of UNV, improve recruitment procedures and introduce various modalities for co-operation with a larger number of participating countries. The Administrator's comments, on the evaluation review in DP/1988/46/Add.1 were pertinent, justified and realistic, especially those with regard to the recommendation to upgrade the role of the UNV programme assistant and the possibility of improving recruitment procedures. In that regard, he invited UNV to improve the interview exercise, to design appropriate job descriptions and to provide candidates with sufficient information. The interview exercise might be improved if it were shared between the UNV recruitment service and the co-operating agency from the country concerned.

106. Mr. TOMINO (Japan) said that his delegation generally approved the UNV programme; however, as the review had mentioned UNVs should be used as a valuable means of technology transfer through on-the-job training or instruction for counterpart projects. If the UNV secretariat conducted a rigorous selection process, with full consideration for that possibility, the tendency of the number of volunteers to increase would be slowed. Expansion should be kept at a level that could be supported; the Special Voluntary Fund was too weak to sustain the expanding programme. It would therefore be prudent to reassess the rules on the use of the Special Voluntary Fund (SVF) to pay the external costs of UNVs from industrialized countries because the SVF should be primarily used for supporting and assisting in the welfare and training of volunteers.

107. Ms. CLARKE (Observer for Jamaica) said that her country had been one of the first beneficiaries of UNV assistance and its programme, which had started in November 1972, had been marked by the use of UNVs in various social and economic activities. Some 100 UNVs had served in Jamaica and 34 were currently serving there. UNV's response to requests for volunteer services had often been prompt and in keeping with project delivery schedules.

108. Initially, UNVs had been recruited for assignments chiefly in the educational sector, the main thrust being vocational training. Since the beginning of the 1980s, there had been a shift in focus towards health activities, especially the provision of medical services by UNV health specialists, such as general practitioners and primary health care specialists. That assistance was spread over Government hospitals, clinics and health centres throughout Jamaica, and had proved most valuable, because the volunteers were willing to operate with a high degree of responsibility in demanding conditions. Her Government had agreed to finance the in-country costs of volunteers through Government cash counterpart contributions amounting to 9 million Jamaican dollars.

109. It had also agreed to participate in the DDS programme for the Caribbean subregion, and had provided host facilities for a workshop for the subregion, organized by UNV, at which eight countries had participated in discussions leading to an agreement on a DDS project to be executed by the UNV programme.

110. Emphasis would be placed on an exchange of field workers among the participating countries, as well as on-the-job training, income generation and self-employment activities for youth, women and other disadvantaged groups. The CARICOM Council of Ministers had recommended an initial allocation of \$US 250,000 from the intercountry IPF to start that DDS project, with the aim of mobilizing additional support once activities were under way.

111. Her Government had already identified an umbrella non-governmental association called the Council for Voluntary Social Services as the most appropriate programme to act as a focal point because of its infrastructure and activities throughout the island.

112. The DDS programme was in its tenth year of operation, with around 200 partner organizations in nearly 40 countries in Africa, Asia and the South Pacific. The Caribbean subregion would be a logical extension for a programme that had accumulated considerable experience and expertise in promoting self-reliance at the community level.

113. She was concerned at the proposal to charge the external costs of all volunteers to project budgets, i.e. to national and regional IPFs, which could have a negative effect on the future use of UNVs in all developing countries; it would result in the escalation of their costs and make UNVs even less competitive in terms of costs with volunteers recruited by means of bilateral programmes, since the costs for bilateral volunteers were absorbed by the sending organizations.

114. In the case of Jamaica, the additional financial charge to the IPF to cover the external costs of its 34 volunteers, using the standard rate of \$US 3,500 per volunteer, would be \$US 119,000 per year or approximately 14 per cent of its annual IPF allocation. If the calculations were based on the actual costs for the volunteers currently in Jamaica, the charge would amount to almost \$US 400,000. Clearly, her Government which was unable to accommodate that extra cost, could not be in favour of the proposal.

115. Her delegation believed that the existing funding mechanism should be maintained, i.e., that the SVF should continue to pay the external costs of volunteers from developing countries. Similarly, other payments by the SVF, such as those covering the cost of the UNV programme assistants in the least developed countries, should be continued. She therefore endorsed the Administrator's appeal in DP/1988/46/Add.1 for increased contributions to the SVF.

116. Although she agreed with some of the evaluation team's proposals, such as the need to expand the UNV programme to meet the needs of developing countries, she was concerned about the prospect of proportional regional representation in the UNV programme on the basis of criteria other than those provided for within the framework of existing UNV recruitment policy and procedures. Jamaica had always welcomed UNVs from all over the world and would continue to do so, on condition that the recruitment of each volunteer was in response to requests made by national institutions and that all the candidates proposed had been subjected to uniform selection criteria.

The meeting rose at 6 p.m.

