

maintain a strong linkage between the rate of programme-related disbursements and the rate at which revenues (normally assessed and voluntary contributions) are received.

The fourth objective of the Canadian proposals is therefore to offer the financial instruments (for instance a strengthened Working Capital Fund, incentives for prompt payment of contributions, and procedures to deal with arrears and withholdings) and budgetary procedures that will make it possible for agencies to complete as much as possible of their approved programmes, and to meet all priority objectives, whatever the circumstances, without running the risk of weakening their short- or long-term financial viability. The most important procedure proposed in this regard is the division of the agreed programme of activities into two components: the Regular programme and the Stand-by programme. In a difficult cash-flow situation, this enables agencies to set aside lower priority activities without imposing the need to extinguish them altogether.

| EXPERTISE AND INNOVATIVENESS |

Agencies should have a strong sense of the future direction of their programmes, functions, and mandate. The implementation of their programmes should promote the development of excellence and of a high degree of technical expertise, so that Member States can be assured that the programme is of the highest standard and that agencies can be relied upon as a source of accurate, relevant, and up-to-date knowledge.

The fifth objective of the Canadian proposals is to ensure that agencies are provided with resources and administrative instruments, inter alia: (i) to explore areas and functions, in their field of responsibility, which have so far been overlooked; and (ii) to use and further develop their expertise. To this end, the establishment of a Special Programme is proposed.

| STANDARDIZATION AND COMPARATIVENESS |

While it is crucial to preserve a high degree of decentralization and self-direction in the UN system, especially among the specialized agencies, it is equally important to take into account the fact that, beyond their diversity, the agencies share common core responsibilities, face common challenges, and must play complementary mutually-supportive roles. The problems and the opportunities raised in UN forums are typically global