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Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Tuesday, 29 May 1990, at 3 p.m.

President: Mr. POPESCU (Romania)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.10 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 (DP/1990/44) (continued)
- (b) REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR ON 1989 ACTIVITIES (DP/1990/45, Parts I, II and III; DP/1990/46, Parts I and II) (continued)
- (c) PERIODIC REPORT ON EVALUATION (DP/1990/49) (continued)

1. Mrs. CHAALAN (Syrian Arab Republic) said that her country was fully aware of the scope and complexity of demographic problems and of their disastrous consequences for economic development and social well-being. The Syrian Arab Republic attached considerable importance to population activities and greatly appreciated UNFPA's activities and its assistance to countries in formulating their demographic policies and its role in making public opinion aware of population problems.

2. The world was facing a demographic explosion which could only be controlled through international co-operation; that was particularly true of the developing countries which were also confronting other complex problems involving notably the environment and the economy as well as a situation which inhibited any development strategy and prevented any improvement in the living standard of populations.

3. Her delegation was convinced that finding a solution for demographic problems was a prerequisite to any economic and social progress and it supported the resolutions and conclusions of the International Forum held in Amsterdam which had correctly identified the issues at stake and drafted a world strategy to deal with them. In those circumstances, UNFPA's work-load would inevitably increase.

4. Governments as well as the entire international community had a responsibility to improve the living standards of their populations. For that, the solidarity of UNFPA and the other competent specialized agencies was necessary, and it was therefore important to diversify the sources of funding. The Syrian delegation welcomed the increase in contributions from donor countries and agreed with the Executive Director that those contributions should be expanded still further, that other donors should be found and that the full range of resources allocated to demographic activities should be increased. With respect to bilateral financing, her delegation emphasized that, as indicated in document DP/1990/44, the criteria for selecting the recipient countries had often resulted in the concentration of bilateral resources in some countries to the detriment of others.

5. Mr. URBINA FUENTES (Observer for Mexico) said that Mexico's demographic programme reflected a close relationship with UNFPA both in respect of the support received and in the drafting and execution of the programme. It was currently in its third stage - the period 1989-1994 - within the frame of reference drawn up in 1976, and taking into account the fact that the country had a population which doubled every 67 years.

6. That programme had been successful because in 15 years the overall birth rate had been reduced from 6.3 to 3.5 and because the number of couples making use of the family planning services had increased from 900,000 in 1973 to 7.9 million in 1989. Despite those satisfactory results, however, the annual demographic growth rate was still 2.1 per cent.

7. The Government of Mexico intended to tackle the problem of extreme poverty through a national solidarity programme because it realized that it was dangerous to allow the imbalance between population, territory and resources to persist. The Government had given unprecedented support to the population policy. For the first time, the President of the Republic himself had chaired the quarterly meetings to assess demographic policy and related programmes. Similarly, the funds allocated to that sector had increased and greater private sector participation was encouraged. Consequently, the family planning budget had reached almost \$40 million in 1990.

8. Particular attention was being given to family planning, obstetrics and sex education. The demographic education and education programmes for women as well as those programmes on internal and international migration had been expanded and projects had been started for developing intermediate towns as well as for environmental measures; the most important measure undertaken, however, was the decentralization of the national population programme in order to assist States and municipalities in obtaining not only political support but also the financial resources needed for its execution.

9. Mexico supported the proposals that other United Nations agencies should be involved and felt that it was necessary for the agencies accredited to a country to pool their resources and join other private non-governmental organizations in support of national priorities. Lastly, Mexico hoped that, without detriment to the resources allocated to developing countries, special assistance could be given to Governments which increased their budgets and embarked on measures in the priority areas mentioned in part II of document DP/1990/45.

10. Mr. GHAZI (International Labour Organisation) said that he would confine his remarks to the evaluation report and thus respond in particular to the representative of Switzerland. The purpose of the joint ILO/UNFPA evaluation activities was to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the programmes. On the basis of the recommendations made as a result of those evaluations, ILO had implemented certain measures to strengthen the joint UNFPA/ILO programme: many of the projects executed by ILO were multidisciplinary and rather complex and therefore, a new post of interregional adviser on project design and evaluation had been established and funded by ILO; an additional post of programme officer, also funded by ILO had been created in the Population Co-ordinator's Office, in collaboration with the relevant UNFPA branches, the job description of the information, education and communication (IEC) expert had been substantially revised. ILO had also drawn on its own resources to create an additional post of IEC documentalist, lastly, various measures had been undertaken to integrate population concerns into major relevant operational programmes in a systematic manner.

11. The need for brevity in document DP/1990/49 might have put certain remarks somewhat out of context. For example, the reference in paragraph 47 to the over-burdening of staff with administrative responsibilities could be rather misleading, because the professional staff was not involved in

day-to-day administration. The problem was one of limited staff both at Headquarters and in the field, especially of regional advisors, in view of the increase in countries with projects and the number of countries interested in having projects.

12. Mrs. SADIK (Executive Director, United Nations Population Fund), replying to comments made by delegations during the debate on item 6, expressed the satisfaction and gratitude of all UNFPA staff for the support and constructive suggestions voiced concerning the work of the Fund and said that she deeply appreciated the concern expressed by numerous delegations about the need to increase significantly resources and funding for population programmes worldwide. Regarding documentation, she appreciated the many positive statements about the documentation UNFPA had prepared for the present session and recalled that Governing Council decision 89/46 A, paragraph 27, had requested it to submit, in addition to the regular annual and periodic reports, no more than two special reports per session; however, six special reports had already been requested for the thirty-eighth session of the Council.

13. She recalled the major points raised during the debate on the Amsterdam Declaration: (a) the extension of family-planning information and services; (b) the integration of family-planning programmes in basic health services; (c) the continuing need to broaden public awareness of population issues and their links to environmental and development issues; (d) the importance of socio-cultural research in designing and implementing programmes suited to local conditions; (e) the need for training in a variety of programmatic and management skills in order to make population programmes more effective; (f) the empowerment of women and their increasing participation in the management of social and economic programmes; (g) the strengthening of data collection and analysis capabilities at the country level; and (h) the need to double the resources available from both domestic and international sources for population programmes by the end of the century.

14. Responding to a query made by the representative of the Federal Republic of Germany, she pointed out that at present two countries - India and China - alone accounted for more than 60 per cent of total domestic spending on population. In both those cases, resources from international sources constituted a relatively small part of total spending. Although it was desirable that domestic spending on population programmes should increase in the future in many developing countries, the bulk of sub-Saharan African countries and other least developed countries would find it extremely difficult to raise the additional resources needed in the face of the debt crises, structural adjustment programmes and bleak prospects for economic growth in the 1990s. Consequently, the Fund had projected that, in the coming decade, domestic resources would increase in volume but not in percentage. The Fund realized that it was necessary to maintain the momentum generated by the Amsterdam Forum through immediate follow-up on all those points. To that end, work on various measures had been started: (a) reformulation and clarification, where necessary, of the Fund's major policy guidelines; (b) support for research and training; (c) review of ongoing programmes through the field offices with a view to integrating the goals and objectives of the Amsterdam Declaration; (d) assistance to Governments in formulating strategic planning goals and mechanisms in consonance with priorities and programme approaches of national development plans; and (e) increasing co-operation with other United Nations and with non-governmental organizations. Those issues were dealt with in more detail in document DP/1990/44 and in the supplementary information paper distributed on the previous day.

15. In reply to the question raised by the representative of the Netherlands concerning the need for increased emphasis on maternal care, she noted that that area had been relatively neglected in many countries. The Safe Motherhood Initiative jointly sponsored by WHO, UNFPA, UNICEF, UNDP, the World Bank, the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF) and the Population Council, had been specifically set up to address that problem, especially since maternal care offered a very good entry point for family planning.
16. She noted with satisfaction that Brazil had welcomed many of the suggestions made in document DP/1990/44 and was gratified that that country would emphasize population issues in the preparations for the 1992 Environment Conference.
17. She noted that the 1990 State of World Population Report had been favourably commented upon by numerous delegations. The report had been translated into 18 other languages, besides the working languages of the Fund, and had received extensive media coverage in many countries around the world. That had undoubtedly helped to focus attention on pressing population issues. The report should be seen as a continuation of the Amsterdam Forum. She shared the view expressed by the representative of the United Kingdom that all staff of aid agencies should be made aware of population issues.
18. Both developed and developing countries had strongly endorsed the need for increased resources for population programmes. It was extremely encouraging that many countries had specifically endorsed the target set in the Amsterdam Declaration of doubling the resources for population by the year 2000. In that connection, she thanked the Government of Denmark for having indicated that it would increase its financial resources to UNFPA. She agreed with the views expressed, notably by Norway and Sweden, that there was a need to increase population resources from Official Development Assistance and for greater burden sharing it was imperative to have a larger number of donors if the goal of \$9 billion was to be attained. As mentioned by the delegates of Canada and the Federal Republic of Germany, it was also of the utmost importance for the recipient countries to increase their share of resource flows; the EEC and the regional banks should also increase their contributions. The delegation of Belgium had suggested that special meetings should be held to improve co-ordination and financing and she was happy to state that the Fund was already promoting such meetings, for example, under the African Census Programme. She entirely supported the representative of Switzerland's stress on the need to give greater attention to fields that were complementary to population programmes.
19. She observed that virtually all delegations had commented on the matter of co-ordination and had recognized the need for further strengthening existing efforts at national and international levels. She fully agreed with the many views expressed about the importance of national level co-ordination and of the lead role of Governments in that regard. The donor community could assist Governments in building up their co-ordinating capacity and, as several delegations had suggested, UNFPA could play a role in providing such assistance. Co-ordination at the regional and global levels should also be improved and that could be done within existing frameworks. There too, several delegations had stressed the potential role of UNFPA. She also thought that co-ordination should be focused on specific activities and she was pleased to note that delegations who had spoken on that topic broadly

shared the views of the Fund on the promotion of exchanges of information and co-ordination. She would also appreciate the advice of delegations on priorities among the areas suggested.

20. She welcomed the proposal by the delegation of Denmark, which had been endorsed by several others, for a joint UNICEF/UNFPA report on co-ordination efforts at the field level. She again stressed the fact that the Fund had already taken many steps towards more co-ordinated programming.

21. She was gratified by the strong support expressed by so many delegations for the integration of population variables in development strategies. She said that the Fund, jointly with the Population Division of the United Nations, had carried out a joint study which had led to the publication of a manual.

22. The Fund had long subscribed to the view that women had to play a decisive role if the population and development goals were to be achieved. The Fund was striving to help Governments to take their own initiatives to promote the different roles of women in society. Education was crucial in improving the status of women and the Fund worked in close co-operation with WHO, the World Bank and UNICEF in that area. It also co-operated with many United Nations agencies and non-governmental organizations to have women's place in development recognized. It was allocating an increasing proportion of its resources to activities designed to enhance the role of and improve the status of women. All UNFPA evaluations would, in future, assess the degree to which women had been taken into consideration as both participants and beneficiaries in programmes and projects. The Fund was also preparing a thorough study of the implementation of the strategy to strengthen its capacity to deal with problems concerning women, population and development, to be submitted to the thirty-eighth session of the Governing Council.

23. She welcomed the interest expressed by some delegations in socio-cultural research and said that the Fund would continue to give the subject priority attention. A proper understanding of the socio-cultural context was fundamental in order to design programmes suited to needs and it was necessary first of all to identify the capacity for research in that area in developing countries. As the delegation of Switzerland he said, research should be planned in such a way as to take into consideration the factors that related to the effectiveness of programmes. To that end, the Fund had convened an expert meeting to identify the priority areas and the approaches to be utilized. All the projects of the Fund, as of now, included socio-cultural research when the data and knowledge bases were inadequate.

24. She said that the collaboration of the Fund with the WHO Global Programme on AIDS had resulted in the elaboration of a series of guidelines geared to facilitating the formulation and implementation of specific projects in countries, the systematic participation of the Fund in meetings of interested parties to examine the medium-term plans and options for UNFPA support, as well as the identification, formulation and implementation of AIDS-related activities within the framework of the maternal and child health and family planning (MCH/FP) programmes and information, education and communication (IEC) programmes. In the second phase, UNFPA would take part in specific projects in the most affected developing countries, utilizing the guidelines formulated during the first phase. Field staff would continue to participate actively in discussions with Governments to ensure integration of activities

and identification of opportunities for assistance. The Fund also gave support to the United Nations Population Division for a study on the demographic impact of AIDS.

25. A number of delegations had stressed the importance of new issues such as ageing and the population structure as well as international migration. UNFPA had sponsored a number of activities in those areas.

26. She said that Mr. van Arendonk would reply in detail to the comments made on the periodic report on evaluation (DP/1990/49). She noted that one of the central aims of the new programme review and strategy development exercises was to increase the utilization of evaluation results. Replying to the delegation of the Federal Republic of Germany, she said that countries selected were those that were at the stage of a new country programme, rather than a selection based on substantive criteria. In future, the countries giving rise to such evaluations would be priority countries.

27. The Fund shared the view of a number of delegations that staff increases should in future be foreseen largely in the field. It would be useful to determine in which country such additional posts would be useful, but methodologically, the exercise was a complicated one. The Fund might contact a number of countries with the request to share their relevant experience with it.

28. Mr. EL-FERJANI (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) paid a tribute to the excellent work done by UNFPA under Mrs. Sadik. The results were evident in all areas and a number of countries were beginning to reap the fruit of those efforts. The scientific nature of the Fund's activities came out in the report on evaluation. It was interesting and encouraging to note the importance and priority given by UNFPA to evaluation exercises. A data base established on scientific criteria and a follow-up system would enable such evaluations to be made on the basis of established criteria, which would simplify the subsequent distribution of posts and budget preparation.

29. Evaluation was an important step in any organization or administration and its methodology should be developed with the greatest care. Experience showed in fact that proper evaluation of projects made it possible to avoid wasting time and money.

30. He hoped that the periodic report on evaluation would be translated into all the official languages.

31. Mrs. PRADEL (Federal Republic of Germany) shared the views expressed by the delegation of France concerning the evaluation of population and development planning activities, and took note of the comments made in that regard by the Executive Director. The conclusions of the independent in-depth evaluations indicated that, so far, UNFPA had not found the right approach to the question of integrating those activities. The poor results recorded in that area were due largely to the lack of interest shown by Governments in such integration, that was hardly surprising since the idea was very ill defined. It appeared that UNFPA had waited for countries to define the methodology to be used and the key operational concepts in that area. In future, it should, specify its methods and ideas even if it had to alter them in order to take into account the individual features in the national situation. She noted with satisfaction that, according to Mrs. Sadik, UNFPA had already taken steps in that direction.

32. Instead of trying to elaborate a single comprehensive plan of activities for population and development, UNFPA should seek to identify the key sectors in each country - for example, health, education, income-generating activities - where integrated activities would contribute most to achieving demographic targets. If it did not have a much more practical an operational approach to population and development questions or UNFPA might allocate substantial resources to inefficient activities, to the detriment of other essential ones, such as maternal and child health and family planning or information, education and communication.

33. Mrs. KEPPENS (Belgium) referring to paragraphs 5 and 16 of document DP/1990/49, asked what measures the Executive Director planned to take to improve the quality of the built-in evaluations and improve access to the results of internal evaluations. Regarding the statement that those undertaking the evaluations "have had little or no training in evaluation methodology" (para. 6), she asked what specific measures would be taken to rectify the situation. With respect to independent evaluations, she requested further details about the programme review and strategy development system which apparently did not include country programmes. She stressed the importance of evaluation, by independent sources, of programmes and even projects in the specific context of each country. Lastly, she asked what criteria were used by UNFPA in choosing the topics for evaluation.

34. Mr. ELGHAOUTH (Mauritania), referring to the evaluation of the WHO/Regional Office for Africa intercountry programme, said that he was pleased with the success achieved by the Harare sub-regional team and asked for further information regarding the shortcomings of the Bamako team. The national quota system for recruitment imposed by WHO appeared to undermine its efficiency and he asked whether such a measure meant that the region was suffering from a permanent shortage of competent experts suitable for recruitment by the African Office. He asked how things stood with the training programme set up by UNFPA to correct the shortcomings which persisted in that area, in Africa and elsewhere. He also asked for the report of the evaluation mission and inquired what measures had been taken to rectify that situation.

35. Lastly, he expressed surprise that in virtually all UNFPA documents submitted in 1990, reference was invariably made to sub-Saharan Africa. That term did not correspond to the facts and failed to reflect the unity of the African continent, it should therefore not be used by United Nations agencies.

36. Mr. VAN ARENDONK (Deputy Executive Director, UNFPA) replying to all the questions asked by the representatives of Canada, the United Kingdom, the Federal Republic of Germany, the United States and Switzerland, said that the system of referring internal evaluations to Headquarters was not yet complete because it was a relatively new activity. In fact, the field staff should be made aware of the importance of transmitting evaluation reports because of the lessons to be learned. UNFPA had conducted training for country directors and programme officers on monitoring and evaluation guidelines, procedures and actual experiences as an integral part of the programming cycle. Specific training on the subject was being planned for Headquarters and field staff. In addition, the Project Review Committee was gradually expanding its consideration of the internal evaluation reports as a way to focus increased attention on the monitoring of projects.

37. With regard to the lessons learned from the evaluations, UNFPA planned to transmit its findings in several ways to Headquarters and field staff as well as to agencies. The sending of circulars and programme advisory notes also seemed to be very effective.

38. In future, all projects would be subject to evaluation, although some might only need self-evaluation. The need for more elaborate evaluation would be addressed when the project was formulated and confirmed at the time of the tripartite review meetings. He took note of the fact that the delegations of the United States and of other countries wished to receive regular evaluation reports and analyses of the data-base.

39. The themes for comparative evaluation were identified during the annual consultations between the Technical and Evaluation Division and the Geographical Divisions. The schedule for those evaluations was formulated in such a way that the results were made available in time for decisions to be taken.

40. Generally speaking, at present, evaluations were utilized to confirm or, if necessary, modify projects and programme formulation and policy guidelines. The Fund was trying to include the evaluations in the framework of the Programme Review and Strategy Development (PRSD), the ultimate goal of which was to formulate an overall strategy for national population programmes with the respective Governments.

41. With respect to the insufficient integration of population activities into development plans commented on by the representatives of Norway, Canada and the Federal Republic of Germany, the main problems encountered stemmed from the difficulty of linking the research programmes and their results to the process of development planning itself. The integration of population and development activities was a completely new area - even the major universities did not give courses on the subject - and therefore, UNFPA had undertaken three years ago a training programme designed specifically to formulate the appropriate methodology and concepts. The area was such a new one that it was very important to conduct activities in the field, in order to obtain empirical data.

42. With respect to the suggestion by the United States delegation that surveys on the health of the population should be used for evaluation purposes, he said that data of that kind did not necessarily render an account of the effectiveness of UNFPA programmes because they concerned an entire national programme.

43. As to the usefulness of the evaluations, referred to by the representatives of the United Kingdom and the United States, he said that such an exercise was justified, because the Fund and its programme officers had easy access to its results and used them, and could thus ensure that the shortcomings observed had been corrected.

44. In reply to a question from the delegation of the Federal Republic of Germany, he explained that self-evaluation did not necessarily exclude an independent evaluation. However, the value of self-evaluation was to induce project leaders to accept the possibility of failure, in order to improve the implementation of activities.

45. The members of the Governing Council had heard comments by different agencies - WHO, FAO and ILO - on the evaluations. Some members had raised a problem of co-ordination between the WHO headquarters and the Regional Office for Africa. In fact, it seemed that WHO gave very considerable support to all its Regional Offices and that the latter may have misapplied the guidelines and the results of the research transmitted to it. Like FAO and ILO, UNFPA considered that provision should be made for other regional advisers and had even made an observation to that effect in connection with the report on support costs. He proposed that the representative of Mauritania should revert to the issue he had brought up in respect of the Bamako sub-regional team when the regional and country programmes were reviewed, adding that the problem was not peculiar to Africa and should be settled bilaterally. He had no authority to decide on whether the expression "sub-Saharan Africa" should be retained or changed.

46. He informed the representative of Belgium that UNFPA was endeavouring, by means of special training, to impress upon its field staff the importance of internal evaluations, evaluation methods and the communication of results. He hoped, in that way, to improve both the quality of the reports as a whole and to add to the knowledge of methodology. The PRSD did not exclude the possibility of making independent evaluations of country programmes where necessary. In respect of the criteria to be used in selecting a topic for comparative evaluation, he explained that account was taken of the decisions to be made, the programmes to be implemented or any new problems which emerged.

47. He assured the representative of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya that the report would also be published in Arabic. He hoped also that he had answered all the questions raised.

(d) FUTURE PROGRAMME OF THE UNITED NATIONS POPULATION FUND (DP/1990/47 and 48)

48. Mr. KUNUGI (Deputy Executive Director, UNFPA), introducing the report on the work plan for 1991-1994 and the request for approval authority (DP/1990/47), said that, as far as programmed resource utilization for 1989 was concerned, total project expenditures in 1989 had been \$157.4 million, while the total programme resources made available were \$177.2 million, yielding a resource utilization rate of 88.8 per cent. Furthermore, the year-end allocation had been \$194.2 million, which resulted in the traditional budget expenditure rate of 81 per cent. In 1989, UNFPA had spent \$27.6 million more on programme activities than in 1988, an increase of 21.3 per cent. Expenditures for country projects in sub-Saharan Africa had increased by around 26 per cent compared with 1988, to \$29.3 million in 1989, whereas the intercountry projects had risen to \$9.8 million, an increase of approximately 27 per cent. Estimated expenditures in 1989 for priority countries had been \$78.1 million or 74.6 per cent of the total expenditures for country activities. That rate was the highest ever recorded in recent years. The programme expenditures level approved by the Governing Council for 1990 had been \$156.2 million; together with the carry-forwards of resources of \$8.5 million, the revised total programmable resources for 1990 was thus \$164.7 million.

49. The projected income for the 1991-1994 work plan had been calculated in terms of an average increase of 9.5 per cent per annum for the period under review, which took into account a recent trend to increase income (11.4 per cent in 1987, 14.1 per cent in 1988 and 4 per cent in 1989), and

also because the main donor countries had adopted the Amsterdam Declaration and the idea of increasing resources for population activities. On the other hand, operational costs should increase by an annual average of only 6 per cent during the period 1991-1994, in keeping with the wish expressed by several countries to see the Fund make more effective use of the limited resources at its disposal. In accordance with paragraph 16 of Council decision 89/49, which had set the level of the operational reserve at \$45 million with effect from 1989, no additions to that reserve were planned for 1991-1993. However, subject to Council approval when the level of the operational reserve was reviewed, the Fund proposed to increase the level by \$5 million in 1994 to \$50 million. Thus, the new programmable resources, as shown in table H, were estimated at \$775.8 million with the following breakdown: \$166.7 million in 1991; \$184.5 million in 1992; \$204 million in 1993; and \$220.6 million in 1994. To that amount would be added the estimated carry-forwards of \$8.5 million from 1990 to 1991. Assuming total programmable resources of \$784.3 million for the period, the Fund proposed to increase the resource allocation for country activities from \$548.5 million for 1990-1993 to \$580.4 million for 1991-1994 (table I). Resources allocated for regional and interregional activities were expected to show a slight decline compared to the previous work plan. He noted with satisfaction that some representatives, from the main donor countries in particular, had given global approval for planning resources in the manner set out in the document under consideration.

50. Concerning country programme resources (table J) the Fund proposed again to increase its support for sub-Saharan Africa to \$190.4 million or 32.8 per cent of the total country programme resources during the period 1991-1994. The resources allocated for Asia and the Pacific would increase to \$248 million (42.7 per cent of the total), in order to make allowance for the large number of priority countries in that region, while the two other regions - the Arab States and Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean - would continue to receive a comparable share of the programmable resources, in other words, \$71 million each. Concerning intercountry programme resources as shown in table L, sub-Saharan Africa would receive the largest share, namely \$49.1 million or 24.1 per cent. The other regions would continue to receive resources at approximately the same percentage level as during the period 1990-1993.

51. In accordance with Governing Council decision 89/46 B, UNFPA was requesting approval for 1991 of an expenditure level in the amount of \$166.7 million, or an increase of \$10.5 million over the amount approved for 1990 (table M). He recalled that the Fund set a programme ceiling in order to monitor the level of allocations and thus achieve a maximum resource utilization level, while maintaining prudent financial control. In order to have the necessary flexibility to meet new demands, every year UNFPA updated its work plan, which was established on a rolling plan basis.

52. The Council had before it statistics on the status of financial implementation of Governing Council-approved UNFPA programmes and projects (DP/1990/48). In 1989, 19 country programmes had been completed; the delivery rate of those programmes was 94.4 per cent on average, compared with 85.3 per cent for the regional and country programmes completed in 1988. Although subject to further evaluation, the data seemed to indicate the increasing capacity of developing countries to absorb more resources and the enhanced programming capacity of UNFPA, working in collaboration with the recipient Governments and executing agencies.

53. Mr. EL-FERJANI (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) noted with satisfaction that the UNFPA work plan for 1991-1994 (DP/1990/47) and the statistics concerning the status of financial implementation of resources allocated to country programmes and projects (DP/1990/48) showed that the Fund was working actively to promote family planning as well as education, training and communication, to enhance the role of women in development or to advance technical training. He also endorsed the efforts being made to mobilize a greater volume of resources in future, subject always to the Fund ensuring that the real value of income was protected from the exchange rate fluctuations of certain major currencies.

54. The new country programmes were extremely important and he hoped, in particular, that UNFPA would give continued attention to those concerning countries in the Arab region and that it would strive to intensify its co-operation with those countries.

55. The Fund should also co-ordinate its activities as much as possible with UNICEF, FAO and other agencies. He asked what criteria were used by the Fund, in executing its work plan, to avoid any duplication of expenditure and activities with Governments either bilaterally or multilaterally.

56. Mr. ELGHAOUTH (Mauritania) said that he endorsed the UNFPA recommendation (DP/1990/47, para. 35) on resource planning, the new programme expenditure level and the estimates of the new programmable resources for the period 1991-1994. On the whole, he supported the guidelines selected by the Fund for its work plan and especially the high priority given to Africa. In that connection, he said that the representative of the United Kingdom need not have misgivings about the African countries' inadequate resource "absorption capacity". The very idea of "absorption capacity" should no longer be taken into account.

57. The breakdown by substantive area of the expenses incurred from 1986 to 1989 (DP/1990/47, table C) seemed to indicate a slight decline in the proportion allocated for family planning in the total expenditures. He hoped that that was because the figures were only provisional.

58. Mr. KRAMER (Canada) observed that, in the statistics transmitted to the Council concerning the status of UNFPA resources allocated to country programmes and projects (DP/1990/48), multi-bilateral resources were not always integrated. The programmes or projects financed by funds of multi-bilateral origin did not receive the Council's endorsement in the usual conditions. In the interest of clarity and in order to have a table which faithfully reflected the implementation of programmes, as approved by the Council it would be preferable to show multi-bilateral programmes or projects separately.

59. The statistics showed that the Fund's more forceful action in Africa, in conformity with the strategy adopted for the sub-Saharan region, was already yielding results, if only in respect of the volume of resources collected. The utilization rate of those resources, however, was extremely variable and he asked whether the Fund was contemplating any additional measures to try to increase the level where it was particularly low.

60. During the period 1983-1989, the resource delivery rate was set at an average of 92.8 per cent which was perfectly satisfactory; in some countries, however, it was only 19 per cent whereas in others it exceeded 100 per cent.

He asked what lessons had the Fund learned from such sizeable differences. In particular he would like to know why the rate had been especially low in the case of two or three country programmes approved for Asia in 1985. It was a fact, however, that the increase in the rate was unprecedented. He asked whether the Fund could offer an explanation of that increase.

61. In respect of the work plan for 1991-1994 (DP/1990/47), he wished to state once again that it would have been better to simplify the format in order to enable a comparison to be made between the results obtained and what had been envisaged three years earlier. In respect of the projections concerning future income, his delegation felt that an increase of 9.5 per cent was optimistic, but would accept them because they could be reviewed every year. It noted, furthermore, that since priority was being given to action in Africa, the allocation of a larger share to the African continent of total programmable resources would be justified, but that was not really the case. Intercountry activities should not, in its opinion, absorb more than 25 to 26 per cent of total resources in order to allow national activities to receive a larger volume of resources.

62. His delegation would like the volume of resources earmarked for priority countries to match the stated target. However, the resources actually transferred to those countries were only 70 per cent of the total, whereas the Council had wanted a figure of 80 per cent. He asked whether the Fund intended to bridge that gap, and how.

63. Mr. SKJØNSBERG (Norway) noted that UNFPA's work plan for 1991-1994 referred only to general resources. As they had constituted so far more than 95 per cent of the Fund's total resources, he could accept that approach. The income projections were based on an extrapolation of the recent increase in the resource base. Again, Norway supported the approach, although it might be unduly optimistic and was sensitive to exchange rate fluctuations. Hopefully, the United States Government would soon decide to contribute again to UNFPA and it would then be possible to revise income estimates upwards.

64. His Government fully supported the plans for utilizing the new programmable resources, and it could therefore support the recommendations made to the Council, including the proposals concerning planning programme resource utilization.

65. In view of UNFPA's review and assessment exercise and the results of the Amsterdam Forum, the work plan should perhaps be more policy-oriented, indicating better UNFPA's future priorities and goals. Member States could thus discuss UNFPA's strategy on the basis of rolling four-year work plans.

66. Mr. MALMIERCA (Cuba) considered that UNFPA was achieving extremely good results in securing an average available resource utilization rate of close to 80 per cent. His delegation therefore supported the work plan submitted for 1991-1994 which, in its opinion, gave due emphasis to aid to Africa and in particular, the sub-Saharan region, as well as to a number of vital questions, such as enhancing the role of women in development. His delegation supported the recommendation on resource planning, the new level of programme costs and the volume of new programmable resources for the period under consideration.

67. Ms. CARTER (United States of America) commended UNFPA for the emphasis it placed on new initiatives in sub-Saharan Africa, in its work plan for 1991-1994 (DP/1990/47) and for its planned concentration of resources at the country level, absorbing 74 per cent of programmable resources during that period, compared to 74 per cent in 1989. Those priorities corresponded to those set by the United States for its activities during the period and conformed on the whole to the broad guidelines given by the Council. Her delegation asked whether the assumption of an annual increase of 6 per cent in operational costs reflected the actual rate recorded in recent years.

68. Table 6 of document DP/1990/47 revealed a sizeable decline in the expenditures allocated to family planning programmes even after taking into account IEC designed to improve the status of women; the latter were support activities crucial for the success of those programmes. Such a reduction ran counter to the rapidly increasing unmet demand for family planning services around the world. Furthermore, in the 13 new proposed country programmes, the share of resources allocated to family planning/IEC were cut back still further. Participants in recent meetings of the OECD Development Assistance Committee and the Amsterdam Forum had asked for a substantial increase in the resources allocated for family planning services. Her delegation requested UNFPA to review its work plan along those lines.

69. Similarly, she noted that in the list of UNFPA priorities, no mention was made of plans to provide assistance to developing countries in acquiring contraceptive commodities. That was a critical issue which must be addressed by the major donor countries without delay. Her delegation would appreciate further comment by UNFPA on its plans in that key area.

70. According to table C, in 1989 there had been an almost total absence of activities related to the implementation of policies. Yet the experience of the United States was that there was an increasingly heavy demand from developing countries for assistance in that area. The United States of America might be able to co-operate with UNFPA in executing an AID project and the Fund should inform the Council how it could strengthen its future work in that area.

71. Mr. SMALLENBROEK (Netherlands) noted with satisfaction that UNFPA's income had risen again in 1989 and that the Fund had been able to expend almost 85 per cent of its programme resources. However, the projected annual increase in income of 9 per cent was perhaps over-optimistic and his delegation urged the Fund to exercise caution.

72. It was also perhaps too ambitious to anticipate that by 1993 80 per cent of the resources earmarked for country allocations would be assigned to priority countries. While that figure was indeed a target, the Fund should ensure that resources were allocated to the countries most in need of international assistance to implement population policies. However, the percentage of allocations to priority countries had scarcely risen in recent years. He would like to know what action would be taken by the Fund to ensure that 80 per cent of the resources for country programmes were indeed allocated to priority countries in 1993.

73. Mrs. PRADEL (Federal Republic of Germany) also thought that UNFPA results for 1988-1989 in respect of the utilization rate of available resources were satisfactory. At first sight, the breakdown of expenditures between country activities and intercountry activities was also satisfactory. However, she would like more information on the quality of intercountry projects and urged the Fund to extend systematic evaluations to intercountry projects.

74. The total volume of expenditures had risen by over 15 per cent in 1989 and it was regrettable that the expenditure earmarked for family planning had remained virtually unchanged. Expenditures on family planning and complementary IEC-related activities had increased by only 7 per cent. In fact, the Fund should concentrate on those two areas so as to meet the threats so clearly described in the Amsterdam Declaration. On the other hand, it was satisfying to note that the expenditures allocated for special programmes had increased because it showed that the Fund was giving increasing attention to the link between issues concerning women, population and development.

75. Basic data collection, population dynamics and formulation and evaluation of population policies accounted for 30 per cent of total expenditures, which was considerable. She had a number of questions on that score. What was the volume of research carried out in those areas? What criteria did the Fund use in responding to requests for aid for research projects? What percentage of expenditures in those areas was allocated to the topic of "Population and development"?

76. Her delegation would also like to know why the substantive area entitled "implementation of policies" had been virtually neglected in 1989.

77. The breakdown of expenditure into substantive areas for the period 1986-1989 should also be undertaken for the period 1991-1994. That would make it possible to ascertain whether the work plan was giving considerably more importance to family planning.

78. In table D, the work plan also included a breakdown of the expenditure incurred during the period 1986-1989 under the heading of national activities by functional category. She would like to have some explanations about the heading "Training", whether the term covered meetings and how the Fund ascertained that meetings included a training component.

79. It was interesting to see how expenditures were divided between priority countries and non-priority countries (table F), but there again the same breakdown should be established in the 1991-1994 work plan.

80. With regard to the work plan and the request for programme approval authority, in her view, the figures submitted were cautious and were therefore satisfactory. Nevertheless, the reservations that she had expressed in 1989 about the utilization of resources still held good for the period 1991-1994. In respect of the regional distribution of expenditures, the Federal Republic of Germany would have liked Africa to receive a larger share of total resources. In any case, future work plans should take more specifically into account the needs of priority regions.

81. Estimates for resource carry-overs from 1989 to 1991 suggested that the Fund was making its expenditures policy more dynamic. The Federal Republic of Germany welcomed the change, but felt that the quality of the programmes should not in any way be undermined by the increase in the resource utilization rate.

The meeting rose at 6.05 p.m.