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President: Mr. PIBULSONGGRAM (Thailand)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.20 a.m.

UNITED NATIONS POPULATION FUND: STATUS OF REMODELLING OF UNFPA PREMISES
(continued) (DP/1989/65, DP/1989/69)

1. Mr. CABEIRO QUINTANA (Cuba) said that his delegation approved the Executive Director's request to increase by \$900,000 the funds appropriated for the remodelling of UNFPA headquarters. At the same time, he would like the Executive Director to take into account the request made by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Question (ACABQ) in paragraph 9 of document DP/1989/69 that she report on the consequential budgetary and other changes involved in her forthcoming reports on the budget for the biennium.

2. Mr. KUFOUR (Ghana), speaking on behalf of the Group of African States, noted that the additional costs would be covered from savings realized both at headquarters and in the field because of delays in recruitment of staff throughout 1988 and 1989 (DP/1989/65, para. 8). The Group of African States wished to know the reason for those delays, the posts involved, their geographical distribution and to which region such staff should have been assigned. It would also like to know when the Fund planned to complete the recruitment process and how the delays had affected programme delivery in the different regions.

3. Since additional office space was being requested, the corresponding costs would be recurrent. He wished to know how UNFPA intended to finance those costs in subsequent years once the recruitment of staff for the African region was complete.

4. Mr. KUNUGI (Deputy Executive Director, UNFPA) noted that questions had been raised about UNFPA's new direction and policies including decentralization and improved programme delivery, particularly in the Sub-Saharan African region. He wished to inform members that UNFPA had requested the consulting firm MacKenzie and Co. to carry out a management survey of UNFPA headquarters, including a survey of personnel requirements. The proposed report for the biennium, which would take the recommendations of that survey into account, would be submitted to the Governing Council, through ACABQ, in June.

5. Responding to the questions put by some delegations, he said that the anticipated savings would result primarily from delays in the recruitment of staff at headquarters and in the field. As the Executive Director's report indicated, \$900,000 would come from savings in the field and \$200,000 from savings at headquarters. Savings were also being made in other areas and it was envisaged that \$1.1 million would have been saved by the end of the current biennium.

6. Some 15 international staff had been appointed so far, many of them country programme directors, but eight more international programme staff and some national staff remained to be recruited. It had been UNFPA's constant concern to improve both programme delivery and recruitment. Recruitment difficulties arose primarily from the need to find competent staff with experience in population and a thorough knowledge of the necessary languages. Current efforts were being concentrated on the recruitment of country programme directors for Africa.

(Mr. Kunugi, UNFPA)

7. Replying to one of the questions raised by the representative of Ghana, he said that so far no final estimates had been made of expenditures in sub-Saharan Africa; however, existing data showed that execution of the new programmes approved by the Council in 1987 and 1988 had been satisfactory.

8. The recurrent costs of additional office space for UNFPA were estimated at \$420,000 a year. That amount would come from the regular APSS budget and would be included in the proposed budget for the next biennium.

9. Replying to a question put by the representative of Ecuador concerning the system used by UNFPA to recruit staff, he said that for the posts of international programme officer and country programme director, a university degree, technical training and some 12 years of job experience were required. The latest UNFPA bulletin announced current vacancies and the requisite qualifications.

10. In the Latin American region, the post of Director for Costa Rica remained to be filled but, in the mean time, the Resident Representative was handling programmes for Central America. UNDP Resident Representatives acted as UNFPA Resident Representatives in countries where no national director had as yet been appointed. That had occurred in the African region in 1988. When the posts of national programme staff were filled, such staff received training and travelled to headquarters for consultations to prevent any delay in programme delivery.

11. The PRESIDENT said that the Council had thus concluded the general debate on agenda item 7. If there were no objections, he would take it that the Council wished to approve an amount of \$900,000 in excess of that previously approved for remodelling and additional space in UNFPA premises, taking into account the views expressed by various delegations in the discussions of the subject and by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions as reflected in document DP/1989/69.

12. It was so decided.

OTHER MATTERS

(a) ALTERNATIVE STRATEGIES FOR DESERT LOCUST CONTROL (DP/1989/66)

13. Mr. BROWN (Associate Administrator) said that UNDP had been working very closely with the system of international organizations, and in particular with FAO, in responding to the most recent outbreak of the locust plague and in providing financial support to the current programmes which involved the use of conventional methods, i.e. chemical sprays, in dealing with it. UNDP intended to continue supporting fully the existing programmes which were being undertaken within the international system under the leadership of FAO and in which conventional systems were used.

14. Concern had recently been expressed at the fact that, although the locust scourge had existed since Biblical times, insufficient money and attention had been

(Mr. Brown)

applied to finding out what science had to offer in the way of alternative means of dealing with it. That had become even more important because of the negative environmental implications of chemical pesticides, which had been noted at various expert meetings, such as the World Commission on Environment and Development, the consultative meeting of distinguished scientists convened by UNDP in September 1988 and the meeting of representatives of locust-affected developing countries, bilateral development agencies and scientists sponsored by UNDP at Cairo in December 1988. The participants in the last-mentioned meeting had endorsed the initiatives aimed at undertaking a medium- to long-term programme of research on alternative strategies for desert locust control and establishing an international scientific research network. Since the participants in the Cairo meeting had emphasized the urgency of launching such a programme, the UNDP Administration was seeking the preliminary views of the Council at the current session instead of waiting until June.

15. UNDP's proposals for alternative strategies for desert locust control had been discussed at a meeting of the Special Programme for African Agricultural Research held in Paris, and preliminary discussions on the subject had taken place with the International Centre for Insect Physiology and Ecology (ICIPE), the Environment Department of the World Bank, FAO's Plant Production and Protection Division and IFAD, with a view to ensuring the full association of those institutions with the work proposed by UNDP.

16. There were three issues on which the views of the Council were being sought: first, the willingness of Governments to support in principle such an initiative, which implied the need for resources in excess of those currently available through inter-country IPFs; second, the question of establishing a management structure for such a research programme, which for the time being, as proposed in document DP/1989/66, would be a management committee appointed under the authority of a decision of the Governing Council; and lastly, the recommendations for the establishment of a scientific advisory panel which would play a key role in research related to the initiative.

17. The Administrator intended to submit a more detailed proposal to the Council at the thirty-sixth session. In the mean time, the Administration was seeking the Council's authority to move ahead with the setting up of the scientific advisory panel and the management committee, which would provide policy guidance and advice to the scientific panel. The global project to be presented to the Governing Council in June would propose the allocation of a sum of money which could be used to start up the work of the scientific advisory panel, on the understanding that additional financial support would be needed from the donor community to undertake the envisaged research programme.

18. Mr. CRUSE (France) emphasized the gravity of the desert locust plague, which had prompted his country not only to co-sponsor General Assembly resolution 43/203 with the other members of the European Community, but also to put forward concrete proposals at the summit meeting held at Casablanca in December 1988.

(Mr. Cruse, France)

19. While his delegation welcomed the measures taken in that area under the leadership of UNDP, it urged that special attention should be paid to co-ordinating such measures with those being applied by other agencies, especially FAO, and by the countries concerned. He expressed interest in the various issues on which the Administrator was to report to the Governing Council at its thirty-sixth regular session, especially the necessary financial resources, the establishment of the management committee and the composition of the scientific advisory panel, and emphasized that one of UNDP's priorities with regard to desert locust control should be the training of experts.

20. His delegation regretted that once again the Administrator of UNDP had not sought the services of French-speaking experts, as could be seen from the composition of the scientific group which had drafted the report contained in annex I to document DP/1989/66, particularly in the case of alternative strategies for desert locust control, since studies had been carried out in France which had made it possible to envisage new approaches to the problem based on scientific data gathered over long periods of time.

21. To sum up, France endorsed the position of UNDP and considered that action should be taken on both fronts: the traditional method of combating desert locusts, since the matter was urgent, and alternative strategies, since all possible solutions should be envisaged, especially in an agro-ecological perspective. France had taken measures to that end and hoped to be able to continue doing so in collaboration with UNDP.

22. Mr. HOPLAND (Norway) said he welcomed the initiative taken by UNDP with regard to desert locust control and especially its action-oriented nature. UNDP was the agency best placed to play a leading role in co-ordinating long-term efforts to fight the locust plague. Close co-operation with other organizations, in particular FAO, UNEP and ICIPE, was essential.

23. The initiative was in line with Norway's view that UNDP should become more actively involved in addressing problems of a regional and cross-boundary character. Norway's experience with bilateral desert locust control activities supported the conclusion appearing in the document to the effect that renewed efforts must be made to find alternative methods of fighting locusts. Within the framework of that objective, an overall research plan should be established with a view to addressing short-term and long-term problems, in particular as they related to the environmental aspects of locust control.

24. The research plan should seek to identify areas of responsibility for the different organizations involved and establish a time-frame for the planned activities. That division of labour should, to the largest extent possible, take into account the need to involve research institutions in locust-affected developing countries.

25. Mr. PERRY (United States of America) commended both the past and present leadership of UNDP in desert locust control. UNDP-financed control efforts had

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(Mr. Perry, United States)

been carried out by FAO. The United States also supported the leadership of FAO in co-ordinating control efforts during outbreaks and in monitoring and maintaining a state of readiness between upsurges of locusts.

26. The United States recognized the importance of the expansion of research efforts which complemented the relatively large contribution made by the United States to the locust control efforts of the donor community. In that context the United States was generally supportive of the proposed UNDP long-term research programme for developing less environmentally harmful methods of desert locust control. FAO appeared to share that view. FAO had indicated, at both the UNDP-sponsored meeting on long-term research in Cairo in December 1988 and the meeting sponsored by the Special Programme of African Agricultural Research in Paris in January 1989, that it did not see its role as that of being a co-ordinating agency for long-term biological control research. Such research would be aimed at developing non-traditional control measures which would reduce or eliminate large-scale use of pesticides.

27. The United States concurred with the analysis by FAO and supported the general approaches proposed by UNDP in document DP/1989/66 to provide leadership in a multidonor-financed research network to explore the full range of options for developing biological desert locust control measures. However, the United States was concerned that at the present time there were a number of related programmes being circulated by international agencies for donor support. In addition, FAO had suggested areas of expanded research which it anticipated co-ordinating, and the Special Programme of African Agricultural Research was examining their potential role in a co-ordinated donor effort. Clearly the proposed research activities needed to be brought together in a co-ordinated approach, and the United States believed that UNDP could play a critical role in that effort.

28. However, since satisfactory results would require a long-term research commitment and substantial funds, UNDP should commit significantly more of its funds than had been proposed. The research programme should be implemented only if there was a clear commitment by the Council to both the level and duration of required funding. Therefore, while the United States could agree in principle to the programme, decisions on resources should wait. In the mean time, the United States asked the Administration to re-examine its budget allocations and report in detail to the Council at its thirty-sixth session on the resources which would be required.

29. Mr. PETTITT (United Kingdom) welcomed the long-term research programme for the development of alternative strategies for desert locust control. He also supported the recent decision to establish a panel of experts to plan the research within the overall co-ordination efforts of FAO in locust control and research on that subject. Moreover, he welcomed the commitment of UNDP to a research programme of the highest quality. Since its implementation would necessitate the use of scientists without direct experience in desert locust research, there would be a need for close co-operation in the field with locust control experts.

(Mr. Pettitt, United Kingdom)

30. It was clearly inappropriate for two agencies to claim the leadership role in locust control research. The division of labour suggested in the document before the Council, i.e., to have short-term research carried out by FAO - which would take care of the immediate locust control difficulties - and to have UNDP conduct the long-term research - which could help to develop alternative, less environmentally harmful methods - was not satisfactory. Nor was it enough to say that funding would continue for ongoing activities. In his delegation's view, there should be only one management body for desert locust control research, and only one co-ordination centre, where an adequate balance would be maintained between long-term research and research on immediate operational needs.

31. Obviously, UNDP, as the funding agency, was and should be participating in those activities for which it would be accountable to the managing body. The proposed research, whether or not funded by UNDP, should be managed through the Desert Locust Control Committee of FAO.

32. His delegation was concerned at the lack of attention given by UNDP to the reservations expressed at the Cairo meeting. Those present had wanted to understand more clearly the management structure proposed, the accountability for funds and, in particular, the role of FAO. His delegation therefore proposed that no substantive action should be taken before the issues were adequately clarified, in conjunction with FAO, and more detailed proposals were put before the Governing Council.

33. Mr. SAHLMANN (Federal Republic of Germany) welcomed the Administrator's proposal to establish a short-term and long-term research programme to develop alternative strategies for desert locust control and to establish a managing committee and scientific advisory panel for the programme. He would await with great interest the report to be submitted to the Governing Council at its thirty-sixth session, and he suggested that the comments on that subject offered by the United States and the United Kingdom should be taken into account.

34. Mr. KUFOUR (Ghana) welcomed the Administrator's initiative with regard to alternative strategies for desert locust control contained in document DP/1989/66, because he knew the harmful effects of synthetic chemical pesticides and the tendency of insects to develop a resistance to certain pesticides after prolonged exposure. The Group of African States supported the proposal to use biological control methods. He drew attention to one of the conclusions of the Cairo meeting, advocating that institutions in the locust-affected developing countries should participate in the international research network. Such an approach would help develop national capacity to deal with the problem. The possibility that FAO might collaborate with UNDP in activities carried out in that context should also be considered.

35. Mr. SOUTTER (Canada) welcomed the Administrator's proposal to the Council that UNDP should play a more active role in desert locust control. The research programme described was coherent, and it complemented other activities in that field. UNDP should seize the opportunity to co-operate more closely with those

(Mr. Soutter, Canada)

organizations currently involved in the fight against locusts, notably FAO. He drew attention in that regard to General Assembly resolution 43/203, paragraphs 10 and 14, which called on FAO to co-ordinate locust control activities.

36. There were a number of reasons why the idea of organizing and co-ordinating research on desert locusts was worthy of support. Research programming would be based on the needs of the countries affected and on the technical requirements of locust control, rather than on the personal or institutional preferences of researchers; moreover, organizing research would also facilitate access to top experts and laboratories, reduce duplication of work and combine research efforts, which to date had been scattered despite the valuable contributions from European and regional institutions.

37. The research programme was based on recommendations made at the meeting held in Rome in September 1988 under the auspices of FAO. At the Cairo meeting, organized and partly funded by UNDP, technical recommendations had been made on the basis of those formulated earlier at the Rome meeting and at the meeting of a group of scientists in Tucson, Arizona; all were solid and deserved support. On the other hand, the UNDP conclusion that it perhaps had a mandate to lead efforts to co-ordinate desert locust control seemed to be less firmly founded, as had been noted by the delegation of the United Kingdom.

38. Several other organizations could claim the mandate of co-ordinating research efforts and other activities relating to the desert locust. They included the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the International Fund for Agricultural Development, and, in the Sahel, the Permanent Inter-State Committee on Drought Control in the Sahel and the Joint Anti-Locust and Anti-Aviarian Organization. His delegation would welcome FAO's views on its role in the control of locusts and on the most effective way to co-ordinate research on the subject. Canada believed that the Governing Council would not wish to widen the gap between research and its application.

39. UNDP was well qualified to contribute to that effort: it could offer flexible financial mechanisms and a wide network of field offices. Recognizing that fact, his delegation agreed in principle to the release of funds in February 1989, but would like to see those funds used in the most effective manner possible. In June 1989 UNDP could re-examine its institutional position concerning research on the desert locust and could fund participation in seminars and research sponsored by other organizations, such as FAO, the Joint Anti-Locust and Anti-Aviarian Organization and the Desert Locust Control Organization - East Africa. At that time the Council could consider the possibility of expanding the project, subject to the reservations Canada had expressed. His delegation would prefer UNDP to take part in world efforts, but the question of co-ordination remained open; there, too, FAO's views would be welcome. His delegation would not exclude an environmental-advocacy role for UNDP.

40. Further, Canada did not agree with the proposed formation of the management committee. The Governing Council was, perhaps, not the right forum to establish a

(Mr. Soutter, Canada)

technical committee, whose competence would in any event be doubtful. The scientific advisory panel was an interesting idea. Nevertheless, given the reservations that his delegation had expressed concerning the management committee, Canada must come to the logical conclusion that such a panel would be of limited effectiveness. On the other hand, his delegation agreed with UNDP's proposal to reserve a larger part of fourth cycle resources for control of the desert locust. Lastly, he trusted that research activities would be co-ordinated in the most effective manner possible through those agencies that were most knowledgeable and experienced in the matter.

41. Mr. AQUARONE (Netherlands) endorsed the statement by the representative of Norway and thanked the Secretariat for the documentation submitted.

42. Mr. FERNANDEZ (Liberia) said that his delegation endorsed the statement made by the representative of Ghana, which reflected the views of his own delegation. It was gratifying to hear that FAO would maintain its lead role and that there would be close co-operation with UNDP. Turning to specifics, he asked the Associate Administrator where the management structure referred to would be located. Liberia trusted that the research would be practical and would help to train personnel in the region.

43. Mr. DUARTE (Cape Verde) endorsed the statement made by the representative of Ghana and pointed out the need to co-ordinate the work of UNDP with that of other agencies, such as FAO and UNEP. A full report by the Administration would be required in June at the thirty-sixth session.

44. Mr. HEIN (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations) said that FAO had been engaged in locust control for more than 30 years and that in that endeavour it had received financial support from many donors and, in particular, from UNDP, which had recently approved an interregional emergency assistance project in the amount of some \$3 million.

45. The document under consideration had given rise to a series of proposals, in particular by the United Kingdom and Canada. FAO was of the view that there was an urgent need to establish the closest possible co-operation in that domain within the United Nations system. The representative of the United Kingdom had referred to the Desert Locust Control Committee established in 1955, whose statutes reflected, in a 1968 FAO amendment, the need to co-ordinate national and international locust research and control policies and measures. FAO's regional commissions were also mandated to deal with the issue.

46. He agreed with the United Kingdom that future consideration and elaboration of the proposal should indicate specific functions for FAO, in accordance with its mandate.

47. The research proposal contained in document DP/1989/66 had been very well received at the Cairo meeting by FAO, which recognized the need for long-term research. In that connection it should be recalled that, at its most recent

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(Mr. Hein, FAO)

session, the General Assembly, in resolution 43/203, had requested the Director-General of FAO, in close co-operation with the relevant organizations of the United Nations system, including UNEP, WHO and UNDP, to undertake an assessment of the pesticides and techniques currently used in the fight against locust and grasshopper infestation, in particular the biological fight against the reproduction of larvae, and to test the efficacy of those pesticides and techniques, bearing in mind their effects on the natural environment and the health of the people living in the affected zones. The mandates given to FAO must be taken into account in the further elaboration of UNDP's proposal.

48. Mr. OULD CHEIKH EL GAOUTHE (Mauritania) said that the representative of Ghana had stated the position of the African countries. In common with the representative of the United Kingdom, he insisted that there should be no weakening of the mandate of FAO, which was going through a financial crisis. FAO's position on the proposal was not very clear, but the matter could be resolved in informal consultations.

49. With regard to the emergency assistance project, referred to in paragraph 2 of document DP/1989/66, he wished to know what stage of implementation had been reached. Further, he inquired where the proposed research project would be located and how it would be organized, and suggested the possibility of using an IAEA laboratory, with which FAO worked on questions relating to plants and fertilizers.

50. Mr. JASINSKI (Poland) said that his delegation fully supported UNDP's long-term locust research initiatives and wished to stress the important role of FAO in that domain. All interested countries should be able to participate in the project.

51. Mr. BROWN (Associate Administrator), responding to points raised by representatives, said that the Cairo meeting had identified the problem of a lack of communication among scientists and the need to adopt a more structured approach. There was a need for a comprehensive compilation of all research on the subject and for a list of scientists working in the field. It was proposed to establish a mechanism whereby scientists and researchers could deal jointly with the question. The group of eminent scientists would establish guidelines for future work, would seek to obtain contributions and would award contracts to existing research institutions. There was no question of UNDP conducting research or managing research; it would, rather, provide an infrastructure and a mechanism for channelling funds, backed up by scientific advice.

52. With regard to the view that long-term research was better carried out where short-term research was already under way, it should be noted that, when establishing priorities for the use of time and resources, short-term problems and needs generally prevailed, and there was little prospect of concentrating on long-term projects.

53. Responding to comments made by the representative of France, he reiterated the need for co-ordination through administrative machinery. With respect to participation by French experts, he noted that the names contained in the

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document were those of experts who had participated in the Tucson meeting and not those constituting the scientific advisory panel. In that connection he invited France and all interested countries to propose names of scientists to constitute the panel.

54. With regard to the question by the United States of America as to the means of allocating resources for a specific project under the long-term programme, he said that there would be a technical advisory mechanism for determining the relative priorities of various types of research. Such a mechanism would also be useful as a source of guidance for independent donors, even if they did not wish to participate in centralized or joint financing.

55. As to the statement of the FAO representative, he was not absolutely sure that the position he had outlined was the same as that taken by FAO at the Cairo meeting. The document had been prepared with the understanding that the FAO delegation supported the proposals. There was no question that it would not be possible to move ahead while questions or misunderstandings persisted or those concerned changed their positions.

56. He suggested that the Council should authorize the Administrator to develop his proposal in greater detail and depth; that it should invite him to hold further consultations with the donors, FAO and other agencies and request him to submit a proposal in June based on those consultations, as well as funding estimates for whatever proposal he formulated. One could thus begin to set up structures for the mechanism, determine if the idea had the necessary support and get a clearer understanding of relations with FAO.

57. In reply to Mauritania's question on the project referred to in paragraph 2 of the document, \$3.25 million had been approved for its funding, and training activities had already begun.

58. With regard to Ghana's question on the inclusion of research institutions from the developing countries, they had already been participating actively and UNDP intended to continue such collaboration. As to the concern expressed by Liberia, future consultations would, indeed, include also the receiving countries.

59. Mr. MUNTASSER (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) proposed that the Associate Administrator's proposal should be adopted.

60. The PRESIDENT said that he would take it, if he heard no objection, that the Governing Council wished to adopt the proposal of the UNDP Associate Administrator to the effect that he would continue to examine the matter in depth, that he would consult the various bodies concerned and the involved parties, and that he would come forward in June with specific proposals and projects.

61. It was so decided.

(b) PREPARATIONS FOR THE FIFTH PROGRAMMING CYCLE (DP/1989/67)

62. Mr. BROWN (Associate Administrator), introducing the sub-item, said that the mid-term review of the fourth cycle, which would take place in June, would be a good opportunity to begin to examine the options for the following cycle. Document DP/1989/67 contained a proposed timetable for the actions and activities planned to enable the Council to adopt a final decision in June 1990 on the utilization of UNDP resources during 1992-1996. Since the fifth cycle began on 1 January 1992, it was important that the final decision should be adopted in 1990. A good many countries would as a result already know in 1991 that their IPF would be, and could then submit country projects to the Council in June 1991 and begin to execute them in January 1992, thereby avoiding a repetition of the previous pattern of great discrepancies in the pace of programme delivery. Since the current session was an organizational one, the Council should have no difficulty in adopting the proposed timetable.

63. Mr. RHONER (Switzerland) observed that all delegations were aware that many aspects of the preparations for the fifth programming cycle would depend on the discussion of the future role of UNDP that would take place in June.

64. Mr. SOTO (Colombia) said that he believed that the consultations scheduled for March 1989 in the draft timetable should be held in the second half of April, so that they could take into account the conclusions reached regarding the paper on the future role of UNDP.

65. Mr. OULD CHEIKH EL GAOUTHE (Mauritania) said that he believed that there was no organic link between the political message of the decision on the future role of UNDP and the apportionment of resources for the fifth cycle, which should be based on the statistical data for the global economy at that time.

66. Ms. DUDIK-GAYOSO (United States of America) said that it was difficult to understand how the Administrator could submit in June a conceptual paper outlining issues and options for the utilization of resources during the fifth cycle, when the major debate on the future role of UNDP, during which those very issues and options would be considered, would not yet have been concluded. It would be preferable to adopt the proposed timetable provisionally and reconsider it in the context of the decision adopted by the Council in June on the future role. The documents being prepared on the future role were not apparently devoting much attention to the nucleus of the UNDP programmes.

67. Mr. BROWN (Associate Administrator) recognized that the proposed timetable was an optimistic forecast. Those involved in the preparations for the fifth cycle were keeping abreast of the progress of the paper on the future role. The main debate on that paper would be held in early June 1989 and the conceptual paper would be considered in the second half of the month.

68. The informal consultations scheduled for March 1989 might be deferred to April, but in that case it would be necessary to resuspend the application of the 10-week rule. The goal of the first informal consultations was to exchange opinions on the progress of the fourth cycle. With regard to the suggestion by

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Cuba that the informal consultations should be held immediately after the seminar on the future role of UNDP, he assured him that advantage would be taken of every opportunity, including the seminar.

69. In the discussions on the future role, the general direction of UNDP programmes would be dealt with, considering not the overall amounts utilized but the manner in which the money had been spent, because the calculation of the overall amounts and the IPFs required a series of data that did not necessarily depend on the paper on the future role.

70. Early in February 1990 the Council would study the manner in which the Administrator should prepare the first projections for the fifth programming cycle and on that occasion a paper based on the June 1989 decision would be submitted. It was hoped that the final document would be ready in June 1990. As to any linkage between the apportionment of resources in the fifth cycle and the future role of UNDP, the Council was to adopt a decision on the matter in February 1990.

71. The PRESIDENT, before announcing the conclusion of consideration of sub-item 8 (b) of the agenda, suggested that the Administration should take duly into account all the opinions expressed, including those regarding linkage between the preparations for the fifth cycle and the future role of UNDP, and that the Council should take note of the proposed timetable and adopt it with the understanding that it would be reviewed in June. He further suggested that the Council should request the Administrator to submit at the thirty-sixth session a conceptual paper outlining issues and options for the utilization of resources during 1992-1996 and should recommend that a final decision on the matter be adopted at the thirty-seventh session.

72. It was so decided.

MID-TERM REVIEW OF FOURTH CYCLE COUNTRY PROGRAMMES (DP/1989/8)

(a) TIMETABLE FOR INDIVIDUAL COUNTRY MID-TERM REVIEWS

(b) MEASURES FOR MID-TERM REVIEWS OF REGIONAL, INTERREGIONAL AND GLOBAL PROGRAMMES

73. Mr. HIRONO (Director, Bureau for Programme Policy and Evaluation) said that in June 1988 the Governing Council had asked the Administrator to provide aggregate data for all mid-term reviews of country programmes together with an analysis of the main findings and results. The Council had also asked for a timetable for the different mid-term reviews, and information on the measures being taken to carry out the reviews for regional, interregional and global programmes. The information requested was to be found in document DP/1989/8.

74. In the large majority of cases, the time-frame for the country programme coincided with the fourth programming cycle, which meant that most country programmes had been under way for two years and the mid-term reviews were due in the current year. It would therefore not be possible to report to the Council on

(Mr. Hirono)

the results of the reviews before 1990. The annex to the report contained the schedule for the country programme reviews.

75. With regard to the regional, interregional and global programmes, all of the reviews, with the exception of those for the Arab States region, would take place in 1989, and the report described the measures being taken to that end.

76. By the end of 1989, well over 100 reviews would have been carried out, and the secretariat therefore proposed to prepare in 1990 a comprehensive report on the mid-term review for the cycle, containing aggregate data on the reviews conducted as well as a synopsis of their main findings and perceived trends.

77. Mr. HOPLAND (Norway) said that the mid-term review should be a truly in-depth study of all country programmes assessing, in particular, the impact of the themes on which the Council had placed special emphasis, such as human resources development and institution-building, poverty elimination, management of the environment and natural resources and the strengthening of participation by women in the development process.

78. With regard to the involvement of the Council in the review, his delegation was concerned, firstly, with the amount of work which the Council could entrust to the secretariat with regard to the preparation of reports on each country programme and secondly, with the quantity of information which the Council would be able to absorb. According to document DP/1989/8, the Administration would be prepared to report in 1990 on the review of 80 country programmes; his delegation felt that the Council would not be able to deal with that number of reports in a meaningful way, and therefore supported the Administrator's proposal that the in-depth reporting should take place on a selective basis, e.g., 10-15 country programmes, in order to make the task realistic and feasible both for the secretariat and for the Council. Various selection criteria would have to be discussed and agreed upon, and suggestions by the Administrator to that end would be welcome.

79. Mr. RHONER (Switzerland) said that the mid-term review was one of the main tasks of the Council. His delegation was pleased to learn that UNDP was going to undertake the first systematic review of programmes in the field. The framework for that review was contained in document DP/1989/19/Add.3, and it was undoubtedly a good starting-point. The most important thing was that the review should take place and that it should be of use to those directly concerned, especially the Governments of recipient countries, the resident representatives, the regional offices and, of course, the Administrator, who was ultimately responsible for the programmes. The task of supervision was incumbent on the Council.

80. Since the reviews were extended over a period of approximately two years, it would be helpful for the Administrator to submit to the Council before each session a synoptic report on the reviews conducted and for the Council to have before it at each session all of the reports on the programmes which had undergone changes. In addition, a selection of representative reports on country programmes and, at the proper time, all of the reports on the mid-term reviews of the regional, interregional and global programmes, should be presented.

81. Mr. KUFOUR (Ghana), noting the importance which the Group of African States attached to the mid-term review, said that he was surprised by the large number of countries for which a review date had not yet been set. In section II of document DP/1989/8, concerning regional programmes, the paucity of information on programmes for Africa, in comparison with the information for other regions, was striking. That required an explanation, since it was difficult to accept the implicit argument that the programmes had to wait until three regional programme officers were appointed. The mid-term review for the African region was only tentatively scheduled for the last quarter of 1989, which seemed to imply that it might not be carried out even then. That was unacceptable to the Group of African States. His delegation hoped that when the Administrator presented his report to the Council in June 1989, final plans would be proposed for the review of the regional programmes for Africa.

82. Mr. SRISUCHART (Thailand) said that the UNDP programme process had been very useful to the recipient countries. His Government had worked closely with the UNDP field office and had set up the direction of the programme according to its economic and social development priorities. In that respect, the process of setting up the long-term programme enabled the recipient countries to prepare for the allocation of the counterpart budget, including the national staff who would work together with the expatriates as soon as the project began.

83. His delegation emphasized that if the absorptive capacity of the recipient country were taken into consideration at the time of the formulation of the project, problems would be minimized. His Government had been using the UNDP country programme system as an example for the preparation of the long-term technical assistance programme in order to negotiate with other bilateral donors. Several long-term bilateral programmes had been established so far. His country also felt that the UNDP monitoring system, including the tripartite review and the mid-term review, was a good mechanism for achieving the self-reliance of the recipient country as the external resources were phased out.

84. His delegation welcomed the proposed schedule for the mid-term review of its country programme, and the authorities concerned were willing to participate in the review together with UNDP.

85. Thailand had actively participated in the regional programme for Asia and the Pacific; it had co-operated with UNDP and had hosted the two meetings of aid co-ordinators held at Bangkok. With regard to the five theme papers to be considered at the fourth meeting of aid co-ordinators to be held at Jakarta, his delegation felt that it was necessary for the debate to focus also on human resources development, especially at the middle level. With regard to the government execution theme, in order for the system to operate more effectively, greater efforts should be devoted to the co-ordinating mechanism.

86. UNDP had asked the Council whether the reporting to the Council could be done on a selective basis, owing to the large number of country projects and regional programmes which had to be reviewed and reported on at the same time. Although his delegation would prefer to know the outcome of as many programmes as possible, it

(Mr. Srisuchart, Thailand)

had no objection to the reports being presented to the Council on a selective basis, if that would improve the quality of the reporting.

87. Mr. SOUTTER (Canada) said that the mid-term review was extremely important. Although it was only one of many activities in the process of carrying out a programme, it was a useful management tool both for UNDP and for the countries concerned. The mid-term review gave the Council, which was concerned with the initial programme proposals, an opportunity to become involved in the implementation of the programmes.

88. His delegation felt strongly that each programme should be submitted to the Council for review, and would prefer not to adopt the suggestion made in document DP/1989/8 that reports should be submitted on a selective basis. His country proposed that the Council should seek a compromise between its need to be informed and consulted on all programmes and the need to limit the time devoted to such reviews. The useful suggestions made by the representative of Switzerland could be a first step towards a viable solution.

89. In view of their strategic and budgetary importance, regional programmes should be looked at individually, as proposed. The recent efforts made by the Regional Bureau for Asia and the Pacific to keep the Member States informed of the content and functioning of those programmes should be commended. The interregional and global programmes could be reviewed in 1990 and 1991, in two stages; a timetable for reviews could be established which would take into account the follow-up and review mechanisms of each programme.

90. With regard to country programmes, the Council could consider two for each region, one in 1990 and the other in 1991. In that case it would be necessary to improve the submission format. An overview should be prepared of the overall context in which each country programme operated, and the impact of that changing context on the relevancy and the implementation process of the approved programme. Obviously, the Council was interested in the main programme findings, not in an arbitrary selection thereof. The adjustments made by UNDP and the country, as well as those that might require a decision by the Council, should be presented clearly.

91. His delegation did not favour the use of charts comparing intraregional or interregional programmes. The mid-term review was not a contest; it was an exercise designed to review programmes individually and was a natural counterpart of the initial approval of the programmes.

92. Mrs. LAURENT (France) said that the mid-term review was a crucial phase, not only for recipient countries, but also for the Governing Council, as the decision-making body. She urged that the initial schedule should be observed and expressed interest in learning the possible causes of delay. In order to avoid delaying the proceedings and bearing in mind the comments made, she supported Switzerland's proposal and emphasized the relevance of the comments made by the representative of the Group of African States.

93. Ms. DUDIK-GAYOSO (United States of America) said that the mid-term review was of paramount importance, because it enabled the Council to assess the performance of the country programme and served as a framework for identifying projects not included in the relevant document. The review was also of great interest to participating Governments, because it provided an opportunity to reassess the directions of the programmes so as to ascertain whether the programmes continued to meet key objectives and responded to the country's priorities. The country programme document was not only a strategy document, but was also part of a process of analysing development problems and addressing them through specific projects.

94. Her delegation expressed its appreciation and support to the regional bureaux for the efforts that they had made to monitor the implementation of regional programmes, to encourage Governments to participate in the mid-term review of such projects and to assess in depth such specific areas of interest as grass-roots participation in the African development process and the implementation of projects in Asia.

95. The mid-term review of a country, regional or interregional programme was more than just a collection of project reviews or a renamed annual review. It would appear that, to a certain extent, UNDP was using reviews that had already been prepared as mid-term reviews of some of those activities. The timing of the mid-term review was also essential to the decision-making process in the Council with respect to the future role of UNDP and the structure of the fifth programming cycle. It should provide the Council with information about what it could realistically expect from UNDP programmes. Her delegation also believed that it should serve to identify recurrent obstacles or management issues which needed to be addressed. For example, it should report on the degree to which Government execution or the multiplicity of small projects had increased the field offices' management burden and on the way to solve those problems.

96. It was important for the Council to have enough time to consider the results of the mid-term reviews. Therefore, the United States agreed with proposals made at the current meeting that the Council's consideration of the reviews should be organized in three segments: in June 1989, February 1990 and June 1990.

97. The United States expected to obtain from the mid-term review some basic data on each country programme, i.e., one or two pages of information on how the programme had evolved in relation to the original plans. Document DP/1988/19/Add.3 indicated that UNDP had drawn up a highly useful standardized format for the mid-term review that was both brief and comprehensive. One way of reconciling the need of Council members to receive information on the largest possible number of programmes with the Council's need to make an in-depth review of an appropriate number of projects would be to provide delegations with that format.

98. In addition to data on each country programme, her delegation would like to see an in-depth consideration of a representative sample of different country programmes. Those in-depth reports should cover programmes with a variety of characteristics: some with a major emphasis on Government execution, others focusing on a few sectors and a third group consisting of broad programmes

(Ms. Dudik-Gayoso, United States)

simultaneously covering many sectors. The sample should include some large and small programmes. That sample would, of course, be in addition to those country programmes which the Council must review in accordance with UNDP rules, because the situation in the country had changed to a point requiring major revisions in the programme. The secretariat should provide information about which country programmes must be resubmitted in accordance with those rules.

99. She recalled that the Zimbabwe programme had to be resubmitted for Council approval during the mid-term review, which was an unprecedented case. On previous occasions, her delegation had mentioned other country programmes which in its view should come back to the Council for detailed review. They included, for various reasons, the programmes of Somalia, the Sudan, the Philippines and Guatemala. In the case of Somalia, there had been problems in covering local and recurrent costs; in the case of the Philippines, the programme had been drafted at a time when major political changes had been occurring; and in the case of Guatemala, the programme covered an extremely broad range of needs, which it was possibly unable to meet. The additional allocations to the IPF, under Council decision 88/31, had possibly alleviated that problem somewhat.

100. Her Government would inform the missions of the United States Agency for International Development of the mid-term review schedules. Those missions would welcome information from recipient Governments about their experience with the mid-term review process. The Council's discussions would benefit considerably from close consultations between the secretariat and the permanent missions of recipient countries in New York. UNDP should keep delegations informed of plans for mid-term reviews, particularly those that had yet to be made public. The United States believed that UNDP staff in New York should participate in the process of reviewing country programmes, as such involvement would help to build an important link between Headquarters and the UNDP field offices.

101. Mr. FERNANDEZ (Liberia) supported the United States proposal that the New York missions of countries should be consulted when their programmes were considered by UNDP.

102. Mr. PETTITT (United Kingdom) said he supported the proposal of Switzerland and other countries that the Council should be told which programmes would be considered in depth. It would be useful to know whether all of the country programme funds would in fact be considered during the mid-term review, and not only the IPF funds.

103. Mr. JASINSKI (Poland) said that the mid-term review of country, regional, interregional and global programmes was important, because it could be used to increase public awareness of UNDP's work. The review of Poland's programme, carried out in October 1988, had yielded favourable results and had made it possible to discuss many useful ideas. He emphasized the innovative nature of the regional programme for Europe and its importance for the programmes of other regions. The Council should bear in mind particularly the intention to develop new management techniques and the proposals concerning science and technology, the environment, transport and communications and energy. Lastly, his delegation was interested in the reviews of global and interregional programmes.

104. Mr. HIRONO (Director of Programme Policy and Evaluation) said that Ethiopia, Chile, Paraguay, Cuba, Peru, Saudi Arabia, Tunisia, Malta, the United Arab Emirates, Algeria, Indonesia, China, Laos, Nepal, Bangladesh and India had completed their mid-term reviews.

105. Replying to the expressions of concern by the representatives of Ghana and Liberia, he confirmed that the mid-term review of the regional programme for Africa was scheduled for October or November 1989. That date was firm and did not depend on the appointment of the three new regional programme officials. Replying to the question by the United Kingdom representative, he explained that the mid-term review indeed included all the funds involved in the country programme. UNDP was aware of the need to hold closer consultations between the UNDP secretariat and the missions of recipient countries in New York, as the representatives of the United States and Liberia had indicated. Some programmes, such as that of Zimbabwe, were undergoing changes and others would be considered in great detail, including those of Somalia, the Sudan, the Philippines and Namibia.

106. While the Bureau for Programme Policy and Evaluation agreed to provide all documentation, some selective criterion had to be established in terms of regions, for example, reviews of least developed countries and most developed countries or reviews by sectors. As the representative of Switzerland had mentioned, it would be useful to carry out the mid-term review in June 1989, February 1990 and June 1990. However, it would be impossible to know in advance what part of the work would have been completed by that time. As the representative of Norway had said, the focus should be on concrete issues, particularly those of interest to the country under review.

107. The secretariat fully agreed that regional programmes should be reviewed individually and not jointly. Moreover, the active interest in the review process shown by States was constantly borne in mind and they were being kept informed.

108. The PRESIDENT said that consideration of agenda item 4 had been concluded.

The meeting rose at 1.15 p.m.

