



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

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agenda

POLICY

Other matters

THE ROLE OF UNDP IN THE WEST BANK AND THE GAZA STRIP

Note by the Administrator

1. The Administrator considers it essential that the Governing Council have, at this time, full information on the circumstances surrounding the important role of UNDP in the occupied territories of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. The recent and continuing tragic events there have a special reality for UNDP which, since 1980, has been carrying out a programme of economic assistance to the Palestinian inhabitants in a variety of sectors. In close consultation with all of the parties involved, including in particular the people themselves, UNDP has been able to prepare and implement a wide-ranging series of economic and social development projects which have begun to address many of the most serious handicaps under which the people now live. UNDP has marshalled a total of \$21.5 million from its central resources for this purpose, covering the years 1980 through 1991, a figure that is very small in terms of the needs but one that has enabled UNDP to become a leading element in the economic and social development efforts in the occupied territories. Some limited additional funding has come, or is in sight, through special voluntary contributions from governmental and intergovernmental sources.

2. The UNDP programme, because of its nature and the support it enjoys from the local population, has weathered the dangerous period of the past two months in remarkably good fashion. While strikes, transport problems and curfews have had peripheral effects on operational activities and the freedom of movement of personnel, most project implementation work continues on schedule. The UNDP Office in Jerusalem, which oversees all UNDP work in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, has remained open and all staff, both international officials and locally recruited Palestinians, are at their posts.

3. In the current UNDP planning cycle, 1987 through 1991, an amount of \$8 million has been authorized by the Governing Council for expenditure from Special Programme Resources. Practically all of these funds have been earmarked for specific projects approved in principle by the parties directly concerned with whom UNDP consults.

4. In his recent report to the Security Council dealing with the situation in the occupied territories (S/19443 of 21 January 1988), the Secretary-General has concentrated on questions relating to the safety and security of the Palestinian population, but has also called special attention to the economic and social conditions in which they live. In paragraph 49 of the document, the Secretary-General states: "Many of the Palestinians consulted expressed the hope that a concerted international effort could be undertaken to revive the territories' economy, perhaps initially through an expansion of the existing programme of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in the territories. I have asked the Administrator of UNDP to study this possibility".

5. In response, the Administrator has informed the Secretary-General that the UNDP programme can be enlarged quickly and effectively, subject only to the availability of additional funding. A project pipeline of well-studied project concepts already exists, containing over \$50 million worth of highly beneficial activities in water supply, agriculture, industry, human settlement, health, education and employment. If significant additional funding becomes available, projects with demonstrable prospects for contributing to the economic advancement of the territories would be specially selected in consultation with the parties directly concerned. These might include the development of industrial zones and other assistance to small-scale industries, greatly enhanced work on already initiated studies for a full-scale port in Gaza, wide-scale support for employment - creating agro-industries and food processing and marketing, construction of low and medium-income housing, and development of commercial centres to provide affordable and efficient space for the establishment of small businesses and shops.

6. The UNDP role in the economic and social development of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip has been described as a critical one by all of the interested parties. With this special responsibility arises the immediate necessity to redouble efforts to acquire sufficient additional funding to cover the most critical needs involved in economic advancement. The Administrator therefore requests the Governing Council at this session to agree in principle to the following actions:

(a) To authorize the Administrator to earmark provisionally an additional amount of \$4 million from Special Programme Resources to undertake projects and also to enable planning and project formulation activities to commence on the types of projects described in paragraph 5 on the understanding that these projects would be funded by contributions from other donors;

(b) To call on Governments and intergovernmental institutions to respond immediately through matching funds in the form of special voluntary contributions in at least the same amount of \$4 million;

(c) To confirm the earmarking of the additional funds up to an amount of \$4 million mentioned under (a) above from Special Programme Resources at the forthcoming thirty-fifth session of the Governing Council in June 1988, subject to the response to the appeal to be made under (b) above.
