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Report of the Joint Inspection Unit on United Nations
documentation and on the organization of the proceedings
of the General Assembly and its main bodies

Note by the Advisory Committee on Administrative
and Budgetary Questions

The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions has received the Secretary-General's comments on the report of the Joint Inspection Unit on United Nations documentation and on the organization of the proceedings of the General Assembly and its main bodies (A/8319 and Corr.1). The Committee transmits them herewith to the General Assembly.

COMMENTS BY THE SECRETARY-GENERAL ON THE REPORT OF THE
JOINT INSPECTION UNIT

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INTRODUCTION

1. The Joint Inspection Unit, pursuant to paragraph 15 of the General Assembly resolution 2609 (XXIV) of 16 December 1969 and paragraph 5 of resolution 2693 (XXV) of 11 December 1970, has submitted to the General Assembly, through the appropriate channel, a report on United Nations documentation and on the organization of the proceedings of the General Assembly and its main bodies (A/8319 and Corr.1). The Secretary-General submits herewith, for the consideration of the General Assembly and the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, his comments on the report of the Joint Inspection Unit. These comments include, where appropriate, mention of the recommendations adopted by the Special Committee on the Rationalization of the Procedures and Organization of the General Assembly, established by General Assembly resolution 2632 (XXV) of 9 November 1970, and included in its report. 1/

2. The report of the Joint Inspection Unit is a long one, in which a large variety of facts is examined. Although in some cases - as is inevitable in so comprehensive a survey - the accuracy of the facts stated is open to discussion, the Secretary-General's report is unlikely to be helpful to the Advisory Committee or the General Assembly if it devotes the amount of space which would be required to a detailed examination of detailed statements and statistics, which for the most part are intended only to be illustrative of a situation which is admitted on all sides to be grave. Therefore the present report, while containing a few general comments on the problems of documentation and on those of the procedures of the General Assembly, will confine itself principally to examining the main recommendations of the Joint Inspection Unit, summarized in part A, section IX, and part B, section VIII, of its report (A/8319 and Corr.1).

1/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-sixth Session, Supplement No. 26 (A/8426), para. 359.

I. COMMENTS ON THE MAIN RECOMMENDATIONS ON DOCUMENTATION IN THE REPORT
OF THE JOINT INSPECTION UNIT (A/8319, part A, section IX)

A. General comments on the problem of documentation

3. The volume of United Nations documentation has been a very serious problem almost since the beginning of the Organization and to an ever-increasing extent in recent years. The quantity of documents produced is closely linked with the programme of conferences, since about 85 per cent of United Nations documents are produced in connexion with meetings. Although it is generally felt that there are too many meetings, no effective means have yet been devised for reducing the programme to more manageable proportions, which makes it much harder to limit documentation. In fact, it seems doubtful that the attempt to limit documentation without taking serious steps to limit the programme of conferences can have really satisfactory results. Nevertheless, if the problem of documentation is considered separately, it must be recognized that some documents are insufficiently useful to warrant the costs involved, while others are longer than they should be, and the total volume is unreasonably high. Yet documents are the most important working tools of the Organization and any excessive limitations imposed would risk creating impediments to the discharge of the functions of the United Nations and impairing the possibility of attaining its objectives.

4. The core of the problem is discipline on the part of delegations and of the Secretariat. Delegations should not call for the production of documents whose cost is out of proportion to their usefulness and, if they do so, other delegations should not support their requests out of mere courtesy. The Secretariat should always bear in mind the principles laid down for the limitation of documentation, should, whenever appropriate, call them to the attention of delegations and United Nations organs and should scrupulously observe them in documents for which it is responsible. Fixed rules and limitations of the kind recommended by the Joint Inspection Unit may be useful to supplement and reinforce such discipline, but will be quite ineffective unless the discipline already prevails.

5. Any rules or limitations laid down must take full account of the distribution of authority within the United Nations under the Charter and the practice of the Organization. Each principal organ has been able to decide upon the scope of its own documentation and each subsidiary organ has been able to do the same to the extent that no decision was taken otherwise by the body that established it or by some rule laid down by the General Assembly. A few such rules have in fact been adopted by the Assembly, and others have been recently laid down by the Economic and Social Council in its resolutions 1623 (LI) and 1624 (LI) of 30 July 1971. Except for documents of the Secretariat, the Secretary-General has had no authority to pronounce upon the necessity or usefulness of any particular document which is called for by an organ; his function, apart from providing financial estimates, when appropriate, and calling attention to rules and policies laid down by the General Assembly or other competent organ, has been to produce the documentation requested if it was possible to do so. The General Assembly, under the Charter, has the budgetary power, including that of granting or denying appropriations for documentation, and laying down rules in this regard. Though the Assembly has made

rules on a few matters, such as verbatim records, and summary records for new organs and conferences, it has thus far left considerable scope for the decisions by other organs, which for the most part are composed of representatives of the same Members which constitute the General Assembly. Those representatives often consider that they have a clearer idea of the documents necessary for their particular tasks than representatives in the General Assembly, whose concerns are mainly financial and administrative. Differences of view between organs and variance of the practice of some of them from the recommendations of the General Assembly would be unlikely to occur if all Members of the Organization were able to co-ordinate completely the positions taken by their various representatives in different organs. Though such co-ordination, if effectively carried out, would no doubt largely solve the problem of excessive documentation, promotion of co-ordination within individual delegations does not lie within the scope of the Secretary-General's responsibilities.

6. In its present renewed effort to deal with the problem of the volume of documentation, the Assembly has, as in the past, two courses open to it. First, it can establish general recommendations or policies, which are not binding upon other organs and from which they can depart after the financial consequences of doing so have been stated. Or, second, it can lay down fixed rules which must be complied with by other organs, or establish fixed quantitative limits which may not be exceeded. It will be important to be quite clear about which of these two courses is being followed. To the extent that the power of decision is left to other organs in matters where there are policies but no fixed rules, it would not be reasonable to ask the Secretary-General to enforce quantitative limitations which the Assembly has established on the assumption that its policies will be followed.

7. If new fixed rules, from which other organs are not permitted to derogate, are to be laid down, it would be essential that they should be simple and clear, so that their application by the Secretary-General would be beyond dispute. If value-judgements on the contents, importance or urgency of a document are involved, the Secretary-General could not be expected to oppose his own judgement to that of the organ concerned when a matter relating to the performance of the mandate of that organ is involved, and the organ itself, unless otherwise expressly provided, would naturally be competent to decide. Moreover, for similar reasons, the Secretary-General could not properly be asked to act as umpire between the competing claims of two or more organs for the production of documents, at least where there are no major differences in the importance of the organs concerned or of the subjects under consideration. Should a competition between two organs arise, the Secretary-General might have to deal with the documents on a "first come, first served" basis. Doing so would make priorities depend largely upon mere chance rather than upon reasoned judgement and would be unlikely, in the long run, to prove satisfactory to the Members.

B. Comments on the main recommendations

Recommendations 1 and 2 (15 per cent reduction of documentation by means of a quota system)

8. The Joint Inspection Unit recommends that, as an initial step, the volume of United Nations documentation as computed for 1970 should be reduced by at least 15 per cent by means of the introduction of a document quota system similar

to that in use in the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). Inquiries have been addressed to FAO and UNESCO concerning the operation of their quota systems and both agencies have made very complete and helpful replies.

9. The FAO quota system. With regard to the FAO quota system, that organization has informed the Secretary-General that, despite a rapid expansion of activities, the system has been effective since 1968 in bringing about some reduction both in the volume of documentation (which has varied over the years but, in 1971, seems likely to be about 10 per cent under the 1967 figure) and in requirements for internal translation (which has also varied but, in 1971, seems likely to be about 6 per cent under the 1967 figure). Contractual printing and translation have also been virtually stabilized in volume during those years, though costs per unit have increased. The budgetary proposals of the Director-General for 1972-1973 provide for a 5 per cent increase in internal printing capacity, but a 5 per cent decrease in the capacity of the internal translation services.

10. The UNESCO quota system. In UNESCO, the quota system has apparently brought about no reduction of documentation, but has held the increase to the same proportions as the increase of the activities of the organization as a whole (except for the expansion due to the introduction of Arabic as a working language of the General Conference). The main effect has been to make possible a closer adherence to the budgetary appropriations so that, after considerable time and effort had been spent to stabilize the amount of documentation, in 1965-1966, the UNESCO Bureau of Documents and Publications was able to live within its appropriations (which had never happened before) and, in 1967-1968 and 1969-1970, the Bureau required a budgetary transfer of only about 2 per cent above its appropriations (most of which was needed for mandatory documents of the General Conference and Executive Board, which are estimated on the basis of experience, but are not subject to the quota allocation system). In 1968, the Director-General issued instructions to the Secretariat to reduce by 20 per cent the number of pages which it was responsible for preparing for the General Conference and the Executive Board and, while this target was not fully achieved, the situation nevertheless improved considerably during the 1968-1970 biennium.

11. Comparability of the situation in FAO and UNESCO to that in the United Nations. It is evident that there are certain differences between the situation in the United Nations and that in FAO and UNESCO which will inevitably affect the operation of a quota system in the United Nations. In the first place, the work of the specialized agencies is in general less subject to ardent political contest, so that there is much less tendency than in the United Nations to keep political issues alive, in the absence of a possibility of immediate decision, by requiring Secretariat reports, by sending questionnaires to Governments etc., thereby increasing documentation. In the second place, the Directors-General of FAO and UNESCO have much more effective control over the quantity of documentation than does the Secretary-General. The Secretary-General has been informed that, in FAO, the amount of material issued in regard to which the Director-General and the staff exercise a decisive influence upon the contents and length probably represents 90 per cent of the total production. In UNESCO, barely 20 per cent of the documentation (in terms of number of pages and printing costs) is mandatory, leaving 80 per cent under a substantial degree of control by the secretariat. In the United Nations, roughly 35 per cent of production at Headquarters, in terms

of the number of pages in one language, of the output of the Translation Service and of that of the Verbatim Reporting Section, consists of meetings records, which, as will be explained in paragraph 14 below, are already subject to strict limitations and not capable of reduction unless more severe rules are introduced with respect to the bodies entitled to such records or effective steps are taken to limit the programme of conferences. About 50 per cent of United Nations production consists of documents submitted to United Nations bodies, including proposals, amendments and other materials emanating from delegations (over which the Secretariat has little or no effective control) and reports of United Nations organs (which are usually drafted by the Secretariat in accordance with detailed instructions and decisions by the organs themselves). About 15 per cent of United Nations production consists of publications (the contents of some of which have been decided in detail by the General Assembly or other bodies). On the other hand, in FAO, meetings records constitute a far smaller proportion of production, since, apart from verbatim records for the Council and Assembly and summary records for only two committees, as a general rule the reports of the various bodies constitute the only record of their proceedings. It is apparent that the agency secretariats have considerably more latitude regarding other documents and publications. The situation in UNESCO is comparable to that in FAO. It thus appears that the Secretary-General is in a very different position from that of the Directors-General of FAO and UNESCO with regard to the application and enforcement of a quota system.

12. Limitations on the applicability of a quota system in the United Nations. As has been said in the general comments above, the General Assembly, in its efforts to limit documentation, has the choice of making binding rules and limitations - involving changes in the legal authority thus far enjoyed by other organs in respect of their documents, an authority whose limitation, especially as regards the Security Council and other principal organs, might well involve legal problems under the Charter - or of making recommendations and establishing policies from which other organs can depart after they have been made aware of the financial implications of doing so. In the past, the General Assembly has acted mainly by way of recommendations which have not, to any great extent, yielded the desired results. To the degree that the Assembly chooses once again to proceed by means of making recommendations rather than by making rules, additional quantities of documentation caused by decisions of organs not to abide by the recommendations in particular cases would not be charged against the quotas. To do so would only reduce the shares of the other organs which abide by the recommendations, and that would seem neither just nor feasible.

13. Moreover, as has been said above, meetings records (verbatim records, summary records and minutes) constitute about 35 per cent of the annual output of the United Nations. Pursuant to recent resolutions of the General Assembly and Economic and Social Council, a number of bodies have dispensed with summary records, either entirely or partially, so that in the last two years there has been some reductions, both proportionately and absolutely, in the number of meetings for which such records are provided. As regards verbatim records, some reductions have likewise been achieved. The following figures relate to Headquarters:

	<u>1967</u>	<u>1968</u>	<u>1969</u>	<u>1970</u>
Meetings held	2,555	2,579	2,683	2,787
Meetings provided with:				
Summary records	1,240	1,174	1,002	1,020
Verbatim records	436	473	412	410

14. All organs, however, have recently reviewed their need for summary and verbatim records and it is not to be anticipated that many more will dispense with them unless new binding rules are introduced on the matter. Moreover, new organs will continue to be established and, if the resolutions creating them provide for meetings records, the Secretariat can only comply.

15. The length of verbatim records obviously depends solely upon the length of the meetings. As regards summary records, there is greater flexibility for the Secretariat, but the limit of that flexibility has already been reached. Under current instructions from the General Assembly, the target is to hold the length of a summary record of a two-and-one-half hour meeting to 15 standard pages, or six pages per hour, and in practice the length is being held to an average of about five pages per hour. In the opinion of the Secretary-General, any attempt at further reduction would seriously affect the quality of the records and would only result in more and longer corrections by delegations.

16. The quantity of meetings records thus varies with the number of meetings and, unless new and more severe rules on entitlement to records are introduced or some yet undiscovered means are found for controlling and limiting the programme of conferences, is not susceptible of further reduction. Thus a 15 per cent over-all reduction would involve a 23 per cent reduction of documents in categories other than meetings records. In the first year of a new quota system, this would appear unduly drastic and impracticable. It must also be considered that the volume of proposals and amendments submitted by delegations is also mainly a function of the number of meetings and is not within the control of the Secretariat. It is suggested, therefore, that the quota system should not apply to meetings records, to proposals and amendments, or to any additional types of documents whose contents and length are not within the control of the Secretariat.

17. Mode of operations of the quota system. As pointed out by the Joint Inspection Unit, the problem is not the simple one of a uniform across-the-board reduction of every single document or type of document. In some areas of work, to which delegations and principal organs attach high priority, United Nations activities are increasing and the volume of documentation is consequently growing and must continue to grow, while in other areas of less urgency great reductions may be effected without serious inconvenience. The problem is to determine who should weigh and decide upon competing claims. It is evident that no single Department or Office of the Secretariat would be competent to establish and administer the quotas, because none would have the knowledge to establish relative priorities in vastly divergent fields. The existing United Nations Publications Board, although it has technical competence in the various phases of documents production, sales etc., would likewise not be the appropriate body for decisions on the relative substantive importance of documents. Some new internal machinery might have to be created, which would make recommendations to the Secretary-General or submit its irreconcilable divergencies to his arbitrament.

18. One great simplification in the establishment of quotas would be the adoption of programme planning, as proposed in the new presentation for the budget. The quantity of documentation for each programme would be set in connexion with the adoption of the programme itself. It may be noted that both UNESCO and FAO, where quota systems are in effect, follow the practice of programme budgeting and that this practice is facilitated by the fact that their budget planning is

biennial rather than annual. It is the Secretary-General's intention to study the ways and means by which the sum of documentation costs attributable to particular programmes and activities could be separately identified in the future new budget presentation.

19. Views of the Secretary-General regarding the adoption of a quota system.

In spite of all the above difficulties, the Secretary-General would be willing in principle, if the General Assembly so wishes, to attempt, in 1972, to establish and operate a quota system, applicable to documents under his control, with a view to reducing such documentation submitted for processing (translation, composition, reproduction and distribution) in that year by 15 per cent in comparison with its volume in 1970. Such a system, however, would not apply to verbatim or summary records. The modalities of such a quota system are being studied and the Secretary-General hopes that he will be in a position to submit a report on the subject to the General Assembly before the end of its current session.

20. Finally, something must be said about the financial effects of the reduction of documentation through the quota system, if it is effectively accomplished. As indicated by the Secretary-General in his opening statement to the Fifth Committee 6 October 1971, 2/ there cannot immediately be budgetary savings in the same proportion as the reduction of documentation effected, because reduction of the basic permanent conference servicing establishment should not be undertaken until it is clear that the reduction in the demand for documents is permanent. Thus the estimated saving of \$4.5 for the first year, given in paragraph 279 of the report of the Joint Inspection Unit, appears to be impossible of achievement. The FAO is planning a 5 per cent reduction of internal translation facilities only for 1972-1973, though its quota system has been in operation since 1966. Moreover, if "author's costs" are to be taken into account (see recommendation 4), even a permanent reduction in documents would not necessarily justify a reduction of substantive staff. Few officials are employed solely for drafting documents and a reduced demand for such drafting might simply mean that they could devote more time to other aspects of their work. It may also be pointed out that, if there is no loss of substance, the drafting of a short document usually takes more time and effort than writing a considerably longer one.

Recommendation 3 (Further studies on the reduction of documentation)

21. The Joint Inspection Unit recommends that further studies should be made every two or three years with a view to the ultimate reduction of documentation to 50 per cent of the 1970 level. On the basis of experience and as the activities of the Organization may be expected to grow rather than to diminish, it seems doubtful that a 50 per cent reduction could be achieved without a major change in the type of documentation service provided for meetings as well as extreme self-restraint on the part of United Nations organs. A review of documentation every two or three years and the setting of new targets for reduction might, however, have some useful effect.

2/ See A/C.5/1376.

Recommendation 4 (Types of costs to be included in financial estimates)

22. The Joint Inspection Unit recommends that all cost estimates for documentation should include the cost of drafting, editing, translating, typing, reproduction and distribution. This recommendation presumably applies not only to the budget estimates, but also to statements of financial implications under financial rule 113.1 and the related rules of procedure of the various organs. The drafting costs would be much more difficult to estimate than most of the other elements of expenditure referred to and such estimates could be only very tentative and approximate, especially when statements of financial implications have to be submitted on short notice. There would be specially severe difficulties in the case of reports to be prepared in consultation with the specialized agencies or on an interagency basis. Nevertheless, if the General Assembly so decides, an effort can be made in this direction, as is done at present when the drafting cannot be done by the existing staff. If the existing staff can do the work, however, drafting costs, though included in the estimates, would have to be excluded from the amount of the appropriation requested for the document, because the emoluments of the staff involved would already have been provided for under another heading. It may also be remarked that, since distribution takes place by several different methods (including local messenger service, diplomatic pouch, mail and freight), accurate calculations of the cost of distribution of particular documents is virtually impossible and, if such costs have to be estimated, it can be done only by an arbitrary formula.

Recommendation 5 (Documents required to be issued before General Assembly sessions)

23. The Joint Inspection Unit recommends that the Secretary-General should draw up a list of all basic documents for the General Assembly which must be issued before the start of a session, and that no item should be discussed at a session unless the basic documentation has been issued before the opening of the session. The Secretary-General, so far as his responsibility is concerned, intends to make further efforts to ensure that pre-session documentation appears sufficiently in advance of the time it is to be discussed, though the main difficulty arises from decisions of organs to meet either soon before or even during Assembly sessions. There are also reports of the Secretary-General (for example, those under paragraph 8 (a) of General Assembly resolution 2426 (XXIII), of 18 December 1968, and under paragraph 11 (a) of General Assembly resolution 2555 (XXIV), of 12 December 1969), which are, in practice, submitted for review by the specialized agencies at meetings of the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination in October each year. In regard to the problem of meetings held after the beginning of the Assembly, it may be noted that the Special Committee on the Rationalization of the Procedures and Organization of the General Assembly has tentatively decided to recommend that the Assembly should require its subsidiary organs to complete their work and submit their reports before the opening of each regular session. It is doubtful, however, that the recommendation of the Inspectors that no item should be discussed unless the relevant documentation has been issued before the session will be entirely acceptable to the General Assembly, because it would make the agenda depend not upon the judgement of the Assembly itself on the importance and urgency of items, but rather upon the manifold hazards that beset the production of documents. The authority of the Assembly to decide upon what it wishes to discuss should not be limited by the arbitrary operation of these hazards. In order to guarantee issuance before the opening of a session, elaborate planning of

a time-table for each stage of production (drafting, clearance, editing, referencing, translating, typing, reproduction and distribution) would have to be set up to ensure an even flow of work; but, if the time-table were not observed, the document would still not be available, even though the responsibility for the failure of timely publication might perhaps be somewhat clearer than it sometimes is at present.

Recommendation 6 (Reports to be submitted less often than annually)

24. The Joint Inspection Unit recommends that the Secretary-General should draw up a list of periodic reports which could be submitted at intervals of two or three years rather than annually as at present. The General Assembly, by paragraph 5 of its resolution 2538 (XXIV), of 11 December 1969, requested the Secretary-General to prepare a list of such reports, and invited the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions to submit recommendations on shortening or discontinuing them or issuing them less frequently. By paragraph 5 of resolution 2732 (XXV), of 16 December 1970, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit to it, at its twenty-sixth session, additional information relating to the implementation of resolution 2538 (XXIV), and information concerning periodic reports will be given in the Secretary-General's report thus requested. With regard to the recommendation by the Inspectors that issuance of such reports before the opening of a session would be necessary if they were to be discussed, however, the comments on recommendation 5 apply.

Recommendation 7 (Requests to participate in the Security Council)

25. The Joint Inspection Unit recommends that requests to participate in the Security Council made by non-members of the Council should no longer be published as separate documents. Though this recommendation is included among those "which require a decision by the General Assembly", it would appear that a decision by the Security Council would have to be sought, as a change is involved in a practice established by the Council itself.

Recommendation 8 (Form of reports of organs)

26. In regard to reports of subsidiary bodies, the Joint Inspection Unit recommends strict adherence to the criteria of Paragraph 27 (a) and (g) of the Committee on Control of Documentation (A/3888). This is already done by the Secretariat, which calls attention to them in administrative instructions (the latest of which is ST/AI/189/Add.7 of 30 September 1971), and whose central editing units maintain a continuous dialogue with authors with a view to excluding superfluous or repetitious material. The Secretariat will be greatly assisted in this regard, at least with respect to reports to the Economic and Social Council, by the Council's resolution 1623 (LI), of 30 July 1971, which lays down guidelines for the drafting of such reports. But the Joint Inspection Unit goes on to attempt an exhaustive enumeration of what should be allowed to be included in reports ("a description of the work done", conclusions, decisions, proposals for decision by the General Assembly, etc.), and what should not be allowed ("no part of any working paper", "no extraneous material" etc.).

27. It might serve a useful purpose if the General Assembly reminded other organs of the policies adopted by it in the past, but not yet strictly observed. It would

also be useful to avoid reproduction in reports of current documents which are already receiving wide circulation. Yet it would seem desirable, and is in accordance with the recommendations of the Special Committee on the Rationalization of the Procedures and Organization of the General Assembly, that nothing should be done which would impair too severely the existing power of subsidiary organs to decide for themselves how best to present the results of their work, guided by a minimum of rules and a maximum of reason. This has been the previous practice of the General Assembly, which, for example, in the annex to its resolution 2292 (XXII), of 8 December 1967, in paragraph (e) made a rule against annexing records of meetings to reports, but, in paragraph (f), allowed organs to decide, in exceptional cases and after a statement of financial implications, that summaries of views should be included in reports. As regards the rule against annexing records, it may be recalled that, notwithstanding Assembly resolution 2292 (XXII), two subsidiary bodies of the Security Council have since found it necessary, in order to overcome political difficulties, to annex the records of certain meetings to their reports.^{3/} As regards summaries of views, the Third and Sixth Committees of the General Assembly, in accordance with the procedure laid down in resolution 2292 (XXII), have decided to include such summaries in their reports on certain items, in particular to serve the permanently useful purpose of facilitating the understanding and interpretation of legal texts, including conventions. The elimination of this practice would mean a new rule forbidding what a majority of the Members, sitting in Main Committees, have found desirable, and would impoverish the travaux préparatoires of important United Nations treaties, thus making their interpretation more laborious. Moreover, the rules recommended by the Joint Inspection Unit seem in any case too rigid. Some United Nations bodies have a practice of issuing working papers of a very informal character only to the members of the bodies in question. These working papers, which are the only measure of progress towards agreement in the discussion, are unavailable to anyone who has not attended the meetings. These papers are sometimes incorporated in final reports, which is the only means of making them available. Ruling out this practice, as the Inspectors recommend, would seem impractical.

Recommendation 9 (Summaries of Government replies to questionnaires)

28. The Joint Inspection Unit recommends that the Secretariat should, to the extent possible, prepare analytical summaries of Government replies to questionnaires and should issue the complete replies as conference room papers in the original language only. The problem of publishing Government replies can be solved only if United Nations organs decide to send out questionnaires solely in cases where it is strictly necessary to do so. As regards the recommendation of the Inspectors, since very few delegates can easily read all four working languages, the general practice has been to translate the replies and to make analytical summaries only on request. This practice is somewhat modified by Economic and Social Council resolution 1154 (XLI), of 4 August 1966, which requires that replies to questionnaires calling for substantially factual information should, where appropriate, be analysed and the analysis issued as a Council document; the full original text of the replies, however, is made available for examination by

^{3/} See, for example, S/9844 and Corr. 1 and 2, Add.1 and Corr.1, Add.2 and Corr. 1, 2 and 3, and Add.3; S/9863 and Corr.1, Add.1 and Add.1/Rev.1; and S/10229 and Add.1 and 2.

Governments of Member States, it being understood that the reply of any Government will be published at its request. The preparation of an analytical summary of Government replies is a very laborious and delicate task, since necessary omissions and condensations create a risk of representing the views of Governments in ways which would not be recognized by their authors. Because the task is difficult, it is expensive in terms of "author's costs", that is, the time of Professional staff, and it seems doubtful that for the sake of a saving in documentation it would on balance be advantageous that the preparation of analytical summaries be made a general rule. In any case, it would hardly be appropriate for the Secretary-General to decide whether the full replies of Governments or an analytical summary should be published unless he is specifically authorized to do so; the choice could best be made by the body that decides on the questionnaire in the first place.

Recommendation 10 (Documentation on human rights)

29. The Joint Inspection Unit recommends that the full periodic reports on human rights should be reproduced as conference room papers in the original languages only, that analytical summaries should continue to be documents of general distribution, and that the country and subject indexes should be dispensed with. The present system is based on Economic and Social Council resolution 1074 C (XXXIX), of 28 July 1965, which calls for circulation in full of the information received pursuant to the resolution and for a subject and country index. The analytical summaries are prepared in accordance with resolution 16 B (XXIII), of 22 March 1967, of the Commission on Human Rights. Though it would be necessary to consult the Council and the Commission on these matters, the Secretary-General, for his part, would not see any particular difficulty in giving effect to the recommendations if accepted by the organs concerned, provided that translations of the information received are available in all working languages.

30. The Joint Inspection Unit also recommends that the only documents of studies undertaken by the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities to be given general distribution should be the draft and final reports of those studies. As far as the Secretary-General is concerned, the recommendation gives rise to no objection.

Recommendation 11 (Documents containing petitions)

31. The Joint Inspection Unit recommends that petitions should be grouped and that those which are received after the time-limit should be deferred until the next session of the body concerned. This recommendation is acceptable to the Secretary-General to the extent that it does not conflict with procedures and practices decided upon by United Nations organs.

Recommendation 12 (Simultaneous distribution of documents in all working languages)

32. The Joint Inspection Unit recommends abandoning the rule, adopted at the request of delegations and expressly laid down in Economic and Social Council resolution 1624 (LI), of 30 July 1971, which requires simultaneous distribution of a document in all languages. Documents would be distributed in the various language versions as they become available, subject to the understanding that no document would be discussed until it was available in all working languages. The reasons why delegations prefer simultaneous distribution in all languages are obvious and understandable. Nevertheless, storing large quantities of bulky documents until all language versions are ready presents serious difficulties. On occasion, it has been necessary to depart from the simultaneous distribution rule, in particular during the twenty-fifth session of the General Assembly, when the quantity of documents that had to be stored pending distribution blocked emergency exits and exceeded the limits of safety. Although the Secretary-General would continue to make every endeavour to distribute documents simultaneously in all

working languages, he would welcome being granted discretion to depart, in exceptional cases, from this rule. He would wish, however, still to be able to apply it to certain documents, including his report on the work of the Organization.

Recommendation 13 (Recommendations of the Ad Hoc Committee of Experts to Examine the Finances of the United Nations and the Specialized Agencies)

33. In his comments on recommendation 2, the Secretary-General has indicated his willingness to explore the possibilities of identifying and quantifying all the documentation costs attributable to each of the various programmes and activities into which the proposed new form of the budget would be divided. It had already been his intention to include a budget line under each main part of such a budget which would include the special costs of meetings and special conferences. At the same time, it had been the intention to maintain a separate submission covering the permanent conference servicing units at various locations, although it would certainly be possible, at the same time, to distribute the latter costs among the various programmes and activities for purposes of information only. It would also be feasible to summarize, in an information annex, the total expenditures attributable to conferences and meetings, both direct and indirect, as proposed by the Joint Inspection Unit. It would seem that these procedures would serve the purpose of recommendation 13 (a).

34. It would also seem that these proposed procedures could serve the purpose envisaged under recommendation 13 (c). At the same time that the calendar of meetings for the ensuing budgetary period are submitted for approval, all the related proposals, as separately identified in the budget and summarized in the information annex, could be taken into account, as well as any revised estimates which may be required at that time.

35. As regards recommendation 13 (b), it is the constant endeavour of the Secretary-General to ensure that, in accordance with rule 154 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, estimates of expenditure are submitted when appropriate. The application of the part of that rule relating to statements by the Advisory Committee of the effect of proposals on the budget would be greatly facilitated if items having financial implications were dealt with as early as possible in the session. In the past, serious strain has been placed upon documentation facilities by the need to produce, near the end of the session, so many documents relating to the consideration of financial implications by the Advisory Committee and the Fifth Committee.

36. Recommendation 13 (d), that the dates and place of scheduled conferences and meetings should not be changed if an increase of expenditure over what has been approved by the General Assembly is involved, seems desirable as a general principle, but there must be authority to make exceptions to it when political and substantive considerations so require. No important conference or session ought to be allowed to fail for want of a few days' extension if such an extension is possible under the conference programme; the result might be a set-back in the work of such magnitude that an entire new conference would have to be held, which would in the long run be much more costly than an extension. Further, changes of dates and places are sometimes made indispensable by changes in political circumstances and the chances of substantive success, as estimated by the delegations that will take part, ought not to be prejudiced by mere administrative or budgetary rigidity.

Recommendation 14 (Statistical criteria for documentation and meetings)

37. The Joint Inspection Unit recommends the adoption of uniform statistical criteria for documentation and meetings at all United Nations offices. The Secretary-General accepts this recommendation and plans to hold consultations to this end. The Unit also recommends the maintenance of certain statistical records of the General Assembly's documentation. Such records are already being maintained and were made available to the Inspectors.

Recommendation 15 (Timing of actions in execution of General Assembly decisions)

38. The Secretary-General accepts the recommendations of the Joint Inspection Unit that Departments and Divisions should be apprised no later than 15 January of their responsibilities arising from decisions taken at the previous session of the General Assembly; that questionnaires should be sent no later than 31 January; and that consultations with other bodies should likewise be initiated no later than 31 January. An exception must naturally be made for questionnaires to be drawn up in consultation with the specialized agencies. Although consultations can begin by 31 January, it may not be possible to send out the questionnaires until a later date. As regards the list of items for inclusion in the provisional agenda, the Special Committee on the Rationalization of the Procedures and Organization of the General Assembly has decided to recommend that such a list should be communicated to Member States not later than 15 February, ^{4/} which involves sending it to the various Departments for comment much earlier than the date of 15 May recommended by the Inspectors. The Secretary-General considers that the recommendation of the Special Committee is feasible and would give Members more timely information.

Recommendation 16 (Government replies to questionnaires)

39. The cut-off date for replies of Governments to questionnaires, which the Joint Inspection Unit recommends should be uniformly set at 30 June at the latest, is sometimes decided by the Assembly in the resolution calling for Government comments, in the light of the difficulty of the subject and the date the comments will be needed, and sometimes as long as a year or more has been allowed for the preparation of comments on technical subjects. Without prejudice to the authority of organs concerned to set cut-off dates in the light of special circumstances, the Secretary-General has no objection to setting them normally at 30 June.

40. The Joint Inspection Unit recommends that replies should be grouped in a single document issued before the Assembly's session, and that subsequent replies should be issued in a single addendum prior to the start of the work of the Committee concerned. Government replies are always grouped in an initial document and every effort will continue to be made to issue it before the session. Replies are also grouped as far as possible in addenda. As for the suggestion that there should be only one addendum, issued before the Committee starts its work, after which no further Government replies should be published, the Secretary-General would need an express decision of the General Assembly to that effect if the urgent demands of Members for the publication of their late replies are not to be given effect. Experience has shown that Governments, like some organs of the United Nations, sometimes have difficulty in meeting deadlines, and a limitation of the ordinary right of Members to circulate documents on agenda items which are not yet completed would certainly give rise to protests and difficulties.

^{4/} Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-sixth Session, Supplement No. 26 (A/8426), para. 359, annex II, para. 17.

Recommendation 17 (Exclusive responsibilities of Departments and Offices for the control and editing of documents)

41. As for the "allocated quotas" referred to by the Inspectors, comments have already been made in connexion with recommendations 1 and 2. Departments already have substantive control of their documentation as recommended in the report. As regards responsibility for the editing of in-session documentation, the Departments already do most of the editing that takes place in regard to conference room papers, proposals and amendments, that is, documents sponsored by delegations, and the Secretary-General sees no difficulty in giving them the whole responsibility, which naturally involves close liaison with the sponsoring delegations. Central editing units, however, have an important function in regard to reports (indeed, recommendation 19 could scarcely otherwise be given effect) and long documents for which the Secretariat is responsible, since only the central units can ensure compliance with general directives, can try to secure economy in drafting and ensure uniformity. This is the case whether the documents appear before or during the session.

Recommendation 18 (Enforcement of drafting criteria)

42. The Secretary-General endeavors, as recommended by the Inspectors, to enforce strictly the drafting criteria laid down in General Assembly resolutions 1272 (XIII), 2292 (XXII) and 2538 (XXIV), taking account of which of those criteria are binding rules and which are recommendations from which organs may decide to depart in particular cases.

Recommendation 19 (Form of reports of Main Committees)

43. Since Editorial Directive ST/CS/SER.A/9 of 15 September 1970 was issued, it has been strictly observed in respect of reports of Main Committees. That Editorial Directive is based on the resolutions of the General Assembly and consequently it recognizes that Main Committees have some options as to the contents of their reports, in accordance with the resolutions.

Recommendation 20 (The Secretary-General's report on the work of the Organization)

44. The Secretary-General accepts the recommendation that the format of his annual report should be reconsidered with a view to shortening it. He does not, however, agree that it could serve its purpose if it were based on what is now the introduction to the report. The purpose of the introduction is to convey the personal views, comments and suggestions of the Secretary-General, rather than to serve as "an annual report to the General Assembly on the work of the Organization", as required by Article 98 of the Charter. Further, the introduction usually covers international developments up to the first week of September (while the report itself covers only the period to 15 June). The records of the general debates in the Assembly show that the introduction has been useful to delegations in preparing their statements in those debates.

Recommendation 21 (Report of the Economic and Social Council)

45. The Inspectors recommend restructuring the report of the Economic and Social Council. This work is already under way in pursuance of the Council's

resolution 1623 (LI), of 30 July 1971, and the Council's report to the General Assembly at its twenty-sixth session 5/ has followed a new format in which greater emphasis is placed upon the work of the Council itself.

Recommendation 22 (Summaries of technical or complicated reports)

46. The Joint Inspection Unit recommends the preparation of summaries of the more technical and complicated reports, indicating the kind of action required. Summaries are now provided for some Economic and Social Council documents pursuant to the Council's resolution 1090 (XXXIX), of 31 July 1965. In 1970, these summaries accounted for about 100 pages in each language. These summaries add to the documentation workload and it would appear to be for delegations, rather than the Secretariat, to determine whether this increase is justified by the usefulness of the summaries.

Recommendation 23 (Document on policies with respect to documentation)

47. The Secretary-General has no objection to the recommendation of the Joint Inspection Unit that the documents on documentation policies (A/INF/136) should be up-dated annually to give current figures on the volume and cost of documentation.

Recommendation 24 (Note to delegates on all documents)

48. The Joint Inspection Unit recommends that every United Nations document should carry on its cover page a note requesting delegates and observers not to mislay it and not to request additional copies. Typing such a note on all documents might of course slightly lengthen each of them and thereby increase the volume of documentation, and might even devalue the request if it were placed on everything instead of only on long reports, as at present, of which there is really a short supply. If it were decided to place such a note on all documents, perhaps it could be done on an experimental basis for one or two years to see whether it has any effect.

Recommendation 25 (Distribution of Secretariat administrative documents)

49. The Inspectors recommend that the distribution of certain Secretariat administrative documents should be limited only to those whom they directly concern. An attempt has already been made in this direction, for example with regard to documents which are of concern only to staff members of a particular nationality. Further efforts in this direction might perhaps involve work out of proportion with the savings to be effected, since it will frequently be difficult to identify in advance all of those who may be concerned with a particular administrative instruction or similar document.

Recommendation 26 (Secondary distribution of press releases)

50. The Secretary-General has no objection to the recommendation of the Inspectors that the delayed secondary distribution of press releases should be discontinued and will put this recommendation into effect at the next session of the General Assembly.

5/ Ibid., Supplement No. 3 (A/8403).

II. COMMENTS ON THE MAIN RECOMMENDATIONS ON THE
ORGANIZATION OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE
GENERAL ASSEMBLY IN THE REPORT OF THE JOINT
INSPECTION UNIT (A/8319, part B, section VIII)

A. General comments on part B

51. In commenting on the recommendations made by the Joint Inspection Unit in part B of its report, the Secretary-General wishes to take full account of the facts that it is the General Assembly itself which is the master of its procedure and that the final evaluation of these recommendations will therefore be made by Member States. It may be recalled that the process of such evaluation has already begun, since a number of recommendations made by the Joint Inspection Unit were also raised in the Special Committee on the Rationalization of the Procedures and Organization of the General Assembly and are dealt with in the report of that Committee. 6/ The recommendations adopted by the Special Committee are referred to in the following comments.

B. Comments on the main recommendations

Recommendation 1 (Maximum duration of General Assembly sessions)

52. It is of course for the General Assembly itself to decide upon the practical as distinct from the theoretical possibility of shortening the session to 10 weeks, as recommended by the Joint Inspection Unit. It may be pointed out that the average duration of sessions ever since the beginning of the Organization has been about 13 weeks and that the Special Committee recommends no immediate reduction of this duration, which, in view of the steadily increasing number of Members participating in the debates, already indicates a growing efficiency in the conduct of the business of the Assembly. A suggestion for shortening the sessions, which was put before the Special Committee by the Secretariat, that rule 1 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly should be amended to provide that regular sessions should commence on the fourth Tuesday, rather than the third Tuesday, in September, thus reducing the duration of the session by one week. That week could be used with advantage by delegations and by the Secretariat to complete the preparations for the session. The Special Committee, however, decided not to recommend a change in the opening date. 7/

6/ Ibid., Supplement No. 26 (A/8426).

7/ Ibid., para. 359, annex II, para. 4.

Recommendation 2 (Maximum time for the completion of the work of Main Committees)

53. The recommendation of the Joint Inspection Unit that Main Committees should complete their work within eight weeks is, of course, closely linked with the question of the duration of the session dealt with in recommendation 1 and cannot be discussed independently. If the total session were to be restricted to 10 weeks, the work of the Main Committees would inevitably have to be limited to eight or nine weeks.

Recommendation 3 (Tentative work programme of regular sessions)

54. The Secretary-General does not consider that it would be useful for him to attempt to draft and circulate to Members, more than 30 days before the beginning of a session, a complete work programme for the plenary and for the Main Committees, as recommended by the Joint Inspection Unit. At a time so far in advance of the opening of the Assembly and in the absence of many of the representatives who would take part in the session, the Secretary-General would find it practically impossible to complete the necessary consultations with delegations, whose views are of paramount importance in regard to the organization of work. Also, the time required for an item may be altered by events occurring immediately before the opening of the session. Furthermore, in accordance with rule 100 of the rules of procedure, the Main Committees have always, and reasonably, been entrusted with the decisions on how they deal with the items referred to them by the plenary; but a substantial change by even one Committee in the tentative work programme drawn up by the Secretary-General might affect those of the plenary and the Committees, thus entailing substantial changes in the whole work programme. It follows that a tentative work programme circulated by the Secretary-General one month before the opening of the session would be premature, could scarcely reflect the desires of delegations and would be liable to such major changes at a later stage that it would be only misleading to any delegations that relied on it.

55. The report of the Joint Inspection Unit does not make it clear whether the work programme, after consideration by the General Committee, would be adopted by the General Assembly, thus withdrawing from the Main Committees the responsibility they have heretofore borne for the organization of their work. If this were the case, the change would not seem desirable, as the Main Committees themselves are in the best position to know the practical possibilities in this regard.

Recommendation 4 (Information to Members before the session)

56. The Special Committee has also considered the question of the circulation of the unofficial list of items proposed for inclusion in the provisional agenda and of an annotated list of items. It has recommended that the unofficial list of items should be circulated, not later than 15 February, and an annotated list of items, indicating briefly the history of each item, the available documentation, the substance of the matter to be discussed and earlier decisions by United Nations organs, should be circulated not later than 15 June. 8/ These recommendations provide for information to be sent earlier to delegations than the recommendation of the Joint Inspection Unit, and it would seem useful for delegations to have such information as early as possible. As regards the recommendation of the Inspectors,

8/ Ibid., para. 359, annex II, para. 17.

the Secretary-General would often not be in a position to make any useful statement on "(iii) the kind of action required by the Assembly and the degree of urgency of such action", as suggested in the report.

Recommendation 5 (Role of the General Committee)

57. The Special Committee has also considered the functions of the General Committee and has expressed the hope that the General Committee would be able to hold more frequent meetings in conformity with rule 42 of the rules of procedure, without thereby interfering with the normal meetings schedule of the plenary and the Main Committees. ^{9/} There seems to be no advantage in regular periodic meetings of the General Committee if there are no particular problems to be discussed, and it seems preferable that it should meet only from time to time, as required. Under rule 42, the General Committee meets "as the President deems necessary or upon the request of any other of its members" and, therefore, the desirable flexibility exists under the present rules.

Recommendation 6 (Programme of work of Committees)

58. To the same end as this recommendation of the Joint Inspection Unit, the Special Committee has recommended an amendment to the rules of procedure which would require that all Main Committees, at the beginning of the session, should adopt a programme of work. ^{10/} This proposal, which would generalize a procedure already followed by some of the Main Committees, seems both useful and feasible.

Recommendation 7 (Working group on recurrent items)

59. The question of the future session to which a recurrent item should be deferred is normally settled by each Main Committee when it decides on the terms of the draft resolution or decision which it proposes with respect to the item. It would seem that the question of the desirability of forming a working group - especially at the outset of the session - to deal with this matter could best be left to each Main Committee.

Recommendation 8 (Joint meetings of Main Committees)

60. At the first to sixth sessions of the General Assembly (1946-1952), joint meetings of two or more Main Committees on items of common concern were a frequent practice. The practice was not continued, however, because the majority of delegations were not convinced of its advantages. In such meetings in the past, only one representative has spoken and voted for each Member, and it was left to each delegation, or to chance, to decide which of the two or more Main Committee representatives, each expert in his own field, should speak and vote, with the result that full and balanced representation of the range of opinion in each Committee was not assured. There were also various legal problems about the mode

^{9/} Ibid., para. 13.

^{10/} Ibid., para. 359, annex I, para. 5

of constituting joint committees, about their officers etc. Joint meetings can of course be resumed however, whenever delegations consider them useful to deal with particular items.

Recommendation 9 (Qualifications of presiding officers)

61. Availability of candidates for service throughout the whole session is and should be a factor for the consideration of the Assembly and its Committees in their selection of officers. As regards the experience of candidates in the work of the General Assembly, it may be recalled that rule 105 of the rules of procedure provides that officers shall be elected on the basis, in addition to equitable geographical distribution, of "experience and personal competence". It is unfortunate that in some cases, undue weight may have been given to geographical distribution in elections.

Recommendation 10 (Meetings of officers of Main Committees)

62. It would seem useful for the officers of a Main Committee to review the progress of work only if the Committee is behind schedule. As regards Saturday meetings, it would seem preferable to leave it to the Committee itself to decide whether its work would best be furthered by meeting on Saturday morning, or by leaving the time for consultation among delegations.

Recommendation 11 (Starting time of meetings)

63. Experience has shown that the responsibility for starting meetings on time rests primarily with the presiding officer. If he announces his intention to start on time and then regularly begins at the stated time, delegations do provide the quorum required by the present rules of procedure at the appointed hour. Any change in the rules of procedure to eliminate or reduce the required number of members for the opening of a meeting would be only a supplementary means of allowing the presiding officer to begin on time, if he so chooses.

64. The questions of the opening of meetings and of the number of delegations that must be represented at that time have been considered by the Special Committee, which has recommended that the President may declare a meeting open and permit the debate to proceed when one third of the members of the General Assembly are present, and that similarly the Chairman of a Committee may declare a meeting open when one quarter of the members are present. ^{11/} It would seem preferable to specify, as the Special Committee has done, some minimum number of delegates who must be present, in order to avoid the possibility that a representative may find himself called upon to address a nearly empty room.

Recommendation 12 (Prior examination of items by subsidiary organs)

65. The Special Committee has also considered this matter, but has not found it possible to make a recommendation that, as a general rule, items in the economic,

^{11/} Ibid., paras. 3 and 8.

social and human rights fields should not be considered by the General Assembly until completion of their examination by a subsidiary body. On the other hand, the Economic and Social Council, by its resolution 1622 (LI), of 30 July 1971, recommends that the General Assembly adopt a resolution declaring it advisable "for any new economic, social, scientific or technical questions appearing on the agenda of the General Assembly to be considered as a rule, first by the Economic and Social Council, which would make specific recommendations concerning the nature of possible future decisions to be adopted by the General Assembly on such questions".

Recommendation 13 (a) (Statement on documentation policies and costs in Main Committees)

66. The contents of the opening remarks of the Chairman of a Main Committee will in practice probably remain, as at present, within the discretion of the Chairman himself. If, however, the General Assembly were so to direct, the information referred to by the Joint Inspection Unit could be incorporated in a uniform statement to be read out by all Committee Secretaries at the beginning of the work of their Committees.

Recommendation 13 (b) (Invitation to speak briefly during the general debate)

67. Even in the absence of an invitation to speak briefly like that recommended by the Joint Inspection Unit, the average length of statements in the general debate in plenary since the nineteenth session of the General Assembly has been 34 minutes. The Special Committee proposes modifications of rules 74 and 115 on time-limits on speeches, ^{12/} but has not suggested an automatically applicable limitation of time or an appeal from the Chair for brevity. At the opening of a session, a President could express, on behalf of the General Assembly, a wish that statements in the general debate should not exceed 30 minutes, or 10 minutes in the case of exercise of the right of reply. In the absence of a rule, however, there might not be compliance with such a request. The General Assembly, at its twenty-fourth session, approved a suggestion by the Secretary-General that statements in the exercise of the right of reply during the general debate should not exceed 10 minutes. ^{13/}

Recommendation 13 (c) (Length of statements in Main Committees)

68. A time-limit of 15 minutes for statements in Main Committees, unless otherwise decided by the Committee, seems more rigid than it would be possible for delegations to accept. A Committee may always impose a time-limit on speeches under rule 115 of the rules of procedure, but a general rule applicable to all debates would probably be found impractical.

^{12/} Ibid., paras. 4 and 10.

^{13/} Ibid., Twenty-fourth Session, Annexes, agenda item 8, document A/BUR/175, para. 10.

Recommendation 13 (d) (Congratulations and condolences)

69. With respect to congratulations, the Special Committee has decided to recommend a new rule of procedure to the effect that congratulations to the officers of a Main Committee shall be expressed only by the Chairman of the Committee at the previous session - or, in his absence, by a member of his delegation - after all the officers have been elected. 14/ The Special Committee, however, considers that, instead of extending this rule to the plenary, as is recommended by the Inspectors, it would be better to retain the current practice of the plenary whereby congratulations to the President are confined to brief remarks included in speeches made during the general debate.

70. As regards condolences, the Special Committee is recommending that they be expressed only by the President of the General Assembly or by the Chairman of a Main Committee on behalf of all the members, and that, in exceptional cases, the President might call a special plenary meeting for the purpose. 15/

Recommendation 13 (e) (Closure of the list of speakers)

71. The Special Committee has recommended that the date for the closure of the list of speakers should be announced early in the debate and that the list should be closed after one third of the number of meetings foreseen for the item have been held. 16/ This arrangement seems more practical than closure of the list of speakers after only two meetings on an item have been held, as recommended by the Joint Inspection Unit, since closure of the list at a very early stage of a long and complex debate might only lead most delegations, by precaution rather than from a real intention to speak, to inscribe themselves on the list.

Recommendation 13 (f) (Statements of Rapporteurs)

72. The Special Committee has recalled the recommendation made in 1947 by the Committee on Procedures and Organization of the General Assembly that Rapporteurs should not read out their reports in plenary meetings 17/ and stressed the fact that they should limit themselves to brief introductory statements. 18/ It has also recommended confirmation of the practice of introducing simultaneously related reports of a non-controversial nature. 19/ These recommendations, as well as those of the Joint Inspection Unit, seem likely to be helpful.

14/ Ibid., Twenty-sixth Session, Supplement No. 26 (A/8426), para 359, annex I, para. 9.

15/ Ibid., para. 359, annex II, para. 82.

16/ Ibid., para. 69.

17/ Ibid., Second Session, Plenary Meetings, vol. II, annex IV, document A/388, part II, para. 26.

18/ Ibid., Twenty-sixth Session, Supplement No. 26 (A/8426), para. 359, annex II, para. 52.

19/ Ibid., para. 53.