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Addendum to Statement of Mr. James P. Grant
Executive Director of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)
in Response to
Issues Raised on Agenda Items 4, 5, 6 and 7
At the
1994 Annual Session the UNICEF Executive Board

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2-6 May 1994

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FOR INFORMATION

RESPONSE OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
TO ISSUES RAISED ON AGENDA ITEMS 4, 5, 6 AND 7

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I have been heartened by the discussion of the cluster of items 4-7 on the agenda of this Annual Session of the UNICEF Executive Board. Admittedly, we are still finding our way toward the most productive organization of our meetings within our new format and schedule. As our superb Chairperson, Hon. Anna Makinda noted, there is certainly room for making further improvement. But I feel that we are headed in the right direction.

Even though a wide range of themes have been addressed, I believe that the key issues that have been crying out for discussion have received -- or have begun to receive -- the serious attention they deserve. There has been more spontaneous exchange between Board and Secretariat than in the past. Your Secretariat deeply appreciates the inspiring, thoughtful, constructive and critical comments and suggestions made by delegation after delegation. We have listened carefully.

Although we have identified points for further discussion and important decisions are pending on several others, I am left with the overwhelming impression of strong support from the Board for major elements of our policy and action:

- * On the **Medium-Term Plan** covering the period 1994-1997, I hear most of you saying UNICEF is basically on track;
- * On **World Summit for Children follow-up**, I hear most of you saying that, notwithstanding the many difficulties that need to be surmounted, there is a real chance that the promises of 1990 to children can indeed be kept, and warrant further support;
- * On **Africa**, I hear the Board speaking in a single voice, saying that this continent of infinite potential, considerable accomplishment and unacceptable suffering needs to remain our number one priority.
- * More generally, in the diverse interventions of developing and industrial country delegations alike, I hear a recognition of the centrality of children and women to the entire development process, and to the solution of the broader problems of poverty, population and environment that threaten the otherwise encouraging prospects for humankind on the threshold of the 21st century.

It was most gratifying to have with us the First Ladies of Lebanon and of Colombia who led their respective delegations. UNICEF is proud to have played a modest role in what Mme. Mona Haroui of Lebanon described as the "rebirth of a nation" by providing "assistance in rehabilitating, reconstructing and expanding social services, particularly for children and women." The First Lady of Colombia Mme Ana Milena Muñoz de Gaviria has been personally most active in supporting the goals for children in her country and in the hemisphere through her leading role among the First Ladies of Latin America and the Caribbean. I believe Board members will agree with her statement that poverty is the greatest enemy of human rights, including the rights of children and that the alliance between developed and developing countries has to be strengthened to combat this enemy.

Although there was a good deal of overlap among the themes and interventions, I shall address the issues raised under the heading of the various agenda items.

I. REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Goals, sustainability and capacity-building

The question of whether the attention to goals for children helps or hinders sustainability of programmes, national capacity-building and longer-term development has been a concern of a number of delegations. A related issue is whether global goals and targets, which have proved of tremendous value for advocacy and mobilization, are sufficiently relevant for diverse national situations. Some delegations, such as the Netherlands and the United Kingdom, felt that goals and targets should not be the most important determinants for setting priorities.

Others have recognized the potential conflict but have commended UNICEF for its "attempt to balance the use of resources for near-term and emergency versus strengthening an infrastructure that will provide better health in the future", to use the words of the United States delegation. Many delegations from the developing countries, notably China, Colombia, Indonesia, Lebanon, Philippines, Tanzania and others mentioned how the goals and strategies, adapted to each of their countries, have led to focusing attention to children's needs, mobilizing resources and achieving significant results. The Philippines, for example, has been pursuing a 12-point plan of action for children referred to as the "Dozen Doables" which mirrors UNICEF's mid-decade goals. And the United States delegate referring to the findings of the World Development Report said, "...an increase of 23 years life expectancy in the developing world since 1950...is a tribute to and a justification for attention placed on child survival and development. Successes in this area provide the courage to confront the difficult issues of poverty, population and environment".

China, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Indonesia, and Pakistan, the Philippines and Turkey detailed action they are taking to achieve the mid-decade goals as part of longer-term strategies. The First Lady of Lebanon, a country emerging from 17 years of devastating civil conflict, sees the mid-decade goals as achievable even in her war-torn country. The delegation of Nicaragua, another country struggling with reconstruction, firmly stated that "the medium-term objectives help us to build for the long-term". Indonesia called the mid-decade goals "achievable and realistic".

Achieving goals indeed would be a pyrrhic victory if progress cannot be sustained, as the Canada delegate reminded us; but our experience of the last decade gives us confidence that progress towards tangible goals builds confidence and capacities, and promotes re-ordering of priorities leading to greater sustainability of human-focused development.

Even where country resources are severely limited, confident progress has been made to address the mid-decade goals, which are seen as a means to the longer-term commitments of each country's own National Programme of Action. Delegations have also spoken to Norway's concern that goals be adjusted to country realities. Regional gatherings of Heads of States and government leaders convened by the Organization for African Unity at Dakar, Ministers of Health in Asia, the League of Arab States in the Middle East and North Africa and most recently the leaders of Latin America meeting in Bogotá have all

built a consensus around these goals, and added other region-specific ones of their own as well.

In most developing countries, National Programmes of Action and their adaptation at the provincial and municipal levels are clearly the instruments for adapting the general consensus on goals to country needs and situations.

Let us remember that the goals for the 1990s and the shorter-term mid-decade targets concern the most basic and irreducible survival and development needs of children - immunization and protection against killer diseases, essential nutrients, access to basic education, access to safe water and sanitation, and a political and legal commitment by societies to meet these and other basic needs. A vision of sustainable human development cannot have credibility unless it encompasses these basic priorities. Indeed the mid-decade goals are among the most cost-effective and sustainable. Success in achieving many of these goals, such as Oral Rehydration Therapy, is dependent on people's actions and behavioral changes rather than on expensive interventions. Once goals such as eradication of polio or elimination of guinea worm are achieved, they will, of course, be sustained forever. Thus not only is there no inherent conflict between achieving goals and ensuring sustainability, but concern for sustainability and cost effectiveness should be a basis for supporting the mid-decade and end-decade goals.

I do not mean to underestimate the difficult challenges in designing and implementing programmes in a way so that the short-term goals truly become the stepping stones to sustainable development and building self-reliance. The need for developing indicators for monitoring progress towards capacity-building and sustainability has been noted by the delegates of Canada and Norway. This is an interesting and challenging suggestion, one on which we will have to work harder, in collaboration with national governments and other international partners.

Resource Mobilization

I thank the Chairperson for pointing to the problem of finding the resources required to sustain the global momentum on children. Many delegations including Bangladesh, Burkina Faso, Colombia, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Guinea Bissau, Indonesia, Jamaica, Japan, Nepal, Niger, and Zambia, expressed concern about the decline in resources, reflected in a lower income projection for UNICEF, just when intensified efforts are needed to reach the goals for children in the 1990s. Others note the continuing burden of external debt that limits the possibility of allocating greater resources to meeting children's needs. Debt-relief, both bilateral and multilateral, debt-swaps for generating funds for social priorities, and application of structural adjustments with attention to enhancing human capacities were all identified as past solutions to resource constraints. Côte d'Ivoire has suggested the idea of an arrangement between a group of donors and individual or a group of countries to support specific high priority social goals by which the country's commitment and mobilization of resources would be matched. Delegations have also spoken to Norway's concern that global adjustments to country realities. Regional gatherings of Heads of States and government leaders convened by the Organization for African Unity at Dakar, Ministers of Health in Asia, the League of Arab States in the Middle East and North Africa and most recently the leaders of Latin America meeting in Bogotá have all

Let me turn to the issue of 20/20 - the concept which encompasses the re-allocation and focusing of public expenditures as well as aid on recognized human development priorities through basic social services.

As we heard from Dr. Nafis Sadik, the 20/20 concept is one which enjoys the strong support of not only UNICEF but of UNDP and UNFPA as well. All our agencies are prepared to work further in developing this concept with interested countries.

I find it most encouraging that so many Board members both from developed and developing countries have expressed their views on this issue, including the delegations of Austria, Bangladesh, Colombia, Côte d'Ivoire, Denmark, Ghana, Guinea-Bissau, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Korea, Namibia, Nicaragua, Niger, Norway, the Philippines, Tanzania, United States and Zambia. I am gratified that most have expressed strong support for the concept.

In particular, I welcome the recognition by the first lady of Colombia that 20/20 could be a starting point for alliance building between donors and recipient governments in support of women and children; what we in UNICEF strongly encourage in the form of country specific "compacts for children" around National Programme of Actions. Several other delegations referred to such constructive alliances. The representative of Namibia noted that achievement of targets would require cooperative arrangements between recipients and donors. The representatives of the USA and Zambia also called for partnerships.

I fully concur with the delegates of Denmark and Tanzania that 20/20 in particular could be one useful indicator of commitment to sustained achievements for women and children in Africa, as also suggested in the Consensus of Dakar. I can assure the delegates of Japan and Austria that UNICEF will continue to advocate for restructuring of expenditures in support of human development priorities, including the improvement of statistics on allocation patterns.

With the backing of so many developing and industrialized countries at this Executive Board, we cannot allow the new momentum that 20/20 has acquired to be dissipated. Delegates have before them, in paragraph 72 of the Progress Report on the Follow-up to the World Summit for Children (E/ICEF/1994/12), a draft resolution on 20/20.

In this connection, I welcome the suggestion by Switzerland to establish an ad hoc working group on the concept of 20/20, particularly if their work can be completed this summer. In fact, the DAC working group on statistical problems is already considering definitions for basic education and basic health, which are the same as those attached as annex to CRP38, for recommendation to the High Level Meeting of the OECD Development Assistance Committee towards the end of this year.

This gives me an opportunity to propose that UNICEF contacts the OECD, with the blessing of the Executive Board, to arrange a DAC meeting on this subject. This meeting should be held as early as possible, especially since this topic will come up for discussion at the International Conference on Population and Development in Cairo in September.

I might also add that we all recognize that the concept of human development, as so eloquently expressed in the Human Development Reports, goes

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well beyond the provision of basic social services (which UNICEF and UNDP have termed Human Development Priorities -- encompassing primary health care including family planning, basic education, nutrition and low cost water and sanitation --), but that these basic social services, on which the World Summit focused so particularly, are of a particular concern to the well-being of children.

It is quite clear that, while attaining the Summit goals should not require a major infusion of "new" money, it will require some additional resources and, toward that end, a shift in expenditure priorities in accordance with the 20/20 approach. UNICEF is pleased that many developing countries have already implemented their side of 20/20. Bangladesh spends more than 20 per cent of its budget on social priorities. Namibia, we learned, is spending 30 percent of its national budget on education and 17 per cent on health. Both are commendable achievements.

We now urge the industrialized country donors to join in this process. We thank the countries that have increased their high level of contributions to the social sector. The representative of Australia pointed out that more than 20 per cent of his country's ODA budget goes to basic needs; Japan reported that basic human needs are the first priority and receive 30 percent of ODA; the United Kingdom reports that 31 percent of bilateral ODA has gone to the social sector.

But note that for both developing and donor countries, 20-20 refers to a limited class of social expenditures - not all social expenditures but priority social expenditures, as defined in CRP 38, which was distributed on 3 May.

The representative of Japan pointed out another important factor, that higher levels of ODA funding for social sector priorities also requires governments of recipient countries to submit appropriate requests.

Several of the delegations from industrialized countries, Canada, Germany, Japan and the United Kingdom, referred to the scarcity of resources for development. There are pressures from the competing needs of emergencies, peace-keeping and disaster prevention. There are domestic budgetary concerns that require donor governments to make difficult choices on aid. Aid policies are reviewed in a domestic context.

UNICEF appreciates the efforts being made by donor agencies, NGOs and others in the industrialized countries to ensure a higher level of ODA resources for social priorities and look forward to continued efforts in this regard. We were therefore pleased at the high level of overall support for social sector activities and for the special emphasis on Africa, as voiced by the delegations of the France, Japan, Nepal, Sweden and the United Kingdom.

We were heartened at the expressions of support for the role of UNICEF as an advocate for greater funding. The representatives of the United States referred to the need for "a more equitable sharing of both the burdens and the benefits of this world" and for a "focus on advocacy to increase funding for priority human development". This support for UNICEF as an advocate was voiced strongly also by Germany and several other delegates.

We are pleased also at the support by the Executive Board to explore new and innovative means of funding programmes. The delegations of the Ghana,

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Indonesia, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom referred specifically to the use of resources from the World Bank and regional banks. In this regard, I wish to point out that UNICEF has signed Memoranda of Understanding for further cooperation with the World Bank, the African Development Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank. UNICEF cooperation will include the use of bank funds where this is consistent with the mandate and goals established by the Executive Board.

Several delegations including Australia, Belgium, Côte d'Ivoire, France, Germany, Italy, Republic of Korea, Netherlands, Switzerland and the United Kingdom highlighted the vital role of the National Committees, NGOs and the private sector. The National Committees for UNICEF and NGOs last year provided 28 percent of all UNICEF income, are rapidly expanding their efforts in many countries and are among the most innovative of fund-raisers. Our involvement in debt swaps would not have been possible without the pre-eminent role of the National Committee of the Netherlands and the efforts of Committees in Canada, Germany, the United Kingdom and the United States. National Committees are serving as the voice of UNICEF in the industrialized countries with more effectiveness than ever.

Many delegations referred to the debt burden and the need to reduce both multilateral and bilateral debt and the role of UNICEF debt swaps. These included the Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Guinea-Bissau, Niger, Philippines and Zambia. Perhaps the representative of Jamaica most clearly illustrated the problem when she pointed out that 49 percent of that country's 1994-95 budget goes into the servicing of domestic and foreign debt. Half of the budget is already committed before a single domestic programme in any sector can be funded.

We will continue to work actively in the area of debt. To date UNICEF has carried out or participated in 18 debt conversions, benefitting seven countries - Bolivia, Jamaica, Madagascar, Peru, Philippines, Senegal and Sudan. We are working at expanding the debt swap operation to a number of additional countries including Zambia and a number of other African countries. In addition, the governments of several African countries - Burkina Faso, Guinea-Bissau, Niger and Senegal have asked UNICEF to help them define mechanisms for further reductions of external debt which we are now doing in cooperation with UNDP and UNCTAD. UNICEF is also working actively with the governments of Canada and Switzerland in their programmes for cancellation of official debt in exchange for the establishment of local currency counterpart funds for social expenditures.

The balance between fund-raising for short term emergencies and long term sustainable development was referred to by several delegations including those of Austria, Bangladesh, Belgium, Japan and Norway. Others, such as the delegation of Germany, mentioned that emergency activities are an integral part of the UNICEF mandate and that such activities must continue.

As delegations pointed out, in 1993 some 28 per cent of UNICEF expenditure was in the area of emergencies. Demands in this area are not predictable and UNICEF is very much driven by the requirements of the UN system under the overall coordination of DHA. Appeals are developed and launched jointly, representing a systemwide assessment of comparative advantages among the key partners, UNICEF, UNHCR, WFP and UNDP. Funds are provided by donors in response to specific appeals and from specially earmarked funds.

The delegations of Russia and several others referred to the situation and needs of eastern Europe, NIS and the Baltics and the effectiveness of the limited resources allocated to the region. UNICEF recognizes the requirements of this region and its special characteristics. In this regard, we will continue to provide the most effective and efficient programmes consistent with the Board approved mandate and the resources available. We would encourage donors to make further resources available, additional to their normal ODA contributions.

I thank the Government of Japan for good news announcing an increase in its 1994 general resources contribution to UNICEF by ten per cent over the last year, and its reassurance that it will consider further increases in keeping with its economic stature and its commitment at the World Summit for Children. I would like to reassure Japan and other Board members that UNICEF would continue to improve in the areas of resource management and accountability so that donors are encouraged to do more for children. Our heartfelt thanks go to the German National Committee for raising over \$50 million dollars for UNICEF in 1993 and all other National Committees who collectively have helped to offset in part the reduction in official contributions.

Cost-effectiveness and Accountability

The delegations of Bangladesh, Belgium, Columbia, Japan, and Switzerland mentioned the importance of efficiency, cost effectiveness and accountability particularly in a time of limited resources. I fully agree and would encourage delegations to again review the section on cost-effectiveness in the Report of the Executive Director (Part 1) that details several solid examples of how UNICEF has managed to increase throughput while decreasing the ratio of administrative and programme support budget costs to total expenditures. I also share the hopes of Germany and the United Kingdom that the management study will produce new ideas on how UNICEF can further streamline and improve its operations. However, as noted by the Bangladesh delegate, although further improvements in cost efficiency may be possible, they are not substitutes for more resources.

The delegate from Nepal was concerned with the effect the modest income growth in the medium-term plan might have on the sustainability of general resources programmes. I can reassure the delegate that through careful planning, UNICEF can sustain its programmes by combining the income levels forecast in the plan with the remaining surplus cash balance. Of course, we remain hopeful that donors will help UNICEF exceed the income levels forecast in the Medium-term Plan so we can expand our programmes of cooperation to meet the many urgent priorities that exist.

CEE/CIS

Many delegations including Austria, Belgium, France, Kazakhstan, Romania, Russian Federation, and Turkey commented on UNICEF's role and activities in Central and Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CEE/CIS). I wish to express UNICEF's gratitude to Turkey and the newly

formed Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) for hosting in January 1994 important meetings to promote the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the high-priority mid-decade goals for children in the nine ECO member countries.

I wish to assure the delegate from France and Belgium that the UNICEF office in Geneva will continue to play an important role in UNICEF's efforts to reinforce its capacity to respond in a cost-effective and innovative way to the needs of women and children in the CEE/CIS region, especially in matters related to National Committees, emergency programmes, NGOs and public information. We have strengthened the staffing of the Geneva office in the last few years in both the administrative and emergency areas.

II. PROGRESS ON FOLLOW-UP TO THE WORLD SUMMIT FOR CHILDREN

I have heard from many delegations that National Programmes of Action have come of age, uniting action for children everywhere. Australia and Italy reported on the recent completion of their NPAs and Switzerland reported on action underway. Belgium, Canada, China, Colombia, Ecuador, France, Italy, Jamaica, Lebanon, Republic of Korea, the Netherlands, the Philippines and Switzerland all called for continued support for National Programmes of Action.

Delegations also raised the issue of how to ensure that this momentum continue its pace so that all countries complete National Programmes of Action and incorporate them into national development strategies and budgets. A resolution to this effect is proposed for the Board's action in paragraph 72 of E/ICEF/1994/12.

The ownership of National Programmes of Action has always rested with national governments. Increasingly, civil society is obtaining a stake in NPA activity in many countries. This means UNICEF already has many partners helping it advance action for children. It was particularly gratifying to hear reports on successful collaboration between governments, the UN agencies and NGOs in the preparation of National Programmes of Action. We are grateful for the commendation UNICEF received from our distinguished Chairperson for our work with many partners to draft National Programmes of Action and turn them into reality.

Sub-National Action

We recognize, however, as underlined by The First Lady of Colombia that "local and regional governments must participate actively in these National Programmes of Action for real decentralization to happen and for them to reach the most vulnerable". Several other delegations called for increased attention to empowerment through local plans of action. UNICEF will do its utmost to support the grassroots momentum built up this past year as governors, mayors, local leaders around the world put forward their own plans of action for children. We expect many others to join the forty-three countries that have drawn up National Programmes of Action at the sub-national level. This is a most important form of empowerment for women and children.

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Several countries assigned a prominent role to decentralization, in the provision of basic services. Ethiopia expressed the need to decentralize to the level where "people could be helped to help themselves". Ghana recognized the role of decentralization in the enhancement of grass-roots participation and capacity building. To such effect the Ghanaian government is organizing a series of capacity building seminars at district level.

The delegate of the Philippines indicated that in view of the trend towards devolution of power and of responsibilities regarding the provision of basic services to municipal governments, the Philippines government was challenging local governments with the responsibility of goal achievement.

Several delegations, such as Brazil, Ecuador, France, Italy and the Philippines, mentioned the Mayors, Defenders of Children Initiative and expressed their support for UNICEF continuing to work with municipal authorities as a means to achieve the mid-decade goals. I am pleased to see that in Brazil the NPA will be implemented at the municipal level. We applaud the municipality of Quito for taking the lead to organize the mayors in the region by creating the Coordination Group of Mayors, as Defenders of Children in Latin America. The Italian National Committee, which inspired the Mayors Initiative, should be commended for their mobilization efforts which have now taken on global dimensions.

UNICEF would like to see the Mayors, Defenders of Children Initiative be more widespread. We have already seen an increasing number of mayors in all regions of the world join this initiative and commit themselves to playing a key role in the achievement of the Summit goals.

Monitoring and Mid-decade review of progress

Many delegations drew our attention to the continued support needed for monitoring National Programmes of Action, as called for in paragraph 35 of the World Summit Plan of Action. Last week at the Regular Session, we reported on inter-agency cooperation to ensure that monitoring efforts around the world have the full support of the UN agencies and that these contribute to national capacity building. Dr. Hiroshi Nakajima, the Director-General of the World Health Organization, and I in January of this year addressed a joint letter to all Heads of State and Government and promised our full support in the achievement of the mid-decade goals and urged their personal leadership. WHO and UNICEF in 1993 agreed to a joint set of recommended indicators and procedures for monitoring the health-related goals of the World Summit for Children. UNICEF is also collaborating with UNDP, UNESCO and other UN agencies to monitor progress towards other WSC goals. We are working together with national governments and other institutions to build improved monitoring capacity to inform policy and contribute to sustainable action. Local ownership of information must drive the momentum for action.

Indonesia brought to all our attention that mid-decade reviews of progress are needed as called for in the Plan of Action of the World Summit for Children. I see many opportunities ahead of us to do just that, in each and every country and by regions. December 1995, when we must all take stock, is fast approaching. The delegation of France reminded us that "1995 would be a benchmark year for the mid-decade achievements of the World Summit for Children". I expect the Secretary General's own mid-decade review of progress

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for children to take place in 1996 when results from all countries have been shared with the UN agencies.

China urged that an appraisal on the progress towards mid-decade goals be made at the country and regional levels. Clearly, monitoring of progress on mid-decade goals and strengthening national capacities for this purpose are a major area of effort currently and will be so for some time. As Suhail Sharif, our young delegate from Tanzania told us, "Implementation Means Things To Do".

Concerning these matters, suggested language for a Board recommendation is offered in paragraph 72 of E/ICEF/1994/12.

III. ENSURING CHILD SURVIVAL, PROTECTION AND DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICA

Several Delegations (Côte d'Ivoire, Denmark, France, Guinea Bissau, Norway Sweden, Switzerland, Tanzania, United States, Zambia and others) commended UNICEF's priority to Africa and suggested that more attention be given to further increasing resource allocations for Africa. Priority interventions in Africa particularly for the reduction of diseases were seen as critical. The United States reduction of global inequities as a principal concern, particularly with respect to Africa.

The delegate of Italy noted that conflicts were having a devastating effect on children in Africa. Italian cooperation with UNICEF under the leadership of the Department of Humanitarian Affairs had been positive in several African countries. Although the Italian government had been forced to cut its contributions to general resources, we share their hope that more resources would be available for needs of high priority programmes in African countries.

I am happy to see the endorsement by so many delegations of UNICEF's priority to Africa. I note with appreciation the expression of support for the Dakar Consensus as a framework for UNICEF cooperation in Africa and the fact that the majority of African countries now have an NPA in a final form or close to being finalized. I have also noted and I hope the donor representatives will note, the difficulties many countries have been facing in increasing budgetary allocations to NPA actions. In this context, examples like Namibia's efforts to reduce military expenditure to reallocate these resources to the social sector are worthy of emulation by other countries.

With regard to Switzerland's request on details of how the priority to Africa is translated into action, it should be noted that this is best reflected in the innovative programmes that have originated in Africa, such as programmes to eradicate guinea worm, and for support of the mid-decade goals the Bamako Initiative and the area-based programmes founded on the Iringa experience. National AIDS prevention and control programmes have been implemented in several African countries and innovative experiences in AIDS education both in communities and schools originated in Africa. The Executive Director's report Part II, provides details of UNICEF activities and describes some of the successes and constraints in programme implementation. UNICEF resources allocated to Africa have increased remarkably over the period 1985 to 1993; furthermore, 40% of all UNICEF staff are now in Africa.

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Several delegations noted the importance of adapting global goals to country specific realities, particularly in Africa. The articulation of national programmes of action and sub-national programmes was seen as a positive step in that direction. Furthermore, it was hoped that short-term goals would complement, rather than detract from longer term objectives of capacity building and empowerment.

The United Kingdom questioned whether, at a time when several African countries are facing the collapse of systems and structures, UNICEF is taking the right direction in its pursuit of the goals. I would agree that the revitalization of systems and structures is the paramount need in much of Africa. The Bamako Initiative was developed by the African Health Ministers in 1987 for that purpose. UNICEF has been the strongest supporter of this Initiative. However, experience has also demonstrated that, without goals, systems tend to be inefficient. We need systems for sustainability and goals for efficiency. Furthermore, as I responded at the time of that intervention, the mid-decade goals emerged from the Consensus of Dakar signed by more than 40 African Governments, numerous donor Governments, international financial institutions and NGOs.

Japan expressed concern on the statement in the Africa paper E/ICEF/1994/L.4 to the effect that UNICEF may need to extend its activities beyond its traditional mandate, to a wide range of public policy matters. This statement refers to recommendations from the multi-donor evaluation that in certain African countries, UNICEF may be expected to play a greater role in articulation of social policies as they affect women and children. Increasingly, UNICEF cooperation at the country level has necessitated involvement in the systematic review of the impact of macro-economic policies on women and children, and collaborative efforts in programmes to mitigate the negative impact of structural adjustment on women and children. In this regard the remarks of the delegation of Zambia are worth citing:

My delegation is particularly pleased ... with UNICEF field office participation in World Bank-organized consultative group meetings or UNDP-organized round tables for a number of African countries. These have contributed to the systematic examination of policies and programmes and project designs for their likely impact on children and women. UNICEF has a strong grass-roots network and is therefore in a strong position to highlight the effects of certain policies adopted and should therefore continue to draw attention to the positive and negative effects of macro-economic trends and policies on the well-being of children and women.

Furthermore, UNICEF support to implementation of the NPAs will coincide with greater involvement in the National Development Plans.

IV. THE MEDIUM-TERM PLAN

I welcome the opportunity given this year to the Executive Board to comment in more detail on the Medium-Term Plan. In past years we felt that it had not been given the attention it deserved as the main policy document that

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sets UNICEF's course. This plan will shape all UNICEF programmes over the next three years.

It was encouraging to hear the broad-based support for the Medium-Term Plan expressed by many delegations - among them Denmark, Italy, Nicaragua, Pakistan and the United States. While some felt it had effectively balanced the needs of emergencies with those of ongoing programmes, others, such as the First Lady of Colombia and the delegation of Nepal, pointed to their concern that emergencies may affect ongoing programme delivery, especially with the more conservative projections we have made of resources. Others called our attention to the need to increase the share for education. We will return to the issues of emergencies later this morning. We are committed in the plan to increase the share of resources going to education through the speed with which we can do so will depend in part, on the additional supplementary funding we receive for this vital sector.

I noted that some delegations, among them Denmark, felt the document could be shorter and more focused on forward-looking aspects. We welcome the Executive Board's advice on a briefer format, as we too find it a weighty document to prepare.

Convention on the Rights of the Child

Reference to the CRC was made by the delegations of Australia, Bangladesh, Burkina Faso, China, Colombia, Denmark, Ecuador, Germany, Ghana, Guinea-Bissau, Italy, Jamaica, Kazakhstan, Lebanon, Nepal, Netherlands, Nicaragua, Philippines, Russian Federation, Romania, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey and the United Kingdom as well as by the National Committees for UNICEF and the NGO Committee on UNICEF.

I would like particularly to commend the efforts of countries, which, as illustrated in the statements of the delegations of Lebanon, Pakistan, the Russian Federation and Nicaragua, have followed up on ratification of the CRC by forming national coalitions to ensure CRC implementation in close cooperation with NGOs, by harmonizing their national legislation with provisions of the CRC, and by establishing national monitoring systems to follow up on progress in CRC implementation. These efforts deserve special mention, as they are steps on the part of governments to incorporate the rights enshrined in the CRC into national laws and policies.

The important linkages between social policies, the NPAs and the CRC were noted by the delegations of Italy, Sweden and Turkey, and the First Lady of Colombia eloquently described the goals of the World Summit for Children as an instrument for making the CRC a reality. The concept of empowerment is crucial to the attainment of rights and, as noted by the delegate of Denmark, the empowerment of women and children is necessary for the fulfillment of their rights.

Several delegations, including Australia, Burkina Faso, Ghana, Guinea-Bissau, Jamaica, the Netherlands, Nicaragua, Philippines, the Russian Federation and Sweden noted the challenges in implementing the CRC and the role of UNICEF in its implementation, including assisting Governments with following up on the Concluding Observations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child after it reviews the country report, and the development of monitoring indicators to assess progress.

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We note with appreciation the efforts made by the delegations of Kazakhstan and Switzerland to reach ratification by 1995. Support for universal ratification by 1995 was also voiced by the delegations of Australia, Bangladesh, Burkina Faso, Germany, Nepal, Nicaragua and Romania.

The Primacy of the Country Programme

As delegations justifiably raise their concern about how UNICEF deals with the great diversity of country situations while it attempts to carry out advocacy and mobilization of support for children worldwide, I find it necessary to stress repeatedly the primacy of the country programme for UNICEF.

UNICEF's country programming process gives paramount importance to the situation of individual countries. Some delegations, among them Sweden, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom raised concern, suggesting there maybe insufficient recognition in global goals and strategies for country differences. The country programming process makes certain that strategies are owned not only by UNICEF staff in the field but, more importantly, by their national counterparts. This is underlined by the way many delegations, from the developed as well as the developing countries, made reference to the strategic importance of National Programmes of Action. National Programmes of Action are by definition designed by national governments, adapting global goals to their own situations and identifying their own country-specific goals. Italy spoke of them as the means to enable the coherent implementation of country programmes for children; China looked to them as the main strategy for UNICEF to pursue in its country programmes. I see UNICEF's country programming process merging increasingly with National Programmes of Action so that the country programme becomes a concrete expression of UNICEF's contribution to national commitments to children. Delegates may wish to consult CRP.26, circulated at last week's Second Regular Session, on this subject.

Multi-Donor Evaluation Follow-up

We have noted that many of the delegates have commented on the importance of the multi-donor evaluation itself (Denmark, Germany, Indonesia, Italy, Nicaragua, Sweden) and the application of some of its recommendations in the case of the Medium Term Plan as mentioned by the distinguished delegate of Australia. The distinguished delegate from Denmark expressed that he would have liked to see more specific references to multi-donor evaluation follow-up made in the Report of the Executive Director. In addition to the Report of the Executive Director, specific responses to multi-donor evaluation recommendations are seen in several of the reports being presented to the Board, including a number of country programme recommendations presented last week during the second regular meeting which reflected the multi-donor evaluation recommendations on strategic choices; the Report on Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women and Girls: A Policy Review (E/ICEF/1994/L.5) which responds to questions raised by the multi-donor evaluation, the Progress Report and Lessons Learned for Evaluations and Studies in UNICEF (E/ICEF/1994/L.3) which provides an overview of evaluation policies and activities relating to recommendations of the multi-donor evaluation; the Report on Responses from UNICEF Field Offices to the Multi-Donor Evaluation of

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UNICEF (E/ICEF/1994/L.7) in which preliminary responses to the evaluation at the country level are identified.

Let me say that I agree that country programmes require a mix of service delivery, capacity building and empowerment to be most effective. However, different countries will need different mixes. For example, countries in greatest need will need more service delivery, while capacity building and empowerment are being pursued at the same time. In countries where infrastructures are in place, empowerment leading to demand creation will tend to receive a greater share of attention.

Evaluation

A number of delegations (China, Nicaragua, Sweden, United Kingdom, United States) mentioned the importance of evaluation of UNICEF supported programmes. We agree that the role of evaluation is critical and have been placing special emphasis on strengthening the management of the evaluation function over the last three years as can be seen in the 1992 Executive Board Report entitled "Overall Progress in the Implementation of Evaluation Activities in UNICEF", (E/ICEF/1992/L.9) and the 1994 Board Report entitled "Progress Report and Lessons Learned from Evaluations and Studies in UNICEF", (E/ICEF/1994/L.3).

Major ongoing tasks in this area have included the strengthening of the evaluation function within the country programme cycle, the continued development and promotion of the evaluation database which now contains information on over 2,000 completed evaluations since 1987, capacity-building activities for both UNICEF staff and national counterparts, and strengthening of the role of regional offices in the evaluation, monitoring and lessons learning process.

Progress made and lessons learned from the evaluations of UNICEF supported programmes will be discussed in greater detail under Items 11 and 12 scheduled for the Wednesday afternoon session.

UNICEF Contribution to Three UN Conferences

Denmark and Norway wanted to know how UNICEF was going to influence the Conference on Population and Development. As Dr. Nafis Sadik confirmed in her statement yesterday, UNICEF has deputed a senior staff to the Secretariat of the Conference and has been actively involved in the preparatory committee meetings. We have contributed to various modification of the framework document in areas of UNICEF concern such as education of girls and women, maternal and child health, family planning, education and communication as well as the addition of a section on the girl child.

The Republic of Korea drew our attention to this conference, as well as others, as an opportunity to advocate for the achievement of the goals.

The First Lady of Colombia raised the issue of UNICEF's contribution to the World Summit for Social Development. I welcome her suggestion that UNICEF contribute its experience from the World Summit for Children. It is one we have shared together with many countries and partners around the world. This experience in translating goals agreed at the international level into National Programmes of Action may be shared at the World Summit for Social

Development by many country delegations. They can count on our support in preparing contributions that will show how each country has turned the year 2000 goals into concrete national action through National Programmes of Action sensitive to each country situation. Indeed as the Chinese delegation suggested, it would be most appropriate for leaders attending the Social Summit to report on progress being made in the achievement of the mid-decade goals for children. A recommendation to this effect is included in the draft text provided in paragraph 72 of E/ICEF/1994/12.

I am happy to note the concern that improved monitoring systems be in place before the World Summit on Social Development in Copenhagen next year. China called for UNICEF to accelerate the development of monitoring systems in many countries. Rest assured that we are doing our utmost, but other partners must join in this effort. UNDP with its series of Human Development Reports has led the way to a consensus on the value of social investments. In Copenhagen, there must be a major commitment by all to see that timely information can be collected in all countries, rich and poor, on the most basic areas of human progress. UNICEF's new publication, *The Progress of Nations*, is dedicated to that effort.

Several delegations wanted to learn about the role UNICEF was playing at the preparation for the World Conference on Women and Development. UNICEF has been very active in helping integrate UNICEF's concerns in the draft Platform of Action: These are focus on girl child, a life cycle perspective and involvement of youth in the Conference. As you heard yesterday from Mrs. Gertaude Mongella UNICEF is collaborating with the Conference Secretariat at all stages of preparation. We have also seconded a staff member to that Conference Secretariat.

Education

In her opening remarks, our Chairperson emphasized the importance of girls' education as a means of empowering women. The Observer delegation of Norway also stressed the education of girls and women as the single most important investment for social development. Girls' education has become one of the priority areas of UNICEF support for education at country level.

Burkina Faso, Jamaica, Namibia, Ghana, Bangladesh and Nepal spoke about basic education as a vital sector for development and an important area for UNICEF assistance. Burkina Faso stressed the importance of community-based early childhood development programmes as complementary to primary education and as a component of women's income-earning activities.

The delegation of the Republic of Korea presented education as a pre-requisite for democracy and development and argued that more resources and advocacy must be accorded to education by government and donor agencies.

The delegates from Australia, Denmark, Ethiopia, Ghana, Netherlands, U.K. Sweden, Italy and Canada stressed the importance of empowerment and capacity building as a vital strategy for development and as an important area for UNICEF assistance. Belgium underlined the central role of education in human development. The Philippines noted the importance of basic education and the training of teachers and the importance of vocational and secondary education.

The First Lady of Lebanon praised the Education for Peace programme in Lebanon which is teaching tolerance, understanding and peaceful coexistence. This innovative approach is now serving as a model to other countries. Italy also mentioned the importance of peace education and education for development.

The Colombian First Lady said that the Escuela Nueva approach has to be systematically followed-up in order to ensure its implementation. She also stressed the education of the out-of-school youths especially the dropouts. The Jamaican delegation said, although in Jamaica there is gender equity in education, women still face problems of economic independence and job opportunities.

I agree with all these statements and would like to reiterate the importance, both in terms of resources and staff support, that UNICEF is now providing to assist countries to reach their own NPA goals for education. There are signs of a new vitality in basic education and new efforts such as the summit of nine high-population countries on education and a proposed African initiative will help us move forward in this area. As the Executive Board has asked, a policy review and progress report on education will be presented to the next annual session of the Board.

Gender and Development

The First Lady of Colombia underlined the problems of adolescents, teenage pregnancy and prostitution and stressed the need for actions for pregnancy prevention, sexual education, AIDS and education for school drop-outs.

UNICEF agrees with the observations that attention has to be given to special needs of adolescents and that they should be considered a target group for services. The policy review paper on "Gender equality and empowerment of women and girls" strongly supports this. UNICEF is promoting the inclusion of reproductive health in education programmes for teenagers in Cameroon, Thailand and Uganda and looks at this as an integrated element of AIDS prevention.

Many delegations placed strong emphasis on UNICEF support for the empowerment of women. UNICEF focus of advocacy and actions is on promoting and supporting education of girls and women and increasing the participation of women in decision-making at community levels. A fuller discussion of this topic was held in the context of the policy paper on gender equality and empowerment of women on which I will touch only briefly in this response.

The Role of Fathers

Several delegations including the United States made reference to the need for examining the role of the father in regards to UNICEF supported programmes and strategies. We are currently developing, together with the Population Council and other institutions and NGOs, the formulation of an in-depth study to take place in a number of countries on the role of the father whose results can be quickly fed into the UNICEF country programme process. The outcome of a new collaboration in Jamaica with an NGO, Fathers Inc., has been encouraging.

Health

I am pleased to note that many countries reported significant progress on health goals. One example is Lebanon where, as the First Lady of Lebanon informed us, steady progress is being made towards achieving the mid-decade health goals, even as the country has been recovering from a long war.

The delegate from the USA noted increased longevity by 23 years since 1950 in developing countries and credited UNICEF for having supported activities and interventions leading to this achievement. He noted that the mid-decade goals is a useful tool for tracking progress towards the end-decade goals.

Indonesia referred to the success of UCI and indicated that the incidence of measles and polio could be dramatically decreased even further. To ensure the quality and potency of vaccines, he urged that the Children's Vaccine Initiative explore the development of a single shot vaccine which will reduce the need for multiple visits. We are working on this along with WHO and other partners.

The Bamako Initiative

Many delegations made references to the importance of sustainability and self-reliance. The delegate from France saw the Bamako Initiative as the most appropriate strategy to meet the challenge of the health problems plaguing sub-Saharan Africa and urged UNICEF to extend the Initiative to the urban setting. The Philippine delegation stated the relevance of BI for Asia especially in the context of decentralization, self-reliance and responsibility.

The Ethiopian delegation, among others, addressed the crucial need of involving the communities and families in decision-making regarding health of children and women. This approach was strongly endorsed by the US delegation who recognized the validity of the Bamako Initiative approach and its relevance to the situation prevailing in Sub-Saharan Africa.

Water and Sanitation

Many delegations including the United States, the United Kingdom, Jamaica, Nepal and Nicaragua mentioned the importance of water and sanitation as essential basic services for the well-being of children. UNICEF is committed to continuing and strengthening its support to the sector to ensure that the World Summit Goals are achieved.

The Philippines, Lebanon and Nepal stressed the importance of clean water for improvement of health including the reduction of diarrhoeal diseases. During the past year, UNICEF has been at work on developing a new strategy for the 1990s based on improved health and socio-economic benefits from sector programmes. The Secretariat will be pleased to present to the Executive Board a new sector strategy for Water and Environmental Sanitation, as the delegate from Nepal requested, at the annual session of the Board in 1995 or 1996 if the Board so wishes.

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The Philippines raised the importance of water as a scarce resource that must be conserved. We fully endorse this view and are supporting the development of integrated sector programmes that are starting to address issues of water conservation and preservation.

The Philippines also raised the importance of ensuring effective operation and maintenance of existing systems. Indeed, if we are to accelerate coverage we must ensure that the maintenance of existing systems receives sufficient attention. UNICEF in many countries is actively supporting government in the development of operation and maintenance programmes including many in South East Asia.

HIV-AIDS

The impact of HIV-AIDS on children was highlighted by several delegations, among them, Norway, Zambia, Colombia, Sweden. In Africa, there has been an alarming rise in the number of children who are HIV positive and a large number of children are orphaned. In some villages almost all of the productive child-bearing parental generation is gone as pointed out by the Chairperson of the Swedish Committee for UNICEF who stressed the importance of innovative AIDS education and awareness programmes. Zambia pointed out that the AIDS endemic should be considered as an epidemic emergency.

The Board adopted a resolution at last week's session concerning inter-agency collaboration on this subject which will guide us in seeking to respond to the challenges presented by this epidemic.

The delegation of Norway emphasized the need for increased programme support for children in especially difficult circumstances including children who are victims of armed conflict, national catastrophes or HIV-AIDS. In addition, the Chairperson of the Swedish Committee for UNICEF pointed out that 25 per cent of Africa's children are out of school and thus in risk of becoming street children.

Urbanization

The first Lady of Lebanon, highlighted the dramatic levels of rural-to urban migration as people fled areas of conflict resulting from local wars and invasions. This migration placed a heavy toll on existing urban infrastructure that failed to keep pace with the soaring population of cities. We are proud of our modest cooperation in rehabilitating and reconstructing the urban water supply systems and for expanding social services in urban areas which was linked it to health improvement.

Several countries, such as Kazakhstan, Jamaica, Nepal and Bangladesh, highlighted the priority allocated to shelter and water and sanitation services provision, and established the linkages between such infrastructure and the health of children.

France pointed out that insufficient attention was paid to the problems created by rapid urbanization and lack of city planning, happening in most countries, particularly in Western Africa. UNICEF country programmes are increasingly focussing on provision of essential basic services in urban areas

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as part of the follow-up to The World Summit for Children. Many mayors have taken the initiative to launch municipal programmes of action for children with modest support from UNICEF.

Environment

A number of delegates (e.g. Canada, Colombia, Italy, Netherlands, Norway, Philippines, the United Kingdom) noted the importance of maintaining a long-term perspective on sustainability, especially in the context of the downward spiral attributable to poverty, population growth and environmental degradation. We see this as a reinforcement of the UNICEF position laid out in the 1994 report on the State of World's Children. We are committed to orienting our country programmes towards integrating the strategies of capacity building and empowerment as evidenced in most country programmes submitted last week for your approval. Also, we are actively pursuing the implementation of Board decision 1993/14 to incorporate "primary environmental care" as a cross-cutting strategy to meet basic needs, to empower families and communities, and to use resources sustainably. Facilitating children's participation is evident in our support, for example, in the production of the Rescue Mission: Planet Earth, A Children's Edition of Agenda 21. This publication contained their views, without specific endorsement by the sponsor UN agencies, and was presented to the Board by the authors and editors of the book on Monday. Partnership with NGOs and other UN agencies has also been actively pursued as an integral element in the endeavor.

Emergency Operations

Many delegations paid tribute to UNICEF staff who lost their lives in the line of duty and expressed appreciation for UNICEF's work in emergency. The delegations of Japan, Zambia, Canada, The Philippines, Côte d'Ivoire and Ethiopia among others, also commented on UNICEF's role in emergency situations.

Canada requested clarification on UNICEF's definition of emergency assistance, asking to what extent it involved relief only as opposed to rehabilitation. I would like to emphasize that UNICEF works within the framework of the UN Humanitarian Assistance system in close collaboration with other agencies in the system and follows the definitions and criteria within this framework for assessing situations and offering assistance. As the delegate from Germany said. "UNICEF has proved itself to be an active supporter of a concerted UN-approach to humanitarian assistance led by the Emergency Relief Coordinator and, on a multitude of occasions, has its efforts at the field-level within the resident-coordinator system."

In all its efforts, UNICEF has tried to strike a balance between emergency and development through a judicious decision-making process by a Senior Management Task Force on emergency; and by maintaining the Country Programme as an effective vehicle for the continuum for relief to development. However, a part of the increased expenditure in emergency may be legitimately a rehabilitation expenditure, if adequate non-emergency supplementary funds were available. This is a dilemma which UNICEF itself cannot resolve without the help and support of its donors.

Children in Armed Conflict

Many delegations, including those of Colombia, Indonesia, Iraq, Italy, Japan, Lebanon, Sweden, Norway, highlighted their concern about children affected by war. Lebanon praised UNICEF's efforts throughout the sixteen years of turmoil in Lebanon. The delegate of Japan stressed the need to protect children in armed conflict and called for inter-agency co-operation specifically with UNHCR and DHA. The delegate of Colombia highlighted armed conflict as one of the main constraints for the implementation of the Convention of the Rights of the Child. The Swedish delegate stressed that children in war stricken areas implies a further dimension to the work of UNICEF with special emphasis on assisting children traumatized by war. Italy pointed out that UNICEF plays a vital role in protecting the rights of children exposed to armed conflict, civil strife or violence, and made specific reference to former Yugoslavia, Somalia and Rwanda. The Chairperson of the Swedish Committee for UNICEF made reference to children in armed conflict in Africa. For instance, children have recently been slaughtered by the thousands in Rwanda. In Angola, a recent estimate concerning landmines is that there are 15 to 20 million mines in the ground which means two for every single inhabitant in that country. I agree with the need for international action for de-mining as highlighted by Belgium, by the Chairperson of the Standing Committee of National Committees for UNICEF, and by the NGO Committee on UNICEF.

Sanctions

Ecuador, Japan, Indonesia and Iraq supported consideration of the Executive Director's suggestion that child impact assessment be undertaken and the information be submitted to the Security Council prior to imposition of sanctions. The United Kingdom delegate commented that, while he did not consider the annual session of the UNICEF Executive Board to be the most appropriate forum for discussing sanctions in detail, UNICEF nevertheless has a role in briefing the Security Council about the impact of sanctions on children.

NGOs and other allies

The important contribution of NGOs to the implementation of programmes to assist women and children were noted by the delegations of China, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Jamaica, Kazakhstan, Nepal, Nicaragua, United Kingdom and the USA. Indeed, in many countries NGOs have been closely involved in the planning and implementation of the NPAs, and UNICEF is convinced that it is only through the strong support of NGOs that the Summit Goals can be attained and sustained. As emphasized by the delegations of Jamaica and the Philippines, NGOs are key actors in bringing public attention to children's issues and mobilizing communities to participate in the national development effort.

The delegations of Lebanon, Pakistan and Sweden also referred to the important work of NGOs and NGO coalitions in the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The delegations of Jamaica and Sweden referred to the need to devote more attention to capacity-building among NGOs, a suggestion to which the UNICEF Secretariat is very receptive, and it has already taken steps in this direction.

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Information

The delegates from Colombia and the Philippines drew attention to the influence of the media, particularly television, in promoting a culture of social disintegration and violence. They urged UNICEF to work with the media in promoting peace and generating more information on the silent emergency.

UNICEF has significantly increased its works with television in developing educational programmes about and for children. It has also initiated an images project which will enable us to dialogue with the media on the impact of images projected.

In 1993, UNICEF carried out several training and orientation programmes on children's issues for journalists and for UNICEF staff in cooperation with Radio Netherlands, the Australian Broadcasting Corporation, the Thompson Foundation and press institutes in Asia, Africa and Latin America. These and other such efforts are summarized in the 1994 UNICEF Annual Report which has just been issued.

With regard to the comments by the delegates of the Netherlands and Indonesia on *Progress of Nations*, we are gratified that the publication is considered a useful contribution. I should note here that we realize and acknowledge the limitations of GNP estimated via exchange rates and the need for cautious interpretation of them as an indicator of economic situations in the derivation of national performance gaps. We did examine the alternative of GNP as estimated via purchasing power parities. But while this latter method is conceptually an improvement, it makes very major data demands, which limit its practical viability for many countries.

The delegate of Italy has asked us to ensure more coordination between the evaluation, research and information activities performed at headquarters and those of the International Child Development Center in Florence. While the activities of ICDC are synergistic with those of UNICEF headquarters we agree that more can be done to maximize the impact of the work of the center through increased collaboration.

V. UN SYSTEM REFORM AND RESTRUCTURING OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

UN system reform

Although the issue of reform and operational activities in the field is not due for discussion until Friday, I was pleased to see that a number of delegates referred to the central role of Resolutions 46/182 and 47/199, including Brazil, Germany and Ghana. We welcome the statement by Germany that "UNICEF has proved itself to be an active supporter of a concerted UN approach to humanitarian assistance led by the Emergency Relief Coordinator." I was happy to learn that Ghana is in the process of preparing its Country Strategy Note. The Netherlands also noted the importance of NPAs as a basis for obtaining "value added" from the Country Strategy Note. We look forward to a full discussion of the implementation of Resolution 47/199 on Friday.

Executive Board restructuring

Many delegations including Brazil, Germany, Italy, Netherlands, Nicaragua, Sweden and Turkey commented on the restructured Executive Board, the new arrangements for the Annual Session and how the objectives of the reform implemented under resolution 48/162 can be better met. The expectations from the new arrangements are many: that the discussions would be efficient and business-like; that there would be a genuine dialogue on programme and operations issues; there would be a clear demarcation between tasks of the Board, the ECOSOC, and UNICEF's field responsibilities; and that more effective coordination within the U.N. family would be achieved. We have made some progress but clearly, we are passing through a phase of transition in this regard. In the words of the delegate from Germany, "The adoption of resolution 48/162 by the General Assembly last December launched a process of change ... this process is by no means completed as yet, even though a number of results have already been achieved." Discussion of the new rules of procedure, has taken up considerable time and attention during last week's regular session and this annual meeting. I hope we will achieve the purposes of the new structure, abiding by the provisions and the spirit of resolution 48/162.

Tributes to UNICEF

I thank the delegations of Belgium, Brazil, Burkina Faso, China, Colombia, France, Japan, Italy, Indonesia, Nicaragua, the Philippines, Pakistan, Russian Federation, Rumania, Turkey, the United States and others for their kind words concerning UNICEF. The First Lady of Colombia said "This action-oriented organization devoted to child survival and development is recognized the world over", and Nicaragua said that "UNICEF is one of the most appreciated agencies of the United Nations because it works for children".

I am personally grateful to all the delegations that have made kind references about me and my role in UNICEF. The distinguished delegate from Belgium credited the Executive Director for making UNICEF one of the most active and visible part of the multilateral system, stating that UNICEF was the best known and most loved entity in the UN system. I am sure that it is the mandate and role of UNICEF in the world community that has made UNICEF what it is. I am also deeply grateful to Dr. Dogramaci, the delegate from Turkey who, I believe is the most senior as a member of the Executive Board, for his very kind and generous words about me and my contribution. I am overwhelmed by these tributes and can only say that without your commitment and the active support of our UNICEF staff, we never could have succeeded as we have.

In conclusion, I wish to join my voice, as I did in last year's Executive Board, with Marian Wright Edelman, leader of the United States delegation and the foremost defender of children in the United States:

As we look at what must be done to save the world's children today, next week, next month and over the mere 297 weeks until the turn of the century ... it is increasingly clear that two possible paths lie before all of our nations ...

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One is a path of increasing violence, both external and internal, of a fatalism about poverty, hunger, illness, growing inequality and child death and of drift and indifference as nations lose their moral compass and faith in their ability to attach problems ...

The second and alternative path is what UNICEF's remarkable life-affirming work provides us. This is the path of combating child poverty, preventing illness, relieving hunger, pursuing sustainable development, discouraging violence bringing hope into every corner of the globe, not least of all hope in our often cynical rich nations that the problems of poor children at home and abroad can be dealt with.

As the delegates of both Niger and the United States put it, rephrasing slightly an African saying:

"It takes the whole world to raise a child."

Let us all make sure that, with the active participation of UNICEF, the world does its job well.