



Statements and Speeches

No. 83/24

OPERATIONAL ACTIVITIES FOR DEVELOPMENT

Statement by Mr. David Lee, Deputy Permanent Representative of Canada to the United Nations and Canadian delegate to the Second Committee of the thirty-eighth session of the United Nations General Assembly, New York, November 22, 1983.

Operational activities for development are among the most significant areas of involvement of the organizations in the United Nations family. Given the scope of the Director-General's [for Development and International Economic Co-operation, Mr. Jean Ripert] report presented to us earlier in Document A/38/258, and the fact that we are participating in a triennial review, this agenda item is especially important this year since it provides the appropriate moment to consider and elaborate major policy guidelines to govern our future efforts in this area.

This question was discussed extensively at the summer session of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) and was also the subject of an important declaration by the Group of 77. Consequently, it is not necessary to review this earlier analysis once again. However, I would like to recall that the comments of the Canadian delegation on that occasion were concerned mainly with the coherence of the system as well as with priority activities, efficiency of management, and the level of resources. In fact, most delegations which intervened at ECOSOC, underlined the importance of coherence, with emphasis being placed on the cohesiveness of the system based on the central role of the United Nations Development Program (UNDP).

In the light of these discussions, the Director-General provided both written and verbal comments yesterday which we found very pertinent. We wish to express our gratitude for his comments, which we have followed carefully, since we found in them important elements which responded to concerns expressed in July at ECOSOC and which, therefore, help to advance our consideration of operational activities for development.

In my intervention today I will consider first the question of resources, and then deal with several specific points leading to some proposals for action.

Resources

Judging from many of the comments made, the main problem facing the UN development system is one of insufficient financing. My government entirely shares the feeling that too few resources are available.

If one believes in this system and the central role played by UNDP, and this Committee as well as the General Assembly has reaffirmed this belief for many years, the resources necessary to enable the fulfillment of its mandates must be provided. However, the analysis should not stop there for other elements must be considered.