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GOVERNING COUNCIL

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SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 31st MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Wednesday, 21 June 1989, at 10 a.m.

President: Mr. PIBULSONGGRAM (Thailand)

later: Mr. KUFUOR (Ghana)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION (continued)

(b) IMPLEMENTATION OF DECISIONS ADOPTED BY THE GOVERNING COUNCIL AT PREVIOUS SESSIONS (continued)

(i) AGENCY ACCOUNTABILITY (continued) (DP/1989/17)

1. Ms. LEE (Australia) recalled that, at the special session in February 1989, her country had emphasized the importance it attached to an independent, objective and wide-ranging review of agency support costs as a means of ensuring agency accountability. Such a study should cover not only United Nations executing agencies, including the UNDP Office of Projects Services (OPS), but also Government and private sector agencies, and should suggest ways in which every executing agency might be held accountable to the UNDP Administrator for project and programme implementation, including proper and timely financial reporting. The ultimate goal was more efficient and effective programme and project delivery.

2. Like other delegations, Australia was extremely disturbed by the fact that a number of executing agencies had not yet signed the Standard Basic Executing Agency Agreement with UNDP. However, as the agency support costs study was to cover the whole question of future UNDP/executing agency relations, it seemed sensible to approve the Administrator's recommendation to defer consideration of the question of the status of agreements between UNDP and executing agencies until the study had been completed.

3. While serious decisions about the future of OPS could be made only in the context of the Council's consideration of the recommendations of the expert group, she wished to place on record Australia's view that OPS was doing valuable work and that its current operations posed no threat to UNDP's multilateral character.

4. Mr. ROHNER (Switzerland) said that his delegation was extremely surprised that major executing agencies, among them four subsidiary organs of the United Nations, including the Department of Technical Co-operation for Development (DTCD) and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) (DP/1989/17, para. 4) and also the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), had not signed the Standard Basic Agreement with UNDP. It hoped that DTCD, in its statement to the Council, would explain why it had not signed the Agreement when two thirds of its resources came from UNDP.

5. The report was not very explicit about the problems which some agencies apparently had with the content of the Agreement, although it referred to an exchange of correspondence and a number of meetings that had not yielded any major results (DP/1989/17, para. 11). A solution was not going to be found overnight. Switzerland therefore hoped that the expert group would raise the thorny issue of the Standard Basic Agreement in the many contacts that it would have in July 1989 with executing agencies and with the UNDP management, and would suggest possible

(Mr. Rohner, Switzerland)

solutions in its report. It was absolutely essential that a satisfactory solution be found before the next programming cycle.

6. Miss DOHERTY (United Kingdom) said that the future standardization of agreements with the specialized agencies must be considered in the context of the expert group's recommendations. However, it was disappointing that a number of the major and most active executing agencies had not reached an agreement with UNDP on their subcontracting activities. She hoped that the decisions that would emanate from the expert group's recommendations would be rapidly incorporated into new arrangements which might be set in motion by the end of 1991.

7. Mr. KING (Deputy Director of the Bureau for Programme Policy and Evaluation) thanked the United States delegation for its advice, which the secretariat would bear in mind for the latest review with the expert group and in preliminary consultations to determine whether agencies were prepared to recognize the validity of the Standard Basic Agreement in an exchange of notes with UNDP.

8. In reply to the question by the representative of the Federal Republic of Germany as to whether the Administrator had informed the Council of the difficulties which UNDP was experiencing in getting major agencies to sign the Agreement, he said that the record did not indicate that the Council had asked the Administrator to formulate a new agreement. It appeared that, when the 1970 Consensus had been adopted, the Administrator had considered that a new agreement was necessary and had formulated it on the basis of his administrative authority. There had therefore been no need to inform the Council that agencies appeared reluctant to sign the Standard Basic Agreement. UNDP's legal advisers had also taken the view that agencies remained accountable to UNDP even if they had not signed the new Agreement, because they had signed the earlier Special Fund Agreement and because UNDP had signed Standard Basic Agreements with Governments.

9. UNDP would convey to the expert group the suggestion by the representative of Australia that the role of the private sector and non-governmental organizations and that of OPS should be studied.

10. Replying to the representative of Switzerland, he said that UNDP had abandoned its attempt to get agencies to sign the Agreement in 1978, before DTCD had been set up, and there was no record that UNDP had later proposed to DTCD that it sign the Agreement.

11. The PRESIDENT said that the Council had completed its consideration of item 4 (b) (i) and proposed that it request the Drafting Group to prepare a draft decision on the item.

12. It was so decided.

POLICY REVIEW: THE ROLE OF THE UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME IN THE 1990s
(continued) (DP/1989/14)

13. The PRESIDENT invited Mr. Durão Barroso, Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and International Co-operation of Portugal, to make a statement.

14. Mr. DURÃO BARROSO (Observer for Portugal) said that, in a rapidly changing world, UNDP would have to devise a new strategy. No fundamental changes were needed, but some improvements were clearly necessary. One main focus of UNDP's activities in the 1990s should be to develop the national capacities of individual countries in order to achieve greater self-reliance, increase the number of government-executed projects and ensure that TCDC activities played a more important role.

15. In designing the programme for each country, however, close attention should be paid to the priorities set by its Government. UNDP, for its part, should increase its role as the central funding and co-ordinating body for technical assistance within the United Nations system. With regard to the so-called "microfund", while he understood the need for some mechanism to meet the increasing demand for small capital grants and loans, he was not very enthusiastic about the idea of creating yet another fund and believed that it should be given further consideration.

16. Portugal paid particular attention to development assistance because of the historical and cultural relations it had maintained with other nations over the centuries. Although Africa was its first human and political neighbour, Portugal also attached great importance to its links with Latin America, particularly Brazil. Within the European Community, Portugal had been emphasizing the need for industrialized countries to correct the existing imbalance between North and South. The economic and political unity that the European Community now represented, and the expectations placed in it by the many countries with which it had preferential relations, should lead it to assume greater responsibility in the battle against underdevelopment. That was why Portugal attached such importance to the current negotiations for the new Lomé IV Convention.

17. The European countries, which ought not to be the sole providers of assistance to the least developed countries, looked favourably upon the international community's growing tendency to sustain a permanent and active effort, through the organs and agencies of the United Nations system, to encourage integrated programmes for social and economic growth. That meant giving particular attention to questions such as the external indebtedness of the least developed countries, incentives to production based on export earnings, and assistance in the diversification of production and the promotion of trade. A new international consensus was needed on measures to support the least developed countries, and it was particularly important that the current negotiations within the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) should take into account specific ways of protecting the economic production of those countries so as not to erode the special preferential systems currently in their favour.

(Mr. Durão Barroso, Observer, Portugal)

18. In recent years, his country, taking a new approach to development assistance, had increased its bilateral and multilateral assistance and taken a more active stance in the relevant forums and in multilateral development programmes. Portugal, which had been a UNDP recipient country on a small scale only and would cease to be so at the end of the current cycle, was considering a substantial increase in its contribution to UNDP that would make it a net contributor. It would take a more active role in UNDP and in the United Nations system through more dynamic participation as a donor country in facing the challenges of the 1990s. Middle-income countries like Portugal had an important role to play in UNDP by bridging the gap between the developed and the developing countries.

PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION (continued)

(b) IMPLEMENTATION OF DECISIONS ADOPTED BY THE GOVERNING COUNCIL AT PREVIOUS SESSIONS (continued)

(iii) REVIEW OF THE WORKING GROUP OF THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE (DP/1989/20)

19. The PRESIDENT, reporting on the outcome of the consultations on the effectiveness and future of the Working Group of the Committee of the Whole conducted by the President and the Bureau pursuant to Council decision 89/3, said that the divergence of views reflected in decision 87/50 with respect to the Working Group still prevailed. Some member States considered that it had facilitated an informal dialogue with the secretariat that had deepened members' understanding of important technical matters and of UNDP itself, and they favoured the continuation of that type of mechanism, while avoiding repetition of discussions and inconclusive results.

20. Other Governments considered that the membership of the Working Group was too limited and that intersessional consultations should be held in a body composed of all members of the Council and open to observers. To avoid having the Administration interpret points raised in discussions of the Working Group as formal decisions, such a new forum should confine its discussions to technical issues on a non-institutional basis, and should be convened only on an ad hoc basis, as required.

21. Another group of countries opposed the continuation of the Working Group because certain assumptions about levels of resources which had led to its creation in 1985 had not materialized.

22. It had been agreed in the consultations that delegations might wish to consider the question in the context of proposals on the governance of UNDP arising from the high-level segment.

23. He hoped that an appropriate decision could be reached in accordance with Council decision 87/20, perhaps without a lengthy discussion since delegations had now been informed about the item. It might suffice to request the Drafting Group to elaborate a draft decision on the matter.

24. Mr. BROWN (Associate Administrator, United Nations Development Programme) reminded the Council that if no decision was taken, the Working Group would disappear. He pointed out, moreover, that the assessment put forward by the Administrator (DP/1989/20, para. 16) did not constitute an interference in the work of the Governing Council because it had been made at its request. In view of the fact that some delegations believed that Working Group discussions should not be taken to be political decisions, the Council might wish to reflect on the difference between political and technical questions, bearing also in mind that, for instance, the Working Group had for two days discussed project design, a technical question, with a view to later applying the results of the discussions.

25. Mr. KIURU (Finland), speaking on behalf of the four Nordic countries, said that, in order to judge if the Working Group had fulfilled its mandate, its performance needed to be reviewed. The Working Group had been established in June 1985 to help with the tasks of the Committee of the Whole, but in time its role had evolved. Within the UNDP governing structures there was a need to discuss matters outside of official channels, and if the Working Group were abolished some other forum would have to be created for informal discussions. For example, meetings between donor and recipient countries were very useful and the practice could be improved by holding more joint co-ordination meetings attended by representatives from permanent missions responsible for UNDP-related matters. As in the case of such consultations, the performance of the Working Group could also be improved.

26. The Nordic countries believed that a consultative body without decision-making powers should be maintained, since it had proved useful. It shared the Administrator's assessment (DP/1989/20, para. 16), and hoped for a solution satisfactory to all members regarding the Working Group's continued operation.

27. Ms. COLLOTON (United States of America) said that her Government believed that the Working Group was very useful and did not understand why it was so controversial. It allowed for a constructive dialogue between donor and recipient countries and a better understanding of the operation of UNDP technical co-operation and the constraints on it, as well as an open and candid dialogue between the secretariat and member States on a multinational rather than bilateral basis.

28. For example, the Working Group had been particularly successful in making a useful examination of important issues such as the means of improving project design, project quality and project delivery; the experience with government execution and the programme and project review process; the plans for the mid-term review; the procurement of goods and services from developing countries; the review of the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development, 1986-1990; co-ordination issues; ways to improve the effectiveness of project personnel; and considerations on the future.

29. If the Working Group was abolished, another similar one would have to be created. Consequently, it should be established on a permanent basis, without prejudice to the improvements suggested by delegations, especially regarding ways

(Ms. Colloton, United States)

of involving representatives from the capitals of those who participated in operational activities.

30. Mr. AL-ZUNNI (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) said that his delegation was satisfied with the Working Group, which it found very useful for the Committee of the Whole. It would be in favour of expanding the membership of the Working Group.

31. Ms. LEE (Australia) said that her country's geographical situation made it difficult to send representatives from the capital to meetings of the Working Group, but that the Working Group's reports had been very useful for her delegation and she therefore supported its continuation.

32. Mr. ROSELLO (Spain) said that his delegation joined those who believed that the Working Group was useful and should continue to exist, with the necessary changes.

33. The PRESIDENT said that during the consultations he had held with the regional groups, the positions had been clear: certain delegations were in favour of having the Working Group continue to operate as it had been doing, others would prefer that it continue with changes, and a third group of delegations preferred that it be abolished. Accordingly, he again suggested that it would perhaps suffice to refer the matter to the Drafting Group and discuss it again in the context of the debate on the main programme directions of UNDP.

34. Mr. ROHNER (Switzerland) said that he shared the President's view and recalled that between 1983 and 1985 the Governing Council had devoted a great deal of time and effort to establishing the current organizational structure, so that changes should not be made lightly.

35. Mr. AQUARONE (Netherlands) said that some delegations had interpreted the establishment of the Working Group as a concession to donor countries, and the fear had been expressed that the Working Group would become a policy-making club with a limited membership that would undermine both the sovereignty of States and the Governing Council's authority. Over the past two years the Working Group's meetings had shown that such fears were unfounded, and that the Working Group was of great value. The Special Trust Fund, which had made it possible to finance high-level participation by members from the least developed countries, should be continued. The discussions had taken place in an informal and constructive atmosphere, which had resulted in an improved understanding not only of the various issues themselves but also of the way in which the issues were perceived by other delegations, the UNDP secretariat and the specialized agencies. Participation by all the parties concerned in the discussions had been instrumental in preventing the emergence of a dichotomy between UNDP's interests and those of the specialized agencies.

36. The Working Group played a complementary role where the Council's work was concerned. It had not taken policy decisions or prevented the Council from exercising its authority, as some delegations had feared it might; however, the Netherlands was willing to consider any alterations and improvements that might be suggested.

37. Mr. SAHLMANN (Federal Republic of Germany) said that he endorsed the views expressed by Finland and the Netherlands and wished to suggest that the President should be asked to hold consultations with Member States before the Council's following session, in February 1990, on ways of improving UNDP's overall management. In the mean time, he suggested that the measures adopted by the Council, including the decision that the Working Group should continue to function, should continue to be implemented.

38. Mr. CHEKAY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) endorsed the President's view that the Drafting Group should be requested to draw up a draft decision on the matter. The Soviet Union participated with interest in the Working Group's activities, while agreeing that it had exceeded its mandate on a number of occasions. It should be retained, but as an open-ended body. The specialized agencies, some of which had been unable to participate in past meetings, should participate in its meetings in the future. Lastly, it must be made clear that the Working Group could consider only technical questions, and not policy matters.

39. Mr. LICHTINGER (Observer for Mexico) said that the Working Group should cease to function; as indicated by the Soviet Union, it had often exceeded its mandate and exercised authority that was the Council's alone.

40. That issue must be considered in greater depth and be the subject of negotiations in the Drafting Group itself. As suggested by the President, the matter could also be examined in the context of consideration of the future role of UNDP, but such an approach must not stand in the way of the adoption of a specific position on that particular issue.

41. The PRESIDENT said that, if he heard no objection, he would take it that the Governing Council wished to decide that the matter should be considered further in the Drafting Group.

42. It was so decided.

UNITED NATIONS TECHNICAL CO-OPERATION ACTIVITIES (DP/1989/46 and Add.1-3)

43. Mr. ZHONG Shukong (Director, Policy, Programming and Development Planning Division, Department of Technical Co-operation for Development) said that 1988 had been an important year for the Department, which had delivered its largest programme ever, as well as starting a programme of self-assessment and review in order to pin-point areas where efforts would be required in the 1990s and to respond more effectively to the developing countries' evolving needs.

44. Where quantitative aspects were concerned, expenditure on UNDP-financed projects had accounted for 65 per cent of the Department's total 1988 delivery, about the same as in 1987 but in dollar terms a drop of \$6 million in comparison with 1986. The growth in the programme had come from UNFPA financing, which had been translated into a significant increase in projects in the areas of statistics and population. Programme delivery had also risen in the areas of development planning and development administration and finance. However, the increase in the

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latter area had resulted partly from the Department's involvement with the Special Action Programme for Administration and Management in Africa (SAPAM), the funding for which was now fully committed.

45. The Department had once again maintained strict control over its administrative expenditure, and had accordingly increased its operational surplus. The number of staff had remained the same as in 1987, despite the growth in delivery (DP/1989/46, fig. 5).

46. The Department's activities covered some 15 substantive areas or sectors. Human resources development was the common thread running through the programme. Since human beings were both the engine and the beneficiaries of development, training was the component that had increased most and now represented 20 per cent of the Department's total programme. In 1988, 49 per cent of placements for training had taken place in developing countries. Moreover, expenditure on training did not include the cost of preparing training packages, particularly the computerized training games in various sectors, including the population and development simulation model and ENERPLAN, a training game for planning and analysis in the area of energy resources, which had been received very well in many developing countries.

47. Human resources development encompassed close collaboration with Governments in institution-building to ensure better management of the development process, the transfer of technology, and manpower planning and development, with a view to strengthening the developing countries' national capacity. For example, in the mineral-resources sector, the Department had provided advisory services in the areas of mineral-resources planning and programming, investment, rehabilitation of production facilities, and technical and financial evaluation. The Department had at the same time continued basic exploration for minerals.

48. Another theme that cut across almost all sectors was that of better management and conservation of resources, given the impact that environmental factors could have on the ability of Governments to sustain economic development. In the water-resources subsector, for example, the major trend was in the direction of longer-term water-resources planning, improving water-resources management in rural areas, and establishing computer-based information systems. Even in projects where the objective was to increase the availability of water, particular emphasis was placed on training the counterpart personnel and the local population to maintain their own facilities.

49. DTCD was greatly concerned at the continuing decline in delivery in the energy sector, although there were prospects for improvement in 1990. The programme's main emphasis had been on energy planning and conservation, the creation of energy data banks and information systems, and the establishment of technical research centres such as the oil research centre in China. At the same time, DTCD had facilitated access to state-of-the-art technology and expertise in the full range of non-nuclear subsectors, including oil and gas exploration and geothermal energy. It had provided technical services to the United Nations Revolving Fund

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for Natural Resources Exploration in the areas of mineral exploration and geothermal energy and hoped that the Fund would take greater advantage of its extensive experience and in-house expertise.

50. Development planning advisory services were the Department's second largest programme, followed by statistics, administration and finance and population. Together, they constituted the foundation for national capacity-building and were naturally interdependent. The Department's expertise in those areas placed it in a unique position to pursue an integrated, multisectoral approach in supporting aid co-ordination and in helping to establish integrated project banks for monitoring public investment programmes. A large part of its work involved support to developing countries, particularly those in Africa. With such experience, the Department's development planners had been requested to assist in the preparation of the background documentation and macro-economic analysis required for the 1990 Second United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries.

51. DTCD had taken, or was in the process of taking, a number of initiatives to further improve the effectiveness of its services to developing countries, including a flexible approach to the processing of field missions and subcontracts and to facilitating procurement from developing countries. Equipment purchased in developing countries already accounted for 38 per cent of all equipment procured in 1988 - a 10 per cent increase over the previous year (DP/1989/46/Add.3, fig. 7). Earlier in 1989, DTCD had been authorized to accept lower programme support costs in the case of projects with a heavy equipment component or needing less than the usual technical backstopping.

52. DTCD welcomed the possibility of going beyond traditional modalities of technical co-operation and taking advantage of the increasing availability of national capacities. Although, as with UNDP, there had been no change in 1988 in the number of internationally recruited experts, 40 per cent of whom had come from developing countries, the number of national experts had grown by nearly 50 per cent by comparison with 1987. The roster of consultants and experts had been reviewed and computerized and efforts had been made to enlist the support of technical institutions, universities, private firms and non-governmental organizations in order to increase DTCD's ability to provide field consultants at very short notice. As a result, four out of five advisers recruited in 1988 had been highly specialized consultants. There was also great potential in the "twinning" modality which matched the relevant entities of developed and developing countries for the delivery of advisory services and for training purposes. DTCD was also continuing with operationally related research, in order to provide a conceptual and methodological framework for its technical co-operation activities, thereby improving the quality of its advisory services.

53. Looking to the future, DTCD, as the operational arm of the United Nations Secretariat, must provide maximum support in the coming decade to the strengthening of developing countries' national capacities within their own policy framework, which was a prerequisite for government execution of development projects and for promoting self-reliance. What was involved was not a simple transfer of

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responsibility, but a further refinement of the tripartite partnership, with Governments of developing countries playing the lead role.

54. In the coming years, DTCD could be involved more fully in enhancing the capacity of developing countries to improve their development planning and management. For instance, it could play a greater role in preparations for round-table meetings and in NaTCAPs, especially by involving its interregional or technical advisers, thereby avoiding the risk of duplication, as well as in project identification and formulation missions organized by the Management Development Programme, thus providing multisectoral development advice at the country level. Such measures would give DTCD countless opportunities for co-operation with UNDP in the service of developing countries.

55. Replying to the question raised by the delegations of the Federal Republic of Germany and the United States concerning the division of labour between the UNDP Office for Projects Services (OPS) and DTCD, he said that the work of DTCD experts encompassed 15 sectors, many of them related to general development questions, which, as could be seen from DP/1989/46/Add.1, accounted for 15 per cent of the work of OPS.

56. The Department's activities in those 15 sectors ranged from project delivery to the provision of non-project-related services. The technical services which DTCD provided to developing countries included advisory services and assistance with specific project components such as training, equipment, etc. As several delegations had pointed out, the multisectoral nature of DTCD was an essential part of such assistance, which was aimed at promoting the national capacities of developing countries in accordance with their respective priorities and needs.

57. DTCD had long emphasized that co-operation between OPS and DTCD could be much closer than it was. For instance, DTCD rarely had the opportunity to act as a sub-contractor for projects executed by OPS. DTCD could make a valuable contribution not only to project delivery, but also to the special services which OPS provided, if the Department's in-house technical expertise were more fully utilized by UNDP.

58. Mr. SOUTTER (Canada) commended DTCD for having achieved greater efficiency and accomplishing more work without increasing its staff. He continued to support the emphasis placed on human resources development and the development of management capacities, especially in Africa. UNDP should be encouraged to utilize fully the existing capacity within the United Nations system, especially in DTCD.

59. He was concerned at the limited participation of women in the Department's programmes. For instance, of the 1,331 international experts recruited by the Department in 1988, only 81, or 6 per cent, had been women. Similarly, of the 1,140 fellowship recipients, only 25 per cent had been women and it was his understanding that 65 per cent of them had come from only three countries. He would like to know what measures DTCD proposed to take to correct that trend.

60. Mr. AL-ZUNNI (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) commended United Nations technical co-operation activities in 1988, as outlined in documents DP/1989/46 and Add.1-3, in which DTCD had played a major role, in particular in the area of human resources training.

61. He agreed with the Department's approach of evaluating projects and formulating strategies in accordance with the situation in each developing country and, in particular, supported the contribution which the Department was making to the economic recovery of Africa.

62. The Department had redoubled its efforts to co-operate with the developing countries, and his delegation hoped that DTCD would also continue its efforts to enhance the effectiveness of its work in order to improve the services which it provided to those countries and which were so necessary for their development.

63. The Department should be equitable in the geographical distribution of its services and should provide them to all countries, including the Arab countries. In that respect, he wished to know what methodology the Department used to decide which countries would receive its technical assistance.

64. Mr. CZARKOWSKI (Poland) noted with satisfaction that DTCD had given greater attention to certain components of its services in response to developments in the world economy, thereby demonstrating that it was a flexible instrument for furthering technical co-operation activities. His delegation hoped that those changes might contribute positively to the establishment of a new set of priorities when defining the role of the United Nations development system in the 1990s and the international development strategy for the fourth development decade.

65. Despite those positive changes, it was essential to continue to attach importance to the effectiveness of project implementation and to bear in mind the need to limit administrative expenditures.

66. As long as high standards of project design, implementation and assessment were maintained, DTCD had an increasing role to play in technical assistance projects. However, more attention should be given and more resources allocated to regional, interregional and global projects, in order better to reflect the universal scope and impact of technical co-operation within the United Nations. The strengthening of the role of the regional commissions would greatly assist technical co-operation in that regard.

67. Poland would continue to co-operate in projects in the fields of population and remote sensing and was ready to provide expert services and equipment for project design, implementation and evaluation in other areas, such as natural resources and energy. However, document DP/1989/46/Add.3 showed that no equipment had been procured in Poland.

68. The seminar on water quality management in developing countries, to be held in Poland in September, testified to Poland's interest and abilities in the field of development.

(Mr. Czarkowski, Poland)

69. Poland was also interested in the Department's expertise in managing and developing human resources, especially in the light of the reform of its economic system and its structural and programmatic changes. Poland recognized that every country had something to offer - and even more to gain - by expanding technical co-operation for development.

70. Mr. CHEKAY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) welcomed the fact that, in 1988, the volume of programme delivery had grown by more than 10 per cent over 1987 and that DTCD had placed greater emphasis on human resources development and increased the proportion of expenditures devoted to training from 17 per cent to 20 per cent (DP/1989/46, para. 8).

71. While, on the whole, the Department had made considerable progress, there was still room for improvement. For example, no progress had been made in the number of staff from developing countries who worked on projects, the number of developing countries which participated in sub-contracting had decreased and, at a time of increased resources for all regions, particularly Africa, resources for Latin America had diminished. With regard to increased co-ordination, the Soviet Union believed that the Department should co-ordinate its activities with other organizations involved in development, but on an equal footing.

72. Concerning the need to find the best combination of long-term experts and short-term consultants for development projects, he said that that combination must vary according to the type of project or the country involved and the Department should take a flexible approach and not yield to extreme attitudes. Such an approach should also be taken to the level of planning and programming (macro-economic, multisectoral or sectoral) and to the importance accorded to the public and private sectors.

73. The Soviet Union had always co-operated closely with DTCD and was ready to broaden its co-operation. The Department would contribute to the goals of development if it made greater use of the Soviet Union's wide-ranging experience in the area of co-operation with developing countries.

74. With respect to the future, the Soviet Union proposed that the role of the Department in the 1990s should be based on the democratic principles of co-operation, that its technical and organizational reputation should be strengthened and that it should occupy a place commensurate with its responsibilities among participants in the development process.

75. Mr. KRSTAJIĆ (Yugoslavia) said that the report on United Nations technical co-operation activities (DP/1989/46) showed that DTCD had achieved excellent results in various aspects of its work. Positive changes had been made in the areas of human resources, activities in support of Africa, evaluation exercises and better integration of the specific interests of women in the development process.

76. With regard to the recruitment of experts, his delegation was concerned at the limited participation of developing countries in that component of technical

(Mr. Krstajić, Yugoslavia)

co-operation. It also wished to draw attention to the need to clarify the concept of initiatives to enlist the support of private companies in recruiting experts and consultants under reimbursable loan arrangements (DP/1989/46/Add.1, para. 107). His delegation would like to have more information on the consequences and results of such initiatives.

77. He expressed satisfaction with the work done by the Technical Assistance Recruitment and Fellowships Office, through which the Department co-operated with national recruitment services. He also supported the recommendations made at the biennial meeting of national recruitment services, held at Geneva in October 1988, to the effect that the participation of experts and consultants from under-represented countries should be increased and that training should be provided for senior officials of national recruitment services.

78. Lastly, he supported the direction which the Department proposed to take in the 1990s (DP/1989/46, paras. 53-55).

79. Mr. ZHANG Guanghui (China) said that DTCD was the Secretariat's main tool for carrying out its technical co-operation activities and had done much to build the capacity of developing countries in various areas, thereby contributing to their socio-economic development. In 1988, despite staff cuts, DTCD had managed to reach a record level of activities.

80. His delegation supported the activities so far carried out by the Department and hoped that it would continue to gear its technical co-operation activities to the specific needs of individual developing countries. The technical co-operation experience acquired by its staff was a source of knowledge which, if properly used, would be of great value in helping developing countries to advance.

81. The co-operative relationship between UNDP and DTCD was very satisfactory, as were UNDP's efforts to make use of the Department's technical know-how. He hoped that, in future, UNDP would maintain the tripartite nature of technical co-operation activities, continue to respect the sovereignty of recipient countries and, together with DTCD, go on contributing to the technological and economic development of developing countries.

82. Mr. Kufuor (Ghana) took the Chair.

83. Mr. CHAUDOUET (France) said that, as a representative of the French Ministry of Co-operation and Development, whose main activities were conducted in sub-Saharan Africa, he welcomed DTCD's efforts to help the African region. That region was experiencing a serious crisis and was bearing the burden of external debt and economic adjustment programmes which, in many cases, impeded its development processes.

84. He noted the Department's readiness to increase its participation in national technical co-operation assessments and programmes (NaTCAPs) and round tables and supported improvements in the area of human resources, particularly with respect to training.

85. Mr. GRAHAM (United States of America) said that his delegation fully supported DTCD's shift away from traditional approaches to economic planning towards the strengthening of national capacities for management development, including economic management. He commended DTCD for its effort to increase the delivery of technical assistance, but urged it to devote equal attention to the quality of the advisory and training services it provided and to the results achieved in terms of sustainable development.

86. DTCD had increased its operational surplus for the third year in a row. However, according to the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ), the United Nations had shown an excess of support costs over reimbursement for 1987 to 1989. His delegation wished to know whether the data reported by DTCD were compatible with the data reported by ACABQ.

87. His delegation was in favour of an expanded role for DTCD in supporting government execution of UNDP-funded projects, NatCAPs and round tables, as well as increased co-operation between DTCD and UNDP in implementing UNDP's Management Development Programme. His delegation also agreed that close co-ordination was needed between activities carried out by DTCD under the Special Action Programme for Administration and Management (SAPAM) and its own programme in areas such as public financial management systems, and activities carried out under the Management Development Programme.

88. DTCD must strengthen its evaluation activities by establishing a self-evaluation system for all projects which it implemented and by participating in in-depth tripartite evaluations. Although DTCD was the second largest executing agency, its evaluation capacity was much smaller than that of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), the fourth largest executing agency.

89. The quality of the technical assistance provided by DTCD depended largely on the expertise of its staff. It would be useful to have information on DTCD's activities to maintain up-to-date expertise, particularly in the area of development administration.

90. His delegation was concerned about the apparent duplication of project management and administrative backstopping functions between DTCD and UNDP's Office for Projects Services (OPS).

91. A more effective division of labour between DTCD and UNDP would be desirable, with DTCD providing substantive advice and backstopping for all UNDP-funded projects in its areas of competence and OPS and the Programme Support Division of DTCD performing complementary, rather than competitive, functions in support of project implementation, including capacity-building assistance to Governments.

92. Mr. POPESCU (Romania) said that his delegation noted with satisfaction that 1988 had been of special significance for DTCD, because the budget and programme delivery rate had reached record levels. It congratulated DTCD on the 10 per cent increase in delivery against 1987 and its increased effectiveness with regard to administrative costs and staff productivity. His delegation was pleased to see that DTCD's largest programme had been delivered with the smallest number of people.

(Mr. Popescu, Romania)

93. Encouraging results had been obtained in the main substantive areas: development issues and policies, natural resources and energy, public administration and finance, population and social development. His delegation hoped that, in the near future, project expenditures by component would decrease substantially for internationally recruited personnel in favour of training and other major components directly related to project effectiveness.

94. DTCD should seriously consider all possibilities for substantially improving the situation with respect to the number of experts recruited from the European developing countries and equipment procured from those countries. Romania was one such country and its experience and capabilities should be taken into account in all substantive areas. His delegation wished to thank DTCD for its successful execution of UNDP-financed projects in Romania.

95. Mr. EL ZUBEIR (Sudan) said that the aim of technical co-operation was to strengthen the economic and social development process in recipient countries. As the report indicated, DTCD had achieved very positive results and the Sudan wished to express its satisfaction at the efforts made.

96. Experts from developing countries must participate in training and advisory services and support to non-governmental organizations must be maintained. His delegation would support any measures that might be taken to use the experience of the United Nations system to benefit developing countries. In that connection, like the entire United Nations system, UNDP field offices had information and know-how to contribute. Available external support must also be utilized. It was encouraging that UNDP was drawing on DTCD's co-operation, which could be a valuable asset to it. His delegation also supported DTCD's efforts to prepare NatCAPs and round-table meetings.

97. Mr. ROSELLO (Spain) congratulated DTCD on its effectiveness and on its efforts to improve the quality of assistance and noted with satisfaction that such assistance was increasingly concerned with strengthening the management capacities of recipient countries.

98. Government execution was not only a desirable goal in itself but also an essential means of ensuring that the efforts of developing countries would be self-sustaining.

99. His country was confident that certain problems in the tripartite relationship with OPS would be solved to the satisfaction of all parties. It also hoped that access to consultants' services for technical assistance projects would continue to improve, that consultancy services would be offered on the broadest possible basis and that transparency would be achieved in the recruitment process and in the provision of consultants.

100. Mr. SAHLMANN (Federal Republic of Germany) commended DTCD for having increased its rate of project delivery without increasing its staff and hoped that the quality of delivery had also improved. He wished to know why the proportion of staff members from developing countries and of sub-contracts awarded to developing

(Mr. Sahlmann, Federal Republic of Germany)

countries had declined. Over the long term, those proportions should increase, not decrease.

101. His delegation was not convinced that the best possible division of labour had been achieved between OPS and DTCD. He requested information on co-operation between DTCD and the specialized agencies and again asked how DTCD had fulfilled its reporting obligation to UNDP when it had not signed the Standard Basic Agreement. Since several specialized agencies were present at the meeting, he would appreciate their comments on their relationship with DTCD.

PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION (continued)

(b) IMPLEMENTATION OF DECISIONS ADOPTED BY THE GOVERNING COUNCIL AT PREVIOUS SESSIONS (continued)

(iv) UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME CO-OPERATION WITH NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS AND GRASS-ROOTS ORGANIZATIONS (DP/1989/23)

102. Ms. TIMPSON (Director, Division for Non-Governmental Organizations), introducing the report prepared in compliance with Governing Council decision 88/27 (DP/1989/23), said that during the high-level segment of the Council's debate, as in other international forums, the Programme's special mandate in the human dimension of development, in strengthening national capacities and in building self-reliance had been underscored. That meant not only introducing new technologies developed externally, but also recognizing the value of traditional knowledge. Accordingly, UNDP and its Division for Non-Governmental Organizations looked at people as active agents of their own development and not as passive recipients of assistance. Past experience, for instance in the area of rural development, had demonstrated that project success was more likely when beneficiaries were full participants in project planning and execution.

103. The Partners in Development Programme, which had been expanded in 1989 to cover 61 countries, was a good example of co-operation with non-governmental organizations (NGOs). In many instances, NGOs selected for grants had been smaller, less well-known organizations which were receiving donor funding for the first time. That kind of programme, which emphasized self-reliance, decentralization and community involvement, could have a broader appeal than other more impersonal UNDP activities, and over the following year, efforts would be made to open up the programme to private, in addition to governmental, contributions.

104. UNDP had supported the convening of national dialogues between Governments and NGOs in many third world countries, including Colombia, Tunisia, Togo, the Philippines, Zimbabwe, Indonesia and Bangladesh. The support provided by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations to the meeting held in the Philippines, and by the World Bank to the meeting held in Togo, were good examples of the close co-operation between UNDP and other organizations of the United Nations system. At the same time, more and more Governments were becoming

(Ms. Timpson)

interested in drawing on the Programme's knowledge of other countries' experience in order to design programmes adapted to their own circumstances.

105. The Africa 2000 Network, a programme focusing on activities to halt environmental degradation and promote sustainable development, was starting full-scale activities in eight countries in 1989, but only with the explicit agreement of the respective Governments. Similar mechanisms had been piloted in several African countries through a grass-roots initiatives support fund. The Administrator had outlined simplified sub-contracting and accounting procedures for those types of projects (DP/1989/54, paras. 48-55). Definite commitments to the respective trust fund had already been received from Canada, Denmark, France, Japan and Norway. The Regional Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean was exploring the possibility of initiating a similar programme.

106. An important role was emerging for UNDP co-operation with donor-based and international NGOs. That had been true especially in emergency situations, such as those in Afghanistan and Central America, and would soon be seen in Namibia. That type of co-operation should expand in the future.

107. Another area in which Governments were calling for UNDP support was co-ordination of the external assistance provided by NGOs, which had increased from an estimated \$1 billion in 1973 to approximately \$5 billion currently. More than 10 per cent of bilateral aid now flowed through private development agencies. However, most of the data she had just cited had come from donor Governments and the picture might not be as clear from the vantage point of recipient countries.

108. In order to give Governments a better understanding of those aid flows, the annual development assistance report prepared by UNDP field offices would now include a section on NGO assistance. Moreover, the Division for NGOs would co-operate with the Regional Bureau for Africa in national technical co-operation assessments and programmes (NaTCAPs) in order to obtain meaningful data on NGO assistance at the national level.

109. The foregoing highlighted the importance of UNDP support to grass-roots organizations and its co-operation with NGOs, as well as the relationship between those UNDP activities and government priorities as identified in their own development strategies and plans. That importance had also been emphasized by a number of speakers from all regions during the high-level segment.

110. Mr. OGAWA (Japan) said that his delegation thought very highly of the steps taken by UNDP to promote co-operation with non-governmental organizations and grass-roots organizations under the various innovative initiatives described in document DP/1989/23. Such collaboration helped to ensure that development co-operation met the real needs of the developing countries. The main element for success was flexibility in field operations. Consequently, his delegation supported the approach taken by the Administration and hoped that UNDP would do more along those lines.

(Mr. Ogawa, Japan)

111. To support such UNDP activities, Japan, aware of the growing need at the grass roots for that type of assistance in African countries, had contributed \$1 million to the Africa 2000 Network Trust Fund and hoped that the programme would achieve its goals. Since the preparatory phase had already come to an end, he would like to know what framework had been established for the Network, including the selection of recipient countries and projects and the allocation of resources; and in what manner UNDP, the non-governmental organizations and the recipient and the donor Governments would participate in its execution. He also requested the Administration to provide information periodically to interested parties, including the donors, on the progress made in carrying out the programme.

112. Mr. GRAHAM (United States of America) said that his delegation was pleased to see the progress that had been made in the Partners in Development Programme and applauded UNDP's decision to extend it to more countries in 1989. It urged UNDP to continue and expand its evaluation activities in connection with the Programme.

113. It also noted the establishment of the Africa 2000 Network to link African-based grass-roots groups and non-governmental organizations in an effort to combat environmental degradation and promote ecologically sustainable development. On the other hand, while the United States supported the increased focus by UNDP on the environment, it discouraged the proliferation of trust funds, since that tended to diminish the importance of UNDP's centrally funded programmes and could hinder the integration of concerns like the environment into the mainstream of UNDP activities.

114. It had been a significant UNDP initiative to provide information on non-governmental organizations to recipient Governments as an aid to co-operation between the two. The numbers of non-governmental organizations were rapidly increasing and they constituted an important force in development.

115. His delegation supported the simplification of financial management and control of procedures facilitating co-operation with grass-roots groups and non-governmental organizations, as long as the integrity of UNDP's financial and accounting system remained intact and the flow of funds could be tracked.

116. It applauded UNDP activities in the field such as the two regional training seminars organized in 1988 for government, UNDP and non-governmental-organization personnel. It also commended the involvement in such activities of UNDP-associated funds and programmes, notably the United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF), the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), the United Nations Sudano-Sahelian Office (UNSO) and the United Nations Volunteers (UNV), and looked forward to receiving reports on progress in that regard at future Council sessions.

117. Mr. SOUTTER (Canada) said that he welcomed the continuing UNDP efforts to encourage grass-roots participation in development and to further co-operation between UNDP field offices, the Governments of developing countries and non-governmental organizations. The latter could have a considerable influence in proposing new solutions for the socio-economic problems facing both developed and developing societies.

(Mr. Soutter, Canada)

118. It was very encouraging that the Partners in Development Programme had been so well received by the UNDP field offices, Governments and non-governmental organizations. His delegation supported the Administrator's decision to extend the programme to 60 countries in 1989, at the same per-country funding level.

119. As already stated during the high-level segment, Canada would continue to support the Africa 2000 Network, aimed at promoting ecologically sustainable development, and it encouraged other donors to contribute to the Network Trust Fund.

120. Mr. CHAUDOUET (France) said that he welcomed the closer relations between UNDP and non-governmental organizations. Although France's experience was of more recent date than that of other donors which had long considered non-governmental organizations as partners in development, it was making up for lost time by actively applying what it had learned in that regard.

121. A study group had been set up in France to study what was referred to as the "non-governmental space of development". The term "space" was chosen because the non-governmental organizations as such were only part of a larger whole in which other development partners not belonging to the governmental sector participated. He wondered, however, to what degree a municipality or an administrative division could be considered "non-governmental", or into what category a labour union, political party or enterprise should fall. In the developing countries themselves, many village associations or groups of persons called themselves non-governmental organizations because the title helped them to exist and to support creative initiatives in their own countries. Furthermore, local non-governmental organizations differed enormously in Asia, Latin America and Africa. The area of competence of each participant in the non-governmental space must be clarified in order to make UNDP action more effective. France had undertaken to support the Division for Non-Governmental Organizations and some of its programmes, and would try to convey to it its own experience in the matter. The non-governmental space could have an essential place in development, a fact that had to be given firm though cautious recognition.

122. Mrs. RAPOLACKI (Observer for Lesotho) said that her delegation was very much in favour of UNDP's encouragement of participation in development by grass-roots organizations and of co-operation among developing countries. Such efforts would succeed if they were country-specific and took into account the different situations, traditions, beliefs and customs of each country. Greater participation by rural communities must be achieved, and to do so it was essential to determine what mechanisms could be used to link local self-reliance initiatives with national development policies and external development assistance.

123. Her delegation supported the proposal that the Council should approve funding from SPR for the continuation and extension of domestic development services activities. It also supported the Africa 2000 Network and the Administrator's decision to extend the Partners in Development Programme to 60 countries in 1989 (DP/1989/23, para. 14).

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.

