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SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 9th MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Friday, 24 February 1989, at 3.40 p.m.

President: Mr. PIBULSONGGRAM (Thailand)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.40 p.m.

APPROVAL OF DRAFT DECISIONS ON VARIOUS ITEMS

1. Mr. KUFUOR (Ghana), Vice-Chairman of the Drafting Group, said that draft decision DP/1989/L.8 had been amended so that the last paragraph now ended with the words "as well as on its future requirements and plans". Draft decision DP/1989/L.11 had also been amended. Paragraph 1 now read: "to continue his efforts to implement the Management Development Programme"; and paragraph 2: "on the basis of the five principles contained in paragraph 10 of Governing Council decision 88/31 of 1 July 1988 and taking into account the views expressed".

Draft decision DP/1989/L.5, under agenda item 2 (c)

2. Mr. KUFUOR (Ghana), Vice-Chairman of the Drafting Group, referring to paragraph 3, said that the African Group would like consideration to be given to additional resources for the Transport and Communications Decade in Africa.

3. Mr. BROWN (Associate Administrator) said that that was acceptable as long as it was part of the record.

4. Draft decision DP/1989/L.5 on Special Programme Resources was adopted.

Draft decision DP/1989/L.8, under agenda item 2 (c)

5. Draft decision DP/1989/L.8 on the Transport and Communications Decade in Asia, as amended, was adopted.

Draft decision DP/1989/L.7, under agenda item 2 (c)

6. Miss HASSAN (Observer for Egypt) said that the fourth preambular paragraph should refer to the First Transportation and Communications Decade rather than to the second one, and operative paragraph 3 should refer specifically to the First Decade.

7. Mr. KUFUOR (Ghana), Vice-Chairman of the Drafting Group, agreed that the fourth preambular paragraph should refer to the First Decade. In paragraph 3, however, the Drafting Group had had in mind the preparation and holding of the Second Decade itself. He drew attention in that connection to General Assembly resolution 43/179.

8. Mr. BROWN (Associate Administrator) said that the \$5 million from Special Programme Resources were in respect of the First Decade, which continued until 1991. The difficulty in paragraph 3 could be overcome by referring to "the Decades".

9. Draft decision DP/1989/L.7 on the Transport and Communications Decade in Africa, as amended, was adopted.

Draft decision DP/1989/L.9, under agenda item 5

10. Draft decision DP/1989/L.9 on participation of UNDP in the preparations for the United Nations Conference on Least Developed Countries was adopted.

11. Mr. KABIR (Observer for Bangladesh) said that the preparatory meeting on disaster relief had no funding as yet, and appealed to all donors to contribute so that the meeting could take place.

Draft decision DP/1989/L.11, under agenda item 2 (a)

12. Draft decision DP/1989/L.11 on the Management Development Programme, as orally revised, was adopted.

Draft decision DP/1989/L.12, under agenda item 4

13. The PRESIDENT said that the draft decision had been submitted by Switzerland.

The meeting was suspended at 4.15 p.m. and resumed at 4.30 p.m.

14. Mr. ROHNER (Switzerland), introducing draft decision DP/1989/L.12, said that, after preliminary consultations with the secretariat, it had been decided to make the following revisions: the words "a synthesis" in paragraph 2 (a) should be replaced by the words "an overview"; and the French text of paragraph 2 (b) should be corrected by replacing the words "que l'Administrateur a expressément demandé de" with the words "que l'Administrateur a été expressément invité à".

15. Ms. COLLOTON (United States of America) said that she supported the draft decision, but proposed amending it by adding the following new preambular paragraph, as either the second or the third: "Noting the Administrator's offer to make available to delegations on request the standardized mid-term review reports on country programmes described in document DP/1988/19/Add.3,".

16. Mr. CABEIRO-QUINTANA (Cuba) suggested deleting the phrase "on request".

17. Mr. LEENSTRA (Netherlands) suggested replacing the word "delegations" with the words "Member States".

18. Ms. COLLOTON (United States of America) concurred.

19. Mr. OULD CHEIKH EL GAOUTHE (Observer for Mauritania) asked why the United States amendment was necessary, since such reports were furnished automatically.

20. Regarding paragraph 2 (b), he asked whether it was the Governments or the Governing Council that had requested the Administrator to resubmit reports, and whether the Administrator himself could ask the Council to take up such reports.

21. Mr. BROWN (Associate Administrator) explained that paragraph 2 (b) covered two possible situations: the new Government of a country could decide that it wished

(Mr. Brown)

to draft an entirely new country programme and would ask the Administrator to bring that major change before the Council; or a country could simply decide to make a change in the agreed country programme and would ask the Administrator to resubmit it. The countries themselves had the power to do that.

22. Regarding the United States proposed amendment to the draft decision, it was his understanding that the information in question was not generally available in any document. The amendment was needed if the Administrator was to be required to provide that information.

23. Mr. KIRDAR (Secretary of the Council) pointed out that since paragraph 1 of the draft decision dealt with a substantive issue, which could not be taken up at an organizational meeting, the words "the organizational meeting" should be replaced by "a special session".

24. Draft decision DP/1989/L.12 on the mid-term review, as orally revised and amended, was adopted.

Draft decision on net contributor status under agenda item 2 (b)

25. The PRESIDENT said that the text of the draft decision had not yet been issued formally.

26. Mr. KIRDAR (Secretary of the Council) read out the English text so that it could be interpreted into the other official languages.

27. Mr. LAUTENBACHER (Switzerland), Vice-President of the Council, introduced the draft decision, stressing its complexity. Decision 85/16 would be valid for the remainder of the fourth cycle. In paragraphs 2 and 3 of the draft decision, delegations had sought to give as much flexibility as possible to economically distressed countries, without departing from decision 85/16. In programming the fifth cycle, the Council might wish to consider social indicators and geographical constraints, beyond the strictly economic criteria in decision 85/16 (para. 4). Referring to paragraph 5 of the draft decision, he said that those issues which had been deferred could be taken up in the context of the discussions on the future of UNDP and arrangements for the fifth cycle. Although a consensus had been hoped for, the reality was that the draft decision was satisfactory to many, but not all, members of the Council.

28. Mr. AL-FAYHANI (Observer for Bahrain) said that the draft decision before the Council exempted only two countries from net contributor status and did not take into account the arguments advanced by his delegation or the real economic circumstances of his country. His delegation wished to reaffirm its opposition to Council decision 85/16 and to stress its reservations with respect to the assumption of net contributor obligations by his country.

29. The World Bank and the Government of Bahrain were still in the process of to assessing the country's per capita GNP. His delegation had therefore been

(Mr. Al-Fayhani, Observer, Bahrain)

surprised at the statement of the Associate Administrator at the meeting of the Working Group to the effect that the figure of \$9,600 for per capita GNP in 1987 as given in document DP/1989/5, had been derived from World Bank data. That information was incorrect, as was shown by the fact that the World Bank itself admitted, in the World Bank Atlas 1988, that it had no information on Bahrain's per capita GNP for 1986 or 1987. The Administration should ascertain the accuracy of its information before incorporating it in a distorted manner in United Nations documents.

30. His delegation was saddened that the Council should adopt a selective approach to the matter of net contributor status. Rather than approving the programme-planning arrangements outlined in paragraphs 4 and 5 of document DP/1989/5, the Administration and the Council should continue to be receptive to the views of those countries which felt unable to assume net contributor status. To bring pressure to bear on them to accept that status was a practice incompatible with the universal and voluntary character of UNDP. His delegation had hoped that the Council would give favourable consideration to the views of his Government, which had been prompted to oppose decision 85/16 and to call for its review for a sound developmental reason.

31. The argument that local office costs were in some cases greater than programme expenditures had already been refuted. That that might appear to be the case in Bahrain was largely due to the reduction in its IPF and in the amounts allocated to the country for the fourth programming cycle, not to any change in the country's development needs.

32. His Government had opposed decision 85/16 from the outset. It now appeared as though the Council had come to regard that decision as immutable and not subject to review or discussion as it affected certain specific countries.

33. Mr. BROWN (Associate Administrator), replying to the representative of Bahrain, said that the World Bank provided UNDP with both published and unpublished information. Therefore, even if a figure for Bahrain's 1987 per capita GNP did not appear in the Atlas, it might have been provided to the Working Group as an update from the World Bank. Net contributor status had been determined on the basis of the 1983 figure and was waived only if the 1987 and subsequent figures fell below \$3,000.

34. Mr. AL-FAYHANI (Observer for Bahrain) said that information on Bahrain's national income was contained in a document submitted at the thirty-fifth session of the Council. The Administration should refer to that information. The national income for 1986 was not included in the World Bank Atlas 1988.

35. The draft decision on net contributor status was adopted.

36. Mr. MUNTASSER (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) said the fact that his delegation had joined in the consensus did not at all mean that it accepted 1983 as the base year for calculating the criteria mentioned in decision 85/16.

37. Mr. ALI (Observer for Oman), referring to paragraphs 2 and 3 of the draft decision, said it was disappointing that consideration had not been given to the circumstances in some countries. Even where per capita GNP was not under \$3,000, countries might have experienced economic problems since 1985. The Administrator had even proposed using additional criteria in order to assess the impact of unfavourable economic conditions in determining whether exemptions should be granted.

38. In the interest of attaining a consensus, his delegation had not opposed the draft decision; but it believed that it should be applied flexibly to countries which had faced serious economic problems since 1985. The Administrator should conduct a study of countries which had experienced economic difficulties since 1983, on the basis of which exemptions for the fourth programming cycle could be determined.

39. Mr. KING (Observer for Trinidad and Tobago) said that his delegation had proposed using a basket of criteria to ensure greater flexibility and equity in the classification of countries and, consequently, in the implementation of decision 85/16. It was regrettable that the draft decision did not provide for such a basket. Nevertheless, paragraph 4 gave cause for hope. His delegation had not wished to oppose the consensus, but hoped that its earlier request would be taken into account when the decision was implemented.

40. Mr. BATAINEH (Observer for Jordan) said that his delegation shared the concerns expressed by the representatives of Oman and Bahrain.

41. Mr. PETTITT (United Kingdom) requested clarification on whether the deletion of two paragraphs from an earlier draft would affect the increased allocations planned for Iran and Mozambique. He wondered whether an agenda item on the deferred issues referred to in paragraph 5 of the decision just adopted would be included under fourth-cycle programming.

42. Mr. LAUTENBACHER (Switzerland) said that it was the Working Group's understanding that the Administration would make the necessary proposals in the context of the fourth cycle at the June 1989 session.

43. Mr. KRAMER (Canada) commended the Libyan and Omani delegations for their display of flexibility. The issue of net contributor status was virtually under constant review. His delegation recognized that economic criteria alone might not be sufficient to determine eligibility for net resource transfers, and noted that the approach would be reassessed for the fifth cycle. Referring to paragraph 2, of the decision just adopted, he said that any action must be based on current information; UNDP should seek the latest statistics from the World Bank and other agencies in order to reconcile the needs of developing countries with the provisions of decision 1985/16.

44. Mr. AQUARONE (Netherlands) referred to paragraph 35 of document DP/1989/5 and said that his delegation wished to reaffirm the validity of the principles governing the independence of intergovernmental organizations, the immunities and

(Mr. Aquarone, Netherlands)

privileges of international civil servants and the validity of the common system administered by the International Civil Service Commission for UNDP personnel.

45. Mr. MUNTASSER (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) said that his delegation failed to understand the Working Group's decision to emphasize one issue and defer others because of the time factor. The concerns expressed by the delegations of the United Kingdom and the Netherlands bore out his own earlier assertion that all the issues should have been deferred.

46. Mr. BROWN (Associate Administrator), replying to the representative of the United Kingdom, said that the increases for Iran and Mozambique had not been a question of principle. The calculations in those two cases were based on decision 85/16, and unless there were objections in principle, UNDP programming would proceed normally. The reference to "consultations with ... national authorities" in paragraph 2 of the decision on net contributor status did not mean that figures provided by national authorities could replace the figures provided by the World Bank. Violation of that principle would call the very integrity of the system into question. He could assure the delegations that the Administrator would take note of the Vice-President's statement on flexibility and that programming already under way would not be interrupted even if future programming became impossible under paragraph 1 of the decision.

47. Mr. OULD CHEIKH EL GAOUTHE (Observer for Mauritania), supported by Mr. AL-FAYHANI (Observer for Bahrain), expressed the hope that if countries objected to the World Bank figures, UNDP would send its own economists to assess the situationn.

48. Mr. BROWN (Associate Administrator), reiterated that UNDP was not authorized to deviate from the requirements of decision 85/16. Only where World Bank figures were not available could it use information from other sources in computing per capita GNP. Clearly, if a country objected to the World Bank's figures, an economist could be appointed to discuss technical aspects, but the final determination would still be based on those figures.

49. Mr. OULD CHEIKH EL GAOUTHE (Observer for Mauritania) expressed the hope that the consultations referred to in paragraph 2 of the decision would be held in a harmonious spirit.

MID-TERM REVIEW OF FOURTH-CYCLE COUNTRY PROGRAMMES (continued)

50. Mr. BIHAMIRIZA (Observer for Burundi) asked the Governing Council to note, for the future, that in the report on the mid-term review of country, regional, interregional and global programmes (DP/1989/8), no mention had been made of the Economic Community of the Great Lakes Countries, comprising Burundi, Zaire, and Rwanda, even though account had been taken of that Community, in fourth-cycle programming.

ACTIONS TAKEN OR PROPOSED BY THE UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME IN RESPONSE TO DECISIONS OF OTHER ORGANS OF THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM (DP/1989/10)

51. Mr. KIRDAR (Secretary of the Council), speaking as Director of the Division of External Relations and Governing Council Secretariat, introduced document DP/1989/10. He drew attention to annex I, reporting actions taken or planned by the Administration in response to decisions taken by the Economic and Social Council in 1988, and section III, elaborating on decisions adopted by the General Assembly at its forty-third session which required action by the Council in 1989. He also drew attention to paragraph 15, concerning arrangements for reports by the Administrator on future action to be taken by the Council.

52. Mr. PETTITT (United Kingdom) said that his delegation agreed with the proposals contained in paragraph 15. Further discussion was needed on items (a), (b), and (c) in paragraph 10.

53. Mr. PETRONE (Italy) said it was disappointing that item (c) did not contain proposals for modifying the agenda of the Governing Council in order to comply with Economic and Social Council resolution 1988/77 requiring meetings of subsidiary bodies of the Council to end eight weeks before the session of the Council at which their reports were considered.

54. Mr. KIRDAR (Secretary of the Council), speaking as Director of the Division of External Relations and Governing Council Secretariat, said that an item was being added to the agenda of the thirty-sixth session of the Governing Council in order to address that concern.

55. The PRESIDENT said that if he heard no objections, he would take it that the Council wished to take note of document DP/1989/10 and of the statement by the Administration.

56. It was so decided.

The meeting was suspended at 5.05 p.m. and resumed at 5.30 p.m.

OTHER MATTERS (continued)

(c) REPORT OF THE CHAIRMAN OF THE WORKING GROUP OF THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE (continued)

57. The CHAIRMAN said that if he heard no objections, he would take it that the Council took note of the report of the Working Group of the Committee of the Whole.

58. It was so decided.

59. Mr. PETRONE (Italy), referring to the report of the Working Group, said that some delegations had indicated a desire to discuss the future role of UNDP.

CLOSURE OF THE SPECIAL SESSION

60. The Chairman declared the special session closed.

The meeting rose at 6.20 p.m.

