

The report of the ad hoc group on housing and urban development recommending the creation of a United Nations committee on housing is its most comprehensive piece of work. We attach particular interest to its emphasis on the usefulness of creating in every country a national agency for housing which could be used as a point of contact for international assistance.

My Delegation also welcomes the idea of convening a meeting of an ad hoc group of experts on community development, which will contribute to strengthening the United Nations programme in that field, as part of the Development Decade.

As suggested by the group of experts on social and welfare programmes, the importance of active citizen participation in the welfare field at all levels cannot be overlooked.

Within the framework of national planning there is room not only for large programmes involving extensive use of resources, but also for smaller and sometimes quite modest projects which can, and often do, have a value out of all proportion to their physical size. There is some danger that very large undertakings, if they are put into effect in the wrong place and at the wrong time, may collapse from their own weight, whereas small projects, carefully developed, can frequently be expanded stage by stage into broad programmes benefiting wide segments of the population. Whatever the approach, we feel that a cardinal rule is that no endeavour can ultimately succeed unless it is firmly rooted among the people; it must be understood by them, it must be seen to benefit them and they must be actively involved in moving it forward.

It is the view of my Delegation that a satisfactory balance must be found between the social and economic sectors as part of the United Nations development decade. We feel that the Secretariat should be given full latitude to re-adjust programmes and priorities in compliance with plans of action outlined by the Economic and Social Council.

My Delegation is therefore gratified at the important re-orientation of UNICEF policy which has recently taken place. The so-called "new look" provides a good illustration of the flexibility with which the United Nations has been able to adapt itself to changing needs and circumstances. The Canadian Delegation finds itself in broad agreement with this new UNICEF trend and particularly approves the diversification of UNICEF policies with programmes aimed particularly at child and family welfare.

We also feel that UNICEF has shown a praiseworthy appreciation of the desirability of a universal approach to meeting the needs of children at the national level and that it has displayed an equally commendable consciousness of the dangers of over-ambitious planning. My Delegation agrees with UNICEF's excellent principles of planning, in meeting the needs of children.

The needs of children and youth living in urban slums are indeed immense and require urgent attention. In fact, these needs will tend to become even greater in the future in view of the rapidly increasing rate of urbanization coupled with substantial over-all population growth. We are glad to see that UNICEF has extended its work into this vital field.

My Delegation is also pleased to note the increased co-operation of UNICEF with the regional economic commissions, the new economic development institutes and such other United Nations agencies as the Special Fund and the World Bank. My Government has consistently favoured the development of close co-operation and co-ordination between the United Nations organs working in related fields. We would anticipate, however, that, if UNICEF is to advise other United Nations bodies on questions of planning related to children, or provide them with assistance in such forms as fellowships or