



UNITED NATIONS
GENERAL
ASSEMBLY



Distr.
GENERAL

A/CONF.81/PC/31
19 April 1979

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

PREPARATORY COMMITTEE FOR THE UNITED
NATIONS CONFERENCE ON SCIENCE AND
TECHNOLOGY FOR DEVELOPMENT

Fourth session

23 April-4 May 1979

Item 2 of the provisional agenda*

PREPARATIONS FOR THE UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE
ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY FOR DEVELOPMENT

Preparation of consolidated discussion paper

Note by Secretary-General of the Conference

1. The Preparatory Committee at its second session included among the documentation approved for the Conference discussion papers on each of the nine subitems of substantive items 1 and 2 of the provisional agenda of the Conference and on substantive item 3 of the provisional agenda. 1/ Each paper was to be 32 to 40 pages in length. Those relating to items 1 and 2 were to set out synthetically "the issues, conclusions and recommendations presented in the national papers and the reports of the regional meetings", while that on item 3 was to present a synthesis "of all proposals contained in the national and regional papers with regard to making the best use of the existing United Nations system and other international organizations to implement the objectives of the Conference". It was also decided 2/ that drafts of these documents should be before the fourth session of the Preparatory Committee. At the third session it was decided 3/ that these documents should be consolidated into a single document of 50 pages.

2. As a result of a request arising from the third session of the Preparatory

* A/CONF.81/PC/27.

1/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-third Session, Supplement No. 43 (A/33/43 and Corr.1), annex II, decision 4 (II), sect. I.A.

2/ Ibid., sect. III.

3/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-fourth Session, Supplement No. 43 (A/34/43), annex II, decision 10 (III).

Committee to the Economic and Social Council to reschedule the Committee's session so as not to overlap with the next session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the dates of the session of the Committee were advanced from 7 to 18 May 1979 to 23 April to 4 May 1979. As a result, in the light of the other requirements for documentation for the fourth session, the Secretary-General of the Conference has been unable to complete the drafting of the consolidated discussion paper in time. The following paragraphs present a brief progress report on the work, which would be finished in time for presentation to the proposed fifth session of the Preparatory Committee.

3. It is now envisaged that the discussion paper will be divided into three parts, the first providing a general conceptual background to the problems of mobilizing science and technology for development, emphasizing the factors that have led at present to an extremely unbalanced distribution of scientific and technological capabilities. This part will also describe some general characteristics of the international scientific and technological situation, outlining several principles that should guide action to direct science and technology towards development objectives.

4. The second part of the paper will examine some specific issues that have been considered important by the countries, regions, United Nations organs, specialized agencies, non-governmental organizations and other groups that have participated in the preparatory process for the Conference. A discussion of the interactions between the various measures proposed for the New International Economic Order and actions in the field of science and technology will open this second part, and reference will be made to some of the issues now under discussion regarding the international strategy for development in the Third United Nations Development Decade. A treatment of the main problems and issues that require action will follow (science and technology planning, co-operation among developing countries, etc.).

5. The last part of the discussion paper will cover the problems and issues associated with the institutional and financial machinery that would be required in the 1980s to ensure a more effective contribution to development from science and technology.
