



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

Distr.
GENERAL

DP/1990/SR.14
16 July 1990

ENGLISH
Original: FRENCH

GOVERNING COUNCIL

Thirty-seventh session

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 14th MEETING

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Monday, 28 May 1990, at 3 p.m.

President: Mr. POPESCU (Romania)

later: Mr. MORALES CARBALLO (Cuba)

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The meeting was called to order at 3 p.m.

UNITED NATIONS POPULATION FUND (agenda item 6) (continued)

- (a) SPECIAL REPORT TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY THROUGH THE GOVERNING COUNCIL AND THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL (continued) (DP/1990/44)
- (b) REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR ON 1989 ACTIVITIES (continued) (DP/1990/45, parts I, II and III, DP/1990/46, parts I and II)
- (c) PERIODIC REPORT ON EVALUATION (DP/1990/49)

1. Mr. MAHLER (International Planned Parenthood Federation), speaking on behalf of the 130 independent national planned-parenthood associations represented by the Federation, thanked UNDP and UNFPA for giving it the chance to be involved in action on what in his opinion was a key variable in efforts to achieve sustainable development for all the world's inhabitants.

2. The issue of development was not one to be over-simplified. While poverty alleviation might be essential in order to enable families to assume responsibility for their own future, the status of women was equally important, as was education. To favour any one of those factors to the detriment of the others was liable to be counterproductive. There was no denying that development was an extremely complex issue, or that major errors had been committed in the past 40 years. What one age took for granted might be queried by the next. Consequently, it was necessary to be capable of acknowledging one's mistakes, of changing and adapting. It was also clear that people could not have their development done for them by outsiders, but had to do it themselves; the most that was possible was to help them by enhancing their skill and knowledge. Part of the complexity of development was attributable to the fact that it required not only knowledge, but also strong motivation, and he thought that NGOs could act as a third sector in that connection, halfway between the public and the private sectors.

3. The challenge of the 1990s was to meet the family-planning needs of 600 million families and provide them with services capable of affording them assistance in that sphere. It was not a matter of setting targets but of satisfying a demand; if that was done, hundreds of millions of couples would be relieved of the distress of having to choose abortion as a method of birth control. There would also be a chance of stabilizing the world's population at around 8 to 10 billion inhabitants, rather than the 13 to 15 billion it would reach if the current trend persisted. Naturally, the crux of the matter did not lie in such overall figures, but rather in the family microcosm. It was the individuals composing the microcosm who should be helped and whose living conditions it was necessary to try to improve.

4. In order to meet that challenge, more determined political commitments than those so far made were essential. Families and communities ought to participate far more democratically and effectively in family-planning efforts. In particular, women should be given an opportunity to play a more significant role. It was also necessary to improve intersectoral co-operation, which left much to be desired, in particular between education and health. Appropriate techniques existed and should be used. Lastly, much more attention should be given to staff working in the sphere of family

planning. There were many bureaucratic public services that demotivated their personnel, when what was required was keen motivation. In addition to greater financial resources, it was essential to establish close co-operation among all those involved in family planning at all levels.

5. Mr. SHANNON (Canada) thanked Mrs. Sadik for stating unambiguously that the huge challenge facing the world community on the threshold of the twenty-first century was to commit itself more deeply to population issues in order to promote development and help to build a better world. His delegation paid tribute to the Fund's tireless efforts to get the prime importance of population issues recognized in the context of economic and social development. It also appreciated the efforts made by the Fund to promote greater public awareness of population issues and to focus greater attention on them. That was necessary in order to mobilize the political will that was essential if population programmes were to be successful.

6. In the foreword to her report, the Executive Director emphasized in particular, the importance of giving priority to the elimination of poverty, disease and illiteracy throughout the world. His delegation recognized that in order to achieve sustainable development, it was essential to combat poverty. However, poverty, like the standard of living, was inseparable from population issues. The highest rates of reproduction were to be found among the poorest sectors of the world's population. That meant rapid reproduction of poverty, which was becoming one of the major issues for the future. All efforts should therefore be focused on those sectors of the population and on the actual nature of population issues. What those issues were concerned with, first and foremost, was human beings, who were an essential resource for the development process, as the Brundtland Commission had clearly demonstrated in its report. The 1990 State of World Population report stressed the need to develop human resources better by increased investment in health, education, activities for women and family planning. Consequently, his delegation fully endorsed the appeal made by UNFPA for greater emphasis on human resources during the Fourth United Nations Development Decade. It also reiterated its support for the prominence given to initiatives for women in the Fund's programme of activities. It took note of the increased importance given to women in Asia and in the Pacific region through training programmes to encourage their participation in various project activities and would urge UNFPA to ensure that such activities were carried out regularly in all regions.

7. The State of World Population report drew attention to the environmental damage that had already been caused by a world population of 5.3 billion and warned against the growing dangers to which the environment was exposed as the population expanded. Environmental problems were inextricably bound up with the planet's capacity to support all of its inhabitants while preserving a balance in its natural resources. It was therefore necessary to change the manner in which natural resources were exploited and to develop more efficient and cleaner techniques. His delegation thought that the Fund should improve its knowledge of the relationship between population and the environment by giving greater support to research.

8. Canada remained concerned about the situation in sub-Saharan Africa, where the socio-economic indicators showed that progress was sluggish. It supported the Fund's activities in that region, in particular the following: research in the socio-cultural sphere; the integration of population factors

into development planning; and support for various programmes and activities in regional and training establishments. It also thought that it was important to apply the results of that research to the design and implementation of the Fund's programmes and projects. The need for greater investment in human resources seemed particularly urgent in that region. Governments should redirect their resources towards health and education programmes so as to combat poverty and reduce the high rates of demographic growth. Family-planning programmes should be strengthened by means of clearly defined operational strategies and they should be integrated into public health systems. To achieve that end, a resolute commitment was necessary at all levels, backed up by adequate resources.

9. The Fund called for a doubling of the level of funds from all sources by the year 2000 and forecast a decline in the share of national funds in proportion to international funds. His delegation was willing for global funds to be increased, but it was concerned about the decline in the share of national funds at a time when the Fund was advocating an increase in investment at the national level in basic services and services dealing with population issues. Accordingly, it requested more detailed information on the trend in the percentage of GDP devoted to such services in each region, and on changes in the share of funds for country programmes contributed by each country.

10. In addition, Canada whole-heartedly supported the Fund's determination to make population programmes more efficient. One fundamental means of improving the design and implementation of such programmes was to ensure tight co-ordination, first and foremost at the country level. That would in particular make it possible to define needs better when it was necessary to appeal for assistance from donors, to rationalize the allocation of resources provided by the international community and to increase the national contribution in that sector. Governments should be responsible for such co-ordination, although the Fund should be able to help in setting up or strengthening co-ordination activities and machinery.

11. UNFPA could help to improve population programmes in other spheres, and his delegation would come back to that point when other items on the agenda were considered. For the time being, he would simply mention Programme Review and Strategy Development as an important area of activity where improvements could be made in the light of the evaluations of national programmes as reflected in document DP/1990/49.

12. National and regional co-ordination was essential in order to ensure programmes were efficient. Canada endorsed the idea of international co-ordination provided it was aimed at dealing with specific problems, such as contraception, information or operational research, and that it was organized so as to achieve clearly defined objectives. He would like more information on those aspects. Lastly, he confirmed his delegation's support for many of the activities proposed by UNFPA in the current year.

13. Mrs. SUNYAKOVA (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) emphasized the close and complex interdependence between demographic trends and economic, ecological, social and cultural factors: that explained why, on the threshold of the twenty-first century, it was essential to stabilize the demographic growth of countries and regions in order to guarantee more balanced economic

and social progress for future generations, to overcome backwardness and to settle local conflicts. She also emphasized the importance of international co-operation, which, while making use of models that had proved their worth, should be constantly setting out on new paths and seeking to resolve demographic, social, economic and ecological problems in a rational and comprehensive manner.

14. From that angle, she felt that the UNFPA's performance in implementing the World Population Plan of Action since the 1974 Bucharest Conference and the 1984 Mexico Conference had been satisfactory. She particularly stressed the role played by the Fund and its Executive Director, Mrs. Sadik, in organizing the International Forum on Population in the Twenty-first Century; she endorsed the Amsterdam Declaration adopted by the Forum and welcomed document DP/1990/44, reporting on its implementation.

15. UNFPA provided valuable assistance to the developing countries, where it was endeavouring to reduce the level of infant mortality, diminish illiteracy, increase life expectancy, and raise the level of education of women, while at the same time seeking to expand and improve statistical services. Although the machinery for international co-ordination and co-operation had been improved, it was still not commensurate with the scale of the problems. Efforts should be made to co-ordinate the programming cycles of UNDP, UNFPA and, if possible, UNICEF, and to design programmes that took into account countries' economic and social development potential and objectives.

16. The documents submitted by UNFPA at the current session showed that it had so far not analysed a number of major questions in sufficient depth, in particular the interaction between social policies to control population growth, and family-planning programmes. The Fund should think more in terms of examining the whole range of social, economic, ethnic, cultural and religious factors governing the conditions under which birth control programmes had to be implemented. Such programmes should be designed and implemented in such a way as to respect the specific characteristics of each country and also human rights; as in the case of any activity in the sphere of population, women should play a full part in those programmes.

17. She commended the increase in the resources allocated by the Fund to projects for African countries, a trend that was in line with the efforts being made by the international community to increase its aid to those countries. The Soviet Union, for its part, intended to increase its contribution to the Fund by 22 per cent in 1991 in comparison with 1988, when it had begun to participate in its activities.

18. The Soviet authorities were anxious not only to share their own experience of demographic issues, but also to draw on that acquired by other countries, in order to solve a number of disturbing problems in the USSR, such as the persistently high rate of mortality among the working population, the high rate of infant mortality, the large number of abortions, attributable to inadequate contraception, and the far from rational distribution of the population: for example, the population of several regions in the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic and the Ukrainian SSR was declining while that of Central Asia was increasing at an annual rate of 2.84 per cent and would double within 25 years.

19. Soviet specialists were endeavouring to develop means of strengthening the family and protecting mothers and children, which would be integrated into the medium- and long-term population programmes in the country's various republics and regions. Soviet bodies were likewise making thorough preparations for the European seminar to be held in October 1990 at Tbilisi under the auspices of UNFPA and WHO. As part of its co-operation with the Fund, the Soviet Union had, for over 12 years, been providing demography courses at the University of Moscow, which had been followed by some 430 trainees from 70 countries. As part of those activities, a group of specialists responsible for preparing for the Chinese population census had recently made a visit in order to study computerized methods of population analysis. The Ministry of Health, the Soviet Academy of Sciences and the Soviet association Family and Health, which was a member of the International Planned Parenthood Federation, had declared their willingness to organize, with the support of the Fund, regular seminars on family-planning problems and the demographic and ecological aspects of development. The USSR wished its experts to participate more actively in the implementation of the Fund's projects and, in addition, hoped to benefit from the assistance of United Nations experts in evaluating the demographic consequences of the Chernobyl disaster. Lastly, Soviet officials considered that it was desirable to study the opportunities for co-operation in the field of mother and child welfare between UNFPA, UNICEF and Soviet bodies.

20. As the members of the UNDP Governing Council would have realized, the Soviet Union favoured a broad dialogue and extensive international co-operation, hoping that it would thus be possible to solve the demographic problems of a single and interdependent world, with due consideration for the differences between countries and regions. UNFPA had already made a constructive contribution to such dialogue and co-operation.

21. Mr. JOLLY (United Nations Children's Fund) said that in recent years collaboration between UNICEF, UNFPA and WHO had grown closer and more effective. He drew the Council's attention to three new developments likely to strengthen that collaboration at the field level and at headquarters. UNICEF, like UNFPA and WHO, had spent much of 1990 developing priority goals and strategies for the 1990s, focused, in the case of UNICEF, on child survival, development and protection and on improvements in the situation and welfare of women. Those objectives, which had been approved by UNICEF's Executive Board at its April session, would underlie collaboration by UNICEF with Governments, other United Nations agencies and donor countries.

22. At the same session, UNICEF's Executive Board had approved a new policy paper on safe motherhood, which focused particular attention on child spacing and family planning. In addition, in one of its resolutions the Executive Board had referred to the Amsterdam Declaration and encouraged UNICEF to ensure that family planning and child spacing were supported as integral parts of primary health care.

23. Lastly, the Executive Director of UNICEF, the Director-General of WHO and the Executive Director of UNFPA had agreed to send a letter to all their field offices summarizing the common goals and strategies of the agencies for the 1990s, drawing attention to their individual objectives and suggesting that the offices strengthen co-operation at the national level, in conjunction with Governments, with a particular focus on those common objectives and

strategies. In particular, the letter emphasized the desirability of harmonizing the programming cycles of the three organizations with national planning cycles, in particular when country programmes were prepared. Inter-office collaboration should specifically focus on reinforcing maternal and child health and family-planning services, analysis of needs, support for information, education and communication, improved monitoring of the human dimensions of development and support for actions to improve the status and well-being of women. For example, it would be possible to consider combining UNICEF and WHO support for the supply of essential drugs with UNFPA support for supplies of contraceptive materials, provided that matched the wishes of the Governments concerned. As could be seen, the letter sought to ensure that field offices activities were not merely parallel, but complementary, and thus more effective.

24. Such complementarity was also desirable at a broader level in efforts to promote more balanced, more sustainable and more human development. As was apparent from the documents before the Council, UNFPA stressed the importance of family planning not only as a way of slowing down the rate of population growth, but also as a means of improving maternal and child health and helping to improve the status of women. For its part, UNICEF wished to emphasize that if child health and survival were improved, couples would feel freer to decide for themselves how many children they wished to have. As the Executive Director of UNICEF had observed, it was by combining child survival and family planning that population stabilization would most quickly be achieved.

25. Many new challenges remained. The World Summit for Children to be held in New York the following September would be an opportunity for the international community as a whole to commit itself to achieving the goals for the 1990s. With renewed action and commitment it could help all countries move to a more human pattern of development in the last decade of the century.

26. Mr. Morales Carballo (Cuba) took the Chair.

27. Ms. ALOPÆUS-STÄHL (Sweden) pointed out that although a high percentage of the world's population did benefit from development efforts, it remained true that the number of women, men and children living in misery was increasing rapidly on account of the growing imbalance between population and resources. She hoped that the current session of the Governing Council would provide an opportunity for a constructive dialogue on the ways of solving that problem with the co-operation of UNFPA. The reports by the Executive Director on the Fund's activities (DP/1990/45, parts I to III) were a good starting point for such a debate.

28. With regard to the Amsterdam Declaration and its implications for population programmes, she trusted that the Governing Council's deliberations would be reflected in the report by the Executive Director of UNFPA to the General Assembly at its forty-fifth session. The Swedish representatives at the Amsterdam International Forum on Population in the Twenty-first Century had noted with satisfaction the constructive ideas put forward on the interaction between population, development, the environment and the status of women. While it was true that population programmes were dependent on development in a wide variety of economic, social and cultural areas, there were nevertheless hundreds of millions of women and men whose demands for family-planning services were not met on account of inadequate funds and

supplies. Women should therefore be enabled to participate fully in development activities as a whole, and the management capacity of population programmes should be improved. Her delegation was consequently prepared to endorse the substantive and programme directions proposed by the Executive Director in document DP/1990/44 regarding family planning, maternal and child health, population policy development and information, education and communication.

29. She hoped that the work plan for 1991-1994 (DP/1990/47) would be flexible enough to ensure that available resources were used efficiently.

UNFPA programmes should be matched to the contributions the donor countries were prepared to provide and to the actual capacity of the recipient countries to utilize them. While welcoming the increase in programme implementation, she suggested that a mechanism for efficient reprogramming of unused funds within certain time-limits should be introduced. In addition, as far as the proposal for a doubling or trebling of the amount of funds earmarked for population programmes was concerned, she said that while the implication of the Amsterdam Forum was that development should take place concurrently in a number of areas which strengthened population programmes and made them more sustainable through national capacity building, it might be inappropriate to increase funding for population activities if the level of development assistance to social sectors remained stagnant. The overall level of international development assistance ought to be increased so that the financial burden was shared fairly.

30. As far as evaluation was concerned, it was a never-ending process, and there was room for improvement in that sphere too, as was rightly pointed out in document DP/1990/49.

31. Co-ordination of development activities within the United Nations and with agencies outside the system still left much to be desired. Her delegation desired closer co-operation among the members of the international community in the fields of development and population, although it did not consider special machinery to be necessary. UNFPA was a natural focal point for global co-ordination, and it should be strengthened so that it would serve that purpose.

32. She welcomed the progress achieved in the sphere of policy formulation and in data collection and analysis, in particular by sex, and considered that UNFPA should play an increasingly active role in that sphere. Supporting national capacity building would enable Governments to initiate and co-ordinate population programmes effectively as part of their country's overall development. Co-operation between UNDP and UNFPA on country-profile identification was commendable, although those agencies could undoubtedly benefit from the World Bank country and sector analyses and from the analysis of the situation of women and children undertaken regularly by UNICEF. She would encourage UNFPA to develop its co-operation with specialized agencies in implementing various programmes, provided that the agencies were able to offer competitive partnerships. With regard to UNICEF in particular, such co-operation would widen the scope for family-planning services, information, education and communication and the prevention of AIDS.

33. She noted with satisfaction the Fund's participation in the Safe Motherhood initiative and the joint declaration by WHO, UNICEF and UNFPA on the reproductive health of youth, as those two spheres were inseparably linked.

34. The Fund also had a substantial contribution to make towards the formulation of a fourth international development strategy, in particular in the area of human resources development, and to the forthcoming World Environment Conference. The experience gathered by the Fund in the field of development policy formulation and implementation with a particular emphasis on urbanization and migration, as well as on the demographic causes and consequences of those phenomena, was extremely valuable.

35. Mr. PASQUIER (Switzerland) said that the report by Mrs. Sadik clearly set out the implications of the Amsterdam Declaration. He nevertheless regretted that that global view was not more fully reflected in the latter part of the document, which restricted itself to an excessively one-sided approach, taking planning activities out of their context. Experience had however clearly shown that the need to reduce the rate of population growth could not be treated as a problem on its own which could be solved simply by having more and better family-planning services. Such efforts were undoubtedly essential, but they could not achieve lasting results unless they were integrated into the overall context of social development. He referred in that connection to the importance of raising women's educational level and status as an essential means not only of diminishing fertility, but also of improving family life. To achieve that end, it was above all necessary to encourage the provision of schooling for girls and practical training for women in order to give them greater economic independence and freedom of choice. It was also desirable to help them to modify traditional institutions which were more often than not hostile to their emancipation. It was vital to adopt approaches that involved the community as a whole, and in particular to seek to develop awareness among young boys and men, either through schools and the media or through the support of local leaders, in particular religious leaders. It was also essential to encourage couples to communicate with each other more if there was to be a genuine sharing of responsibility for birth control.

36. Demography was first and foremost a cultural phenomenon. Accordingly, his delegation welcomed the current broad recognition of the importance of socio-cultural factors for successful population programmes. It had taken note with considerable interest of UNFPA's activities in the field of socio-cultural research. One of the major conclusions of the preliminary analysis made by the Fund of the influence of socio-cultural factors on the success of population programmes concerned the correlation between a society's level of social development and its attitude towards change, a finding which again underscored the need for a global approach aimed at influencing the various factors affecting economic and social development simultaneously and in a co-ordinated manner.

37. As the report pointed out, it was not enough just to make more and more studies; they must also be of use to planners and project designers. Not only must they be made known and accessible, but they should also lead to specific proposals capable of bringing about a change in behaviour. UNFPA should draw the attention of authors to those requirements and encourage government officials and NGOs to establish closer links with researchers. His delegation would like the secretariat to provide more information on the research

activities in UNFPA's programme in terms of expenditure and sectoral distribution. It also noted the lack of a research strategy for the future. The analysis carried out by the Fund had shown that such studies were an essential basis for developing appropriate programmes and projects. The Fund should ensure, in conjunction with recipient countries, that socio-cultural research was carried out whenever it was lacking, which did not necessarily mean that UNFPA should provide the funding for the research, although it could do so whenever necessary, particularly in order to enhance the research capacity of developing countries.

38. As far as mobilizing resources for population activities was concerned, Switzerland realized the seriousness of the problem of population growth and was prepared to support activities in that field, essentially through its contribution to UNFPA. It was convinced of the desirability of significantly increasing overall funds for population programmes, but felt that too much store should not be set by target figures whose achievement did not itself guarantee a genuine improvement in the situation. It was desirable to strengthen support for a whole range of other sectors whose direct or indirect influence on population growth had been demonstrated. The intrinsic quality of population programmes, i.e. their suitability for local conditions and needs and their integration within an overall strategy aimed at developing human resources and improving living conditions, was as important as the resources available. In her reports, Mrs. Sadik clearly demonstrated the major role that UNFPA should play in helping its partners to make programmes of action in the various development sectors more consistent and better co-ordinated. The comparative analysis made by UNFPA on the topic of population and development planning had clearly shown that the measures it had adopted in that sector had not been sufficiently concrete, for lack of operational concepts. It was therefore vital for the Fund to help develop such concepts and strengthen human resources in the areas of analysis, planning and management. Only then would outside assistance be able to achieve its essential objective, which was to reinforce countries' capacity to solve their own problems.

39. Mr. FAN Guoxiang (China) said that population problems had taken on a universal dimension and that all countries in the world would have to set themselves to the difficult task of curbing the population explosion. The world's population continued to grow by 90 million each year, 90 per cent of those people being born in socially and economically underdeveloped countries. The Amsterdam International Forum in November 1989 had put forward a number of principles which could guide UNFPA's future work. His delegation considered that it was essential for the Fund to continue to uphold the principle of respect for the recipient countries' sovereignty.

40. His delegation was pleased to note that in 1989 the total amount of contributions to UNFPA and the funds allocated to projects had increased. In addition, it welcomed the marked rise in funds allocated to priority countries, in particular those in the sub-Saharan region, and hoped that UNFPA would also continue to give attention to other regions with serious population problems.

41. Pursuant to decisions 87/15 and 87/30 of the Governing Council, UNFPA had gradually increased its assistance aimed at promoting a more active role for women in development. In some developing countries, and especially in the

underdeveloped areas of those countries, women's socio-economic status was still very low, a fact which prevented them from participating properly in decisions affecting socio-economic development and family planning.

Accordingly, UNFPA should strengthen its activities in that sphere, and in particular develop, for example, for the direct benefit of women, literacy teaching and training in production techniques and management skills for small-scale enterprises.

42. The goal of UNFPA assistance was to allow recipient countries to become more self-reliant in handling their population problems. After having received such assistance for many years, many countries had acquired enough experience in the areas of programme and project implementation, evaluation and control for UNFPA to encourage them henceforth to implement some projects on their own.

43. In addition, his delegation had also noted that UNFPA was gradually expanding local procurement activities, although the proportion was still too small. The Fund should systematically encourage the purchase of local equipment, which was generally best suited to requirements, and in addition simplify procedure by, for example, authorizing field offices to take full responsibility for local procurement.

44. The Chinese Government had enjoyed excellent relations with UNFPA for a period of some 10 years. It wished to expand that co-operation and to broaden the areas covered by it, and was also prepared to develop co-operation with other countries.

45. Mr. Popescu (Romania) resumed the Chair.

46. Mr. FONDI (Italy) said that, at the current rate of demographic growth, the world population would exceed 6 billion by the end of the twentieth century and 8 billion by 2025. The consequences could be dramatic, particularly as the most vulnerable groups of the population would be the most seriously affected. Italy therefore attached great importance to the activities which UNFPA had been carrying out for the past 20 years and more and firmly supported the structural and financial reforms introduced by the Executive Director in order to improve the Fund's effectiveness. Owing to a financial squeeze, Italy had unfortunately been obliged to reduce its contribution, but it hoped that as from 1991 it would be able to resume, or even improve on the previous rate.

47. The Italian Government urged great collaboration between UNFPA and Italian institutions dealing with population problems such as the Italian Institute of Population Research, which had recently requested UNFPA to organize a workshop on migration problems in Italy and had offered the support of its technical resources for that purpose.

48. The organization of the International Forum on Population in the Twenty-first Century, held in Amsterdam in November 1989, had been an excellent initiative. The Declaration adopted on that occasion should make it possible to prepare an effective strategy for follow-up action.

49. Mr. EL FERJANI (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) considered that the goal to which the participants in the Amsterdam Forum aspired of ensuring a better life for future generations represented a practical and urgent task for the international community, but also a complex one, as a number of interdependent factors had to be taken into account, such as: the role of women in development; the relationship between family and development and between development and national cultures and traditions; and structural adjustment, which naturally had implications for population programmes.

50. There was consequently a heavy task ahead for UNFPA, which was right in wishing to broaden its activities, for example by undertaking studies on the education of women and children. It was essential, however, that when decisions were taken, the prime consideration should be to respect each community's own culture.

51. Effective co-ordination of action at the national, subregional, regional and international levels was essential in order to avoid duplication of expenditure and decisions. There was accordingly a need for rationalization, and for that purpose it would perhaps be useful for UNFPA, as had been proposed, to set up an appropriate mechanism of its own. He would like to be informed about the financial implications of that recommendation and the sources of finance for it.

52. Mr. SAHLMANN (Federal Republic of Germany) said that his delegation attached special importance to the substantive recommendations of the Amsterdam Declaration, which ought to be followed-up. As donors had been requested to co-ordinate population programmes better and to make them more effective, his Government had noted with interest UNFPA's proposal for the establishment of a co-ordination mechanism at the international level and considered that the Fund would be best suited to take the lead in that connection. The proposal by the delegation of Denmark for the preparation of a joint report by UNFPA, UNICEF and, at a later stage, IPPF, could be a first step towards better co-ordination. His delegation also supported greater co-operation with UNV and WHO. The Amsterdam Declaration had rightly stressed the need for recipient countries to take full responsibility for co-ordinating efforts within their own territories and to increase their administrative and managerial capacities in the population field. His delegation fully supported UNFPA's appeal to recipient countries to increase the level of their investment in the areas of health, education and population to 5 per cent of GNP. Any increase in international assistance in the population fields must be preceded by an unequivocal commitment by recipient countries to give much higher priority to population, social development and poverty alleviation.

53. In her report, the Executive Director of UNFPA had indicated the importance of curbing population growth if effective action was to be taken to eliminate poverty. Poverty, moreover, necessarily limited the success of population programmes, particularly because it prevented access to education. UNFPA should mobilize all development aid institutions, within and outside the United Nations system, for the fight against absolute poverty, which was an essential aspect of population policies. His delegation repeated its earlier appeal for active co-operation between all United Nations agencies, preferably in the form of joint programming.

54. Effective action on poverty also meant focusing programming on priority countries and then on poverty groups within any single country. His delegation took note with satisfaction of the increase in the share of programme expenditure going to priority countries, especially in Africa. It would however welcome more substantial increases in the future. From the qualitative standpoint, also, programming should concentrate on the same group of countries, and, in that connection, the Programme Review and Strategy Development missions introduced by UNFPA in May 1989 appeared to be an excellent programming instrument. However, the selection of countries (Angola, Ecuador, Haiti, Mexico and the Syrian Arab Republic) did not sufficiently reflect the need to apply the Amsterdam recommendations on improving national co-ordination to priority countries. That shortcoming should be remedied.

55. His delegation was concerned that UNFPA had not, as planned, allocated 50 per cent of its resources to family planning in 1989. Furthermore, if it had allocated more than 28 per cent of its resources to research, it should also have been able to devote a much larger share to policy implementation and thus to the application of research findings. Moreover, on the specific question of statistical presentation, UNFPA should ensure that definitions were made uniform so that it could submit a coherent table of its aid broken down by executing agency.

56. With regard to the UNFPA field structure, his delegation would like to know what progress had been made on decentralization and, in particular, on the partial delegation of approval authority to field offices. There was room for a careful assessment of the staffing needs of the large number of field offices, which had only 63 Professional posts compared with 100 at Headquarters. It was imperative that many more Professional staff members should be appointed to field offices; their recruitment at the national level would not be enough: in order to meet the future challenges outlined in the Amsterdam Declaration, consideration should be given to reassigning Headquarters Professional staff to the field.

57. On the issue of evaluation, UNFPA had taken a laudable initiative in integrating in-depth programme evaluations into the Programme Review and Strategy Development exercise. His delegation had noted with concern that only half of the large-scale projects included evaluation components which went beyond mere self-evaluation. Projects, and not just programmes, should be subject to regular independent evaluations.

58. His delegation would also be interested to learn how the "Lessons Learned Database" was constituted, particularly in connection with the feedback of the findings of evaluations. In his view, a mere reporting of results would not suffice. Short training courses should be organized for the staff members concerned.

59. Mr. MACDONALD (Australia) said that the documents before the Council fully established the inextricable link between population, natural resources and the environment, which was also stressed in the Amsterdam Declaration.

60. UNFPA was rightly placing more and more emphasis on maternal and child health, the status of women and their role in development. His delegation particularly welcomed the continuing attention given by the Fund to those

issues in Asia and the Pacific, since there was a particularly strong correlation between a decline in births and family welfare on one hand and female literacy and education on the other. Account must always be taken of cultural attitudes when attempting to persuade people of the need for family planning. His delegation therefore welcomed UNFPA's proposal to pursue socio-cultural research on the issue.

62. The population problem was undeniably critical in Africa, but the same was true in certain parts of Asia and the Pacific; he therefore welcomed UNFPA's decision to allocate a high proportion of its resources to programmes for seven South Pacific countries in particular. The Australian Government and Australian institutions would support some of those activities.

61. Australia had substantially increased its contribution in 1990. As it saw population planning as an integral part of development, it would continue to support UNFPA's work in that area.

63. Ms. FIRDAUS (Observer for Bangladesh) said that Bangladesh and UNFPA maintained a symbiotic relationship. In particular, the Fund was making a very active contribution to Bangladesh's Maternal Child Health/Family Planning Programme. It was also collaborating by studying the country's population activities, providing contraceptives and organizing services.

64. Bangladesh was one of the most densely populated countries in the world and accordingly gave priority to action designed to slow population growth, which had been reduced to 2.3 per cent in the 1980s. In 1969, family planning had been practised by only 3.9 per cent of couples; in 1988-1989 the proportion had risen to 33 per cent.

65. The Government had set up a national population control service under the chairmanship of the President of Bangladesh. At the local level, family-planning committees, health and family welfare centres and training programmes for family-planning workers had been established. The implementation of multi-sectoral projects has also benefited from greater co-ordination between the different ministries. In spite of the disappointing results achieved during the first three years of the third five-year plan, the point had been reached at which there was greater acceptance of smaller families. In addition, the public authorities had initiated vigorous action to improve the status of women, in particular through education, which had been made compulsory for girls, and through training programmes for women. There again, UNFPA aid had been valuable.

66. The Government of Bangladesh had decided that population questions would continue to enjoy high priority during the 1990s and that the community as a whole and NGOs should be more closely associated with family-planning programmes. Bangladesh was relying on UNFPA's fullest co-operation during the entire decade; it hoped moreover that the Fund would be called on to play a larger role in the new programme of action to be adopted by the Second United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries.

67. Mr. MALMIERCA (Cuba) said that his delegation had studied the documents before the Council with great interest. It congratulated the UNFPA secretariat on the excellent work it had done in 1989 and the important activities it planned for the future. The Amsterdam Declaration had been

analysed to yield a group of interesting proposals and guidelines in document DP/1990/44, which his delegation was prepared to support, on the understanding that they would be implemented in such a way as to help individual countries achieve their own objectives in the population field.

68. The problem of resources was fundamental, and it was unanimously recognized that international organizations, developed countries and other sources of finance would have to furnish considerably increased resources to help the developing countries resolve their population problems. It would not, however, be easy for the developing countries themselves to increase their contributions, as the international economic situation had affected most of them badly, making it difficult for them to increase the resources allocated to population activities. The need to give priority to population questions was increasingly recognized, however, and his delegation was sure that UNFPA would enjoy the support of the international community.

69. Co-ordination at the national and international levels was another essential aspect. UNFPA had been successful in co-ordinating its activities with other institutions and with Governments. At the national level, each Government was responsible for the promotion, execution and co-ordination of population activities, and better co-ordination at all levels would help to make population programmes considerably more effective and to achieve the common goal of a higher standard of living and quality of life for all peoples.

70. Document DP/1990/45 shared UNFPA's increasingly active role in giving assistance to the developing countries. Efficient allocation of resources for project implementation was the best way of ensuring that the international community's support for UNFPA would continue to grow.

71. In 1989, the Fund had focused its activities on a number of issues, including family planning, information, education and communication, the collection of basic data and women in development. It was essential to maintain a proper balance in the appropriation of resources; no one activity should be favoured at the expense of others, in view of countries' differing situations and capacities.

72. 1989 had marked a new stage in the collaboration between UNFPA and the Latin American and Caribbean region; Cuba in particular was sparing no effort to make the most effective use of the assistance provided by the Fund, which was of great importance for its programmes on family planning, training and research. Furthermore it was important to stress the valuable support given to national programmes by activities at the regional and interregional levels.

73. With reference to the section of the report entitled "Promotion of awareness and review of other aspects of the UNFPA programme", mention should be made of the Fund's important work on the review and appraisal of experience, exchange of information, policy and programme co-ordination, information, TCDC and the promotion of multi-bilateral financing. His delegation had taken particular note of the section dealing with population and poverty. The analysis of the relationship between poverty and population was unquestionably useful, and his delegation trusted that the Secretariat would continue its efforts to identify possible activities, co-ordinate them with recipient Governments and secure aid from potential donors, in order to help alleviate poverty.

74. Mr. VAN ARENDONK (Assistant Executive Director, United Nations Population Fund), introducing the report on evaluation (DP/1990/49), said that he would confine himself to highlighting a number of the Fund's recent evaluation activities and some of their important contributions of evaluation to policy and programme formulation and operational management.

75. UNFPA had been in existence for more than 20 years, and in that time, the role of evaluation had evolved to suit the needs. Initially, the Fund had provided data on the expected and actual performance of country, intercountry and other programmes so that it could be assessed whether the targets of Fund activities had been met. Later on, evaluation had started assuming a more significant role in providing key decision makers with information to help them in their policy-making and managerial functions; that had meant linking monitoring more closely to evaluation and strengthening the relationship between careful programme and project design and actual evaluation. In the past couple of years, as most country and intercountry programmes supported by UNFPA had gone through their third or fourth cycles, programme and project formulation had required increasingly careful and analytical evaluation of past performance. The basic needs assessment missions, which the Fund had depended upon in the past to help guide its decision-making, had been replaced by Programme Review and Strategy Development (PRSD) activities, concerned with comprehensive evaluation of previous experience as the basis for formulating new strategies and programmes. Thus, evaluation had become an agency-wide function involving not only the Technical and Evaluation Division (TED) but also the Geographical Divisions, the executing agencies, governmental collaborating institutions and, most importantly, the UNFPA field offices.

76. The expanded role of evaluation in UNFPA activities had thus given rise to a number of emerging patterns. Firstly, evaluation had tended to be more programme-oriented, attempting to provide key decision makers with useful synthesized data quickly. Secondly, evaluation was now an integral part of every unit in the Fund, with internal evaluation reports regularly made by field offices and executing agencies, the main points of the "lessons learned" from such evaluations being collated and analysed by the Evaluation Branch and TED. Thirdly, the Evaluation Branch was currently concentrating more on independent evaluation of a comparative or thematic nature in an attempt to respond to the more immediate data needs of programme and project officials. To that end, the Evaluation Branch and TED collaborated closely with the Geographical Divisions, executing agencies and private consultants, as well as UNFPA country offices.

77. A number of measures had been taken in pursuing that more active approach to evaluation. Firstly, the introduction and use of the new monitoring and evaluation division guidelines, currently available in English, French and Spanish, was being speeded up. The new project management plan, which had been largely taken over from UNDP procedures, would make it easier to monitor project development, even as the project progress report was no longer required more than once a year. Those new monitoring and evaluation instruments had been tested for two years and were the results of accumulated experience in the Fund. Secondly, training in the processes and procedures of monitoring and evaluation was being pursued and was especially needed for UNFPA field staff, who bore the main responsibility in the area. At the latest Country Directors' Workshop held in New York in April and May 1990, considerable attention had been focused on evaluation. Thirdly, greater

emphasis was being placed on the dissemination of evaluation results, which required as much attention as the actual evaluation process. TED's primary goal was more immediate feedback to decision makers, and that was being carried out by anticipating user needs. Substantive results of evaluations were being released through programme advisory notes, bulletins and the like. The most important findings of major reviews were made the subject of workshops and seminars, to which United Nations agency and NGO officials concerned were invited. Fourthly, as the PRSD system became the main instrument for assessing needs and formulating programmes, the crucial role of evaluation in a total management process was becoming more apparent. The Executive Director had emphasized that PRSD involved all sectors of the Fund. Monitoring and evaluation in all their aspects would therefore require the collaborative efforts of the Geographical Divisions. The evaluation function should thus be able to respond to various information needs: in-depth independent evaluation, thematic or comparative evaluation, internal programme and project evaluation, and lessons learned formed continually updated data bases.

78. Lastly, evaluation activities in the future would emphasize follow-up to recommendations and suggestions for corrective action arising from earlier evaluations. Every evaluation report would include a plan and schedule for follow-up to determine whether actions proposed were being carried out or not. That approach stressed the continuous nature of evaluation as an integral part of the normal management process.

79. Mr. SKJØNSBERG (Norway) welcomed the periodic report on evaluation and said that the Executive Director had his Government's full support in her efforts to improve the evaluation system; it was necessary to identify not only progress and achievements, but also mistakes and difficulties in order to learn from past experience. The comparative evaluations provided useful information for programme and project formulation and for policy development. Those undertaken in the area of population and development planning showed that, for several reasons, the fundamental objective of integrating population into development planning had not been achieved. His delegation was certain that the findings of the report would help UNFPA, and perhaps other bodies as well, to improve performance in that important area. The evaluations of agencies executing UNFPA intercountry programmes were also useful. A good example was the identification of obstacles the WHO regional office in Africa was facing as an executing agency: lack of co-ordination between the regional office and WHO headquarters; WHO's national quota system for hiring staff; and lack of technical capacity in the field of family planning. Those findings were of particular interest for assessing the effectiveness and advantages of different multilateral institutions.

80. Regarding monitoring and evaluation guidelines, his delegation shared UNFPA's view that the basic problem was not so much the design and content of the guidelines, but rather the difficulties encountered in ensuring their proper application. Norway therefore supported the Fund's efforts to improve training in the area, both for UNFPA and executing agency staff and for government project personnel.

81. Mr. NOBLE (Canada) welcomed the increasing emphasis the Fund was placing on monitoring and evaluation, especially as those activities related to the design of new projects and programmes. Canada would encourage UNFPA to apply those guidelines as quickly as possible so as to facilitate monitoring and evaluation as truly effective management tools.

82. His delegation was, however, concerned about four areas, on which it had questions to raise. Firstly, separate country programme reviews were being superseded by Programme Review and Strategy Development (PRSD) exercises. Would evaluation of country programmes continue to be given adequate priority, so as to facilitate effective future programming? Secondly, the evaluation of country programmes indicated that many programmes had consisted of a collection of individual projects, rather than a coherent programme of population activities. That appeared to be a significant deficiency, which his delegation assumed was being dealt with through PRSD. Thirdly, it was disconcerting that UNFPA had found it difficult to get access to the results of internal evaluations undertaken in the field. What were the precise reasons for that situation? Lastly, the evaluation report mentioned deficiencies in integrating population into development planning. It stated that few projects if any had succeeded in making population an integral part of development policy. While pointing out that that was a complex area of programming, the report specified a number of very basic problems in respect of project development and planning. His delegation hoped that those findings would serve as a basis for developing a more realistic approach to programming, to which such high priority was attached.

83. Mr. MOYE (United Kingdom) welcomed the frank and open tone of the report on evaluation. He wondered whether UNFPA had set up a time plan for implementing the training it regarded as essential and how that training would be organized. He approved of UNFPA's move to PRSD, which was likely to further the integration of evaluation into programme and policy development, and asked whether an evaluation was planned to assess the usefulness and utilization of disseminating evaluation results to the field. The United Kingdom was pleased that UNFPA intended to undertake a large-scale evaluation of population education and would like to be kept informed of the progress made. His delegation also asked how UNFPA planned to work towards resolving problems encountered by WHO in implementing the EMRO and AFRO programmes and how evaluation results and recommendations were likely to be translated into practice.

84. Ms. MAGUIRE (United States) commended UNFPA for giving increased attention in recent years to evaluation and was particularly pleased that the Fund had invited the United States Agency for International Development (AID) to collaborate in several UNFPA evaluation and programming missions, including those to Mexico, Nigeria and Zimbabwe. AID would welcome other joint missions of that nature in the future.

85. From UNFPA's report, it appeared that internal evaluations were not yet being completed routinely for every project and that the quality of such evaluations varied greatly. Her delegation would like to know whether UNFPA planned to require regular internal evaluations of all its projects beyond self-evaluation and whether they were the subject of standard instructions or guidelines which might result in more consistent quality.

86. With regard to the dissemination of evaluation results, her delegation would be glad to receive UNFPA evaluation reports on a regular basis, as well as output from the Lessons Learned Database. Such information would be extremely useful and would contribute greatly to effective co-ordination.

87. As careful evaluation was needed to programme scarce resources most effectively, AID had recently taken a number of steps to improve its own evaluation effort: recognition of the need to move beyond an assessment of project outputs and focus instead on programme impacts; creation of an evaluation working group within the Office of Population and establishment at a later date of a separate evaluation unit; and planning for six country-programme impact evaluations in 1990-1991. The Demographic and Health Surveys programme was an extremely useful tool for population-programme evaluation. Such nationally representative surveys provided a multitude of indicators on contraceptive knowledge, practice and accessibility, as well as retrospective measures of fertility and infant and child mortality. Thirty-four surveys of that nature had been completed by 1985, and 25 others were planned for the next several years. The United States welcomed continued co-operation with UNFPA in the area and further discussions on ways of using data for programme evaluation and improvement.

88. Mrs. KRAUER MULLER (Switzerland) said that in order to prosper and improve, any long-term venture must be able to benefit from a critical look at the past, and for that reason her delegation attached great importance to providing the co-operation agencies it supported with an effective evaluation system, enabling them not only to identify past successes and mistakes but also to understand and use those findings in order to improve their programmes. Her delegation commended the secretariat for the informative and critical report on evaluation and suggested that such a report should be submitted to the Governing Council every two years. The Fund appeared to have an exemplary system for feeding evaluation results back into the programming process, at least in theory. If the system was to function properly, not only must it be carefully planned, but its users must also be alive to its usefulness and know how it worked, and that called for appropriate training. Her delegation therefore hoped that UNFPA's efforts in that direction would soon achieve concrete results. The results of evaluations must also be made widely available to the government officials in charge of population programmes, so that they could take them into account in the overall framework of their activities.

89. Her delegation would like to have information from the secretariat about UNFPA's policy in deciding on evaluation themes and timetables, and about the survey methods used.

90. Her Government appreciated the frankness with which the recent evaluation results had been summarized in the second part of the report; although often very critical, the report did not always indicate precisely how UNFPA or its partners planned to take those findings into account to improve their services. Switzerland would be glad to have information on that subject from the competent multilateral agencies, in particular WHO and ILO, if possible through the representatives of those bodies at the current session.

91. Miss PRADEL (Federal Republic of Germany) noted with satisfaction that the information obtained from the Lessons Learned Database would be backed up by monitoring mechanisms and training plans and that evaluation and programming were automatically linked to the Programme Review and Strategy Development activities. Clearly, the guidelines concerning monitoring and evaluation must help to improve project evaluation and should be incorporated in the project descriptions. It was essential that the guidelines should be applied by independent experts and not by local project management staff. It would be useful to determine on a country-by-country basis whether the field offices were able to provide the independent experts desired.

92. Mr. EL FERJANI (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) said that his delegation reserved the right to speak on document DP/1990/49 later.

The meeting rose at 5.55 p.m.