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Special session

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 9th MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Thursday, 22 February 1990, at 3 p.m.

<u>President:</u>	Mr. POPESCU	(Romania)
later:	Mr. HAMADZIRIPI (Vice-President)	(Zimbabwe)
later:	Mr. BABINGTON (Vice-President)	(Australia)
later:	Mr. POPESCU (President)	(Romania)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

OTHER MATTERS (continued)

(a) THE ROLE OF UNDP IN COMBATING THE HUMAN IMMUNODEFICIENCY VIRUS INFECTION (HIV) AND AIDS (continued) (DP/1990/31)

1. Mr. BABINGTON (Australia) said that his delegation welcomed UNDP's heightened interest in the problem of HIV/AIDS, whose effect on development, especially in the poorest countries, was tragic. The alliance comprising the World Health Organization (WHO), as the international leader in health policy, and UNDP, as the leader in socio-economic development, was a milestone. His delegation welcomed the various initiatives taken by the WHO/UNDP Alliance to Combat AIDS, including the comprehensive questionnaire sent to all UNDP field offices in 1989 in order to assess the effectiveness of the Alliance, country by country, and plan future activities accordingly.

2. In view of the nature and magnitude of the problem, UNDP must continue to expand its efforts to combat AIDS during the fifth programming cycle. His delegation fully supported the proposed training programmes to be undertaken in collaboration with the WHO Global Programme on AIDS (GPA) (DP/1990/31, para. 11) in order to ensure that UNDP staff were fully aware of the development implications of HIV/AIDS, including its economic, sociological, cultural and humanitarian aspects. The role of community-based organizations in such programmes must be highlighted. His delegation also welcomed the initiative to prepare a booklet on HIV/AIDS for distribution to all United Nations system employees and their families and hoped that further personnel policies in respect of AIDS would be developed. UNDP should elaborate guiding principles for such policies at the earliest possible date. It would also be useful if the UNDP Administrator continued to inform the Council regularly of the Programme's activities in the struggle against AIDS.

3. Mr. CHAUDOUET (France) noted that the AIDS pandemic was expected to claim three to four times as many lives in the 1990s than it had in the 1980s, and that an international consensus must be reached urgently on measures to be taken in such areas as education, ethics, legislation and financial support. Nowhere was that consensus being sought more actively than at the United Nations, and in that connection, WHO had alerted world opinion to the AIDS problem and co-ordinated activities undertaken by national, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Among the activities resulting from the WHO/UNDP Alliance, his delegation noted in particular the circulation of a detailed questionnaire to UNDP field offices in order to assess the impact of the disease on social and economic development.

4. It was encouraging that in almost every country, multisectoral national committees had been established to deal with the AIDS problem and that programmes to combat HIV/AIDS had been included in UNDP projects and country programmes. That underscored the importance which Governments attached to the question and their desire to earmark UNDP resources for preventive activities, such as education and training. In its efforts to focus on the socio-economic aspects of the pandemic,

(Mr. Chaudouet, France)

UNDP should increase assistance to national AIDS-related programmes within the framework of country programmes and, in co-operation with the United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF) and the United Nations Volunteers, assist community and village initiatives. It would be useful if the replies to the October 1989 questionnaire, accompanied by an analysis and proposals, were submitted to the Governing Council either in June 1990 or, at the latest, at its 1991 special session.

5. Ms. BECKER (United States of America) said that her delegation endorsed UNDP's efforts to provide administrative support to the Alliance at the country level, and to add HIV/AIDS components to its ongoing health and education programmes. Her delegation also supported the Programme's plans to encourage resident representatives and Governments to include HIV/AIDS prevention and care activities in fifth-cycle programming; the establishment of a training programme for UNDP staff; and the publication of a booklet on AIDS for United Nations employees and their families. Her delegation welcomed the diversity of UNDP's initiatives; the Programme's efforts to gear its activities to the needs of individual countries through the country programmes; and its recognition of the importance of strengthening health infrastructure.

6. Mr. AQUARONE (Netherlands) said that his delegation was a staunch supporter of WHO's Global Programme on AIDS and would continue its active participation in the GPA Management Committee. Surprisingly, document DP/1990/31 made no mention of the increasing use of indicative planning figures (IPFs) to finance AIDS-related programmes and projects - a trend of which his delegation had become aware through the Management Committee.

7. The report of the Administrator could have established a more direct link between the effect of AIDS on women and children (para. 2) and the future directions outlined in section II. Although the language used in paragraph 4 alluded to a strong UNDP presence in the Alliance, the report did not describe the Programme's substantive activities. Neither did UNDP's limited participation in Management Committee meetings help to provide a clear-cut idea of its substantive role within the Alliance.

8. It would be interesting to have more details on UNCDF's "innovative" project in Rwanda - i.e. whether, with its important emphasis on blood safety, the project constituted a new approach, or whether it marked the first time that such an initiative had been taken in Rwanda. His delegation would also appreciate some information on the operation of the \$2-million fund described in paragraph 10, which seemed to be a revolving fund. Lastly, details on the future directions of UNDP, including an indication of the expected role of resident representatives in increasing AIDS-related projects during the fifth programming cycle, would be useful. Staff training, while necessary, did not directly help the developing countries. Extension activities such as films and books, on the other hand, were highly significant and deserved greater attention.

9. Ms. POULSEN (Denmark), speaking on behalf of four Nordic countries - Finland, Norway, Sweden and Denmark - stressed the particularly severe impact of AIDS on the

(Ms. Poulsen, Denmark)

developing countries. The UNDP field establishment should be fully utilized in order to co-ordinate an effective response to the situation.

10. The report of the Administrator (DP/1990/31) contained more generalities than specifics on the Programme's AIDS-related activities and the operation of the Alliance. UNDP should help to sensitize the public to the larger economic and social consequences of AIDS and assist national authorities in coping with those problems. Such assistance to national programmes must be broad-based and include both multilateral and bilateral assistance and particularly that provided by NGOs.

11. Mr. van ARENDONK (Assistant Executive Director of the United Nations Population Fund) said that UNFPA had pursued its main objective of integrating maternal and child health family planning (MCH/FP) and AIDS-related activities through the WHO Global Programme on AIDS. In that connection, it was necessary to strengthen contacts between various units of health ministries and elaborate specific procedures and guidelines for the integration of AIDS-related activities into established MCH/FP programmes. Through WHO country representatives or UNDP/UNFPA resident representatives, the Fund was participating in meetings organized by Governments and the Global Programme on AIDS with a view to integrating AIDS-related programmes into national medium-term plans.

12. UNFPA projects included the integration of components on AIDS into MCH/FP and information, education and communication (IEC) projects in Benin, Cameroon, Liberia and Kenya. In Haiti, condoms had been distributed to high-risk groups as part of an MCH/FP project. In general, the demand for condoms from UNFPA had increased. In early 1991, UNFPA would complete an inventory of AIDS-related activities which, together with socio-cultural research on family planning, would be used to determine how behavioural changes could be instituted in certain populations. Initially, the scarcity of specialists capable of integrating MCH/FP and AIDS-related activities might be a problem.

13. An effort had been made to improve communication between MCH/FP structures and national ministerial departments responsible for AIDS-control programmes, generally the epidemiology departments. A UNFPA staff member had been seconded to the WHO Global Programme on AIDS (GPA) in order to elaborate separate guidelines for integrating FP and MCH with AIDS-related programmes. Those guidelines were expected to be published in 1990. UNFPA also continued to support the Population Division in assessing methodologies used to determine the demographic impact of AIDS at both the country and the international level.

14. Mr. PETTITT (United Kingdom) reaffirmed his delegation's position that donors could contribute most effectively by assisting programmes co-ordinated by GPA. That position was in keeping with the London Declaration on AIDS Prevention signed by 147 countries in 1988.

15. Collaboration within the United Nations system, as exemplified by the WHO/UNDP Alliance, was vital. His delegation hoped that the Council would endorse the future directions identified in the report of the Administrator, especially those relating to training, the use of United Nations Volunteers and sensitization.

16. Mr. YENEL (Observer for Turkey) noted that UNDP's sphere of activity was not as well-defined as that of WHO. In its future directions, UNDP should concentrate on engendering a universal awareness of the AIDS problem, for ignorance of the pandemic persisted in many places at every level of society. In that connection, it would be useful if the booklet for United Nations employees and their families or a similar one were distributed to UNDP field offices throughout the world. In low-literacy areas, audio-visual methods could be used for information activities. Information provided by reliable sources, such as the UNDP field offices, would do much to dispel rumours about AIDS at the grass-roots level. Educational programmes must also focus on the treatment of AIDS victims, not only medically but also socially, for ostracism was not the answer.

17. Mr. CABACTULAN (Philippines) expressed the hope that by the Council's June session, UNDP's role in the Alliance would be more precisely defined and that the AIDS issue, however vital, would not take precedence over the Programme's ongoing mandates, such as providing technical assistance to the least developed countries. UNDP might specify its role in the struggle against AIDS in terms of its development projects, following the example of the World Bank, which had financed studies on the effect of AIDS on employment and productivity in Zambian coal mines.

18. Mr. ROTHERMEL (Director, Division for Global and Interregional Programmes, UNDP), responding to the questions raised, said that the questionnaire (DP/1990/31, para. 6) would be analysed on a country-by-country basis and that information on specific activities could certainly be made available to the Council.

19. UNDP of course attached great importance to the non-health aspects of AIDS, such as sensitivity to the use of community-based non-governmental organizations, the minimizing of the economic and social impact of the disease, and the human rights issues involved.

20. A full description of the UNCDF project in Rwanda had been provided to the Council. The use by Governments of very scarce technical assistance funds from their national IPFs (para. 8 of report) to support AIDS-related activities was an indication of the considerable importance they attached to them.

21. The booklet being prepared for all staff of agencies of the United Nations system was an inter-agency effort and when completed would be distributed to all UNDP staff. He saw no reason why it could not be distributed more widely to any Governments desiring the same information.

22. He assured the Council that there would be a more active UNDP presence in the meeting of the GPA Management Committee.

23. Ms. REID (Programme Director, Division for Women in Development, UNDP), replying on issues relating to women and children and the role of community-based organizations in response to the HIV/AIDS pandemic, said that the Rwanda project was an interesting example of experience at the national level to attempt to minimize iatrogenic (medical) transmission of the virus through, for instance, blood transfusions and the use of unsterilized needles. The project would benefit pregnant women and young children in particular, who were disproportionately

(Ms. Reid)

exposed to such transmission in many countries where the blood supply was not secure.

24. Regarding future action, her Division was working closely with the Division for Global and Interregional Programmes to ensure that all training materials and information provided to field staff took cognizance of the fact that young women and children were particularly vulnerable to AIDS. Probably long before the end of the decade, more women than men world wide would be infected: that was already the case in Africa and was becoming the case in parts of the Caribbean.

25. UNDP had developed particular expertise in recent years in involving non-governmental organizations in development. The lesson learned had been that the most effective prevention and care programmes were run by community-based organizations in ways that complemented national action. UNDP was applying that expertise as it determined the most effective way of responding to national requirements for assistance.

26. The PRESIDENT said that a draft decision had been submitted on the item and that the Council would be receiving a report on consultations the following day.

ANNEX TO GOVERNING COUNCIL DECISION 89/23 OF 30 JUNE 1989 ON THE ANNUAL REPORT OF THE ADMINISTRATOR (DP/1990/13)

27. The PRESIDENT recalled that at its thirty-sixth session the Council had decided to consider the text of the annex to decision 89/23 at the current special session. Since no drafting group had yet been set up, he proposed that Mr. Babington (Australia), Vice-President, should hold informal consultations on the matter and that the item should be taken up the following day.

28. It was so decided.

AGENCY SUPPORT COSTS

- (a) REPORT OF THE EXPERT GROUP (DP/1990/9)
- (b) PROPOSED ARRANGEMENTS FOR CONSULTATIONS (DP/1990/11)
- (c) VIEWS OF AGENCIES (DP/1990/10)

29. Mr. DRAPER (Administrator), introducing the item, reiterated an earlier suggestion that an intergovernmental working group should be established to study the report of the Expert Group (DP/1990/9). Such a working group, working possibly from 1 March to 30 April 1990 and consulting as it saw fit with its various government and agency partners, could then submit for consideration at the Council's thirty-seventh session its own findings and recommendations. UNDP was prepared to provide secretariat support, as directed by the Council. UNDP itself would make its comments and recommendations on the report available to the working group and would participate in the discussions at the June session.

(Mr. Draper)

30. The report on agency support costs was remarkably consistent with the triennial review of operational activities embodied in General Assembly resolution 44/211. UNDP was committed to implementing the directives of that important resolution and its preliminary assessment was that the Expert Group's report provided an excellent basis for discussion also on many system-wide matters. The experts had arrived at their conclusions independently, without the constraints of rigid institutional loyalties and vested interests, and the thrust of the report was in line with many past and current UNDP initiatives such as national execution and decentralization.

31. The timing of decisions on recommendations, especially on the support-cost successor arrangements, must be considered. The Council had requested that the report of the Expert Group together with the comments of agencies should be given full consideration at the thirty-seventh session. However, as indicated in the statement of the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination (ACC) (DP/1990/10), the governing bodies of some of the agencies would meet late in 1991 or later and they might not be able to apply any agreed decision before 1992.

32. In summary, he was seeking the Council's guidance on the proposal to establish an intergovernmental working group, including its composition and terms of reference; the type of secretariat support, if any, it would require; and the effective date for adoption of any new support-cost system.

33. Mr. PETTIT (United Kingdom) observed that the report of the Expert Group (DP/1990/9) was a good one, starting from country needs and working towards headquarters functions; it made a number of significant and thoughtful recommendations and offered a set of options on support-cost arrangements. At the current stage, the Council should probably concentrate on the conclusions and recommendations in chapter VII of the report, and it should be able already to issue a statement to the effect that the option it would eventually select was to be found somewhere within the three options recommended by the Group, establishing the broad pattern of arrangements the Council would wish to see applied to the major agencies. For the smaller agencies, arrangements similar to those currently in place would probably continue to apply, although with better protection against currency fluctuations, as recommended in paragraphs 377 to 390 of the report.

34. The major effort must now be to find the right arrangements for the relationship of UNDP and UNFPA with the larger agencies having development functions. The experts had suggested that the Council should select an option providing for prior payment by UNDP for agency services, a smaller recompense for project execution, and financial incentives in the case of services to Governments, including support of government execution. In their three recommended options, the experts envisaged a financial contribution to development activities from agency regular budgets, a controlled introduction of the stimulus of competition and management by Governments - all of which points of view coincided with the thinking of the Council.

35. The main purpose of the current discussion, however, must be to set up the arrangements for continuing the process of decision-taking. The statesmanlike

(Mr. Pettitt, United Kingdom)

approach adopted when commissioning an independent expert group with equal access to Governments, UNDP and other partners must be maintained throughout the rest of the process. The Council's decision on support-cost arrangements would be taken on behalf of the whole international community; but a decision in June with that degree of authority was possible only if system-wide interests were taken into account, if both members and observers were committed to the result, and if the governing bodies of the agencies had been involved in the preparatory work and thinking. It was important to reach a decision in June, despite the difficulties that posed for some of the agencies.

36. Although the Director of the Planning and Co-ordination Office had dismissed the point, his delegation believed there was indeed a close link with the fifth programming cycle, since the results on support costs might colour the attitude of contributors to the fifth cycle, the agencies would have to know what allocations had been made for the next cycle if they were to adapt to the new role envisaged for them and frame their own budgets for the biennium 1992-1993, and Member States as well would need that information for their budget planning as of January 1991.

37. The decision, moreover, must involve all partners of UNDP if it was to be a good decision, and the machinery to make that possible must be set up immediately. The Administrator had made welcome suggestions to that effect in document DP/1990/11. The machinery should be designed to allow a manageable cross-section of the Council membership to investigate in detail the implications of the various options in chapter VII of the report of the Expert Group, and to allow at least selected large and small agencies to do likewise.

38. Mr. NISSEN (Norway), speaking also on behalf of Denmark, Finland and Sweden, observed that the successor arrangements for support costs should promote technical assistance that accorded with the requirements of recipient countries and supported the objectives of self-reliance. There was a great convergence of views within the United Nations on the formulation and execution of country programmes and on the need for decentralization. The support-cost arrangements would also be a crucial tool in organizational restructuring.

39. It was the Council's responsibility to follow up on the report of the Expert Group, while involving the United Nations system as closely and as early as possible. The Nordic countries tended to favour the Administrator's proposal to establish an intergovernmental working group to review the report, perhaps under the President of the Council and certainly in consultation with all others involved. Such a working group should finish its deliberations in time for the Council to take a decision in June.

40. Mr. OGAWA (Japan) observed that support-cost arrangements had both a financial and a policy dimension, the latter best summarized in paragraph 25 of General Assembly resolution 44/211. The policy aspects should be thoroughly examined before a final decision was taken, since they set the framework for a new and dynamic tripartite relationship in United Nations operational activities for development. Moreover, the close linkage between the question of agency support costs and the consideration of the fifth programming cycle could not be overemphasized.

(Mr. Ogawa, Japan)

41. A decision on the complex and important report of the Group of Experts should be taken at the June session. Japan welcomed the Administrator's proposal to set up an intergovernmental working group to deal with the question in the mean time.

42. Mr. SAHLMANN (Federal Republic of Germany) said that support-cost successor arrangements were a complex issue and should serve to improve the quality and consistency of operational activities. His delegation believed that a procedural decision along the lines proposed by the Administrator should be taken at the current session. The final decision would have to be taken no later than the June session since it had an impact on the fifth programming cycle.

43. His delegation supported the proposed establishment of an intergovernmental working group to clarify the various implications of the options set out in chapter VII of the report of the Expert Group, with UNDP secretariat support and consulting services, and to submit its recommendations to the Council in June. Throughout the process, the working group should have access to the Group of Experts for explanations, and should meet with agencies and maintain close contact with the secretariat and task force of the Consultative Committee on Substantive Questions (Operational Activities). With such a mechanism in place, the Council could reach a consensus in June.

44. Mr. CHAUDOUET (France) said that the report (DP/1990/9) was notable for the pertinence of its analysis and its imaginative approach to complex issues. Although it had received only an English version of the report, his delegation had studied the proposals in it as thoroughly as possible and had concluded that the Council must do more than merely identify new modalities for reimbursement of agency support costs. The report examined the roles of and relations between UNDP, the specialized agencies and beneficiary countries in project execution. It was therefore essential that decisions should be taken before the implementation of fifth-cycle projects began - indeed, before the Council's next session, in June.

45. Additional information was still required if informed choices were to be made. The drafters of the report had rightly stressed the need to increase the share of projects executed by beneficiary Governments. Development could not truly take place if a country had not gradually assumed responsibility for decisions, programming and projects. Yet many countries were still unable to satisfy that requirement and consequently needed outside help to enhance their capacity to do so. The situation varied from one country to another, and it would be quite risky to force the issue. Nevertheless, the experts had failed to take the actual capacity of Governments to carry out those tasks sufficiently into account.

46. Consequently, his delegation wished to have updated reports on projects under government execution at the next session of the Governing Council. In particular, the following questions should be answered: were all the Governments concerned capable of handling a significant increase in their burden of responsibility? What consequences might that have for UNDP? And what role should the Office for Project Services play, since increasing its work-load would constitute a step away from the very principle of national execution?

(Mr. Chaudouet, France)

47. His delegation also wished to have submitted to the Council's June session a report on the execution capacity of the Office for Project Services. The Office was a poorly defined administrative unit about which Council members in fact knew very little. Its activities had increased and diversified in a somewhat disorderly fashion, and its effectiveness was questionable. Given the role which the experts wished to see the Office play, any decision by the Council should be based on a thorough evaluation of it.

48. He endorsed the suggestion made by other delegations to have a number of meetings between donors and executing agencies in the coming weeks so that their views regarding the report's conclusions and proposals could be made available to the Council before its June session.

49. Mr. AQUARONE (Netherlands) said that, as the report and its many recommendations were currently under study by his Government, his delegation was not yet in a position to give an opinion on the substantive issues. Generally speaking, the study showed that the time had come for a thorough reassessment of support-cost arrangements and of the partnership concept in general. Times had changed, and differences between developing countries had increased. In addition, the study made a distinction between smaller, more technical and larger executing agencies and suggested that solutions to the problem of agency support costs might differ accordingly.

50. The Council did not have much time in which to reach a final decision on successor arrangements. Consequently, his delegation supported the position set out in document DP/1990/11 that that decision should be taken before a decision was taken on the fifth programming cycle. That meant that the Council would have to establish an intersessional mechanism which would pave the way for the Council's decision in June. He therefore proposed that an intergovernmental group should be established which would have the task of narrowing the range of options presented by the Expert Group and analysing them further in order to arrive at a clearer understanding of their implications. With the logistical support of the UNDP secretariat, the intergovernmental body would consult with the relevant organizations of the United Nations system with a view to presenting the Council with a shorter, though more detailed, list of recommendations. Because of the possible implications for agencies' roles and organizational structure, it was of great importance that they should be able to live with the Council's decision. In that connection, it might be useful for some meetings of the intergovernmental group to be held at agency headquarters.

51. Given the short amount of time available in which to complete its work, the intergovernmental group should be composed of no more than 10 members. Participation by developing countries, which had first-hand experience in the daily management of technical co-operation, was of paramount importance. UNDP should be responsible for ensuring that funds were available for the travel and subsistence costs of group members. The Netherlands would be prepared to contribute funds to UNDP for that purpose. The Council should also bear in mind the heavy calendar of meetings to be held in New York in the coming months.

(Mr. Aquarone, Netherlands)

52. The intergovernmental group would have to be supported by a larger body - e.g., an open-ended informal group in New York - to which it would report. The intergovernmental group should not be mandated to reach a decision, but rather to facilitate decision-making at the Council's June session.

53. Mr. MORALES CARBALLO (Cuba) said that the report had serious political implications and must therefore be given careful consideration. However, his delegation had received the report only a few days earlier and consequently had received no instructions from the Cuban Government.

54. As it was important to maintain transparency in considering the report, all members of the Governing Council, and in fact all Member States, should be involved in that process. His delegation therefore could not agree to the establishment of an intergovernmental group for that purpose. Rather, the report might be considered during the months preceding the Council's June session by the Working Group of the Committee of the Whole, so that all countries could participate. By that time all delegations would have had time to reflect on the issues at hand and could work together in a constructive spirit to reach a decision.

55. Mr. JAYASINGHE (Sri Lanka) said it was necessary to study the report in greater depth. He invited the Administrator and the executive heads of other agencies to submit their views regarding successor arrangements for agency support costs to the Council so that delegations could discuss them in their capitals.

56. At the current session, the Council must agree on a follow-up mechanism, and his delegation supported the Administrator's proposal to establish a working group for that purpose. Informal consultations had already been held regarding the membership and mandate of the working group and its relationship to the Governing Council as a whole, and further consultations would also be required.

57. Ms. COLLOTON (United States of America) said that the issue of successor arrangements for agency support costs was essential to the future of UNDP and had major programme, financial and technical implications. She expressed support for the Administrator's suggestion to establish an intergovernmental working group to consider the proposals put forward in the report, consult with Governments, UNDP and executing agencies as appropriate. Her delegation would continue to work with other delegations to reach agreement on the establishment of the group and on the Administrator's proposals regarding secretariat support and a timetable.

58. She agreed with the representative of the United Kingdom that everything must be done to reach agreement at the Council's June session. With regard to the proposal by the representative of Cuba, she felt that the Working Group of the Committee of the Whole could in fact be one mechanism for consideration of the report, and her delegation planned to suggest topics which could be considered by the Committee. Technical aspects in particular might be successfully dealt with by the Working Group, thereby facilitating the work of the proposed intergovernmental group.

59. Mr. Hamadziripi (Zimbabwe), Vice-President, took the Chair.

60. Mr. TEODOROVICH (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that the report of the Expert Group (DP/1990/9) would serve as a basis for future discussions of the role of UNDP and of the entire United Nations technical assistance system in the next decade. The report's criticism of previous activity required careful analysis, and distinctions must be made as between what was currently feasible and what might be done in the future. That meant soliciting the views of all participants in the tripartite system of technical co-operation. The position of the executing agencies should be clarified, and the Administrator should therefore be requested to circulate the report of the Expert Group to those agencies and ask them to submit their views on it as soon as possible.
61. His delegation attached great importance to finding an optimal solution to the problem of support costs and was prepared to participate in consultations on that issue and to co-operate with an intergovernmental group, if established.
62. Mr. KRAMER (Canada) said that the report of the Expert Group constituted an appropriate point of departure for further analysis and a final decision by the Council. The question remained, however, as to how best to conduct the analysis: there appeared to be general agreement that the matter was one for Governments, but specific organizational arrangements were still open to question. His delegation favoured the establishment of an intergovernmental working group which would analyse options, make proposals and consult with UNDP, other agencies and their governing bodies.
63. It was important for the Council to have a clear understanding of revised arrangements for technical co-operation by June so that the new arrangements could be in place by the end of 1991. As to whether the working group should be open-ended or limited in membership, his delegation shared an attachment to democratic principles but believed that, in view of the many factors involved, limited participation afforded the only way of working constructively. Limited participation in the working group, however, in no way precluded universal decision-taking within the Council. He hoped that a decision could be reached on the composition of the group by the end of the current session.
64. Mr. Babington (Australia), Vice-President, took the Chair.
65. Mr. GOPINATHAN (India) commended the report and welcomed in particular the encouragement the experts had given to national execution and indigenous capacity-building. The report came before the Council at an appropriate time, in view of the adoption by the General Assembly of resolution 44/211. So that momentum generated by that resolution should not be lost, his delegation favoured the adoption in June 1990 of a decision which could then be transmitted to the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly, with a view to having the new arrangements in place by the beginning of 1992.
66. With regard to a follow-up mechanism, his delegation had taken note of the Administrator's proposal regarding the establishment of a working group, but continued to favour an arrangement utilized some years earlier involving open-ended informal consultations. His delegation's support for such an arrangement was based on its desire to maintain transparency in whatever mechanism was established. The

(Mr. Gopinathan, India)

mechanism should continue to operate on the basis of the three options recommended by the experts and not stray from the recommendations of the Expert Group or develop a completely new set of recommendations.

67. Mr. GEPP (Brazil) said it was important that the concept of partnership as the basis for technical co-operation should be maintained. Thus, of the solutions outlined in paragraph 396 of the report, his delegation favoured giving Governments full freedom in the choice of execution modalities and agents, although that presupposed that Governments had been provided with adequate capacity to do so by UNDP.

68. He endorsed the remarks made by the representative of Cuba regarding the late submission of the report and pointed out that few delegations had had time to digest it. He also agreed with the representative of Cuba that an intergovernmental working group was not an appropriate mechanism for considering the report.

69. Mr. TALAVERA (Peru) said that the report should be studied further, preferably by an open-ended group, to ensure greater transparency.

70. Mr. SALAZAR-SANCISI (Observer for Ecuador) said that, in view of its importance, the subject of agency support costs needed to be dealt with prior to the commencement of the fifth programming cycle. However, the Experts Group report must be considered on the basis of a political debate and technical considerations. Unfortunately, that was impossible at present, as the document had been received by delegations only a few days earlier and instructions had not yet been received from Governments.

71. Concern had recently been expressed that special sessions of the Governing Council and its subsidiary bodies were becoming the norm rather than the exception and that substantive issues were being considered during those sessions. His delegation continued to oppose the consideration of substantive issues at such sessions, which it considered a breach of faith.

72. With regard to a follow-up mechanism, his delegation had taken note of the suggestions put forward by the Administrator but opposed the formation of a "mini-working group". The only possible solution would be for the Working Group of the Committee of the Whole to meet well in advance of the debate to be held on the subject in the Council so that all delegations might have time to receive appropriate instructions. In that connection, he supported the remarks made by the representative of Cuba.

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

74. Mr. MUGUNE (Observer for Uganda) said that a decision should be taken on the working group before June. Consultations should be held to decide what kind of group it should be. In his view, it should be transparent, able to consult all relevant agencies and bodies and have available the services of the Expert Group on support costs. The use of other experts would be unwise and repetitious and should

(Mr. Mugune, Observer, Uganda)

be resorted to only if they were needed in specialized areas. Such arrangements would facilitate the reaching of a substantive decision. The Administrator could provide funding for the working group. The Governing Council's decision on successor arrangements would determine the very future of technical assistance.

75. Mr. KABIR (Observer for Bangladesh), referring to tables VII.5, VII.6 and VII.7 in the report of the Expert Group (DP/1990/9, pp. 142-144), said that he favoured option 3 but would give priority to option 2 as a good transition to option 3. A transparent, open-ended consultative mechanism should be set up and experts should be made available to it. If a smaller group were to be set up, proper linkages to a larger one should be established. Those three options should provide a basis for the final arrangements.

76. Mr. JASINKSI (Poland) said that the report of the Expert Group (DP/1990/9) provided a useful instrument for those concerned with the delivery of technical co-operation and should help develop a more effective partnership between government agencies and UNDP. The report tended to overlook the importance of the Governing Council's role in that partnership, which included recipient and donor Governments. The main issue was the quality of that partnership, in which a constructive approach was preferable to mutual criticism. He favoured the establishment of a working group, whose members should be extremely well prepared, particularly in understanding how they could enhance their own roles. Participants should be those who had knowledge of and experience in the delivery of technical co-operation. Constructive consultations were needed to improve delivery of technical assistance.

77. Mr. ZHANG Guanghui (China) said that, in discussing the options presented in the report of the Expert Group, the Governing Council should keep in mind the importance of improved equality, increased self-reliance and the need to promote a real partnership between all concerned.

78. Mr. OSELLA (Argentina) said that he favoured an open-ended working group that would thoroughly analyse the report of the Expert Group. The group should operate on the basis of transparency and meet soon so that its conclusions would be available before the Council's June session.

79. Mr. LANGENBACHER (Switzerland) said that the Council's concerns were procedural and that it should concentrate on recommendations. He favoured the establishment of a small intergovernmental working group that would provide feedback to the whole Council. The group should expect to have the Administrator's views by March, the views of the agencies by April and the reaction of Governments by May. Its recommendation should be available to the Council at its June session.

80. Mr. WIESBACH (United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO)) said that much work still needed to be done on how to organize technical co-operation and how Governments should share the costs of such co-operation. He agreed that a constructive approach was preferable to criticizing partners. UNIDO had formulated some preliminary views and it would make them available if so desired.

The meeting rose at 5.45 p.m.

