

UN - NGO Relations : A New Departure ?

There are signs that a movement of opinion amongst high officials in the United Nations Secretariat may lead to a breakthrough in UN-NGO relations. Let us look at some of the evidence as it appeared in chronological order.

During the course of 1972, an effort was made to use the occasion of meetings of the UN Inter-Agency Coordination Board in London and Geneva to arrange a confrontation between IACB delegates and a number of invited NGO representatives. Matters discussed were restricted to the role of NGOs in « development » and « mobilization of public opinion ». These occasions were brought about through the good offices of Stephan Hessel, UNDP and Curtis Roosevelt, Chief of the ECOSOC NGO Section. Follow up on these rather unique meetings, for which internal reports were circulated, seems, however, to have been negligible.

The ECOSOC Council Committee on Nongovernmental Organizations agreed to hold, for the first time, a set of « hearings » in July 1972 in Geneva — to allow NGOs to express their views on their difficulties in responding to calls to action on the part of ECOSOC. This attempt at « dialogue » did not really succeed — but it was a brave attempt on the part of the Committee and set the stage for later developments.

Then came the October 1972 meetings of NGOs concerned with the environment at which NGOs were given to understand by Maurice Strong, Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme, that an exciting new style of relationship was to be brought into being as a result of the forthcoming UNEP Governing Council in June 1973. This matter has now been postponed to 1974 however (see article on page 414).

In December 1972, in Geneva, a « Meeting of experts on the particular role of the nongovernmental organizations on the mobilization of public opinion and political will » (in support of the International Development Strategy) was convened. Those invited were asked to reply to the ECOSOC NGO Section, although the provisional agenda was under the letterhead of the Centre for Economic and Social Information. The final agenda seems to have been the result of a battle between these two sections, which the NGO Section seems to have narrowly won on points. Most surprising however, was the attendance at the meeting of Mrs Helvi Sipilä, UN Assistant Secretary-General for Social and Humanitarian Matters, who took the chair and a very active role. In addition, the Office of the Under-Secretary-General for Political and General Assembly Affairs (Bradford Morse) was represented by Miss Joan Ebert. The meeting and its mysterious report are discussed elsewhere (see page before). The introduction to the report is reproduced here as well as selected paragraphs (see insert, page 413). In the original invitation, the report was intended to be « for the guidance of the ECOSOC Committee on Nongovernmental Organizations in its preparation of recommendations to ECOSOC at its Spring session, 1973 ». We have noted that the contents of the report were however ignored in the Secretary General's review of CESI/OPI activity (see page 411). Such is the price of interdepartmental victories.

We then come to the February 1973 session in New York of the ECOSOC Committee on Nongovernmental Organizations. The session is described in a separate article (see page 424). There are three surprising things about this particular meeting, which normally is as open to new approaches as the proverbial eye of the needle is

to a camel. Firstly the massive attendance by key members of the UN Secretariat, who made extremely supportive presentations to the (somewhat bewildered ?) Committee. Those making presentations included (in order of speaking).

- _ Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs
- _ Assistant Secretary-General for Public Information
- _ Assistant Secretary-General for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs
- _ Director, Office for Science and Technology, Department of Economic and Social Affairs
- _ Director, Centre for Economic and Social Information
- _ Assistant Director, Social Development, Division, Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs
- _ Deputy Director, Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs
- _ Deputy Director, Research and Development Branch, Centre for Housing, Building and Planning, Department of Economics and Social Affairs
- _ Director, Freedom from Hunger Campaign/Action for Development, FAO
- _ Deputy Administrator, UNDP
- _ Director, Development Support Information Service, UNDP
- _ Secretary, UNICEF Executive Board, NGO Liaison Office
- _ Under-Secretary-General for Political and General Assembly Affairs.

Presentations were also made by various nongovernmental organizations. The low-status ECOSOC Committee has never seen anything like it before.

The second surprising thing was that the texts of the presentation were actually reproduced in an ECOSOC document (E/5257/Add. 1, 9 April 1973), for its 54th session. (The status of the Committee is indicated by the fact that no Summary Records have been produced for several years now). Extracts from some of the presentations are reproduced with this article (see page 425).

The third surprising thing is that the Committee actually managed to go beyond its narrow concern with beating NGO's over the head for not avidly being the UN line on a few currently fashionable issues. Some of the NGO's difficulties and the need for changes on the UN side actually appear in print in an ECOSOC document (see page 424). Signs of a breakthrough ?

We then come to the UNEP-launched « World Assembly of NGO's concerned with the global environment » (Geneva, June 1973). This was a very exciting test case, since the Environment Programme must develop a system of relationships with NGO's and is not bound by the rigid procedures and precedents developed by other UN bodies. The Assembly was deliberately arranged during the first meeting of the UNEP Governing Council to permit « dialogue » between NGO's and government delegates on the Council. The result is described in a separate article (see page 414). The Council postponed the UNEP issue for a year (because of a current review of - such procedures in ECOSOC ?). UNEP Secretariat members let fall a few ideas for essentially elitist, authoritarian schemes for UNEP-NGO relationships, but generally wasted NGO time. The credibility of any « breakthrough » is considerably decreased.

But by chance Bradford Morse, Under-Secretary-General for Political and General Assembly Affairs is able to address the Assembly. It emerges that his Office is now the key place within the UN system from which change may be initiated on the NGO question. (Was he responsible for the dramatic events in New York ?) He promises « dramatic changes » within three months (i.e. for August/September 1973) but is unable to elaborate. He implies that he has been establishing contact with NGO liaison units throughout the UN system and that the coordination of the « UN response » to NGO's is under review. Hopes for a breakthrough rise again. But the UN is so bedevilled with « coordination » problems that probably the only changes possibly are within the ECOSOC Secretariat (see page 429).

The next item arose from the opening speeches to ECOSOC's 55th session (Geneva, July 1973). Both the President of ECOSOC and the UN Secretary-General devoted significant portions of their speeches to a matter which has hitherto been quietly forgotten. (Not the NGO question unfortunately). The point raised was the role of ECOSOC as defined in the *Charter of the United Nations* to oversee the programmes of the specialized agencies. « The fact is that in spite of the accepted overseeing powers of ECOSOC in all subjects explicitly mentioned in Chapter IX of the Charter, a kind of loose interaction has developed between the Council and those organs. It could be said that a satrapy minded attitude was spurred by the incapacity of the Council to act as the central organ from which policy decisions should emerge... I hope that my successors in this Chair will take every possible advantage of Resolution 1768, on the Rationalization of the work of the Economic and Social Council, and act as catalyzers for integrated programmes within the system. » The

Secretary General asserted on this point that existing obstacles • can no longer stand in the way of a reassertion of ECOSOC's constitutional authority within the system... » Why is this change of attitude relevant to the future of UN-NGO relations ?

A major difficulty for NGO's with concerns relating to programmes of several UN bodies, is that from the UN system side the relationships with each such body are quite distinct and independent. An NGO may be • interrogated • by several UN bodies on related points because the NGO liaison units within the UN system do not liaise amongst themselves — to the point that an « NGO » to one part of the system may not • exist » or be « persona non grata » to another part of the system. (Still worse, however, *within* a particular UN body, the NGO liaison section may engage in interdepartmental battle with the section of the office of public information charged with relating to NGO's, and so on for each department with substantive interests calling for relations with an NGO).

Therefore, if operational meaning is given by ECOSOC to the Charter provisions noted above, the procedure by which all units of the UN-system relate to NGO's may well come under review. This could lead to considerable rationalization to the advantage of all parties. It could also lead to a review of the peculiar procedures by which UNESCO and ECOSOC (and now UNEP) encourage the myth that the respective Conferences of NGO's are in some way « bound » to the respective secretariats to the greater glory of all the individuals concerned on both the NGO and on the UN system side (1).

The last event in the chronological sequence to date, was the meeting of the ECOSOC Committee on Nongovernmental Organizations (Geneva, July 1973) — the follow up to the exciting New York meeting. What a disaster the Geneva meeting was in contrast.

Event 9

It was supposed to be a two day meeting (July 4-5) and the issues raised by the previous session certainly warranted the time. At the last minute all the work was transferred to the second day because the government delegates wanted to be present at the opening session of ECOSOC (on July 4th) — which might have been expected. The revised agenda concentrated on NGO action on the questions of racism, colonialism and development. A spokesman of the Committee on Human Rights of the Conference of Nongovernmental Organizations in Consultative Status with ECOSOC was permitted to present a proposal under the first point (2). Delegates debated this paper endlessly so that whatever its merit it effectively rendered it impossible to give adequate time to the broader issues raised at the previous session. To cap it all, after arranging for a working group to review the text (which chopped a further hour off the afternoon session), delegates discovered that they had « reservations » which required further debate with many procedural obscurities.

A number of NGO representatives with prepared statements wasted hours waiting for the snail-like debate to move on to later points of the agenda. It became apparent •in the late afternoon that the question of UN-NGO relations and the «hearing» of NGO's would be examined hastily and impatiently into the last few minutes of the session. Having been exposed to this ridiculous procedure in the past, it did not seem worth waiting for a repeat performance.

If there is any inclination towards an improvement to UN-NGO relations initiated from the UN side, it would require a considerable feat of imagination to determine a means by which it could be accomplished via this Committee. The whole procedural style and approach of the Committee is designed to alienate all but the most sycophantic NGO's from any attempt to relate more effectively to the UN system. Is it so utterly impossible to elaborate a more creative and imaginative procedure ? But maybe the absence of the February impetus behind the Committee was a means of delaying matters which are being debated elsewhere within the ECOSOC system. But even if Bradford Morse can come up with some new formula, how can he expect to upgrade the ECOSOC Committee in the eyes of government delegates ? Maybe his - dramatic changes » will only amount to an interdepartmental shuffle ? Maybe he really can find a way to set a new style of relationship to the advantage of every whether they work until 1975. Meanwhile, whilst organizations tinker with procedural party. We will hear his proposals when this issue comes off the press — we will not know whether they can be implemented for some time. We will probably not know pleasures, the peoples they purport to represent, suffer increasingly from famine, war, pestilence and a variety of no less painful, if less physical, constraints upon their well-being.

(1) The Conferences are serviced through the kind offices of the UN bodies and meet in their secretariat conference rooms. This gives the uninformed the impression that the Conferences must report to these bodies and must avoid adopting any independent stance. It also prevents the many NGO's

ization of their overlapping activities. The multiplicity of such conferences and their effectiveness needs to be sharply questioned from the UN side in any general review of UN-NGO relations.

(2) E/C.2/CAP. 1. The document was not available to other NGO's present, which made it somewhat difficult to follow the debate.

ECOSOC RESOLUTION 1580 (L)

Follow-up

Results of the February 1973 meeting of the Council Committee

Suites

Résultats de la réunion tenue en février 1973 de la Comité du Conseil

Council resolution 1580 (L)

Under Council resolution 1580 (L), the Committee was requested to submit to the Council, at its fifty-fourth session, recommendations on ways of improving the contribution of non-governmental organizations to the implementation of the goals of the International Development Strategy. In a conference room paper, the Committee had before it the replies to the questionnaire from non-governmental organizations in consultative status « active primarily in the field of economic and social development ». The questionnaire consisted of three questions as follows :

- (1) Give brief examples of your organization's programmes already made and being planned that might be considered a contribution to the United Nations International Development Strategy.
- (2) What practical suggestions do you have for developing more meaningful and productive relationships with the Economic and Social Council to enable your organization to contribute more effectively towards the implementation of the International Development Strategy for the Second United Nations Development Decade ?
- (3) Does your organization have any activities for mobilizing public opinion and political will on behalf of the United Nations development efforts, including dissemination of information ?

The Committee also had before it, in a conference room paper, the report by the Secretary of the Committee who, at the Committee's instructions, had visited the headquarters of non-governmental organizations in a number of European cities to discuss with non-governmental organizations their replies to the questionnaire.

As indicated in the three questions of the questionnaire, the Committee had divided its work into three parts : the mobilization of public opinion and political will, the substantive contributions of non-governmental organizations through the consultative process and relations at the field level in technical co-operation and material assistance activities. After hearing an opening statement from the Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs, the Committee then heard from other members of the United Nations system. In order of appearance, the Committee heard from the Assistant Secretary-General for Public Information; the Assistant Secretary-General for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs; the Director, Office for Science and Technology, Department of Economic and Social Affairs; the Director, Centre for Economic and Social Information, Office of Public Information; the Assistant Director, Social Development Division, Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs; the Deputy Director, Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs; the Deputy Director, Research and Development Branch, Centre for Housing, Building and Plan-

ning, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, United Nations Secretariat. Also, the Director, Freedom from Hunger Campaign/Action for Development, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations; the Deputy Administrator for Programmes, UNDP; the Director, Development Support Information, UNDP; the Secretary, UNICEF Executive Board and Chief, NGO Liaison Office; the Under-Secretary-General for Political and General Assembly Affairs, United Nations Secretariat.

Regarding the work of the Committee, the following recommendations are made :

(1) As the Standing Committee of the Economic and Social Council on non-governmental organizations' matters, the Committee should maintain and broaden its dialogue with non-governmental organizations for the mutual benefit of both;

(2) As part of this process, the Council Committee might review with non-governmental organizations the work programme of the Economic and Social Council in order to ensure that non-governmental organizations are informed about meetings which might be of particular interest to them. 1. Regarding co-ordination and liaison

The Committee recommends that the Economic and Social Council request the Secretary-General, within the framework of Council resolution 1296 (XLIV), to consider various ways of improving co-ordination with non-governmental organizations within the United Nations and the United Nations system, so that, in their relationship with the United Nations, non-governmental organizations may most effectively contribute to its goals and objectives.

Attention should be paid in particular to :

- (1) Developing the various forms of relations with non-governmental organizations at the regional and national levels through the regional economic commissions, the United information centres and the UNDP resident representatives' offices;
- (2) Facilitating liaison with non-governmental organizations by organizations in the United Nations system through :
 - (a) Improving co-ordination within the United Nations Secretariat,
 - (b) Simplifying the separate relations maintained by different parts of the United Nations system with non-governmental organizations so that their service and productivity can be improved, and
 - (c) Continuing the exploration of relations with UNDP at the field level in technical co-operation and material assistance;
- (3) Exploring ways to rationalize and co-ordinate the efforts of the United Nations system to mobilize public opinion and political will. Better use should be made of national commissions and co-ordinating committees of non-governmental organizations;

- (4) Making appropriate arrangements for the Economic and Social Council, through the Committee on Review and Appraisal, to receive the substantive contributions which certain non-governmental organizations can make to the development process;
- (5) Obtaining the views and co-operation of those non-governmental organizations in the technical, professional and vocational areas, which may be able to make a pertinent contribution to the International Development Strategy;
- (6) Exploring with non-governmental organizations in consultative status ways in which their national affiliates may be more closely involved with the implementation of the International Development Strategy.

The Secretary-General is requested to report on the progress made in these efforts to improve co-ordination and liaison at the next regular session of the Council's Committee early in 1974 and, if possible, to submit a progress report when the Committee meets during the fifty-fifth session of the Council to be held in Geneva.

2. Regarding field level operations : Recommendations
Member Governments, when drawing up their country programmes for economic and social development and their project proposals for United Nations system assistance, should take into account the practical contributions, experiences and expertise of their national non-governmental organizations. Where appropriate, professionally qualified non-governmental organizations should be consulted or invited to participate in planning sessions.

Assigned regional and country officers of the United Nations system should take initiatives to develop closer relationships with both technical and operational non-governmental organizations as well as those non-governmental organizations primarily involved in public information activities. Non-governmental organizations likewise should seek new ways to improve and develop their relationship with representatives of the United Nations system in the areas in which they operate. These relationships, which can be mutually beneficial, should include new channels of communication, informal consultations and greater collaboration at the fieldwork level. Within each country, representatives of the United Nations system should co-ordinate their non-governmental organizations' activities with each other to avoid confusion and duplication of effort. By the same token, non-governmental organizations are called upon also to co-ordinate more closely their own efforts where this is practicable and feasible. United Nations system representatives should make special approaches to existing co-ordinating structures as, for example, national councils of non-governmental organizations or the co-operative networks of official and non-governmental bodies established for the purpose of disaster relief activities. The latter emergency structures should be maintained and used for longer-term development objectives, within the country programme plans.

Déclaration de M. Ph. de Seynes

Secrétaire général adjoint aux affaires économiques et sociales des Nations Unies

La participation des organisations non gouvernementales aux travaux des Nations Unies est sûrement une des innovations les plus originales et les plus pleines de promesses de la Charte des Nations Unies. Nous voyons que par une certaine anticipation presque divinatoire, les pères-fondateurs des Nations Unies ont su reconnaître l'importance de ce mot qui est devenu très à la mode depuis quelques années — le mot de participa-

tion. Et, en réalité, cette participation des organisations non gouvernementales a été organisée dans le cadre des Nations Unies d'une manière très spéciale et très particulière puisque elle est organisée dans le cadre de l'organe principal chargé, naturellement sous l'autorité de l'Assemblée générale, de s'occuper des problèmes de coopération économique et sociale. Je pense que cela est très important car dans le cadre national — là où nous voyons que parfois des schémas de participation des organisations non gouvernementales ont été organisés, ils l'ont été non pas au sein du parlement, mais au sein de comités ou d'organes subsidiaires de ce parlement et je pense que quand il a été décidé que, en ce qui concerne les Nations Unies, il s'agirait de relations directes avec le Conseil économique et social, cela, avait une valeur tout à fait particulière. Mais bien entendu, ceci pose aussi des problèmes pratiques extrêmement complexes et ce sont ces problèmes pratiques que nous n'avons pas toujours su résoudre. Comment, dans un système qui est déjà extraordinairement lourd pour toutes espèces de raisons et démultiplié, et qui se caractérise par le nombre considérable de ses séances et de ses réunions — et aussi par la quantité — le volume énorme des papiers qu'il produit — comment pouvoir organiser une participation effective d'un très grand nombre d'organisations qui toutes ont un intérêt plus ou moins direct à la poursuite des objectifs des Nations Unies. L'une des modalités qui a été envisagée, c'est la création de ce Comité — son élargissement récent — qui était destiné à lui donner plus de vitalité et plus de résonance, et d'en faire en quelque sorte un point focal pour l'organisation de ces relations entre les organisations non gouvernementales et le Conseil économique et social. De sorte qu'au point où nous en sommes il y a un travail d'imagination constructive qui semble incomber à ce comité de trouver des formules qui, sans être trop encombrantes, permettent néanmoins de donner plus de substance et pous d'efficacité à ces relations qu'elles n'en ont eu jusqu'au présent. Ceci est la première remarque que je voulais faire...

Je pense aussi que, sur ce plan de la mobilisation de la volonté politique, les organisations non gouvernementales ont, dans chacun des pays où elles opèrent, des possibilités d'accès aux autorités publiques qui ne sont pas négligeables; mais peut-être, à l'occasion de cette Décennie du développement et à l'occasion de cet exercice de revue et d'évaluation, devraient-elles songer aussi aux méthodes qui leur permettraient d'organiser une sorte de campagne pour ces objectifs, et par conséquent multiplier ou augmenter considérablement l'efficacité dont elles disposent elles-mêmes souvent...

Finalement, Monsieur le Président, ce que je voudrais vous dire, c'est que je crois qu'il y a certainement une revitalisation de l'intérêt à l'égard de cet instrument de coopération que constitue le statut consultatif. Les organisations non gouvernementales ont un regain d'intérêt au sein du Secrétariat lui-même. Ceci nous le devons peut-être d'abord aux circonstances, qui encore une fois nous forcent à réfléchir aux problèmes de participation, aux problèmes de mobilisation de l'opinion publique, aux raisons de l'impuissance des organes gouvernementaux des Nations Unies à convaincre les gouvernements, et il y a là peut-être une évolution chez nous qui se serait produite de toute façon, mais elle est aussi considérablement stimulée par la présence dans l'équipe du Secrétariat de nouvelles personnalités qui sont elles-mêmes extrêmement persuadées et convaincues de l'importance de cette participation avec les organisations non gouvernementales et qui ont dans le passé beaucoup travaillé avec les organisations non gouvernementales. La présence à mes côtés de Mme Sipla est je crois le meilleur témoignage de ce sang nouveau que M. Waldheim a voulu introduire dans le cadre du Secrétariat lorsqu'il a pris ses fonctions et je sais que vous aurez l'occasion d'entendre Mme Sipla à une séance ultérieure.

Je voudrais aussi signaler tout l'intérêt que mon collègue Bradford Morse prend à ces questions de relations avec les organisations non gouvernementales et tout le dynamisme qu'il y apporte, de sorte que je pense que nous avons un faisceau conjoncturel en matière d'organisations non gouvernementales à l'heure actuelle qui devrait nous permettre de faire quelques progrès et en particulier d'orienter ces progrès immédiats cette année-ci vers la Stratégie du développement...

Presentation by the Assistant Secretary-General for Public Information

The Assistant Secretary-General for Public Information said he regarded the non-governmental organizations (NGOs) as one of the principal channels to inform and educate public opinion about international development efforts. Many organizations had the scope and resources to reach a world-wide audience running into the millions.

The Assistant Secretary-General added that he was requesting OPI's 52 Information Centre Directors to give a higher priority to their relations with non-governmental organizations, « and to take a more active and vigorous approach ». He went on to say that there was a growing interest in the United Nations system in more direct contacts with national non-governmental organizations. He intended to request Centre Directors in selected developing countries to develop a co-ordinated programme to strengthen the co-operation and involvement of influential national non-governmental groups. This initiative would be taken in close co-operation with the resident representative of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and other field offices.

He emphasized the importance of co-operation with non-governmental organizations at the regional level. He said he was in favour of a proposal to appoint non-governmental organization liaison officers to the major regional offices of the United Nations.

Presentation made by the Assistant Secretary-General for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs. (Mrs Helvi Sipilä)

The Assistant Secretary-General stated that non-governmental organizations were an enormous asset in the promotion of the goals and objectives of the United Nations, i.e., those adopted by the Governments of Member States.

She said co-operation and partnership between the United Nations family of organizations and international non-governmental organizations was not of itself enough and stressed that the implementation of the International Development Strategy has to take place mainly at the national level. The contribution of national affiliates of international non-governmental organizations and of other national organizations is of utmost importance and co-operation between the Government of the Member State, the local United Nations bodies and the national non-governmental organizations is imperative. Co-operation between the Governments at the regional level could also improve their co-operation with non-governmental organizations, if there were more participation by non-governmental organizations in intergovernmental co-operation in connexion with the regional economic commissions and other intergovernmental bodies. The expert meeting in Geneva, the Assistant Secretary-General said, called for more partnership at every level between the United Nations, Member Governments and the non-governmental organizations, including planning and decision-making. Certain provisions and restrictions for this request exist in the Charter and the terms of reference of the various United Nations bodies.

Co-operation at the national level between Governments and non-governmental organizations could best take place if Governments would keep non-governmental organizations informed of their needs for voluntary contributions of various kinds in the development effort and would ask their co-operation. This kind of co-operation is actually called for in paragraph 84 of the International Development Strategy both in the developed and the developing countries.

Effective partnership and dialogue between the United Nations, Governments and non-governmental organizations calls for more co-operation among non-governmental organizations themselves, especially at the national level, where a great

deal of expertise would be available from the voluntary community to serve the needs of the Governments and society as a whole. If there were better channels for communications between the Governments and the non-governmental organizations and more awareness of the benefits of such co-operations would strengthen their possibilities in the promotion of the aims and objectives of the United Nations, especially in the field of development and prevent needless overlapping and possibly less efficient, isolated efforts.

Presentation by the Director, Centre for Economic and Social Information (CESI)

The Director of CESI public information channels, in addition to the media, was the network of non-governmental organizations — not only the non-governmental organizations who had traditionally supported United Nations activities in so many spheres, but the other influential ones in their national context who could so powerfully affect the implementation of the Strategy.

The Director said that in his view the two kinds of non-governmental organizations should be brought closer together. He mentioned that the national commissions for the Second United Nations Development Decade, which had grown out of General Assembly resolution 2567 (XXIV), and towards which CESI was extending a greater effort, should be composed of just such a mixture of non-governmental organizations and should also include government participation.

Presentation by the Deputy Administrator, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

The Deputy Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme referred to UNDP's growing concern for establishing better relationships with non-governmental organizations. The UNDP's Administrator has stressed this in addressing regional meetings of the Programme's resident representatives as well as of inter-agency bodies and groups of non-governmental organizations.

Presentation by the Secretary, UNICEF Executive Board and Chief, Non-Governmental Organization Liaison Office

Like other United Nations operating agencies UNICEF works primarily with Governments in its programme aid. UNICEF recognizes that government efforts can never be enough and that it is essential to involve voluntary action and non-governmental organizations, not only in extending coverage but in finding new ways to deliver services benefiting children and adolescents which are economical and simple, and give developing countries experience in approaches which can reach more children, more effectively and more quickly. Non-governmental organizations can play a key pioneering role in this, if they are willing to be innovative and assume risks, less likely to be assumed by government agencies, of experimentation and pilot projects. Non-governmental organization enthusiasm, concern and activities at the grass roots can be an important factor in preparing family and communities to use available government services and also develop their own intrinsic resources, capacities and common purpose.

(continued p. 430)