



**Governing Council  
of the  
United Nations  
Development Programme**

Distr.  
GENERAL

DP/1989/SR.37  
28 June 1989

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

---

GOVERNING COUNCIL

Thirty-sixth session

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 37th MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,  
on Friday, 23 June 1989, at 3.15 p.m.

President: Mr. POPESCU (Romania)

CONTENTS

Other matters:

- (b) Issues of concern to the Governing Council arising from General Assembly action at its forty-third session and from other organs of the United Nations system in 1988:
- (i) Steps taken by UNDP in response to General Assembly action at its forty-third session and other organs of the United Nations system in 1988;
- (iv) Refugees, returnees and displaced persons.

---

This record is subject to correction.

Corrections should be submitted in one of the working languages. They should be set forth in a memorandum and also incorporated in a copy of the record. They should be sent within one week of the date of this document to the Chief, Official Records Editing Section, Department of Conference Services, room DC2-750, 2 United Nations Plaza.

Any corrections to the records of the meetings of this session will be consolidated in a single corrigendum, to be issued shortly after the end of the session.

The meeting was called to order at 3.15 p.m.

OTHER MATTERS

(b) ISSUES OF CONCERN TO THE GOVERNING COUNCIL ARISING FROM GENERAL ASSEMBLY ACTION AT ITS FORTY-THIRD SESSION AND FROM OTHER ORGANS OF THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM IN 1988:

(i) STEPS TAKEN BY UNDP IN RESPONSE TO GENERAL ASSEMBLY ACTION AT ITS FORTY-THIRD SESSION AND OTHER ORGANS OF THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM IN 1988 (DP/1989/61 and Add.1)

1. Mr. KIRDAR (Director, Division of External Relations and Governing Council secretariat), introducing documents DP/1989/61 and Add.1, said that document DP/1989/61 outlined the action planned or taken by UNDP in response to resolutions and decisions adopted by specialized agencies of the United Nations system, the regional economic commissions and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD). Document DP/1989/61/Add.1 dealt with resolutions and decisions adopted by the General Assembly at its forty-third session which were of major concern to the Governing Council. It also contained information on action taken by UNDP in response to General Assembly resolutions concerning the Special Plan of Economic Co-operation for Central America and steps taken or planned by UNDP in response to the growing number of resolutions adopted by the General Assembly on assistance to refugees, returnees and displaced persons. The Council might wish to include an item on the agenda of its 1990 session dealing with the policy aspects of those resolutions as they related to development issues.

2. Mr. KELLAND (Observer for Denmark), speaking on behalf of the Nordic countries, said that, in pursuance of General Assembly resolution 43/199, it would not be possible to reach any firm conclusions on the central co-ordinating and central funding roles of UNDP before the triennial policy review of operational activities for development had taken place and the various expert groups set up by the Director-General for Development and International Economic Co-operation had issued their reports. None the less, the problems in that area appeared to be rather clear.

3. First, insufficient attention had been given in the past to the need for varying responses to different co-ordination requirements in recipient countries. Second, there had been a tendency to disregard in practice the principle that recipient countries themselves must be responsible for co-ordinating all external inputs, including United Nations assistance. Strengthening their capacity to do so must be the ultimate goal. That was not simply a matter of bringing in external experts, but rather required a long-term effort. The lack of cohesion had also been a serious problem. Competition among various parts of the United Nations system had prevented the optimum utilization of resources. The issue of co-ordination with technical assistance provided by the international financial institutions, particularly the World Bank, had received far too little attention.

(Mr. Kelland, Observer, Denmark)

4. In dealing with the co-ordinating role of UNDP, it was necessary to distinguish between countries where such a role was neither relevant nor desired by the recipient, and countries where the opposite was true. In the latter case, coherent efforts on the part of the United Nations system could make a contribution to the recipient's co-ordination of external assistance, and should continue. The UNDP country programming process should not serve merely as a frame of reference, but should also encompass assistance provided by the programmes participating in the Joint Consultative Group on Policy, and ultimately, all United Nations assistance. At the request of the recipient country, UNDP should take the lead in establishing joint programming. Such programming could be of special importance to the least developed countries, most of which needed immediate and long-term capacity development assistance.

5. Government execution was obviously the long-term goal for all externally financed projects. Until that goal had been achieved, the agencies should continue to play their part in the executing process, and intermediate modalities between government and agency execution would have to be developed.

6. Mr. SAHLMANN (Federal Republic of Germany) said that the documents which were before the Council showed that UNDP was at the centre of the technical co-operation provided by the United Nations system. However, he would appreciate it if, in future, more detailed and substantive information could be provided on actions taken and planned for UNDP in response to decisions adopted by other executing agencies. For example, the reference in document DP/1989/61 to the concept of improved co-ordination between UNDP and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) was too vague. Similarly, the document merely noted that the question of agency support costs with regard to the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) and the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) was on the agenda of the Governing Council for 1989. He would appreciate further details.

7. Ms. BECKER (United States of America) said that her delegation appreciated the note by the Administrator, which provided an overview of the links between UNDP activities and actions taken by other bodies. It would have been useful, however, if the report had highlighted the major themes or directions of actions occurring in the system and the Programme's response. For instance, mention could have been made of the relationship and co-operation between UNDP and its executing agencies, and the role of UNDP in management and capacity building, as issues which had been taken up in a number of bodies.

8. With regard to UNESCO, she would like to know what specific steps had been agreed upon to improve co-ordination. Similarly, with regard to the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), the reference in document DP/1989/61 to consultations between UNDP and UNIDO was inadequate; she would appreciate more specific information.

9. Mr. KIRDAR (Director, Division of External Relations and Governing Council secretariat) said that he appreciated the comments and suggestions by Member States

(Mr. Kirdar)

on ways to improve future reports. Concerning the statement by the observer for Denmark on behalf of the Nordic countries, the question of co-ordination was a major issue to be taken up in the annual review. With regard to the questions raised by the representatives of the United States and the Federal Republic of Germany, the working relationship between UNDP and UNESCO had been improving for some time; arrangements were being made for co-operation in the field of education.

10. Mr. BROWN (Associate Administrator) said that UNDP had discussed educational priorities and the role of a funding organization with UNESCO at a meeting which had led to the decision to lay renewed stress on the neglected area of primary education. A UNDP delegation had also visited UNESCO to discuss procedural matters and project design, appraisal and evaluation. Agreement has been reached to send a joint letter to the resident representatives on the subject of UNESCO's work, particularly in the cultural sphere, work which needed more attention from funding organizations. UNDP's collaboration with UNESCO was excellent, and the comments in the Governing Council had not done justice to it.

11. UNDP's relations with the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) had been dealt with extensively elsewhere but he wished to note that while WMO's expenditures were in Swiss francs, the reimbursements which it received were in United States dollars, whose value had for a while been declining. The Governing Council had rules designed precisely to cover problems caused by currency fluctuations and WMO's difficulties should lessen as the value of the dollar rose.

12. UNDP was also in consultation with UNIDO and a meeting had been scheduled for July to deal with project design, appraisal and evaluation. The reality of UNDP's co-operation with UNIDO was far more positive than it might appear from the Administrator's note (DP/1989/61). In connection with chapter VII of that note he said that UNDP had dealt with the issue of the Senior Industrial Development Field Advisers (SIDFAs) and their incorporation into field offices.

13. Mr. MAHGOUB (Sudan) said, although the General Assembly had given UNDP a clear mandate to ensure system-wide co-ordination at the country level, the reality was far from satisfactory. Countries that strongly relied on UNDP suffered as a result. The Administrator's note in document DP/1989/61 did not address his country's concern over the erosion of UNDP's central co-ordinating role or show that the relevant resolutions were being implemented. He would like a more detailed report and thought that the Governing Council might also consider alternative approaches.

14. Mr. PAYTON (Observer for New Zealand) said that his country was especially interested in giving greater prominence to UNDP activities within the United Nations system and supported greater efforts to get more recognition for UNDP and its work.

Progress report on the UNDP role in the implementation of the Special Plan of Economic Co-operation for Central America

15. Mr. RAMIREZ-OCAMPO (Assistant Administrator and Regional Director, Regional Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean) said that he would supplement the information already available in the interim progress report on the Special Plan of Economic Co-operation for Central America (PEC) in document PEC/PRC/89/6.

16. In the past nine months, 18 projects had been approved and three projects were in their final stages of approval. Those 21 projects totalled \$11,224,000, of which \$7,552,000 was charged against special programme resources of \$20 million. The balance was covered by various co-financing or parallel financing arrangements. Therefore an amount of \$12,448,000 in special programme resources was still available for technical co-operation projects.

17. Technical co-operation projects and project profiles having a total cost of \$13 million were in the pipeline. Decisions on those projects and project profiles would be taken in the light of the results of the First Meeting of Central American Governments with Co-operating Governments and Institutions. He wished to highlight some important areas included in the Special Plan.

18. In the area of assistance to refugees, returnees and displaced persons, technical co-operation had been extended by UNDP and UNHCR to Governments within the framework of the International Conference on Central American Refugees held in Guatemala in May 1989. That co-operation had helped secure the international community's agreement that assistance to displaced populations required solutions similar to those required by refugees, including international support. The need for co-ordinated efforts by UNDP and UNHCR when humanitarian relief was insufficient and for long-term plans to reintegrate the uprooted in national development had also been recognized. The Conference also led to an updating of the chapter on assistance to uprooted populations included in the Special Plan. The Conference had further approved a plan of action and machinery for promotion and follow-up, and adopted a declaration affirming that international assistance should be extended on a humanitarian and non-political basis. It had also recognized that solutions to refugee problems should be reflected in economic and social development strategies and had formulated specific projects amounting to \$380 million.

19. In March 1989, Italy had approved \$115 million to finance a programme in favour of displaced persons, returnees and refugees, with emphasis on the displaced. It would assist the five Central American countries and Belize and would benefit 136,500 persons directly and 245,900 indirectly.

20. With respect to the chapter in the Special Plan on the reactivation of the Central America Common Market, and in the light of the financial co-operation that was under study by EEC, efforts had been concentrated on the reform of the Central American Monetary Stabilization Fund (FOCEM). A draft of the proposed reforms was being discussed and consultations would be held with the multilateral financing institutions and interested donor countries. The Central American countries

(Mr. Ramirez-Ocampo)

hoped that the reforms would increase resources available to FOCEM, for balance-of-payments assistance. The provisional results of the study indicated that FOCEM should be able to mobilize between \$450 million to \$600 million in the period 1990-1994. FOCEM already had \$130 million and therefore would need \$320 million to \$470 million more.

21. In the energy sector, the Special Plan provided for a portfolio of investment projects totalling \$66.2 million. That portfolio had been updated and complementary technical studies had been prepared. All the relevant documentation would be available to interested donor countries in October 1989.

22. In connection with the strengthening of the Central American Bank for Economic Integration (CABEI) he said that thanks to the co-ordination of activity with the relevant parties, the international donor community would have a large-scale technical co-operation project available in August 1989. Its thrust would be to strengthen CABEI in the financial, operational, institutional and legal areas and it would be funded in part by UNDP. It was expected that some \$180 million in co-financing would also be available from other sources.

23. Turning to institutional aspects and management capacity in relation to the Special Plan, he said that there was still a need to strengthen Central American institutions at the national and regional levels. That required technical advisory services, training and computer hardware. UNDP was therefore co-operating not only with CABEI but also with the Permanent Secretariat of the General Treaty on Central American Economic Integration Treaty (SIECA), the Central American Institute of Public Administration, the utilities companies and the ministries of agriculture, economic affairs and planning.

24. Turning to UNDP's role in implementing the Special Plan he said that priority had been given to the strengthening of field offices in Central America and to periodic meetings with the resident representatives, as well as to the recruitment of specialists for specific purposes. A detailed budgetary analysis and forecast of UNDP support costs within the approved \$1.5 million allocation had also been prepared. He also stressed in that connection the importance of the First Meeting of Central American Governments with Co-operating Governments and Institutions. It would initiate a dialogue in which the Central American countries would present their development prospects as a region and their specific financial and technical co-operation needs under the Plan and in which the bilateral and multilateral donors would present their development co-operation policies and state their priorities. He was confident that the meeting would lead to the mobilization of new resources from donor countries and institutions that had indicated a particular interest in specific areas or sectors.

25. Lastly, he commended the Central American Governments for their efforts at co-ordination and joint activity at all levels and for the leadership role they had played in connection with the Special Plan.

/...

26. Mr. AGUILAR HECHT (Guatemala), referring to the report of the Regional Director for Latin America and the Caribbean, said that regional and subregional initiatives for peace and development were becoming increasingly important. Guatemala believed that UNDP should be involved in all peace efforts because its experience would enable it to contribute to sustained development, which would, in turn, strengthen the peace initiatives. Guatemala welcomed the active and well-conceived response of UNDP to the request by the Central American countries and by the General Assembly that it assist them in their efforts to implement the Esquipulas II agreement, particularly with regard to the formulation, in consultation with the Governments of the region, of regional projects aimed at promoting sustained development, alleviating human suffering, and fostering economic and trade reactivation and monetary and fiscal integration, in support of the Special Plan of Economic Co-operation for Central America, whose goals and objectives had been endorsed by the General Assembly in resolution 42/231.

27. At their annual meetings, the Central American Presidents had reaffirmed their promise to put forth their greatest efforts to achieve a firm and lasting peace in the region. The Governments of the region pledged to realize the goals and objectives of the Special Plan and to comply with the Declaration and Plan of Action adopted at the International Conference on Central American Refugees held in Guatemala, in May 1989. Peace and development were inseparable, and the support of the international community and of the Governing Council were an incentive to the Central American countries to continue their efforts in both areas. The international community had already provided a comprehensive response to the needs of the region, but additional bilateral and multilateral financial assistance on concessional and favourable terms was essential in view of the emergency situation faced by Central America.

28. The meeting to be held in Geneva from 4 to 6 July between the Central American countries, the bilateral and multilateral co-operating community and UNDP to evaluate the Special Plan and discuss the priorities for project implementation would foster a dialogue in which Central America could outline its development prospects and present a detailed picture of its technical and financial co-operation needs. The co-operating community would have the opportunity to report on its co-operation policies and areas of priority interest. Guatemala trusted that there would be active participation by the co-operating community in that important meeting at the highest possible level and that the decisions taken would represent an additional show of support for the current efforts to achieve peace, development and democracy.

29. In conclusion, he emphasized the importance to Guatemala in particular, and the Central American region in general of the activities undertaken by the Office for Projects Services (OPS) in support of the implementation of the Special Plan as well as other national and regional projects. Guatemala felt that the flexibility and effectiveness of OPS in regard to project execution should be emphasized, and believed that the Council should support its activities.

30. Mr. GUTTIEREZ (Observer for Costa Rica) said that during the 1980s the gap between developed and developing countries had continued to widen. As noted in the Administrator's report (DP/1989/31, para. 15), the economic growth of Central American countries in 1988 had been 1.1 per cent, a decline from 2.6 per cent in the preceding year. The report provided a detailed description of the problems besetting the Central American economies, and it was obvious that under those circumstances the discussion of the development strategy and of the role of international co-operation in that connection were of special relevance for Central America. As a result of the understanding of the problems of Central America shown by the General Assembly, and the decision of a large number of countries to co-operate in their solution, UNDP had drawn up a comprehensive plan for economic assistance to Central America. However, the initiative had always remained with the Central American countries. First individually, then collectively, they had chosen their priorities among the various alternatives, in order to give their own direction to the implementation of the Plan. The activities under way and still to be undertaken by UNDP would be adjusted to the needs defined by each Central American country and by the region as a whole.

31. Work on the Plan entailed tripartite co-operation among the Governments, UNDP and the specialized agencies and other international bodies. UNDP played a central co-ordinating role and was responsible for seeking sources of financing. At its June 1988 session, the Governing Council had approved the sum of \$20 million for the promotion, co-ordination, implementation and follow-up for the Special Plan, the subsequent work had been carried out with the close co-operation of the Central American countries, which had organized a committee at the vice-presidential level to co-ordinate national efforts.

32. As a result of the preparation of the Plan, the capacity for concerted action by the Central American countries had been strengthened and the existence of a broad network of regional institutions had proved its worth. In addition, UNDP had demonstrated its ability to address a complex, serious and pressing problem with major consequences for international peace and stability. The link between peace and development, one of the basic principles of the Central American Peace Plan, had been highlighted.

33. The Government of Costa Rica was aware that the feasibility of the Plan would be established at the meeting of Central American Governments and co-operating Governments and institutions to be held in Geneva in July. Encouraged by the excellent results of the recent International Conference on Central American refugees, the Central American Governments were optimistic about the outcome of the Geneva meeting. The international community had demonstrated the political will to address the problems of Central America, and that augured well for the success of the work that lay ahead.

34. He emphasized that in the case of Central America, as in many other concrete instances, UNDP had demonstrated its capacity to play a central role in international co-operation. That showed clearly how important UNDP was, both to the developing countries benefiting from its activities, and to the developed countries, whose programmes had greater impact as a result of UNDP's experience and guidance.

35. Mr. MARTINEZ ORDOÑEZ (Observer for Honduras) expressed his gratitude to the Governing Council for approving in 1988 the funds which had given rise to renewed hope for peace with development in Central America. He also paid a tribute to UNDP for its valuable contribution to the formulation of the Special Plan, which opened up brighter prospects for a region long afflicted by neglect and violence. Central America was once again benefiting from the support of the international community, which had endorsed the Special Plan. The Plan had brought the peoples of Central America closer together, helped them to rediscover their common origins and needs, and enabled them to recognize that through unity, they would achieve their common destiny of peace, democracy and development.

36. One of the major results of the co-ordination process that characterized the Special Plan had been the co-operation mechanisms developed by the Central Americans themselves. Internal and intraregional mechanisms had facilitated discussion and agreement in setting social and economic priorities. The Special Plan was a vital element in any integration process.

37. The Central American countries were aware of the magnitude of their problems: they could not forget that there were approximately 2.2 million refugees and displaced persons in the region. They recognized that it was difficult to govern and impossible to make progress without scarce and urgently needed foreign exchange. They realized that obstacles could arise among them, but dialogue and negotiations were continuing. Their Presidents, responding to the aspirations of their peoples, had decided to seek peace through the democratic process, giving form to the political aspirations which would guarantee their citizens the right to vote and strengthen the structures regulating the electoral process. They sought the support of the international community for their development, but basically relied on their own efforts, the goal being greater social justice. He did not wish to imply that accepting the challenge was sufficient; the Central American countries knew that a long road lay ahead. But, given the importance of social stability and development in Central America, it was essential that the significant amount and quality of the technical assistance provided by the UNDP division dealing with Central America should be examined and understood by the international community in general and by the co-operating community in particular.

38. The resources approved for the administrative fund for the co-ordination of the Special Plan should signify the rationalization of all of the funds allocated to other programmes for Central America. That rationalization was of primary importance, since the Special Plan envisioned projects involving a series of executing agencies both within and outside the United Nations system. The unification of all development activities in a single co-ordination system would avoid duplication of effort and focus the activities of all organizations involved on the objectives of the Special Plan. The success of the Plan would depend on the outcome of the meeting soon to be held in Geneva. If the necessary financing could be found, implementation of the Special Plan could begin immediately; that would make a very significant contribution to the achievement of social peace and well-planned growth in Central America.

39. Mr. PETRONE (Italy) expressed admiration for the skill and intelligence with which UNDP had operated in giving effect to the Special Plan, which Italy and other Governments would be taking as the frame of reference for multilateral and bilateral assistance to Central America.

40. The peace process in Central America needed to be given further impetus by regional economic co-operation that would create economic incentives for peace. The greatest priority in the mean time was to find a regional solution to alleviate the sufferings of the people uprooted by conflict. Accordingly, Italy was co-financing a multisectoral development programme for Central America with a regional focus (PRODERE). Italy and the Central American Governments had decided to turn to UNDP as the only agency with the mandate and the capabilities to undertake a task of that magnitude. All concerned had moved very rapidly and effectively and the project should become operational by the end of the year. The only concern was that if the flexibility of the Office for Projects Service was reduced and it was hampered in its ability to act the implementation of PRODERE might be delayed.

41. There was an urgent need to strengthen UNDP's Regional Bureau for Latin America, and especially its Central American Division. Italy urged the Council to approve the budgetary and staff requests that would be put before it in that connection.

42. Miss MONCADA (Observer for Nicaragua) said that her Government was grateful for the work done by UNDP to implement the Special Plan, which itself had been the direct result of General Assembly support for the Esquipulas II agreements and reflected the international community's interest in the stability of the region. The Geneva meeting should help to strengthen the Special Plan and meet the region's desire for peace.

43. Mr. VAN NORT (International Maritime Organization) said that the Special Plan of Economic Co-operation for Central America was one of the most important items UNDP was considering at the current session. In view of UNDP's co-ordinating role, he wished to report on complementary activities by the International Maritime Organization (IMO), for which various Latin American countries had furnished TCDC and various European countries had provided funding.

44. The IMO Assembly had passed a resolution in November 1987 calling for assistance to Central America in such fields as maritime safety, marine pollution, port operations, hydrography and maritime legislation. A multidisciplinary field mission shortly thereafter had assisted national authorities to draw up project proposals on urgent maritime needs. Since February 1988, IMO had been organizing workshops and seminars, expert missions and advisory services, and providing fellowships. It had provided assistance on navigational safety, ship inspection, oil-spill response equipment and contingency planning, prevention of pollution from ships, and safe handling and storage of hazardous goods. IMO had also worked with Central American Governments and the Central American Maritime Transport Commission to prepare project documents on the harmonization of maritime legislation and the

(Mr. Van Nort, IMO)

development of maritime safety infrastructures, to be presented to donors at the forthcoming Geneva meeting. IMO would be following up on all ongoing programmes and would in addition be setting up short model courses.

45. Mr. ROSELLO (Spain) said that his Government, which from the outset had been directly involved with UNDP in the implementation of the Special Plan of Economic Co-operation for Central America, attached particular importance to the Plan and particularly welcomed the fact that the Central American Governments themselves had decided to play a leading role in its preparation and execution. That approach gave the plan a truly regional dimension and emphasized the need to strengthen regional institutions in order to promote economic development and efforts to achieve peace.

46. His delegation fully agreed with the Assistant Administrator concerning the importance of the first meeting of the Central American Governments with co-operating Governments and institutions in July 1989. Spain intended to participate at a high level in that meeting and hoped that the international community would respond in an appropriate manner. At that meeting Spain would define the manner in which it would take part in the execution of the Special Plan. His country would ensure that the Spanish plan for Central America would be fully integrated within the framework of the Special Plan of Economic Co-operation for Central America in defining regional priorities and providing the necessary financial and technical assistance. Spain would ensure the fulfilment of the relevant commitments undertaken by the European Community and promote activities carried out in Central America by multilateral economic institutions. At the July meeting, his Government would give in-depth consideration to the various possibilities for the speedy and effective implementation and of the Special Plan in view of the importance of promoting economic and social progress, peace and democracy in the region.

47. Mr. DIAZ de COSSIO (Observer for Mexico) said that his Government's foreign policy gave high priority to Central America. Its technical co-operation with the region, the aim of which was to improve political relations and encourage Latin American integration as well as to further social and economic development in Central America, represented about 10 per cent of Mexico's IPF, or close to \$1 million. In 1989 alone, 160 Central American projects, mainly exchange projects amounting to \$400,000, were under way.

48. An agreement between Mexico and Venezuela had generated an additional \$120 million from oil revenues during the current cycle, to be used for priority pre-investment and investment projects. Those resources would be spent for manpower training in as many fields as possible, and to supplement the funding of technical co-operation projects where necessary. In addition, the Mexican Foreign Trade Bank had opened lines of credit under which tens of millions of dollars had been disbursed annually for Central American co-operation. Mexico was also in the process of refinancing the debts of the Central American countries on the best possible terms. Trade between Mexico and Central America would total about \$300 million in 1989.

/...

(Mr. Diaz de Cossio, Observer, Mexico)

49. Mexico would be attending the Geneva meeting, and expected to work even more closely with UNDP in implementing the Special Plan.

50. Ms. BECKER (United States of America) said that her Government, which supported the objectives of the Special Plan and looked forward to the achievements it would produce, also provided extensive bilateral assistance to the region. A linkage must, however, be established between the Special Plan and the democratization to take place under the Esquipulas II agreements, and the United States would seek to have a provision to that effect included in any resolution on the matter.

51. Mr. CABEIRO QUINTANA (Cuba) expressed satisfaction at the detailed information provided on the implementation of the Special Plan of Economic Co-operation for Central America and reaffirmed his country's strong support for activities undertaken on behalf of that region. He urged the Assistant Administrator to continue his dedicated work in that regard.

52. Mrs. BERNAL (Colombia) commended UNDP for its work on the Special Plan, which offered an excellent example of the kind of co-operation of which it was capable. From the start, Colombia had supported all mechanisms set up for Central American development, whether under the Special Plan, through UNDP or as part of TCDC.

53. Mr. TALAVERA (Peru) said that the Special Plan represented an important step forward in the Latin American region and he urged the UNDP Regional Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean to devote even greater efforts to it. The forthcoming Geneva meeting would provide an opportunity for dialogue and Peru hoped that the desires and needs of the Central American countries would be given priority.

54. Mr. ZAWELS (Argentina) expressed appreciation to the donors contributing to the Special Plan and praised the speed with which UNDP had begun to implement it. The Special Plan was particularly relevant to peace in Central America and consequently to economic progress in the region.

55. Mr. MELENDEZ (Observer for El Salvador) said that the structural causes of Central America's severe underdevelopment had not been eliminated and that consequently the deep economic crisis in the countries of the region was not a short-term problem as it had appeared initially, but a permanent one.

56. The Special Plan of Economic Co-operation for Central America which was the most serious effort thus far to address the development of the region, would also help to restore peace there. El Salvador looked forward to the favourable outcome of the Geneva meeting with the donor community.

57. Mr. SAHLMANN (Federal Republic of Germany) said that his Government had supported the implementation of the Esquipulas II agreements through technical assistance and had endorsed the Special Plan from the outset. It would be taking part in the Geneva meeting and would make a substantive statement there.

58. Mr. AYALA LASSO (Ecuador) observed that the situation in Central America was so critical that it required special co-operation such as that provided for in the Special Plan. The basis on which the Plan was operating was sound, and Ecuador fully supported it.

59. Mr. RAMIREZ-OCAMPO (Assistant Administrator and Regional Director, Regional Bureau for Latin American and the Caribbean) said that the co-ordination effort in Central America demonstrated how institutions from other systems could carry out joint work and avoid duplication of effort. It was particularly gratifying to note the efforts undertaken by the Central American countries themselves to overcome great obstacles and reach agreement in the search for peace and economic development.

60. The PRESIDENT said that, if he heard no objection, he would take it that the Council wished to request the Drafting Group to prepare a decision on that sub-item.

61. It was so decided.

(iv) REFUGEES, RETURNEES AND DISPLACED PERSONS

62. Mr. GORDON-SOMERS (Deputy Assistant Administrator and Deputy Director, Regional Bureau for Africa) said that UNDP and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees had been collaborating closely over the past year and a half in further defining methods of co-operation between the two organizations both at headquarters and in the field. UNDP field offices had been instructed on how the Programme and the Office should work together in dealing with refugees and returnees. Within the framework of the Second International Conference on Assistance to Refugees in Africa, UNDP administered a trust fund which had received pledges amounting to \$9 million, of which \$8 million had already been disbursed. Those resources were used in work involving project formulation and identification.

63. In the area of displaced persons, the Administrator recognized that there was a growing problem which UNDP and the international system had a responsibility to deal with. According to the most recent statistics, the number of displaced persons totalled some approximately 14 million world wide. At headquarters, UNDP had participated in meetings on ways to monitor and co-ordinate the responses of the agencies involved. In the field the Programme had used resident co-ordinators and in some countries had set up emergency operation groups or emergency prevention groups in order to provide assistance. The mechanisms for co-ordinating efforts to deal with the problem of displaced persons already existed in the United Nations development system and should be co-ordinated properly. In view of the enormity of the problem, the Administrator had decided to set up an inter-bureau task force to ensure that the policies and responses of UNDP were consistent regardless of where the problem arose. The task force included representatives of the various regional bureaux and sought to formulate a policy position on handling displaced persons so that field offices would know what to do in cases of massive displacement. The field offices had to develop a data base which would indicate the types of problems that might arise and the capacity of Governments to deal with them.

(Mr. Gordon-Somers)

64. UNDP hoped to complete by the end of 1989 a policy paper addressing the issue in a comprehensive manner. The paper would be sent to field offices, agencies and non-governmental organizations. In the area of displaced persons, the major problem was that UNDP did not have the mandate to make resource allocations as it could in dealing with natural disasters. It therefore had to use the IPFs of individual countries as seed money when the Government wished to use the Programme for that purpose. It was hoped that when the problem of displaced persons arose, UNDP could help mobilize the necessary resources.

65. Mr. GRAHAM (United States of America) said that his Government was committed to helping international organizations in immediate relief efforts and in seeking lasting solutions to the problems of refugees, displaced persons and returnees throughout the world. Maximum co-ordination and appropriate participation by the United Nations agencies involved were especially necessary. In that connection UNDP should keep very much in mind its role as a development agency for technical co-operation and resist the understandable pressures to become another relief agency. Other United Nations agencies active in that area should retain the primary responsibility for responding to humanitarian needs and providing immediate relief assistance.

66. His delegation recognized that the manner in which relief assistance programmes were executed had a lasting impact on long-term rehabilitation. It was also aware that the presence of large numbers of refugees, displaced persons and returnees could have a profound impact on development efforts in the area affected. UNDP provided the link between short-term emergency assistance, longer-term development, and the subsequent reintegration of displaced persons and refugees into the productive economies of their countries. The Programme also played an important role in assisting people in areas where the influx of a large number of refugees and displaced persons could have a disastrous effect on social, economic and institutional infrastructures.

67. Mr. CRUSE (France) said that his delegation firmly supported the statement made by the United States concerning the role of UNDP. Nevertheless, there were certain cases where UNDP could provide assistance, particularly in supporting development operations in refugee camps and in specific emergency situations. The co-ordination between UNDP and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees was useful and should be continued. His delegation supported those activities within the framework of development.

68. Mr. GORDON-SOMERS (Deputy Assistant Administrator and Deputy Director, Regional Bureau for Africa) said that UNDP was very mindful of the points raised by the United States and France. The Programme focused on rehabilitation and development, not emergency relief. The policy paper that was being drawn up would further define that position and ensure that it was fully understood within the UNDP system. Nevertheless, it should be recognized that in emergency situations, Governments might turn to UNDP, particularly the Resident Co-ordinators, for assistance in co-ordinating efforts to promote rehabilitation and development. He assumed that the Governing Council would not wish UNDP to avoid that responsibility if Resident Co-ordinators were requested to provide such assistance.

69. The PRESIDENT said that, if he heard no objection, he would take it that the Council wished to request the Drafting Group to prepare a decision on that sub-item.

70. It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 5.40 p.m.

