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Thirty-sixth session

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 10th MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,  
on Monday, 5 June 1989, at 10 a.m.

President: Mr. PIBULSONGGRAM (Thailand)

later: Mr. SALAZAR-SANCISI (Ecuador)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

#### OPENING OF THE SESSION

1. The PRESIDENT declared open the thirty-sixth session of the Governing Council of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and said that the Council would have a large number of very important items to consider. He hoped that members would be able to arrive at constructive decisions which would further enhance the central role of UNDP in promoting development efforts.

2. Mr. DRAPER (Administrator of UNDP) said that the session was a very important one because of the large number of decisions that would have to be taken which would affect the future of UNDP for the remainder of the decade and for the following decade.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA AND OTHER ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS (DP/1989/L.13 and Corr.1); DP/1989/11, 12 and Corr.1 and Add.1; DP/1989/BFC/L.1 and Corr.1 and Add.1)

3. The PRESIDENT recalled that the draft provisional agenda had been approved by the Council at its organizational meeting in February 1989. With regard to item 8 (g) (Technical co-operation among developing countries), it had been decided, following informal consultations, that the meeting of the High-level Committee to consider technical co-operation among developing countries, which was traditionally held just prior to the regular session of the Governing Council, should be rescheduled for a later date. However, since the Administrator had made a specific request concerning the staffing of the Special Unit for TCDC, the item would need to be retained on the agenda and might be allocated to the Budgetary and Finance Committee if members wished.

4. Mr. GOPINATHAN (India) asked under what agenda item the Council could consider proposals concerning the question of special assistance to individual countries.

5. Mrs. DUDIK-GAYOSO (United States of America) asked whether the question of the role of the Office for Projects Services would be considered in plenary meeting before being taken up by the Budgetary and Finance Committee.

6. Mr. KIRDAR (Secretary of the Council) said that the question of special assistance should be considered under item 5 (a) (i) and confirmed that the question concerning the Office for Projects Services would be considered in plenary meeting under item 9 (e).

7. Mr. KUDRYAVTSEV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) requested that the word "major" in the phrase "major donor countries" in the third line of paragraph (c) on page 7 of document DP/1989/11 should be deleted to bring the wording of the paragraph into line with that of decisions 1988/20 and 21.

8. The PRESIDENT asked the Secretariat to ensure that that request was taken into account and suggested that the agenda should be adopted as amended.
9. The agenda, as amended, was adopted.
10. With regard to the organization of work, the PRESIDENT drew attention to document DP/1989/L.13, in particular annex II which contained a revised timetable.
11. Mr. KIRDAR (Secretary of the Council) explained the minor changes which had been made with regard to the organization of work.
12. The PRESIDENT pointed out that in any event the timetable was flexible and provisional in character and that the Bureau could adjust the schedule of meetings when necessary in order to ensure the smooth conduct of the session. He suggested that the revised timetable should be adopted.
13. The revised timetable was adopted.
14. The PRESIDENT recalled that, by its decision 89/1 of 21 February 1989, the Council had decided to waive rule 22 of its rules of procedure for its meetings in 1989, in so far as that rule referred to the requirement of a quorum of one third of the members of the Governing Council present to open a meeting or to proceed with a debate. He also recalled that, in its resolution 43/182, the General Assembly had requested organs, organizations and bodies of the United Nations system to contribute effectively to the preparatory process for the international development strategy for the fourth United Nations development decade. Members of the Council were therefore invited to address themselves to that matter during the high-level segment of the general debate; the Council might then perhaps wish to formulate its views regarding the strategy.
15. The PRESIDENT outlined the programme of work of the Budgetary and Finance Committee, which would also review the financial implications of draft decisions before the Council took action thereon. He suggested that the Council should agree to the arrangements relating to the Committee's programme of work.
16. It was so decided.
17. The PRESIDENT recalled that consultations had begun concerning agenda item 3 (the role of UNDP in the 1990s). The Bureau recommended that the machinery for those consultations should be instituted as soon as possible, and that they should be led by the Chairman of the Drafting Group, Mr. Edward Obeng Kufuor (Ghana). If he heard no objections, he would take it that the Council agreed to that procedure.
18. It was so decided.
19. The PRESIDENT said that 1990 would mark the fortieth anniversary of the establishment of technical co-operation activities by the United Nations, which had led to the creation of the United Nations Development Programme. It would be important for the Governing Council to mark the anniversary in an appropriate manner. The item should therefore be inserted in the agenda for the 1990 session.

UNITED NATIONS POPULATION FUND

- (a) REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR ON 1988 ACTIVITIES (DP/1989/32, Part I and Corr.1, Parts II and III, and DP/1989/33, Parts I and II)
- (b) REPORT ON THE FUND'S WIDE-RANGING REVIEW AND ASSESSMENT OF ACCUMULATED POPULATION EXPERIENCE (DP/1989/37)

20. Mrs. SADIK (Executive Director of the United Nations Population Fund) recalled that UNFPA had existed for 20 years. There was much to be proud of in those 20 years of work: the full awareness on the part of Governments about population and its role in development; the lowering of population growth rates and the declining rates of maternal and infant mortality; the ever-increasing concern for improving the status and role of women in society. Yet many challenges lay ahead. The current world population situation was characterized by a number of noteworthy achievements: there had been dramatic progress in the commitment to population issues, particularly among developing countries. A large majority of those countries were now convinced about the implications of their demographic situation and most had taken concrete measures to formulate and implement action programmes. For example, more than 80 per cent of developing countries permitted the use of modern methods of fertility regulation and provided support for family planning, either directly or indirectly. Intergovernmental bodies, including the United Nations regional commissions, had addressed population issues within their work programmes and formulated population objectives for their regions.

21. In spite of those important achievements, there was real cause for concern, if not alarm, given the rate of population growth. At the beginning of 1989, 5.2 billion people inhabited the globe, of whom 77 per cent lived in developing countries. The rate of increase was more rapid than had been projected in 1987 by the United Nations, and it was estimated that the world population would surpass 6.2 billion by the year 2000 and reach 8.5 billion in 2025. The decline in the fertility rates of many developing countries had been slower than anticipated. Between now and the year 2000, the population of developing countries would expand by 25 per cent, as compared with only 5.3 per cent in the developed countries. The impact of that increase would vary considerably among regions and countries. Africa and Asia were the regions in which it posed the greatest problems.

22. Another alarming concern was the rapid increase of urban populations, particularly that of large metropolitan areas. Urban populations in developing regions were currently growing at 3.6 per cent annually. That would mean the addition of some 813 million people to the already over-stretched urban centres of the developing world by the year 2000, with about half of the world's population living in cities.

23. The Fund's report to the Council on the implications of the findings and conclusions of the exercise on programme review and assessment (DP/1989/37) demonstrated the urgent need for population intervention. What happened in the last decade of the twentieth century would, quite literally, determine the future of the planet in the twenty-first century. More rigorous intervention could make a

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crucial difference in the future. Through more intensive programme efforts it would be possible to reach the "low" variant of the United Nations population projections, which would mean a difference of at least 1 billion people in the year 2025. Even a miniscule difference in population growth rates would have a phenomenal effect on future population size.

24. Current estimates of population growth clearly showed that earlier projections had been too low. Progress had been made in the previous two decades, but it had been neither quick enough nor sufficient. Many countries had not been as effective as they might have been in formulating and implementing population programmes, and the international community had not made sufficient efforts to support national programmes. One or more critical elements had often been missing; those elements included firm political support, the existence of a national plan and programme for population, with a framework for action for all sectors of the economy, a careful assessment of the socio-cultural context, complementarity with other development objectives, and the participation of all women and men, communities and non-governmental organizations, along with the Government. An excellent example of a population programme which encompassed all those crucial elements was that of Indonesia.

25. In view of the urgent need to strengthen population intervention, it was essential to set clear and achievable goals for the 1990s. Population programme goals should relate to the: (a) development of comprehensive population policies to help achieve sustainable development; (b) deceleration of rapid population growth through the expansion of information, education and services for family planning; (c) lowering of the current levels of infant, child and maternal mortality; and (d) improvement of the role, status and participation of women. It was the responsibility of each Government to select its own policies and objectives in view of the country's particular needs. The aforementioned goals should become an integral part of the fourth international development strategy.

26. In order to underscore the importance of women's role in population and development activities, UNFPA had devoted its 1989 State of World Population report to that theme. The report argued that the extent to which women were free to make decisions affecting their lives might be the key to the future well-being of humankind. A number of specific recommendations had been made in the report and specific goals suggested for the year 2000.

27. Recognizing the urgent need for more rigorous and effective population interventions in the 1990s, UNFPA had sought to define a comprehensive and focused strategy for future programming, based on the findings of the review and assessment study contained in document DP/1989/37. For all aspects of such strategy, the initiative and responsibility rested with the Government, and the Fund's role would be, as in the past, to provide advice and assistance as requested. The strategy would include the following components: (a) strategic planning and programming based on careful analysis of past experience and an assessment of new needs; (b) collective and participatory decision-making, involving all groups in society in the design and implementation of national programmes; (c) meaningful and

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systematic co-ordination to ensure that population was included as an integral part of all development activities; and (d) increased resource mobilization at the national and international levels. While the goals and strategy outlined above represented a true challenge for all parties concerned, they were realistic. Their success or failure would have a decisive impact on the future. UNFPA sought the guidance of the Council on ways to achieve the integration of population issues into the formulation of the new international development strategy.

28. At its twenty-fifth session, the Population Commission had adopted a resolution in which it called for the convening of an international meeting on population in 1994 under United Nations auspices. UNFPA believed that such a meeting would be useful if its objectives were clearly defined.

29. UNFPA was submitting a total of 28 documents to the Governing Council for its thirty-sixth session. They included: (1) a detailed status report on the implementation strategy to strengthen the capacity of the Fund to deal with issues concerning women, population and development (DP/1989/36) - the report reflected the significant progress that had been made in all areas of the work plan and identified areas requiring further work during the next two years; (2) a report on the policy implications of the findings and conclusions of the Fund's exercise on review and assessment of population programme experience (DP/1989/37) - that important document contained recommendations requiring action by the Council; (3) a progress report on the implementation of the strategy for UNFPA assistance to sub-Saharan Africa (DP/1989/38); (4) a progress report on programmes and projects aimed at sustainable development (DP/1989/39), which examined the way in which UNFPA was incorporating environmental and resource concerns into its activities, with emphasis on the importance of inter-agency co-operation; (5) a report on the Fund's publications and audio-visual productions (DP/1989/40), which described the Fund's information strategy - the Council must take a decision regarding the inclusion of the costs of the Fund's basic publications in the administrative and programme support budget for the forthcoming biennium (1990-1991) and the introduction of Arabic, Chinese, and Russian language versions of certain publications; (6) a report on the implementation of the Fund's intercountry programme for 1988-1991 (DP/1989/70), which would be submitted to the Committee of the Whole; (7) document DP/1989/41, containing administrative and programme support services budget estimates for the 1990-1991 biennium - given that programming improvements were to be financed directly from that budget, the proposals for 1990-1991, particularly those relating to staff increases, were essential; (8) document DP/1989/34, which contained the work plan for 1990-1993 and a review of various methods of measuring programme performance; and (9) document DP/1989/42, on the UNFPA strategy for office automation, including the development of a management information system, a report which had been prepared at the request of the Governing Council and on the basis of observations by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ). The Committee of the Whole would also have before it 13 comprehensive country programmes.

30. The Fund's financial situation was on firm ground, owing to continued generous donor support. In 1988, pledges had totalled \$167.3 million, an increase of

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12.1 per cent over 1987 levels. Income had totalled \$178 million, an increase of 14 per cent as compared with the preceding year. There had been 100 donors in 1988, including five first-time donors. The upward trend had continued, with contributions for 1989 showing an additional increase of 6.9 per cent (\$178.9 million). UNFPA was deeply grateful to all countries that had made generous contributions. As in the two previous years, the Government of the United States of America had decided not to contribute in 1988. That action had not only limited the Fund's capacity to respond effectively to the needs of developing countries, but had also left a major gap in the international consensus on population issues. Project allocations had reached \$169.1 million in 1988, a substantial increase over 1987 allocations. The project expenditure rate had been provisionally estimated at 76.8 per cent, as against 80 per cent in 1987. Allocations to priority countries had remained at about the same level as in the previous year, or 76.7 per cent. In keeping with the Council's directives, the largest share of programme resources (over 65 per cent) had once again been allocated to family planning and related information, education and communication activities. Allocations to sub-Saharan Africa had continued to grow. Administrative and programme support expenditures had been estimated at 15 per cent of the total estimated income for 1988, a slight decrease as compared with 1987 (15.6 per cent). More detailed information could be found in the report of the Executive Director (DP/1989/32, Parts I, II and III).

31. In 1988, UNFPA had taken some major steps to improve its programming methods, continuing a process begun in 1987. The Council had strongly supported the new directions mapped out by the Fund, particularly in its decisions 87/30 I and 88/34 A. The appropriateness of those steps had also been confirmed by the review and assessment exercise and by other studies carried out in 1988. The improvements that were to be made in the programming process were intended to enhance programme content as well as programme quality and effectiveness. That meant that all programmes would be developed on the basis of an in-depth evaluation of past experience and an assessment of new needs. Programmes must also fall within the framework of a comprehensive strategy so that projects could be formulated more carefully and adequate attention paid to project monitoring. To that end, the Fund had reorganized its programming system, reallocated certain responsibilities and streamlined procedures. The main point was that UNFPA should take a more analytical and critical approach to its operations. The Fund must try to understand why certain strategies were successful and others were not, and how obstacles could be overcome. That knowledge could then be reflected in the formulation of future programmes and projects. The current method of programming, which had often resulted in an accumulation of disparate projects, would be replaced by a more comprehensive and integrated approach. Thus before areas requiring assistance were identified, a programme strategy would first be elaborated with the Government concerned to allow for a judicious identification of key areas for action, programme goals and approaches, target groups and executing agencies. The Fund's technical staff would provide input on the basis of different sectoral analyses, while the Government would continue to be responsible for management of the country programme with help from the UNFPA field staff and the Geographical Divisions. The new method of programming did not represent a radical

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departure from past practice. Rather, it reflected an important qualitative change aimed at increasing the effectiveness of population activities. The basic principle remained the same: UNFPA provided assistance to Governments at their request, and it was the Governments' responsibility to set priorities and to develop and implement programmes.

32. The Fund was increasingly being asked to set up population programmes. Consequently, it needed to be better equipped in order to serve as a repository of knowledge and a centre for information exchanges. UNFPA had no intention of taking over the responsibilities of other organizations or conducting basic research. It sought to ensure that new knowledge and observations were promptly utilized in operational activities. New research would be sure to take operational needs into account and the results would be incorporated in the planning process. It was therefore essential that UNFPA should improve its technical capacity. At the same time, the Fund would continue to rely on the technical expertise of the specialized agencies, other United Nations bodies and various non-governmental organizations. The additional posts that the Council was requested to approve were absolutely essential to supplement the technical staff at headquarters and to strengthen the field staff if UNFPA was to perform its functions properly.

33. Decentralization was an integral element of the new programming process. In 1988 UNFPA had already decentralized a number of functions and responsibilities, particularly by devolving programme development, project appraisal and approval of certain funding arrangements to the field. Decision-making had also been decentralized to some extent at headquarters and in the specialized agencies. Overall, the results had been satisfactory. For example, field staff were more closely involved with the planning and technical appraisal of country projects. The geographical divisions could devote more time to managing country programmes. Likewise, the geographical divisions and the Technical and Evaluation Division should now be assuming more responsibility for defining country programme strategies and helping to evaluate operational activities. In the past those tasks had been performed chiefly by outside consultants. The problem with that approach was that it gave UNFPA no opportunity to build up a store of knowledge on the technical and operational aspects of population programmes which could be used in future programming.

34. To make it easier to improve programming methods, UNFPA was also revising its personnel policy: in particular, it was improving professionalism by offering more training, setting more rigorous recruitment criteria, offering interesting career prospects and rationalizing the reassignment system. It was also trying to improve the performance evaluation system and working conditions for general service employees.

35. Co-ordination and collaboration with a broad range of national and international agencies was essential. Pursuant to General Assembly resolution 42/196, UNFPA had continued its efforts to integrate co-ordination systematically into all its programmes by such means as consultations with a large number of organizations and bringing its programming procedures into line with those of other United Nations agencies.

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36. The Fund continued to participate actively in the work of the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination and its subsidiary machinery, including the preparations for the fourth International Development Strategy for the 1990s. Joint activities had been arranged with WHO, UNICEF, the Department of International Economic and Social Affairs and several non-governmental organizations, through working groups. UNFPA also continued to participate actively in the work of the Joint Consultative Group on Policy (programme reviews, joint studies on structural adjustments, activities in Sub-Saharan African countries, and regional seminars on the role of women in development).

37. Despite notable progress, different programming methods and cycles in different organizations had sometimes made co-ordination difficult. UNFPA hoped that procedures could be further streamlined throughout the system and the resident co-ordinator system could be strengthened. Further efforts were needed to ensure that intergovernmental bodies gave more uniform guidance on population questions.

38. UNFPA would be taking advantage of a number of regular meetings to mark its twentieth anniversary and invite the international community to rally behind action to restore a balance between population and resources. Participating organizations and executing agents had been urged to join the celebrations, and Governments were sponsoring or supporting a broad range of activities at the national level. Commemorative activities had been planned for the current session of the Council and the forty-fourth session of the General Assembly. An international forum would be held in Amsterdam in November 1989. Furthermore, UNFPA intended to celebrate its twentieth anniversary more specifically on 11 July, since 11 July 1987 had been designated the "Day of Five Billion". It also hoped to recommend to the General Assembly the designation of 11 July as World Population Day, since a number of organizations and Governments were considering holding such an event.

39. If sustainable development was to be encouraged and the generations of the twenty-first century were to be given a chance of survival, the closely related questions of population, women and the environment must become matters of prime concern. Sustainable development could not be guaranteed until women played a full part in economic and social development; until the relationship between the environment and development had been translated into policies and programmes; and until social sectors were given the same attention as economic growth. UNFPA intended to take up the challenge, and invited the international community to join it.

40. Mr. AHMED (Under-Secretary-General for International Economic and Social Affairs), commenting that the session of the Council coincided with preparations for the special session of the General Assembly on economic issues and the preparatory work on the new international development strategy, said he was confident that the Council would, in its discussion of demographic questions, take their long-term aspects into account along with the interrelationships between population, development, poverty, the advancement of women and the environment. The Department of International Economic and Social Affairs would continue to conduct its population-related activities in an overall socio-economic context.

(Mr. Ahmed)

41. He went on to speak of the main features of the twenty-fifth session of the Population Commission. He presented the key findings the Commission had reached from its biennial monitoring of demographic trends and policies: world population in the year 2000 was projected to reach 6.25 billion (5 billion in the developing countries) and 8.5 billion in 2025 (7.1 billion in the developing countries). World population growth was expected to remain at 1.7 per cent per annum until the end of the 1990s, with more than 90 per cent of that growth occurring in the developing countries. Fertility rates continued to decline at the global level, although less rapidly than in the 1970s, and there was great diversity between regions. The use of contraceptive methods continued to rise. Mortality rates were also continuing to decline, but life expectancy at birth had still been only 47.5 years in Sub-Saharan Africa in 1980-1985, despite the target of 50 years set in the World Population Plan of Action. Overall, the trend was towards aging, but children aged under 15, almost 85 per cent of whom lived in developing countries, were still the largest dependent age group. Finally, 42 per cent of the world's population now lived in towns, and urban growth was accelerating.

42. In its report, the Commission had also devoted great attention to the population situation of the least developed countries, which, though less well-known than their economic problems, needed to be studied in depth, especially as a conference on the least developed countries was to be held in 1990. The least developed countries accounted for some 7 per cent of world population, including one third of the population of Africa and one eighth of the population of South and South-East Asia. Their demographic characteristics were similar to those typical of almost all developing countries some 20 or more years previously, and leaving aside individual variations, they had in common high levels of fertility and especially mortality; nothing suggested that they were closing the gap separating them from other developing countries. In addition, some of them had among the highest AIDS rates in the world.

43. Increasingly aware of the situation, the Governments of those countries were formulating appropriate population policies, a development that was particularly apparent in Africa, which had lagged in that respect. Nevertheless, that did not necessarily ensure that the situation would improve at the village level, given the severe human and material constraints. Extreme poverty in combination with the demographic realities in the least developed countries had created an explosive situation that urgently called for the attention of the international community.

44. He then reviewed the recommendations made by the Population Commission to the Economic and Social Council.

45. The Commission had recommended, first, that population issues should be incorporated into the new international development strategy and the measures to be adopted at the Second United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries. It had also recommended the strengthening of actions concerned with the fulfilment of the World Population Plan of Action, which had urged Governments to support the implementation of a set of 13 recommendations. The Commission had further recommended to the Council that it should decide in principle to convene in 1994 an

(Mr. Ahmed)

international meeting on population, for which the Commission had proposed broad goals and preparatory steps. Lastly, it had adopted two recommendations regarding the work of the United Nations Secretariat in the field of population, one giving detailed guidelines for the work programme for the biennium 1990-1991, and the other relating to United Nations assistance to African countries in the field of population.

46. The Department would continue to co-operate with UNFPA and other United Nations bodies to ensure that those important recommendations were properly implemented.

47. Mr. DONAYRE (Chief, Technical and Evaluation Division, United Nations Population Fund) introduced the report of the Executive Director on the policy implications of the findings and conclusions of UNFPA's exercise on review and assessment of population programme experience (DP/1989/37). The report, which was based on a variety of assessments, must be read in conjunction with the multi-volume sectoral document issued. The review and assessment exercise had identified two sets of issues that needed to be addressed: the issues common to all sectors of population assistance, and the critical issues specific to the three sectors of policy development; maternal and child health and family planning; and information, education and communication.

48. The first set of common issues, demanding multisectoral intervention, reflected a number of needs: to strengthen the political commitment of Governments, to co-ordinate national population activities more closely with donor assistance, to set up an appropriate research agenda and a plan for the utilization of research findings, to draw up training strategies and manpower development plans, to institutionalize population activities, to involve non-governmental organizations more extensively, to integrate gender considerations, to set up effective national monitoring and evaluation systems, and to mobilize resources and use them effectively.

49. The second set of issues were sectoral problems. In the policy development sector, the three major issues were: first, the lack of national population strategies in most countries and therefore of comprehensive population policies that incorporated the key variables, identified target groups, ensured the complementarity of population and development factors, and, most importantly, drew on the lessons learned from the experience of earlier programmes; secondly, the insufficient integration of population and development owing largely to a lack of agreement on the meaning of integration, the nature of the relationship between population and development and the method of achieving integration; thirdly, the inadequacy of the data, which did not provide enough integrated statistics on population development and were not sufficiently broken down according to specific target groups.

50. In the sector of maternal and child health and family planning, there were also some unresolved issues. One of them was the accessibility of services, hardly adequate in many countries. What was needed was to emphasize appropriate services

(Mr. Donayre)

based on an understanding of the social and cultural characteristics of the various communities and to use approaches that relied on community participation as much as possible. Adolescent fertility was fast becoming another problem. An effort should be made, on the one hand, to begin as soon as possible to provide sexual, demographic and family life education and to identify the cases at risk and, on the other hand, to provide separate services for adolescents. The need to develop new contraceptive techniques was a third problem. The private sector's lack of interest in contraceptive research necessitated much greater public sector investment; in addition, new areas of activity had to be explored, such as marketing and distribution; and the problem created by the transfer of technologies must not be underestimated.

51. In the sector of information, education and communication, there was a need for greater outreach in creating public awareness - particularly among the authorities and in rural areas - of population problems and of emerging global problems involving the environment, sustainable development or structural adjustment policies; a task that required journalists and programme administrators to work closely together. Despite the great advances made in population education, special efforts were needed to reach adolescents in particular. Lastly, communication strategies must be devised to reach the new target groups.

52. The conclusions of the regional studies and case studies, which could not be discussed for lack of time, had helped to enrich the sectoral analysis just outlined.

53. Mr. POWER (Canada) reaffirmed his country's commitment to UNFPA on its twentieth anniversary, which, appropriately, coincided with the Fund's review and assessment exercise. It was also timely that the current session was being held concomitantly with the preparations for the international development strategy for the 1990s and for the special session of the General Assembly devoted to international economic co-operation to be convened in 1990. It was now clearly understood that population issues were directly linked with development. It was thus very important for the Fund to help ensure that due attention was paid to population concerns and to put forward new ideas as a contribution to the international development strategy.

54. Given the undeniable complexity of the population issues that emerged from the review undertaken, there was an urgent need for a strategic, multidimensional and well-co-ordinated approach to population problems in the coming decade. The two critical issues for the 1990s being rapid population growth and urbanization, the Fund had rightly emphasized the need to take a broad view of population matters that included child and maternal mortality, migration and aging. His delegation appreciated the candid observations about the constraints imposed by insufficient national commitment and inadequate international funding.

55. The goals set forth for the 1990s were indeed ambitious. With regard to the goal of developing comprehensive population policies, it was essential for Governments to integrate their population policies into their development plans.

(Mr. Power, Canada)

Among the ideas put forward by the Fund, his delegation was particularly pleased with the emphasis placed on the status of women and the fact that that issue had been adopted as the theme of the 1989 State of World Population report. Canada was convinced that the only way to reduce fertility and maternal and child mortality, to improve nutrition and attain a number of social and economic objectives was to give women more power.

56. Greater account should be taken of the mounting demographic differentiation among developing countries. Priorities must be balanced and realistic and programmatically useful population targets defined, otherwise there might be tendency to give greater attention to highly populated regions, such as Asia, to the detriment of much more vulnerable regions, such as Africa.

57. The Fund considered that intensified efforts was the key to achieving the "low variant" United Nations population projection. In that regard, it might be useful for decision-makers to learn more about the relationship between fertility, population growth and overall economic growth and development.

58. The Fund could make an important contribution to advocacy functions without diminishing its central role as a funder of population programmes, and UNFPA would have to give greater importance to specific measures adapted to varying regional circumstances. While it fully endorsed the idea of a better international framework for assistance in the population field, his delegation would like the Fund to put forward a specific proposal in that regard. Referring to the vital question of resources, Canada believed that it would be useful to have the views of developing countries on the change which would be called for in the sectoral distribution of development assistance. Canada believed that the Fund should shorten the list of priority countries for its programmes in order to direct more resources to programme activities; for non-priority countries, the Fund should see whether it could reduce its administrative expenditure by strengthening its co-operation with non-governmental organizations.

59. Mr. Salazar-Sancisi (Ecuador) took the Chair.

60. Mr. DE CLERCK (Belgium) said that Belgium supported UNFPA activities in several ways, through its regular contributions to the Fund and its co-financing of various projects, including the project involving the International Centre for Training and Research in Population and Development, at the Catholic University of Louvain. He noted with satisfaction that the world was becoming increasingly aware of the importance of population problems and of their direct impact on development. Most countries were now convinced of the need to maintain a certain balance between population and resources in order to be able to ensure sustained economic, social and cultural development. The Fund had played a decisive role in promoting such awareness. Its position as the most important body dealing with population activities had been confirmed by the financial support which it received from many developed and developing countries.

(Mr. De Clerck, Belgium)

61. The activities of the Fund, which reflected the importance which the international community attached to the implementation of population policies and programmes, took various forms, the most important being assistance to programmes being executed in developing countries.

62. Belgium had always stressed the need for international organizations involved in operational activities to adhere to their specific mandates. Belgium therefore called on the Fund to concentrate its efforts on activities directly related to population issues and to leave the general management of programmes and projects to the competent authorities. It was not necessary for the Fund to develop its own research capacities. With regard to the budget estimates for 1990-1991, he warned against possible duplication with the Population Division of the Department of International Economic and Social Affairs.

63. The Fund had conducted a review and assessment of the experience it had acquired in the area of population. Its report on that subject contained certain gaps, due perhaps to a lack of scientific rigor and the limited number of sectors considered, which to some extent lessened the effectiveness of the exercise; nevertheless, his delegation supported most of the conclusions contained in the report.

64. In its future activities, the Fund should endeavour to reach the most disadvantaged sectors in the poorer countries and make a special effort to ensure that they participated in population activities, in particular by strengthening its co-operation with the competent non-governmental organizations.

65. With regard to the special reports which the Council would have before it under agenda item 6 (c), the report on UNFPA assistance to Sub-Saharan Africa clearly showed that the situation in Africa called for a special effort on the part of the international community; the report on UNFPA publications stressed that the Fund could play a decisive role in promoting awareness of population problems among the general public and among political leaders. As the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Question (ACABQ) had pointed out, publication costs should be financed from the administrative budget rather than from programme resources. With regard to the participation of women in population and development activities, he referred to the excellent 1989 State of World Population report, which clearly showed that, in order to be effective, population policies should take account of the central role which women played and of the need to improve their social and economic status. The promotion of the role of women in development should receive priority attention. That was why all the funds and specialized agencies which had adopted specific programmes in that area should co-ordinate their efforts in order to ensure that the activities of the United Nations system formed a cohesive whole.

66. The last special report which the Council would have before it dealt with sustainable development. While recognizing that UNFPA could play a role in that area, he again emphasized the need to concentrate financial resources on population issues as such.

(Mr. De Clerck, Belgium)

67. With regard to the budget estimates and the proposals regarding personnel, his delegation was not convinced that the requests to increase staff and reclassify posts were justified. Belgium wished to have more detailed explanations regarding the decentralization of decision-making.

68. Mr. GIOVANNINI (Switzerland) said that the Fund was not the only source of financing for population activities but that its contribution was essential because it brought together almost all States. The Fund had a special role to play in public awareness campaigns and the definition of policies and strategies.

69. The Fund had reviewed its 20 years of activity in the area of population, which showed that the success or failure of family planning programmes depended on many factors: high infant mortality, inadequate social welfare systems, insufficient structures for distributing contraceptives and, in particular, obstacles of a social and cultural nature. The Fund had drawn the necessary conclusions from those findings, and was further integrating family planning activities into its maternal and child health programmes. It was imperative that such activities should be also integrated into health services in general.

70. In the 1989 State of World Population report, the Executive Director of the Fund had stressed the influence which a woman's level of education had on the number of children to which she gave birth, and had indicated that the acquisition of a certain degree of economic autonomy could have a positive effect on family size and health.

71. One of the main areas of the Fund's activities was education, information and communication concerning population. The cost of those activities amounted to approximately 15 per cent of its resources. That sector should be strengthened, particularly with regard to the development of communication methods. To that end, the first step should be to conduct an in-depth study of the socio-cultural context in which a programme would be implemented. The Fund was aware of that need and attached special importance to improving knowledge of the social and cultural factors which determined the success or failure of family planning projects. Such an approach should be systematized while at the same time ensuring that the work avoided the pitfall of over-generalization; such studies were not an end in themselves but should facilitate the formulation of communication strategies adapted to each case.

72. Switzerland would like more information about the Fund's policy concerning the promotion of particular methods of birth control, in view of the specific needs of the developing countries and the side effects of some methods, and about its activities in support of natural methods, which had advantages in terms of cost and acceptability. Those two factors should guide the Fund's choice concerning support for research aimed at developing new contraceptive methods.

73. Referring to the draft strategy proposed by the Executive Director to achieve various demographic objectives by the year 2000, he said that in strengthening international co-operation it was necessary to adopt from the outset a realistic

(Mr. Giovannini, Switzerland)

attitude regarding financial prospects: it would be unrealistic to hope that resources allocated for population services could increase 30-fold by the end of the century since other priority sectors, such as health and education, would also require substantial funds. An effort should therefore be made first of all to improve the quality of assistance and reduce programme costs on the basis of the principle that in the medium-term part of the expenses in the field of family planning should be assumed by the users themselves.

74. Mr. LOOS (World Bank) said that, while population growth was not as dramatic as a financial or political crisis, it was just as instrumental in shaping the world. The programmes concerning fertility, mortality, morbidity and migration should be given priority attention in development strategies.

75. In 1800 the world population had been 1 billion; currently it was 5.1 billion and soon the planet's capacity for housing and feeding its population would have reached its limit. The impact of that factor had already been felt; the population explosion was depleting land, water and fuel resources, which constituted a nation's development assets. Population pressure forced farmers to overuse their land and was one of the main causes of the environmental problems in many countries. Population growth must therefore be slowed down if the goal was to ensure sustainable development. Furthermore, reducing population growth rates by decreasing fertility and mortality would make it possible to improve productivity, GNP and family welfare more speedily. In order to cope with that crucial need, the World Bank had developed an approach designed to place population questions in the general socio-economic context, to provide substantial assistance in the fields of population, health and nutrition, to analyse the links between population growth and development, and the factors affecting fertility, and to support efforts undertaken at the international level to increase understanding of population problems.

76. The World Bank attached great importance to co-operation with the other institutions, agencies and non-governmental organizations which dealt with population questions. In 1985 it had launched a regional initiative in Africa in collaboration with the International Planned Parenthood Federation through a special programme to strengthen local family planning associations and promote co-operation among Governments and non-governmental organizations in that field. In collaboration with UNFPA and the Federation and with the support of WHO and the African Development Bank, it was sponsoring an innovative programme to enhance the effectiveness of population programmes in sub-Saharan Africa. Since Africa had the highest population growth in the world, that initiative aimed at creating a consensus among leaders in the health, population and related sectors on how to translate population policies into effective action plans in order to improve the implementation of population programmes. Those institutions, experts and African leaders assumed the responsibility for that effort and received the external technical support which they might require.

(Mr. Loos)

77. Although slowing population growth was an extremely difficult task, the world could and should attempt it. Population, health and nutrition issues could not be considered outside the overall context of development because programmes and activities in those fields were influenced by those in other sectors. Since population and poverty were closely related, the World Bank directed its activities towards the poorest countries, attaching greater importance to sectors which would bring direct benefits to the poor: land development, primary education, small-scale industry, water supply, sanitation, urbanization, population, health and nutrition. High population growth rates depleted both material and financial resources and the lack of environmental protection measures destroyed an asset which was essential not only for quality of life but for life itself.

78. Services for women must be improved in order to promote the participation of women in all fields of activity. Investing in maternal health care was an investment in development. Sustainable development could be ensured only if it was possible to slow down excessively rapid population growth, co-ordinate growth and environmental protection and balance contributions to the welfare of women and the contributions of women to society. Population, environmental and women's issues must be integrated into the structure of development assistance.

79. Mr. ZEIDENSTEIN (Observer, President of the Population Council), speaking also on behalf of the International Planned Parenthood Federation and the International Union for the Scientific Study of Population, said that his organization had worked closely with UNFPA since its establishment in 1969. In the last 20 years, the Fund had done admirable work. Donor Governments had placed increasing confidence in the Fund, and that was reflected in the growth of its annual budget from \$2.5 million in 1969 to the current level of \$190 million.

80. UNFPA had developed extraordinarily positive relationships with developing countries and had afforded broad-based support for their population-related efforts and, more generally, their efforts to strengthen institutional and human resources. The Fund had also provided support to critical sectors including contraceptive development and dissemination and improved management capacity. Within the United Nations family, UNFPA had successfully promoted an awareness of population concerns within the broader context of international development activities. In recent years, the Fund had increased its interest in efforts to improve the status of women, which was a pre-condition for reducing fertility in many countries. It had also provided outstanding leadership in the organization of international conferences on population - in Bucharest in 1974 and in Mexico City in 1984 - and was leading the way to an equally important undertaking in 1994.

81. UNFPA had made excellent use of the capacities of non-governmental organizations and had directed 10 to 12 per cent of its resources in support of work with them. In that regard, he mentioned the Fund's central role in the organization of the 1981 Jakarta International Conference on Family Planning in the 1980s and the 1987 Nairobi International Conference on Better Health for Women and Children through Family Planning.

(Mr. Zeidenstein)

82. The effort by UNFPA to establish links with parliamentarians also deserved attention. Through it, many legislators who shared the Fund's concerns were working within their own countries to ensure the allocation of the financial, institutional and human resources required to solve population problems.

83. In the quest for sustainable development, no United Nations agency was of greater importance than UNFPA, which was playing a dominant role, determined to develop comprehensive population policies, decrease population growth through fertility reduction, lessen child and maternal mortality and enhance the role of women. Nevertheless, it was plain that the current annual levels of official development assistance were not enough to achieve those priority objectives. The annual level of ODA for international population activities amounted to approximately \$500 million, while the level required by the year 2000 would not be less than \$2.5 billion. Gradual increases towards that level needed to begin without delay.

The meeting rose at 1.10 p.m.