

United Nations

A/RES/41/201

**General Assembly**

Distr. GENERAL

8 December 1986

ORIGINAL:
ENGLISHA/RES/41/201
8 December 1986
100th plenary meeting

Office of the United Nations Disaster Relief Co-ordinator

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 2816 (XXVI) of 14 December 1971, by which it established the Office of the United Nations Disaster Relief Co-ordinator and, inter alia, recognized the need to ensure prompt, effective and efficient responses, in times of natural disaster and other disaster situations, that would bring to bear the resources of the United Nations system, prospective donor countries and voluntary agencies,

Recalling also its resolution 36/225 of 17 December 1981, by which it reaffirmed the mandate of the Office of the Co-ordinator, called for the strengthening and improvement of the capacity and effectiveness of the Office, and stressed the need to ensure prompt delivery of concerted relief through an efficient and effective co-ordination system of humanitarian and disaster relief assistance,

Recalling further its resolution 37/144 of 17 December 1982 and other relevant resolutions and decisions, including Economic and Social Council resolutions 1983/47 of 28 July 1983 and 1984/60 of 26 July 1984, in which the Assembly and the Council, inter alia, stressed the need to strengthen and improve the capacity and effectiveness of the Office of the Co-ordinator in order to attain an effective co-ordination system of humanitarian and disaster relief assistance, and recognizing that, as a result of those resolutions and decisions, there is now in place a workable system to promote, facilitate and co-ordinate, on a world-wide basis, relief activities carried out by the United Nations system, in co-operation with Governments and voluntary agencies, including the collection and dissemination of information on disaster assessment, priority needs and donor assistance,

Convinced that there is a clear distinction between immediate humanitarian emergency response and longer-term development assistance and that there is a need to respond to these in a co-ordinated manner, and noting in this regard the different nature and functions of the Office of the Co-ordinator and the United Nations Development Programme,

Noting that the number of disasters to which the United Nations system was called upon to respond has increased from twelve in 1980 to fifty-three in 1985,

Recognizing, in this connection, the importance of the contribution of the International Committee of the Red Cross, the League of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and other competent voluntary and non-governmental organizations,

Recognizing also that the primary responsibility for administration, relief operations and disaster preparedness lies with the Governments of

affected countries and that the major part of the material assistance and human effort in disaster relief comes from the Governments of those countries,

Deeply concerned about the additional economic burden placed upon the developing countries by devastating natural disasters and other disaster situations, as well as the disruption of the development process in those countries,

Appreciating the contributions made by donors to support international relief operations, including those made to the Trust Fund of the Office of the United Nations Disaster Relief Co-ordinator,

Recognizing that shortage of resources has been one of the major constraints on an effective response of the United Nations to disaster situations and continues to hamper the full achievement of the aim of a rapid and effective response to the needs of countries affected by disasters and that, if the shortage is to be overcome, efforts will be required by the international community to provide both funds and assistance in kind,

Recalling, in this regard, its resolution 35/107 of 5 December 1980, in which it reaffirmed the necessity of ensuring a continued sound financial basis for the Office of the Co-ordinator,

Noting with appreciation that the agreements between the Office of the Co-ordinator and other organizations of the United Nations system, including the United Nations Development Programme, which define areas and means of co-operation, have helped to strengthen the collective response of the United Nations system to disasters,

1. Takes note with satisfaction of the report of the Secretary-General on the activities of the Office of the United Nations Disaster Relief Co-ordinator and of the statement made by the Co-ordinator before the Second Committee on 21 October 1986;

2. Reaffirms the sovereignty of individual Member States, recognizes the primary role of each State in caring for the victims of disasters occurring in its territory and stresses that all relief operations should be carried out and co-ordinated in a manner consistent with the priorities and needs of the countries concerned, and that the material and other assistance provided by the international community should be appropriate to the particular needs of the populations of the disaster-affected areas;

3. Recognizes the importance of disaster preparedness and prevention activities, and calls upon the Office of the Co-ordinator, Governments and organizations concerned to ensure that due priority attention is given to them;

4. Reaffirms the mandate of the Office of the United Nations Disaster Relief Co-ordinator, established by the General Assembly in resolution 2816 (XXVI) as the focal point in the United Nations system for disaster relief co-ordination, and calls for reinforcing and improving the capacity and effectiveness of the Office, without prejudice to any decision taken by the General Assembly in the context of the review of the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations;

5. Affirms that the Office of the Co-ordinator plays an active role in executing United Nations Development Programme-assisted projects in the field of disaster preparedness;

6. Reiterates its call to all Governments and competent organs and organizations to co-operate with the Office of the Co-ordinator in order to improve, in particular, the flow of information to Governments and organizations concerned, so that a more complete picture of relief activities, assistance received and further requirements may be provided to all concerned;

7. Calls upon those contributing assistance in kind to provide, when appropriate, special grants to cover the costs of transport and distribution of the assistance to and within the affected country;

8. Requests the Secretary-General and the United Nations Disaster Relief Co-ordinator to intensify their efforts to mobilize additional

voluntary resources to meet the needs arising from disaster and emergency situations;

9. Appeals to Governments to make urgent voluntary contributions, directly or channelled through the Trust Fund of the Office of the United Nations Disaster Relief Co-ordinator, to enable the Office to cover contingency expenses in connection with disaster relief operations;

10. Recommends that, as the Co-ordinator phases out his responsibility for disaster relief co-ordination in a given country, he should contribute to ensuring the necessary transition to the rehabilitation and reconstruction phase by passing on relevant data to competent organs and agencies of the United Nations system;

11. Emphasizes the essential need for the work of the Office of the Co-ordinator to be placed and kept on a sound financial basis, and calls upon the international community to respond positively and expeditiously to the appeal of the Secretary-General for contributions to the Trust Fund to meet the needs arising from natural disasters and other disaster situations;

12. Welcomes the decision of the Secretary-General by which a working group was established to review the emergency response of the United Nations system in relation to the emergency situation in Africa;

13. Stresses, in this regard, the need to take into account the experience gained by the United Nations, in responding to the emergency situation in Africa and other disaster situations, in strengthening the functioning and capacity of the United Nations in the area of emergency assistance;

14. Requests the Secretary-General to submit a report on the implementation of the present resolution, including a comprehensive review and assessment of the existing mechanisms and arrangements within the system for disaster and emergency assistance and co-ordination, to the General Assembly at its forty-second session, through the Economic and Social Council at its second regular session of 1987.