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PREPARATORY COMMITTEE FOR THE UNITED  
NATIONS CONFERENCE ON SCIENCE AND  
TECHNOLOGY FOR DEVELOPMENT  
Third session  
22 January-2 February 1979  
Item 2 of the provisional agenda.  
Preparations for the United Nations  
Conference on Science and Technology  
for Development: (b) Draft programme  
of action

REPORT ON THE POSSIBLE ALTERNATIVES FOR THE FINAL  
STRUCTURE OF THE DRAFT PROGRAMME OF ACTION

1. The draft resolution recommended by the Second Committee for adoption by the General Assembly (A/33/516, para. 12) inter alia requests the Secretary-General of the Conference to prepare for submission to the Preparatory Committee at its third session and for its consideration "a report on the possible alternatives for the final structure of the draft programme of action to be submitted to the Conference".
2. The Secretary-General of the Conference has considered the possible alternatives in that connexion and has reached the conclusion that only a structure based on the scientific and technological dimensions of the new international economic order would be satisfactory from both the conceptual and practical standpoints.

Structure deriving from the agenda of the Conference

3. The first structure which comes to mind is taken from the agenda of the Conference appearing in paragraph 3 of Economic and Social Council resolution 2028 (LXI), of 4 August 1976, which the General Assembly endorsed in resolution 31/184 of 21 December 1976.
4. This general structure could be supplemented by the guidelines for the preparation of national papers set out in decision 2 (I) adopted by the Preparatory Committee on 14 February 1977. 1/ It served as a basis for the consolidation of

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1/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-second Session, Supplement No. 43 (A/32/43), annex II.

recommendations put forward at the national and regional levels (A/33/303/Rev.1). The Member States which expressed their views on the subject observed that such a structure was not suitable for a programme of action. In particular, items 1 (b) and 2 (a) cover, from another angle, most of the points already dealt with in the rest of the agenda. Moreover, the Preparatory Committee implicitly recognized that fact by affirming, in paragraph 3 of its resolution 4 (II), adopted on 3 February 1978, that "substantive issues to be identified by the Preparatory Committee in the light of national, regional and other papers should provide the main topics for discussion at the Conference". 2/

Structure based on levels of action - national, subregional,  
regional, interregional and international

5. This structure is in keeping with the recommendations for action adopted by the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, the Economic Commission for Western Asia (A/33/303/Add.1) and the Economic Commission for Latin America (A/33/303/Add.2).

6. Such a structure has the disadvantage of spreading action relating to specific problems over various levels, thus reducing the impact, which it is hoped will be concentrated, general and synergic. Moreover, at whatever level action is to take place, it is always, in the last analysis, taken by the Member States, either directly or indirectly.

7. The approach based on levels also involves much inevitable repetition.

Structure based on the parties to which the  
recommendations are addressed

8. Such a structure would be characterized by a division of recommendations into those addressed to all countries, to the developed countries taken collectively, to developed countries individually, to the developing countries collectively, to developing countries individually, to the organizations within the United Nations system according to their field of competence, to such organizations according to the geographical area with which they are concerned, to intergovernmental organizations other than those within the United Nations system, to non-governmental organizations, etc.

9. This structure would have the advantage of making it clear what was expected from whom, but it would also lead to repetition and fragmentation of substantive issues.

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2/ Ibid., Thirty-third Session, Supplement No. 43 (A/33/43), annex I.

Structure based on the new international economic order

10. For all these reasons, the Secretary-General prefers a structure which he believes would permit a coherent presentation of the various types of action required in order to attain the objectives of the Conference. As the Conference is essentially a contribution to the establishment of the new international economic order, it would seem to him that the most logical way to approach the structure would be to extract the objectives relating to science and technology for development from resolutions adopted by the General Assembly (3201 (S-VI), 3202 (S-VI), 3281 (XXIX) and 3362 (S-VII)) and from resolutions and decisions relating to the Conference (General Assembly resolutions 31/184 and 32/115; Economic and Social Council resolutions 2028 (LXI), 2035 (LXI) and 2123 (LXIII); and resolutions 1 (I) and 2 (I) and decisions 1 (I) and 2 (I) 1/ and resolutions 3 (II), 4 (II) and 5 (II) and decisions 3 (II) and 4 (II) 2/ of the Preparatory Committee).

11. Additional comments on this structure are to be found in the introduction to document A/CONF.81/PC.21. The Secretary-General of the Conference has submitted this structure to the specialized agencies and other interested organizations and organs in the United Nations system, which have expressed the view that it would be sufficiently broad and flexible to permit a theoretical and practical study of the items included in the provisional agenda of the Conference within the framework of the programme of action and have added to it.

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