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PROGRAMME MATTERS

Co-operation against AIDS

Report of the Administrator

Addendum

I. INTRODUCTION

1. Since the preparation of document DP/1988/1, a number of developments regarding the role of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in the prevention and control of the disease known as Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) have taken place. The Administrator wishes to bring these to the attention of the Governing Council. They include the proposed World Health Organization (WHO) UNDP Alliance to Combat AIDS and two specific global project recommendations (UNDP/WHO AIDS Financing Facility and Global Blood Safety Initiative) related to AIDS, which are included in this document. The Administrator also wishes to bring to the attention of the Governing Council the action taken by the General Assembly on AIDS, resulting in General Assembly resolution 42/8 of 26 October 1987, the recently concluded World Summit of Ministers of Health on programmes for AIDS prevention, and the heightened global concern about the impact of this disease on general public health and economic areas.

II. WHO/UNDP ALLIANCE TO COMBAT AIDS

2. On the occasion of the fourth meeting of participating parties of the WHO Special Programme on AIDS, held in Geneva on 12-13 November 1987, the Director-General of WHO proposed that UNDP and WHO should combine forces in support of national aids programmes. UNDP will bring its experience and expertise to bear in multi-sectoral approaches to socio-economic development in support of WHO as the

international leader in health policy and in scientific and technical matters related to health, specifically in its mandate to direct and co-ordinate the global fight against AIDS. The Administrator agreed to provide full UNDP support to Governments and WHO, especially at the field level, through the network of UNDP Resident Representatives, who also serve as Resident Co-ordinators for the United Nations system operational activities for development. The policy framework for this initiative, which has been given the name WHO/UNDP Alliance to Combat AIDS, appears in the annex to this document. As the policy framework indicates, the collaborative activities which are envisaged are consistent with General Assembly resolution 42/8 of 26 October 1987 which, inter alia, confirms that WHO should direct and co-ordinate the global battle against AIDS and requests the Secretary-General to ensure a co-ordinated response by the United Nations system to the AIDS pandemic in close co-operation with the Director-General of WHO. On 19 January 1988, the policy framework of the Alliance was brought to the attention of the WHO Executive Board by the Director-General of WHO, at which time the concept of the Alliance was endorsed.

3. While the precise details of an agreement between WHO and UNDP covering the Alliance have not yet been fully elaborated, general agreement has been reached that UNDP will support WHO in assisting Governments in formulating, co-ordinating, implementing, monitoring and evaluating national AIDS plans and mobilizing the required external resources. UNDP, through its field offices, will further assist WHO in helping the Governments concerned, to ensure that all external support is an integral part of national AIDS plans and the WHO global strategy on AIDS. In carrying out these responsibilities with WHO, UNDP will assist Governments in seeking to ensure that such offers of support are consistent with the national AIDS plan and Governments' overall development priorities, plans and resource allocations. WHO has the sole responsibility for providing the technical and policy inputs which may be required by Governments for the development, implementation and evaluation of national AIDS plans.

4. Subject to the approval of the Governing Council, it is envisaged, as part of the Alliance, that UNDP will make available to WHO resources on a reimbursable basis, in an amount of up to \$2 million, for a facility to bridge the time between firm pledges of external support for country-level AIDS activities and the receipt of these pledged resources. Other aspects of the envisaged Alliance include the provision by the WHO Global Programme on AIDS (WHO/GPA) of technical and policy guidance to the Resident Representative, who, acting in his or her capacity as UNDP Resident Co-ordinator, will assist Governments in seeking to ensure that assistance from all organizations of the system is co-ordinated within the framework of national AIDS plans. It is expected, under the terms of the proposal, that UNDP Resident Representatives will provide office facilities for the leader of the national WHO/GPA staff and may also provide appropriate administrative, accounting and logistical support to national and WHO/GPA teams, subject to the reimbursement to UNDP by WHO of identifiable additional expenditures incurred in the provision of such support.

5. Finally, the Alliance envisages focal points at the headquarters levels of both UNDP and WHO (in the UNDP regional bureaux and in WHO/GPA) in order to facilitate communication and co-ordination in the implementation of this Alliance. The UNDP Division for Global and Interregional Programmes will serve as a focal point for UNDP collaboration with the Office of the GPA Director.

### III. UNDP/WHO FINANCING FACILITY

6. As noted in paragraph 4 above, the WHO/UNDP Alliance to Combat AIDS envisages a facility to finance national activities between the time of the receipt of firm pledges of external support for country level activities and the actual payment to the WHO/GPA established trust fund for that country within a six-month time-limit. This will be particularly important between the end of the support to the national short-term plan and the beginning of a medium-term plan. To support WHO in this vitally needed bridge financing, the Administrator recommends that the Governing Council approve a reimbursable global project in the amount of \$2 million. Funds from this project will be made available to WHO as required for the above-mentioned purpose and will be reimbursed by WHO to UNDP immediately on their receipt. Because of the very rapid expansion of programmes to combat AIDS in many developing countries (where it is expected that approximately 80 medium-term plans will enter into the implementation phase by the end of 1988) the demands on this facility may exceed the \$2 million recommended by the Administrator. If this proves to be the case, the Administrator intends to review this financing modality and will make recommendations to the Governing Council at future sessions. It should be stressed, as indicated above, that advances will be made only against firm pledges of donors, pending the receipt of payments by the donors concerned. There is no risk to UNDP.

7. In light of the urgency of the AIDS pandemic, the Administrator recommends approval of this global project.

### IV. GLOBAL BLOOD SAFETY INITIATIVE

8. Paragraph 16 of document DP/1988/1 refers to steps being taken to establish a programme to make blood supplies safe throughout the world in order to stem the spread of AIDS and other diseases. A number of steps have been taken in recent weeks to launch this new programme, including consultations convened by WHO/GPA with representatives of UNDP, the League of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, the International Society of Blood Transfusion, and the Health Laboratory Technology Unit of WHO. It has been agreed that these organizations will become the core of a broader consortium of organizations, including a wide spectrum of international organizations familiar with the technical, economic and structural needs and concerns of Government and medical personnel throughout the world. This global consortium is expected to attract financial support from private sector groups as well as from traditional supporters of public health efforts.

9. Those familiar with previous efforts to improve blood safety in developing countries have identified the basic reason for the general lack of success of such efforts: too much attention has been paid to supplying hardware, itself often inappropriate or incompatible at specific locations. Instead, sustainable systems should be built through comprehensive plans for national blood supply and transfusion systems. Such plans must include provision for training in technical and managerial aspects as well as plans for meeting their recurrent costs. The objective of the proposed Global Blood Safety Initiative is to contribute to the global control of the AIDS pandemic by facilitating the establishment and further development of blood transfusion services capable of ensuring adequate and safe blood supplies.

10. In order to move this initiative forward, a consultative meeting is planned during the first half of 1988, at which time interested parties will be provided with information on the present status of blood transfusions world wide. They will also have before them a draft document on strategies for strengthening blood transfusion systems as well as specific proposals for consortium activities at the country level, linked to medium-term national plans for AIDS prevention and control.

11. To assist in achieving this objective, the Administrator recommends to the Governing Council a global project entitled Global Blood Safety Initiative, to be financed as part of a \$3.5 million commitment from UNDP to support AIDS activities (see document DP/1988/1, para. 15). The total project cost will be \$700,000, coming specifically from \$350,000 already earmarked from the global indicative planning figure (IPF) and \$350,000 already earmarked from Special Programme Resources (SPR). These funds will be utilized for the preparation of the consortium meeting and for preparing and financing activities recommended by the consortium.

12. The Administrator recommends that the Governing Council approve this project.

#### V. OTHER MATTERS

13. The Administrator wishes to draw to the attention of the Governing Council that, in response to paragraph 6 of General Assembly resolution 42/8, the Secretary-General has designated the Under-Secretary-General for International Economic and Social Affairs to serve in his personal capacity as the focal point at United Nations Headquarters for activities related to the prevention and control of AIDS. UNDP has participated in meetings on this subject which have been convened by the Under-Secretary-General and is a member of the United Nations Steering Committee under his chairmanship. The purpose of this Committee is to co-ordinate United Nations activities in support of the WHO Global AIDS Strategy and to identify possible joint activities and linkages between individual programmes in this field. Arrangements are also being made which envisage inter-agency co-ordinating mechanisms at the global and local levels in order to give full expression to the Secretary-General's call for harnessing, in close co-operation with WHO, the capacity and experience of the United Nations system in technical co-operation at the country level.

14. The Administrator also wishes to inform members of the Governing Council that UNDP was represented at a senior level in the recently concluded World Summit of Ministers of Health on Programme for AIDS Prevention, which took place in London from 26 to 28 January 1988.

Annex

## WHO/UNDP ALLIANCE TO COMBAT AIDS: POLICY FRAMEWORK

1. The prevention and control of AIDS requires urgent, world-wide action, first and foremost in the health sector. AIDS also has profound social and economic implications. Its control therefore requires political commitment at the highest level, and appropriate social and educational measures. WHO has assumed its constitutional role of directing and co-ordinating the global fight against AIDS. Its Global Strategy for AIDS, approved by the 40th World Health Assembly, includes a wide range of research and development activities in diverse health and related socio-economic and behavioural fields, as well as operational support to countries based on existing and emerging knowledge in these fields. This support aims at strengthening national capacities to set up and operate national AIDS plans, governmental focal points for this purpose being ministries of health fulfilling their function of directing and co-ordinating authority on national health work with their related multi-sectoral health councils, in accordance with World Health Assembly resolution WHA33.17.
2. Countries engaged in AIDS prevention and control have expressed concern about unco-ordinated, ill-timed or inappropriate offers of external assistance to combat AIDS. Similarly, in order to ensure relevant, effective and efficient action, donor agencies have insisted on well-co-ordinated activities in countries as a pre-requisite for their support.
3. To ensure a well-co-ordinated, multi-sectoral approach in the global fight against AIDS, the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) confirmed WHO's directing and co-ordinating role and urged bilateral and multilateral agencies, including those of the United Nations system, as well as non-governmental and voluntary organizations, to support national and international action against AIDS in conformity with WHO's Global Strategy. The UNGA further requested the Secretary-General of the United Nations, in close co-operation with the Director-General of WHO, to ensure co-ordinated response by the United Nations system.
4. A key component of the reforms taking place in the United Nations system is co-ordinated, complementary and harmonious action by all its bodies. Within that system, UNDP plays the lead role, at the country level, regarding social and economic development. Moreover, the UNDP Resident Representative in any country is at the same time the Resident Co-ordinator of the United Nations System's Operational Activities for Development. UNDP is therefore the natural body to ensure co-ordinated support by the United Nations system regarding socio-economic matters in countries.
5. WHO, through its Global Programme on AIDS (GPA), and UNDP are therefore forging an alliance to control AIDS globally, combining the strengths of WHO as international leader in health policy and in scientific and technical matters relating to health, and of UNDP as leader in socio-economic development and of each of its Resident Representatives as co-ordinator of United Nations operational activities for development in countries.

6. This alliance will support countries in developing, implementing, monitoring and evaluating well-co-ordinated, multi-sectoral national AIDS plans in line with the Global Strategy. It will also help countries to ensure co-ordinated support for such national plans by all external partners, including those of the United Nations system. In this way, all partners will find their rightful place, in their field of competence, in the fight against AIDS.

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