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SPECIAL ECONOMIC AND DISASTER RELIEF ASSISTANCE: SPECIAL PROGRAMMES OF ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE

Assistance for the reconstruction and development of Lebanon

Report of the Secretary-General

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. The present report is submitted to the General Assembly pursuant to its resolution 43/207 of 20 December 1988. It provides a brief description of the various assistance programmes implemented in Lebanon from August 1988 to July 1989.

II. GENERAL SITUATION AFFECTING ASSISTANCE EFFORTS

2. The situation in Lebanon in the reporting period was marked by a continued disintegration of the institutions of government and society. Since September 1988, when the Parliament was not able to agree on a new president, the political situation has been one of unprecedented violence. Since March 1989, despite continued appeals for a cease-fire by the international community, there has been almost uninterrupted shelling in and around Beirut.

3. The continued violence had a devastating effect on the overall economic and social situation. More than 500 people died and over 2,000 were wounded. Approximately 75 per cent of the population of Beirut fled to other areas of Lebanon, in particular to the south. The shelling caused extensive structural damage to buildings and to the infrastructure of Beirut. The oil storage facilities were hit and for lack of fuel oil the power station was unable to generate electricity. The Beirut ports were closed for extensive periods and consequently no fuel oil could be delivered. The closure of the ports also severely hindered the delivery of emergency relief aid into the Beirut area. United Nations and other relief operations were adversely affected, since movements of personnel and relief items were subject to an unpredictable security situation.

4. Against this background, a climate of deep crisis and economic collapse prevailed as a result of loss of confidence in the economy. Following a year of galloping inflation in 1987 (730 per cent), the consumer price index increased by 27.5 per cent in 1988 and by another 28.5 per cent during the first half of 1989. In 1989, there were widely divergent price increases from one region to another owing to increased segmentation and blockading of parts of the country.

5. The dollar exchange rate dropped until August 1988, but went up considerably during the fourth quarter. During 1988, the Lebanese pound lost 81.4 per cent of its value (December 1988: \$US 1.00 = LL 513). During the first quarter of 1989, the dollar moved erratically (up to five percentage points) around the LL 500 level. Movements in the exchange rate were to a large extent contained as a result of measures taken by the monetary authorities at the end of 1987 and adjusted thereafter as required and because most deposits were held in foreign currency from 1987 onwards.

6. Since the beginning of the civil strife in 1975, the Lebanese economy has undergone a significant transformation. Until recently, 70 per cent of GDP originated from the service economy and 30 per cent from the productive sectors. In 1988, however, 24 per cent of GDP originated in agriculture, 30 per cent in industry and 46 per cent in the service sectors. Beirut, once a recognized financial centre, has now virtually lost its importance in the banking sector. The

economy has become unpredictable and erratic. Access to basic commodities and services has become the most valuable asset. Scores of people have fled the areas most affected by the recent violence and are unable to engage in productive economic activities. As a result of reduced economic activity, tens of thousands of day labourers and industry workers are unemployed, many without a secondary source of income.

7. In January 1989, some 20,000 people were temporarily displaced from their villages in the Iqlim El-Touffah region owing to fighting among rival local forces. In March and April 1989, large-scale indiscriminate artillery shelling in greater Beirut and the surrounding Mount Lebanon areas (population 1.5 million) temporarily displaced 400,000 people from the western part of the city and its southern suburbs mainly to South Lebanon, and 100,000 from the eastern part and suburbs of the city towards the upper mountain areas and North Lebanon. In July, tens of thousands again fled the city to safer havens. In addition, an estimated 200,000 persons from the affected areas have left the country, particularly professionals and the better skilled.

8. During the period from March to July 1989, living conditions in greater Beirut and the surrounding regions were appalling. The population was subjected to frequent and unpredictable shelling and had to spend days and nights in ill-equipped underground shelters. Sanitary conditions have been poor, garbage collection has become irregular. Electricity supply has been limited to two or three hours daily, and for several days it was completely shut off. Water - already rationed in normal times - was available only every other day. Universities and schools have been closed since March 1989, affecting some 500,000 students. Hospitals and social welfare institutions were severely overburdened, even though accustomed to such adverse conditions after 15 years of civil strife.

III. UNITED NATIONS ROLE AND ACTIVITIES

9. During the period covered by the present report, the United Nations system made every effort to continue its activities and presence in Lebanon despite a seriously deteriorating security situation. The lack of political stability and increasing violence made it extremely difficult for the United Nations to carry out its programme of reconstruction and development. Because of the continuing destruction, activities inevitably had to focus on the increasing need of the Lebanese people for emergency relief aid as well as the maintenance of essential services, such as health care and water supply.

10. The United Nations programmes and specialized agencies involved in the assistance programmes for the reconstruction and development of Lebanon include the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Office of the United Nations Disaster Relief Co-ordinator (UNDRO), the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), the World Food Programme (WFP), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the International Labour Organisation (ILO), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the World Health

Organization (WHO). The Office of the Under-Secretary-General for Political and General Assembly Affairs provides policy guidance and co-ordinates the United Nations Assistance for the Reconstruction and Development of Lebanon (UNARDOL).

11. The United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) continued to provide humanitarian assistance on an ad hoc basis in its area of operation in order to alleviate emergency needs. These humanitarian activities included distribution of food, medicaments and blankets to the local population, in particular during winter-time, as well as medical assistance and emergency transportation.

12. In order to reassess emergency relief needs, the Secretary-General sent a high-level inter-agency mission to Lebanon from 16 to 26 January 1989. The mission was led by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, who is also UNDP Resident Representative and United Nations Special Co-ordinator. The mission was composed of senior representatives of FAO, UNARDOL, UNDRO, UNICEF, WFP and WHO. Representatives of UNHCR and UNRWA participated as observers.

13. Assessing the response to the appeal of the Secretary-General of 4 December 1987, the mission ascertained that the \$85 million the appeal had called for had in fact been donated. The assistance pledged to the United Nations amounted to more than \$48 million. The total relief assistance for Lebanon from contributions to the United Nations and from bilateral and multilateral contributions directly to the Government (the indirect response to the appeal) amounted to more than \$116 million for 1988.

14. In its report, the inter-agency mission recommends total requirements for relief and urgent rehabilitation for the next 12 months amounting to \$87,283,000, of which slightly less than half (\$42 million) is designated for food aid. Other sectoral requirements are for health and sanitation (\$9.1 million); the social sector (\$2.3 million); education (\$5.6 million); water supply (\$6.65 million); shelter (\$5 million); agriculture (\$13.6 million); and public services (\$3 million).

15. Following a discussion of United Nations assistance to Lebanon with the heads of United Nations programmes and specialized agencies at the Administrative Committee for Co-ordination Meeting at Geneva, the Secretary-General on 21 April launched an appeal to the international community to provide urgent humanitarian assistance to alleviate the suffering of segments of the population most seriously affected by the ongoing crisis. Based on the findings of the mission, the aid would provide assistance to 150,000 families, or 800,000 persons, who are in chronic need of general relief aid. Member States so far have responded positively but cautiously to this appeal. The willingness to donate is subject to developments in the country.

16. In order to improve the United Nations system's ability to implement emergency relief assistance, the Special Representative established two co-ordination mechanisms. United Nations representatives, government officials and representatives of the major donor countries met regularly in Beirut. This mechanism was appreciated by all participants and greatly helped to improve and focus the distribution of relief aid. A similar mechanism was introduced for non-governmental organizations, who play a vital role in the actual execution of

the relief projects. It should be noted in this context, however, that the political developments made it increasingly difficult for the organizations and agencies involved in rendering relief aid to identify the appropriate counterparts within the Lebanese Government.

17. Individual reports by the United Nations programmes and specialized agencies involved in providing relief aid in Lebanon are presented below.

United Nations Children's Fund

18. Following the recent escalation of military activities in Beirut, the situation of children may be described as follows.

19. In West Beirut, most of the population (over 70 per cent) have fled from urban areas. For those who remained, supplies of food and medicine are still adequate. However, the heavy destruction of hospitals has created a serious problem, as has the progressive deterioration of conditions of hygiene, particularly in shelters along the demarcation line. A minimum supply of water is still available as a result of UNICEF action last June. All schools are closed.

20. In East Beirut, the situation is very similar, the difference being that the population has not been able to evacuate because of extreme difficulties in leaving the area. Thus, the number of children affected by spending long periods of time in the shelters is greater. The food and drug situation is also similar. Water is still available in urban and coastal areas, but is becoming scarce in mountain areas as a result of the growing influx of the people fleeing to escape the shelling.

21. In the southern and eastern parts of Lebanon, the situation may be characterized by the large-scale arrival of displaced people from Beirut. Their number is estimated to be around 600,000. The majority are living with friends and relatives. However, about 100,000 people (among the poorest) are occupying all available public buildings (schools, mosques, etc.), and living under extremely difficult conditions, particularly in terms of hygiene. Such an increase in population is creating an unbearable demand on the health system, particularly in terms of essential drugs and hospital capacity.

22. In northern Lebanon, the situation remained almost normal until the last few weeks, when about 100,000 refugees began settling in that area. However, the situation is not yet critical.

23. The UNICEF response to the situation includes the following activities:

(a) Maintenance of minimal health services through the provision of essential drugs and basic equipment to 640 operating dispensaries in the country;

(b) Maintenance and improvement of the operational capacity of the seven government hospitals still operating in the country, mainly outside Beirut;

(c) Acceleration of immunization activities and control of diarrhoeal diseases in all regions not directly affected by military activity (given the

recent displacement of the population, these areas now represent over 60 per cent of the total population);

(d) Urgent repair and maintenance of water supply lines and pumping equipment in Beirut and the suburbs following direct damage from shellings;

(e) Regular disinfection and cleaning of over 800 shelters on both sides of Beirut, which are almost permanently occupied by over 70,000 people;

(f) Design and production of a special magazine for children, 60,000 copies of which will be distributed to all children unable to attend school;

(g) Support for major activities aimed at organizing summer camps for children, systematically integrating children from various communities across all front lines. This is currently being implemented with unexpected success. So far, 1,000 monitors have been trained, with particular emphasis on "Education for Peace". More than 21,000 children have been attending various kinds of summer camps and this activity will continue until mid-September. It is estimated that by then more than 25,000 children will have been exposed to this "Peace-building" activity.

24. Presently, the most urgent needs are being met through international response to the United Nations appeal for Lebanon, which includes UNICEF-supported activities, and excellent co-operation with the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). In the near future, main priorities for UNICEF will be to continue emergency assistance to the displaced and to increase support for the provision of essential drugs. A critical problem ahead concerns the necessity of reopening primary schools, which have been closed since March 1989. This will be an absolute priority and will require substantial funding for school stationery, teaching aids and, most importantly, temporary facilities in the form of prefabricated houses or tents.

25. In the light of the above, donors will be approached with specific funding requests once additional funding needs, if any, have been identified.

United Nations Development Programme

26. In conformity with UNDP Governing Council decision 88/31, technical co-operation activities were continued on a project by-project basis, focusing on viable small-scale projects. In addition, efforts were made, as at mid-1988, to revitalize the programme in view of the slightly improved operational conditions in certain areas of the country.

27. At its session in June 1988, the UNDP Governing Council decided to increase, on a provisional basis, the indicative planning figure (IPF) for Lebanon for the fourth programming cycle (1987-1991) to \$8.562 million. In response to Governing Council decision 88/31, UNDP undertook, in collaboration with the Government of Lebanon and the World Bank, a statistical study aimed at compiling the data necessary to permit a comprehensive adjustment of the fourth cycle IPF. The study began in January 1989, when consultations were held between the expert consultant

selected to lead the study and representatives of the Statistical Office of the Secretariat and the World Bank. The report is tentatively scheduled to be completed by December 1989.

28. Funds committed under the IPF in 1987 and 1988 amounted to \$2.9 million. Despite operational difficulties inherent in the prevailing situation in Lebanon during the period under review, it has been possible to continue, albeit at a reduced pace, the implementation of 10 small-scale projects relating to agricultural research, technical education and vocational training, telecommunications training and postal planning, as well as multi-sectoral training under an umbrella fellowships project.

29. New project proposals for UNDP technical co-operation amounting to more than \$10 million were identified in close collaboration with national authorities and non-governmental organizations. Some 20 projects were identified in support of priority sectors such as primary health care, water supply, technical education for women, handicrafts, agricultural research and production, environmental quality control and vocational training. However, the situation in Lebanon since the last quarter of 1988 has prevented the fielding of project formulation missions needed to move project ideas to the appraisal and approval stages.

30. The UNDP Governing Council at its thirty-sixth session was apprised that the security situation had significantly slowed down the implementation of ongoing projects and hindered the programming and formulation process.

31. UNDP will continue its efforts to expand the ongoing programme in order to respond in the most timely and effective manner to the pressing needs of this country. In this respect, UNDP is following the developments closely and, circumstances permitting, will take the necessary steps to resume and accelerate project formulation and implementation activities.

Office of the United Nations Disaster Relief Co-ordinator

32. During the first half of the period under review, the military activities throughout the country and the economic crisis, in particular, required that UNDRO continue and further intensify its emergency assistance to the Lebanese population.

33. In mid-March 1989, military activities increased in and around greater Beirut. Heavy shelling of both sides, with hundreds of dead, thousands of wounded, caused depopulation of Beirut and made emergency assistance extremely difficult.

34. In 1988, \$116 million was mobilized, with \$6.8 million channelled through UNDPRO. These contributions were used in over 50 projects in the health, education and social sectors, and were used to repair shelters and supply water and to assist orphans and displaced persons. These activities were implemented by 44 non-governmental organizations and United Nations organs. It is estimated that about 1 million people in all regions of Lebanon benefited from this assistance.

35. At the beginning of 1989, there were still 21 ongoing projects worth over \$3 million supervised by UNDRO. Nevertheless, following the start of military clashes in mid-March, several of these projects had to be suspended and

implementation of some had to be cancelled. Funds were redirected to new projects of higher priority, such as emergency repairs of water and electricity supply systems in greater Beirut, emergency procurement and distribution of drugs for the chronically ill all over Lebanon, as well as other emergency health programmes.

36. As a response to the increased number of people in need, the Secretary-General appealed through UNDRO on 21 April 1989 for emergency relief aid to Lebanon. Since then, the assistance in cash, material and services reported to UNDRO exceeded \$50 million. The total reported from January to 31 July 1989 is \$52,516,203.

37. During the reporting period, UNDRO regularly issued situation reports to keep the donor community informed. In order to facilitate the co-ordination of emergency relief assistance to Lebanon and to supervise its own programmes, the UNDRO office at Beirut continued its activity through at least one delegate. Since clashes started in March 1989, UNDRO has been represented by the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Lebanon.

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

38. UNHCR assistance in Lebanon remains strictly limited to refugee-related matters. The prevailing situation hinders the presence of international staff in the country. Therefore, the UNHCR programme continues on the same level as previously reported.

39. Presently, UNHCR is not involved in any reconstruction and development programmes for Lebanon. Special funds, however, were allocated as follows:

(a) \$40,000 for assistance to a hospital for the handicapped in East Beirut;

(b) \$50,000 for the reconstruction of a hangar in the Hamlieh School;

(c) \$600,000 from an Arab Gulf Programme for United Nations Development Organizations (AGFUND) contribution for the extension of the Islamic Hospital at Tripoli. This project, which is still under study, has not yet been started because of the prevailing situation.

United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East

40. A brief summary of major projects and operations, including emergency relief assistance, carried out by UNRWA in Lebanon during the reporting period is set out below. A more comprehensive review of UNRWA activities in Lebanon and its other areas of operation is contained in the Commissioner-General's annual report to the forty-fourth session of the General Assembly. 1/

Education

41. During the 1988/89 school year, the 76 UNRWA schools in Lebanon provided education to 33,000 pupils in the first 10 years of the education cycle. Under normal circumstances, UNRWA provides services only to Palestine refugees, but in view of the emergency in Lebanon, the Agency has extended its programmes. In addition, some Lebanese children have been taken into UNRWA schools where spaces

have been available, especially in schools in remote areas. During the reporting period, a new school was being built in Ein El-Hilwey Camp in Salda at an estimated cost of \$1.2 million and a school was opened in East Beirut in rented premises. In 1989, the UNRWA budget for its education programme in Lebanon was \$11.3 million.

Health

42. The UNRWA health programme in Lebanon is primarily community health-oriented and comprises curative and preventive medical care services, environmental health services in refugee camps and a nutrition and supplementary feeding service. When hospital care is required, it is provided through hospitals with which UNRWA has contractual arrangements or by reimbursement of costs incurred in government hospitals. The health programme functioned throughout the reporting period and has a budget for 1989 of \$8.5 million.

Relief

43. The UNRWA regular welfare programme provided assistance to nearly 32,000 refugees during the period under review. In addition, a shelter assistance programme was carried out to help refugees whose shelters in Shatila and Burj el-Barajneh camps were damaged or destroyed in the so-called "camp wars". This programme, similar to previous ones carried out since 1985, provided assistance to over 3,000 families and cost \$3.7 million. In addition, UNRWA carried out special distribution of food to the refugee population, aimed particularly at those in the most dire circumstances. These special distributions cost \$1.1 million over and above the regular food programme, for which \$3.6 million was budgeted in 1989. The overall budget for the Agency's relief services programme for 1989 is \$15.9 million.

44. The total UNRWA budget for the provision of programmes in Lebanon in 1989, including common services and administration costs, is more than \$42 million.

World Food Programme

45. Development project 524/Exp.II, "Feeding programme for children and youths in institutions and vulnerable groups in mother and child health centres": out of a total commitment of 19,768 tons, some 5,695 tons of various foodstuffs were delivered to project authorities in 1988 and 2,770 tons in 1989. Additional commodities will be shipped soon. The number of beneficiaries is 274,500 in all areas of distribution in south and north Lebanon (Onma, Beka'a, Mount Lebanon and Beirut).

46. In emergency operation No. 3168/Exp.II, concerning 275,000 displaced persons, a total commitment of 4,212 tons of various foodstuffs was delivered in 1988. Emergency operation No. 4060, concerning 250,000 persons, was approved in June and a total commitment of 2,080 tons of rice was purchased.

47. WFP is acting as agent for a bilateral European Community contribution totalling approximately 1,000 tons of various foodstuffs, which will be procured and shipped as soon as possible.

48. All WFP commodities are being distributed equitably among all communities.

49. The High Relief Committee of the Ministry of Social Affairs receives and distributes all types of aid to Lebanon. WFP staff participate in and supervise the distribution.

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

50. The FAO programme in Lebanon is supported by three funding sources: UNDP, the Trust Fund and the FAO Regular Programme for Technical Co-operation.

FAO/UNDP projects

51. There are five projects financed by UNDP, at a total cost of \$1,267,000. These projects address the fields of animal health, protected cultivation, olive production, cereal seed development and agricultural documentation.

52. In addition, there is a project on consultancy services, with a total cost of \$700,000, which is currently under consideration. The Government has recently requested FAO to field formulation missions for the rehabilitation of the forestry sector, olive production in the south and aquaculture development. These projects will begin once UNDP funding is approved.

Trust fund projects

53. A project providing technical assistance for planning agricultural and rural development has been operational since 1983 at a total cost of \$680,000. This project is financed under Trust Fund arrangements from the Near East Co-operative Programme and has a duration of six years and three months.

54. Several other Trust Fund projects (FAO/Government Co-operative Programme) are likely to materialize upon improvement of the prevailing situation, for example, the project GCP/LEB/013/ITA on "Strengthening the operational capacities of the Ministry of Agriculture" to be funded by Italy at a total cost of \$1 million.

FAO regular programme

55. Two Technical Co-operation Programme projects are in progress for the rehabilitation of fish production and development of small dams, at a total cost of \$147,000. Five other such projects have recently been completed in the fields of fruit production, apiculture, assessment of emergency food aid requirements, rehabilitation of irrigated agriculture in the mountain area and forestry protection, at a total cost of \$72,000.

56. The FAO Global Information and Early Warning System on Food and Agriculture regularly monitors the crop and food supply situation in Lebanon. FAO assessments are published in the System's monthly report "Foodcrops and shortages" in order, inter alia, to assist donor countries with decisions concerning the provision of aid.

57. Further to the appeal issued by the Secretary-General on 21 April 1989 for the provision of urgent humanitarian assistance, FAO on 12 May 1989 drew the attention of the international donor community to the need to implement specific measures aimed at the immediate recovery of Lebanon's agricultural sector. These measures are based on the inter-agency survey mission that visited Lebanon in January 1989 and identified five areas of assistance in the agricultural and livestock sectors for which \$14 million was needed at that time.

International Labour Organisation

58. During the reporting period, consultancy missions to Lebanon in fields of vocational training and vocational rehabilitation were approved. However, implementation of this activity remains in abeyance pending stabilization of the security situation. Assistance to Lebanon was also proposed in the field of vocational training and labour administration, in the training of instructors and skilled workers required for the reconstruction and further development of the country. If the project is approved, it would lead to establishing a training co-ordination system and the assessment of training needs necessary for a consolidated approach to overcome the shortage of skilled manpower in Lebanon. Lebanon is covered by regional projects for Middle East countries, including a regional workshop aimed at developing administrative and legislative measures to integrate disabled women in income-generating activities, as well as support given to labour ministries by the Regional Arab Centre for Labour Administration. Fellowships awarded to Lebanon enabled nationals to participate in training courses, meetings and seminars in labour administration, labour inspection, labour relations and employment services and other activities, including those involving employers and workers organizations.

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

59. A co-ordinator has been designated for situations of armed conflict and natural disasters and a new strategy has been developed to enable the Organization to respond quickly for the recovery and self-reliance of the affected populations. Within this context, an intersectoral task force on Lebanon has been established to consider the needs of the country in the fields of competence of UNESCO and to prepare programme initiatives for the future in co-operation with the Lebanese authorities.

60. The project "Development of technical education", which is pending approval by the national authorities and UNDP, will be the third and final phase of two projects previously financed by UNDP. This third phase of the project will contribute to the modernization of the technical education system through the introduction of a modular method and the preparation of 48 related textbooks and manuals. Twenty modular programmes for accelerated professional training and different trades will also be produced. Computers will be provided under this project for the creation and management of two data banks for examination questions (traditional and modular systems). A computerized management system for schools will be installed and tested in pilot schools.

61. UNESCO has been entrusted by the Government of Lebanon with the implementation of the project "Development of science teaching", funded by a loan from the Islamic Development Bank. The project will provide scientific equipment for some 600 secondary schools and teacher training colleges. Lists of equipment have been prepared and all preparations for the procurement of the equipment have been made. However, the implementation phase has been suspended until the local situation has stabilized, at which point the Government of Lebanon will provide its key inputs, allowing the full execution of the project.

62. Two Lebanese institutions are members of the International Network for Information in Science and Technology, the Centre for Educational Research and Development and the Faculty of Sciences of the Lebanese University. Lebanese scientists have also participated in numerous regional seminars, workshops and meetings of the Regional Office for Science and Technology.

63. The UNESCO Regional Office for Education in the Arab States notes that:

(a) Six Lebanese experts participated in seminars, meetings and workshops organized by the Regional Office;

(b) Ten UNESCO publications were translated and printed in Lebanon;

(c) Perspectives, the UNESCO periodical, is translated and printed in Lebanon. L'éducation nouvelle, the Regional Office periodical, is also printed in the country;

(d) A Lebanese consultant was sent on a mission to Bahrain to direct a seminar organized by the Office;

(e) A study on the incorporation of the handicapped into technical and vocational education was prepared by a Lebanese resource person;

(f) Representatives of institutions in Lebanon associated with the Education Innovation Programme for Development in the Arab States (EIPDAS) participated in two meetings organized by the Programme.

64. UNESCO hopes to reinstate its representation in the country when the situation improves and the Organization is ready to co-operate with inter-agency authorities in appropriate areas of its competence.

World Health Organization

65. Among the most tragic effects of 14 years of civil war in Lebanon has been the progressive fragmentation, degradation and ultimate disappearance of a functional system of health care for an increasingly impoverished and vulnerable population. The socio-political situation has not only interrupted implementation of the strategy of health for all, but has also begun to affect adversely the baseline indicators for measuring progress towards that goal.

66. Apart from the direct impact of civil war on morbidity and mortality, there are the indirect effects of malnutrition and communicable diseases among different population groups. Diarrhoeal diseases, including dysentery and typhoid, are by far the most common cause of morbidity and mortality among children under two years of age, underlying the importance of oral rehydration therapy for these diseases. There are cases of poliomyelitis, measles and other diseases that could be prevented by immunization. This underlies the importance of the Expanded Programme on Immunization. Owing in part to crowded and unhygienic living conditions, there is an increase in tuberculosis, acute respiratory infections and infectious diseases such as scabies, calling for action by related WHO programmes. There are fears of invasions of plague, cholera and, most recently, AIDS in Lebanon, when the country is least prepared to deal with them. Health statistical and epidemiological services have to be strengthened. Essential drugs are needed, provided they can be safely delivered and properly distributed.

67. Other problems adversely affecting health development in Lebanon are: lack of communication, disintegration of organizations and services, problems with current programmes, supplies and personnel, and security risks to national and external agency personnel. Nineteen public hospitals in Lebanon are virtually inactive. Support for the rehabilitation of these hospitals is essential.

68. Emergency assistance activities implemented during 1988 from WHO funds allocated from the regular budget amounted to \$372,000. This amount covered purchase of drugs for the Ministry of Health and laboratory equipment and supplies for the Central Laboratory. All projects were implemented in response to urgent requests by the Ministry of Health through which these services were provided. Some \$200,000 from UNDR0 funds were allocated at the end of 1988 for support in 1989 to the primary health care programme (life-saving drugs and medical instruments).

69. The WHO representative reassigned to Beirut in December 1987 co-ordinates the health sector emergency programmes financially supported through UNDR0, which has assumed its role as directing and co-ordinating authority for international health-related activities. Collaborative programmes of WHO with the Government of Lebanon were reviewed in February 1988. Emphasis was placed on the provision of primary health care to deprived rural areas.

70. Following reports of dumping of hazardous substances along the shores of Lebanon, the Government requested WHO assistance in assessing the environmental implications and advice on measures to be taken to control coastal pollution. A WHO consultant visited Lebanon for this purpose for one month. Concerted efforts are needed to identify and assess priority environmental problems and implement preventive measures.

71. Protection and promotion of mental health continues to receive WHO support. With the support of WHO, a draft report for a national mental health programme for Lebanon was prepared.

72. A national training workshop for community health workers on community-based rehabilitation was supported and organized by the Regional Office for the Eastern

Mediterranean during 1988. A curriculum for this purpose was formulated. A workshop in nursing management and supervision for nurses and midwives working in primary health care was organized and conducted by the Regional Office.

73. During 1988, five fellowships were awarded for training in the fields of epidemiological surveillance and AIDS laboratory technology.

74. On 19 May 1989, the World Health Assembly, in resolution 42.22 entitled "Health and medical assistance to Lebanon", requested the Director-General of WHO inter alia, "to continue and expand substantially the Organization's programmes of health, medical and relief assistance to Lebanon". The resolution also called upon the United Nations system as a whole to increase its co-operation with WHO in this field and requested Member States to increase their support.

IV. ACTIVITIES OF THE COUNCIL FOR DEVELOPMENT AND RECONSTRUCTION

75. The Council for Development and Reconstruction was established in 1977 and is directly responsible to the Council of Ministers. Among other things, it is entrusted with planning and programming development and reconstruction activities and recommending suitable economic financial policies to the Council of Ministers. It also co-ordinates international agreements in the field of economic and technical assistance.

76. In accordance with the austerity policy pursued by the Lebanese Government to alleviate the continuing deterioration of the economic situation, the Council in 1988 adopted a tight policy of expenditure control. Nevertheless, it attempted to continue implementation of those programmes and of other projects of an urgent nature.

77. Since internal sources of finance became scarce, the Council limited almost all new commitments to projects financed from external sources at advantageous conditions, namely, foreign grants and subsidized loans. Commitments from local sources were limited to essential projects, unavoidable addenda to ongoing contracts or counterpart funds for projects financed from external sources. Work on major locally financed projects was practically discontinued.

78. Preliminary estimates of total new commitments made by the Council in 1988 amounted to LL 24,361 million, equivalent to \$46 million, of which \$45 million was to be financed from foreign grants and loans and \$1 million from local sources. Total commitments for 1988 represent less than 50 per cent of the average annual commitments of the past five years.

79. Preliminary estimates of the total expenditures of the Council in 1988 (mainly on previously contracted projects) amount to LL 10,605 million, equivalent to \$25 million, of which \$23 million was from foreign grants and loans and \$2 million from local sources. The 1988 expenditures represent only 20 per cent of the average annual expenditures of the past five years. Expenditures from local sources were a mere 8 per cent of total expenditures in 1988.

80. The following breakdown of the 1988 commitments and expenditures by major sectoral components is indicative of the Council's activities during that year:

(a) Education: Education remained a priority sector. New commitments of LL 1,543 million are devoted to the ongoing primary and secondary school rehabilitation project (LL 1,000 million) financed through a European Community grant, laboratory equipment for the Lebanese University (LL 523 million), financed through a grant from the Government of France and the construction of a prefabricated school (LL 20 million) financed through a grant from the Government of Yugoslavia. Expenditures amounted to LL 1,455 million, of which LL 1,432 million were for the school rehabilitation project;

(b) Health: New contracts signed relate to loans to private hospitals for the procurement of medical equipment in the context of a financial agreement with the Government of France, amounting to LL 6,730 million. Expenditures amounted to LL 1,194 million, namely, loans to private hospitals for the purchase of medical equipment in the context of a financial agreement signed with the Government of France;

(c) Water: Total new commitments amounted to LL 3,498 million and focused on water supply projects in Beirut. Total payments amounted to LL 3,737 million, comprising LL 2,986 million for water pipes provided to the Beirut Water Authority for the balance of a previous loan from the Federal Republic of Germany, LL 619 million for the Damour-Beirut water supply project financed through a European Community grant, LL 67 million for the Chabrouh Dam study under a financial agreement with the Government of France;

(d) Waste management: Total payments of LL 896 million include LL 844 million disbursed in the context of a financial agreement with the Government of France for the procurement and installation of a solid waste incinerator plant and some LL 51 million paid from local sources as counterpart funds for the same project;

(e) Telecommunications: New contracts signed include a LL 5,956 million addendum to an ongoing telephone exchange project financed by a loan from the Government of France and LL 50 million for telephone network expansion financed from local sources. Payments amounting to LL 870 million comprise LL 362 million for telecommunications teaching equipment at a training facility in Beirut financed through a loan from the Government of France, LL 507 million for telephone exchanges financed with another loan from France, and minor amounts for transmission networks financed from local sources;

(f) Roads: The major road rehabilitation programme, financed entirely from local sources, was brought virtually to a halt in 1988, with new commitments of only LL 154 million. Payments of LL 609 million were made pending a final settlement with the contractors of road rehabilitation projects, which may amount to \$10 million;

(g) Ports: Payments amounted to LL 270 million, of which LL 266 million were for port equipment, in the context of a financial agreement with the Government of France;

(h) Airport: The Beirut International Airport Development Project continued at a slow pace. Total new commitments of LL 1,728 million include LL 1,705 million for airport equipment to be financed from a loan from the Government of France;

(i) Physical planning: The land reclamation project on the shore north of Beirut progressed slowly during the period under review. New commitments include a technical co-operation project financed by the Government of France (LL 105 million, of which LL 66 million were disbursed);

(j) Public administration: Contracts for an amount of LL 4,543 million were signed with the Government of France for the procurement of computer facilities to public administrations, and public administration projects were financed from local sources (LL 22 million).

81. During the first half of 1989, the Council's activity was nearly paralysed owing to the prevailing climate of instability and hostilities. Financing agencies and donors were not prepared to continue any significant reconstruction project or to consider initiating any new project. Also, the monetary authorities and the Government were not prepared to advance fresh resources to cover local currency expenditures on project implementation.

V. CONCLUSION

82. Despite the difficult political and security situation, the organizations of the United Nations system continued their emergency relief activities. The relief assistance provided by the international community as a result of appeals by the Secretary-General, either through United Nations channels or on a bilateral basis, significantly alleviated the suffering of the Lebanese people.

83. Restoration of peace and stability is a prerequisite for the United Nations to be able to implement fully the mandate of General Assembly resolution 43/207. None the less, the Secretary-General remains committed to the emergency relief efforts in Lebanon. He also hopes that the international community will provide additional help for the reconstruction and development of this country in need should the political situation normalize.

Notes

1/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-fourth Session, Supplement No. 13 (A/44/13).
