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COMMITTEE FOR PROGRAMME AND CO-ORDINATION

REPORT ON THE TWELFTH SESSION

5 - 23 June 1972

**ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL
OFFICIAL RECORDS: FIFTY-THIRD SESSION**

SUPPLEMENT No. 10

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I. ORGANIZATION OF THE SESSION

1. The Committee for Programme and Co-ordination (CPC) held its twelfth session at United Nations Headquarters from 5 to 23 June 1972. The summary records of the Committee's meetings during the twelfth session are contained in documents E/AC.51/SR.365-380.
2. The following members of the Committee were represented: Brazil, Bulgaria, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Colombia, Denmark, France, Guyana, India, Indonesia, Japan, Kenya, Malta, Pakistan, Sudan, Trinidad and Tobago, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania and United States of America.
3. Algeria, Austria, Belgium, China, Hungary and New Zealand were represented by observers.
4. The following specialized agencies were represented: the International Labour Organisation (ILO), Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), World Health Organization (WHO), International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD), and International Monetary Fund (IMF). The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) was also represented. Representatives of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) also attended the session. The Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs, the Assistant Secretary-General for Inter-Agency Affairs, the Director of the Budget Division and other senior officials of the United Nations Secretariat were also present.
5. The agenda for the session, adopted by the Committee at its 365th meeting, is reproduced in the annex to this report. At its 374th meeting, the Committee decided not to discuss item 8 (work programme performance in the economic, social and human rights field in 1971: report of the Secretary-General), because of the late submission and consequent late distribution in only one language of the documentation.

III. PREPARATIONS FOR JOINT MEETINGS OF THE COMMITTEE FOR PROGRAMME AND CO-ORDINATION AND THE ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE ON CO-ORDINATION

7. The Committee discussed this matter at its 376th meeting. It had before it a letter dated 2 June 1972 from the Secretary-General addressed to the Chairman of CPC (E/AC.51/L.71) in which the Secretary-General responded to the topics suggested by the members of CPC for possible consideration at the forthcoming Joint Meetings of CPC and ACC to be held in Geneva on 29-30 June. The topics initially proposed by the members of the Committee are indicated in paragraphs 37-41 of the report of CPC at its eleventh session (E/5159). 1/

8. The Committee agreed to the proposal of the Chairman of ACC that the items "Rationalization on a system-wide basis of the activities and programmes of work in the economic and social fields of the organizations of the United Nations system in the light of available resources", and "The human environment, with particular reference to the institutional implications of the recommendations of the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment" should constitute the agenda for the Joint Meetings. It was also agreed that they should be taken up in the order indicated above. One delegation expressed its preference that the human environment item should be taken up first, but was satisfied with the explanation that equal treatment would be given to the two items. The Committee also requested its Chairman to inform members of the Bureau of the Economic and Social Council that their presence would be particularly welcomed at the Joint Meetings this year; it will be recalled that members of the Bureau of the Economic and Social Council are ex-officio members of the Joint Meetings. The Committee also requested its Chairman to invite those delegations who have been attending CPC as observers to attend the forthcoming Joint Meetings in the same capacity.

9. Some delegations expressed their concern at the proposal that two items of great importance and with far-reaching implications should be proposed for consideration at a date which would not allow delegations to prepare themselves for the discussion. It was noted further that no documentation was available on the first of the two items and that the proposed document on the second item would not be circulated until shortly before the Joint Meetings.

1/ Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, Fifty-second Session, Supplement No. 8.

and be more action-oriented, by highlighting existing co-ordination problems and by reflecting any divergent views of organizations. Some delegations also stressed the need for an improvement of exchange of information between ACC and CPC. As for the format of the ACC report, the suggestion was made that future reports should include separately ACC's proposals for topics to be considered in depth by the Council, and should clearly identify items in the report that call for special attention or action on the part of the Council.

14. Commenting on ACC's approach to its work, as reflected in the report, a number of delegations noted with satisfaction the progress in the avoidance of duplication and overlapping and the shift in emphasis that was becoming apparent from negative co-ordination to the identification of areas in which joint or concerted action could appropriately be undertaken. With respect to ACC's methods of work, many delegations expressed support for the measures that ACC intended to take in pursuance of resolution 1643 (LI), as described in section I A of the report. In particular, satisfaction was expressed for the guidelines relating to ACC reporting, contained in paragraph 13, and for the arrangements made by ACC to ensure control over interagency meetings, described in paragraphs 26-28. However, the view was also expressed that more adequate measures were needed in order to fulfil the requirements of Council resolution 1643 (LI). The question was also raised in this connexion of the association of the regional economic commissions and the United Nations Economic and Social Office in Beirut (UNESOB) with the work of ACC and the Preparatory Committee, as envisaged in paragraph 10 of resolution 1643 (LI). In this connexion, the Assistant Secretary-General for Inter-Agency Affairs pointed out that the Secretary-General had agreed to associate the executive secretaries with meetings of ACC when items of particular interest to them were being discussed and that representatives of the regional commissions already attended meetings of ACC sub-committees. Some delegations expressed the hope that this trend would continue in response to resolution 1643 (LI).

15. While noting these measures, some delegations indicated that, in their view, ACC's machinery continued to be too cumbersome to enable the Committee to exercise effectively the co-ordination tasks assigned to it. In this connexion, the Assistant Secretary-General gave assurances that continuing efforts were under way to streamline ACC's machinery and to improve its methods of work. These delegations also noted a continuing tendency on the part of ACC to exercise policy functions which properly belonged to intergovernmental bodies. As an example of this trend, some of these delegations mentioned the passage in the report dealing with the Staff College (paras. 194-198) which, in their view, distorted the decision taken on the subject at the twenty-sixth session of the General Assembly. As was evident from paragraph 198 of the report, members of ACC had taken an unjustified position on controversial aspects of the question prior to decisions being taken thereon by the competent intergovernmental organs. Other delegations felt that the General Assembly decision had been properly interpreted and considered that ACC had acted correctly in reporting on the brief which it had received on the subject from the Executive Director of UNITAR. The Assistant Secretary-General agreed to issue a corrigendum 2/ to the ACC report, which would refer to the paraphrase of the General Assembly's decision contained in

such meetings should be taken into account before decisions on sites for meetings were made. A number of delegations noted that ACC had effected a substantial reduction in the number of meetings of its subsidiary bodies. One delegation further suggested a consideration of the possibility of replacing ACC subsidiary bodies by ad hoc groups.

19. The hope was expressed that the next report would contain fuller information on prior consultation arrangements and pre-programming and the effects that the current transition to programme budgeting and medium-term programming was having on these arrangements and on the over-all work of ACC. Fuller reporting was also sought on the co-ordination of public information activities and the work of the Inter-Organization Board for Information Systems and Related Activities. With regard to co-ordination in the use of computers, several delegations shared the view that the situation reflected in the report was not satisfactory, and that much greater efforts were required in order to permit a fuller and more satisfactory utilization of the facilities of ICC. With respect to the section of the report on personnel and administrative questions, one delegation expressed reservations with regard to paragraph 151 which, in its view, gave the wrong impression that the United Nations had reached a final position with regard to the establishment of long-term recruitment plans and on setting up pilot competitive examinations for junior professional entry. It was explained by a representative of the Secretariat that the only decision taken so far was to attempt to carry out a few limited experiments with regard to competitive examinations; and that the General Assembly would, of course, receive full information on developments in this area.

20. The Committee took note of the topics proposed by ACC for in-depth consideration by the Council, namely natural resources and population. In this connexion, it was pointed out that any in-depth study by ACC on co-ordination in the field of natural resources should not duplicate the report that the Secretary-General had been requested to prepare by the Council in resolution 1673 C (LII). One delegation, while supporting the proposal for a study on natural resources, was opposed to an ACC study on population.

VI. REPORTS OF THE SPECIALIZED AGENCIES AND THE INTERNATIONAL ATOMIC ENERGY AGENCY

26. The Committee considered this item at its 368th to 370th meetings. It had before it the analytical summaries of the reports of the specialized agencies and IAEA as contained in documents E/5149 (ILO), E/5139 (FAO), E/5119 (UNESCO), E/5134 (ICAO), E/5164 (UPU), E/5125 (ITU), E/5121 (WHO), E/5143 (WMO), E/5140 (IMCO) and E/5142 (IAEA). However, since the Council had agreed at its 1818th meeting to the recommendation of CPC at its eleventh session that the WHO and WMO reports would be the two agency reports to be studied in depth by the Council at its fifty-third session, the Committee decided to concentrate its attention on these two reports, without prejudice to comments and observations on the reports of other specialized agencies.

27. The representative of WHO introduced his organization's report and drew attention to the main points in it. WHO's activities were continuing to expand but were also becoming increasingly interrelated with those of other organizations within the United Nations system. WHO recognized the need to relate its 5th General Programme of Work for 1973-1977 to the broad framework of the strategy for the Second United Nations Development Decade. Also, the technical discussions which had taken place at the recently concluded 25th World Health Assembly had been focused on the contribution of health programmes to economic and social development. Unfortunately, however, the report indicated that despite encouraging progress made, it had not yet been possible in most of the developing countries to apply on an adequate scale existing knowledge to the control of diseases. Major obstacles such as the inadequacy of the network of basic health services, the lack of trained manpower and deficiencies in basic sanitation and nutrition remained. WHO attached great importance to its participation in country programming and had expended considerable effort in contributing to this exercise. This had included adapting its own structure, particularly at the regional level. Another area in which WHO was particularly interested was the environment and environmental health programmes that constituted one of WHO's priority activities. His organization had participated fully in the preparations for the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment and had contributed working papers as part of the Conference's background documentation. Other significant WHO activities were planning, organization and administration of health services which included not only research but also direct assistance to Member States, family health, nutrition and proteins, education and training, and drug dependence. The Committee should be interested to learn of certain developments which had occurred subsequent to the publication of the report. The 25th World Health Assembly had approved a new form of presentation of the programme and budget estimates to bring it closer to a system of programme budgeting and had taken steps with a view to taking a decision on the introduction of biennial budgeting. The membership of WHO had now been raised to 135 members and two associate members with the admission of the United Arab Emirates, Fiji, Qatar and Bangladesh to membership and Papua New Guinea to associate membership.

28. Members of the Committee generally expressed satisfaction with the form and content of the WHO report. It was clear, concise and well-organized. The fact that WHO had been able to include a section suggesting specific action to be

and meteorological satellites and the view was expressed that WMO should consider whether more use should not be made of satellites and less of mobile ships. In connexion with the format of the WMO report, members felt that it was generally satisfactory. In particular the chapter on co-ordination was clear and well-organized but more attention should have been given to problems of co-ordination with recommendations for specific action by the Council.

32. Those delegations who commented on the report of IAEA noted that the Director-General was trying to maintain the momentum of its programmes by cutting down administrative expenses and eliminating low priority programmes. It would be useful if IAEA could indicate in its report what proportion of its total budget was devoted to administrative expenses and what proportion was used for operational programmes. Satisfaction was expressed that IAEA was working in close collaboration with WHO, UNESCO and other agencies. IAEA held a key position in relation to the production of clean energy, the improvement of environmental quality, the exploration and exploitation of natural resources, the improvement of food production and the medical uses of nuclear science. Any areas in which there might be overlapping between IAEA programmes and those of other institutions should be brought to the attention of CPC as soon as possible so that corrective action could be recommended.

33. Members of the Committee also commented on how the analytical summaries complied with the format for reporting laid down in Council resolution 1548 (XLIX). CPC considered that the response varied widely from report to report with FAO's report being considered the most satisfactory. Most agencies, except for the ILO, had placed organizational charts at the beginning of their summaries. Not all agencies had provided enough information regarding co-ordination problems with recommendations for specific action by the Council, but the WHO and FAO reports were excellent examples of how this should be done. One delegation expressed the view that the reports of the specialized agencies should include a chapter on specific matters to be drawn to the attention of the Council.

34. With regard to the provision of information in tabular form on expenditures on major programmes for previous and current years, the format varied too much from one report to another to permit an easy comparison between the organizations. It was suggested that the format used in the annual report of ACC on expenditures of the United Nations system in relation to programmes should be adopted by all organizations. It was also considered that fuller information should be provided on the concrete steps taken by the organizations to carry out recommendations made in the course of reports of the Joint Inspection Unit designed to eliminate duplication and overlapping.

35. In the course of the discussion some delegations commented upon the degree of co-ordination between the specialized agencies and the Organization of African Unity (OAU), and recommended the establishment of liaison with OAU and other regional bodies. Some also expressed the view that more co-ordination was needed among the different specialized agencies.

36. One delegation pointed out that in deciding to make an in-depth study of the reports of selected specialized agencies each year, the Council did not intend to supplant the governing bodies of the agencies which are entrusted with the task of assessing the agencies' programmes and drawing their order of priorities.

40. In the view of these members, however, these steps were not only belated but were inadequate to meet the needs of the peoples concerned. The executive heads of the agencies should, as a matter of priority, and on the basis of their contacts with OAU, and the national liberation movements, work out concrete programmes of assistance for submission to their respective governing bodies and legislative organs. The opinion was also expressed that the co-operation of Governments in this regard would be greatly facilitated if UNDP would waive counterpart contributions in respect of projects beneficial to peoples from the colonial territories and to the national liberation movements.

41. A number of members expressed special concern that IBRD and IMF had failed to initiate any programmes of assistance either to refugees or to the national liberation movements or to regions liberated from colonial domination. They believed that IBRD, in particular, by reason of the resources at its disposal and its avowed responsibility to fight poverty and deprivation, could make an important contribution to the provision of such assistance. The Committee was informed by the representative of IBRD that while the Bank could not, within its Articles of Agreement, render direct financial assistance to colonial peoples, it was ready to consider sound development projects submitted by Governments in that context. However, some delegations stated that the difficulties expressed by the representative of IBRD were not insurmountable. These delegations strongly held that, through a degree of flexibility, the Bank was in a position to take the necessary measures, such as, for instance, special allocations for grants to the national liberation movements and, through the International Development Agency, long-term interest-free loans to Governments for projects directly beneficial to colonial peoples. A few delegations considered the actions by IBRD and IMF appropriate.

42. Several members were also concerned that some of the agencies, particularly IBRD and IMF, had not yet discontinued all collaboration with the Governments of Portugal and South Africa. They considered that in implementation of the relevant General Assembly resolutions, the agencies should immediately sever all links with those Governments and should refrain from any action which might imply recognition of the legitimacy of their colonial domination of the territories. Furthermore, the agencies should not maintain relations with any intergovernmental organizations where South Africa and Portugal claimed to represent the territories under their control.

43. Certain delegations expressed the view that the executive heads of the specialized agencies should bring to the attention of their respective legislative organs any difficulties that might hinder the process of discontinuing their relations with colonialist and racist régimes, and the establishment of direct relations with the national liberation movements. They were also asked to advise their respective governing and legislative organs in a specific and systematic manner on their recommendations on decolonization, including a full analysis of the problems involved and concrete suggestions for implementation.

44. A few members, recalling the position taken by their delegations during previous discussions of the question, did not agree with many of the views set forth above. While, in their view, there was no objection to assistance programmes for persons falling within the mandate of UNHCR, they pointed out that all specialized agencies could not be expected to implement to an equal degree the provisions of the Declaration and the relevant resolutions. For instance direct aid to national liberation movements was constitutionally improper and was liable to discriminate

VIII. QUESTION OF THE FORM OF PRESENTATION OF THE
UNITED NATIONS BUDGET

45. The Committee discussed this item at its 372nd and 374th to 377th meetings. It had before it the report of the Secretary-General (A/C.5/1429 and Corr.1) ^{5/} on the new form of presentation of the United Nations budget. The Committee was greatly assisted by the introductory and explanatory statements of the Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs and the Director of the Budget Division.

46. Furthering earlier discussions of the subject of programme budgeting at its earlier sessions, particularly its tenth, the Committee held a constructive exchange of views in the course of which it was apparent that a point had been reached where action would be possible on this important issue. It was also felt that the foundations could be laid for a new system of budgeting which would permit the Organization to streamline its structure to meet the challenges of the Second United Nations Development Decade. In this connexion, some delegations held the view that programmes should be geared to the attainment of the targets set in the International Development Strategy for the Second United Nations Development Decade and that priorities should be determined accordingly.

47. A majority of members considered that the new form of presentation of the United Nations budget as envisaged in the Secretary-General's report provides a basis for planning, programming and budgeting of the activities of the United Nations in the economic, social and human rights fields. They expressed the hope that the Council would endorse the principle of programme budgeting and would commend the report of the Secretary-General to the General Assembly as a suitable basis for discussion. Some other delegations felt that the Council should endorse the principle of medium-term and long-term programming on the basis of existing budget capabilities. The majority of members of the Committee recommended that the Council consider endorsing the proposal for the introduction of a biennial budget cycle. A few delegations were not in a position to endorse these views and reserved their Governments' positions. One delegation emphasized the need to formulate medium-term programmes in a detailed manner.

48. The Committee emphasized the continuing and overriding need for an appropriate body to conduct effective intergovernmental control over the United Nations programmes in the economic and social fields. The Committee noted that the proposed new approach to programming and budgeting should considerably strengthen intergovernmental control over these activities. In this connexion, the Committee wishes to draw the attention of the Council to certain revisions in the text of the Secretary-General's report, accepted by his representatives, which in the original version had led to queries by some members. It was agreed that in paragraph 19 of document A/C.5/1429 and Corr.1 the phrase "in rather general terms" should be eliminated since it might convey an unintended impression of limitation on the

^{5/} A second corrigendum, bearing the symbol A/C.5/1429/Corr.2, was issued on 11 July 1972, following the suggestions made during consideration of the report (see para. 48 below).

IX. WORK PROGRAMME OF THE UNITED NATIONS IN THE
ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND HUMAN RIGHTS FIELDS

51. The Committee considered this item at its 373rd, 375th and 377th meetings. It had before it the report of the Secretary-General on the work programme of the United Nations in the economic, social and human rights fields (E/AC.51/60 and Corr.1).

52. There is a close link between the two reports of the Secretary-General on the form of presentation of the United Nations budget and the duration of the budget cycle (A/C.5/1429 and Corr.1) and the draft programme and budget for 1973 and the initial planning estimates for 1974 for the Department of Economic and Social Affairs at Headquarters (E/AC.51/60 and Corr.1). As was explained in an introductory statement by the Special Adviser for Departmental Programme Planning, the structure of the latter document and the methods employed in presenting the activities of the Department at Headquarters on a programme basis were strictly within the framework of the proposed structure of the budget as given in Annex I of document A/C.5/1429 and Corr.1. In this way, it was hoped that the proposed departmental programme and budget could serve as an illustration of how the new budget envisaged in the Secretary-General's report would actually look as far as the Department of Economic and Social Affairs was concerned. It was also explained that the information presented in the document was not a mere compilation of data received from the programme managers in the Department but reflected the outcome of a carefully conceived review process carried out within the Department by a task force composed of members of the Department and those of the Office of the Controller and the Office of Inter-Agency Affairs. Since this new approach was carried out within a very brief period of time, the document necessarily suffered from a number of deficiencies that made its usefulness rather limited.

53. The Committee felt that the document in general provided a summary of projected programme activities and also represents a useful step forward in applying programme budgeting techniques to activities in the economic and social fields. The view was held that the level and distribution of the resources put at the disposal of the Department was reasonable, bearing in mind the present financial situation of the Organization and the prospects for financing future activities in the economic and social fields. A number of delegations felt that for a proper assessment of total resources required for the implementation of programmes, there is a need to present a truly comprehensive picture of the totality of resources available from budgetary and extra-budgetary funds. Furthermore, some of the costs which are not presently distributed among programmes, e.g. conference services, office space, etc., need to be included.

54. The Committee also felt that for a proper assessment of the activities of the United Nations in the economic, social and human rights fields, it would be essential to have the same type of information as presented for Headquarters to cover activities of the regional economic commissions including UNESOB, as well as for UNCTAD and UNIDO. Only then would it be possible to tackle successfully questions of possible duplication of efforts and of proper co-ordination between the activities carried out in different parts of the Secretariat.

X. REORGANIZATION OF THE DEPARTMENT OF
ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS

58. The Committee considered this item at its 375th and 378th meetings. The Committee had before it the report of the Secretary-General (A/C.5/1430) containing his comments on the report on the restructuring of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs submitted to the Fifth Committee of the General Assembly at the twenty-sixth session (A/C.5/1380 and Corr.1). The Committee also had before it the report prepared by Mr. R. M. Macy of the Joint Inspection Unit on the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and the preliminary comments of the Secretary-General (A/8446 and Add.1).

59. The Committee noted that the Secretary-General is convinced that the Department must have the structural and managerial means to support the Secretary-General in carrying out the functions required of him in the economic and social field by the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly. In this connexion, he is in complete accord with his predecessor. However, the Secretary-General wished to complete his own review of the matter and did not propose at this stage to restructure the top echelon of the Department. He would submit his recommendation in this connexion in time for consideration by the various bodies concerned during 1973. The Committee noted also that other changes of an administrative nature that had been or would be implemented would be reflected in the 1973 budget estimates and that those changes would involve no increase in cost above those indicated in the initial budget estimates for 1973.

60. The Committee was informed that the review being undertaken by the Secretary-General was not a survey of the kind that had been made by the Administrative Management Service. The Secretary-General wished simply to familiarize himself with the rationale underlying the changes proposed.

61. The Committee expressed the hope that the Secretary-General would continue his efforts in this matter and looked forward to receiving further information in this connexion. The view was also expressed that this question should be kept under constant consideration by the intergovernmental bodies concerned.

for submission to the Council at its fifty-third session, that would make possible a cost benefit analysis of the recurrent publications review by Mr. Macy. In particular, it was suggested that information on off-setting revenue from sales would be of assistance.

66. In the light of the discussion, the Committee recommends that the Council should decide on the institution of a biennial cycle for all subsidiary bodies. It also recommends that the Council should endorse the suggestion of the Secretary-General (see E/5102, para. 9) that intergovernmental bodies should, as a matter of routine, request the Secretariat to provide detailed time-tables for the production of reports before stipulating the sessions to which they are to be presented. Intergovernmental bodies should also be encouraged to establish priorities for reports to be submitted to them and to specify the volume of documentation envisaged.

67. With regard to the suggestions made by the Secretary-General in paragraph 13 of his report, the Committee requested the Secretariat to provide the Council, at its fifty-third session, with a consolidated list of General Assembly and Economic and Social Council decisions on improving documentation. In this connexion, it was suggested that the Committee should consider the question of appointing a special rapporteur to review the documentation submitted to the Council and its subsidiary bodies on a recurring basis with a view to their improvement or elimination where they are considered redundant.

68. Finally, the Committee recommends that the Council should at its fifty-third session review and take definitive action on the specific recommendations contained in the report of the Joint Inspection Unit on the Programme of Recurrent Publications of the United Nations (see A/8362, pp. 5-9).

ANNEX

Agenda of the twelfth session

1. Adoption of the agenda
2. Reports of the specialized agencies and the International Atomic Energy Agency
3. Report of the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination
4. Administrative and budgetary co-ordination of the United Nations with the specialized agencies and the International Atomic Energy Agency: report of ACABQ on general co-ordination matters
5. Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples by the specialized agencies and the international institutions associated with the United Nations
6. Question of the form of presentation of the United Nations budget
7. Work programme of the United Nations in the economic, social and human rights fields
8. Work programme performance in the economic, social and human rights fields in 1971: report of the Secretary-General
9. Re-organization of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs
10. Measures to improve the documentation of the Council
11. Reports of the Joint Inspection Unit: report of the Joint Inspection Unit on the programme of recurrent publications of the United Nations
12. Preparations for joint meetings of the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination and the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination
13. Adoption of the report of the Committee to the Council on its twelfth session

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