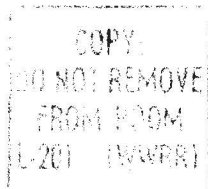


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COMMITTEE FOR PROGRAMME AND CO-ORDINATION

REPORT ON THE ELEVENTH SESSION

1 - 12 May 1972

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

SUPPLEMENT No. 8

UNITED NATIONS

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NOTE

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**E/5159/Rev.1
E/AC.51/61/Rev.1**

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I. ORGANIZATION OF THE SESSION

1. The Committee for Programme and Co-ordination (CPC) held its eleventh session at United Nations Headquarters from 1 to 12 May 1972. The summary records of the Committee's meetings during the eleventh session are contained in documents E/AC.51/SR.353-364.

2. The following members of the Committee were represented: Brazil, Bulgaria, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Colombia, Denmark, France, Guyana, India, Indonesia, Japan, Kenya, Malta, Nigeria, Pakistan, Sudan, Trinidad and Tobago, Uganda, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania and United States of America.

3. Belgium, Canada, Italy 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, and other senior officials of the United Nations Secretariat were also present.

5. At its opening meeting the Committee re-elected Mr. Samar Sen (India) as Chairman; Mr. Stefan Todorov (Bulgaria), Mr. Bernardo de Azevedo Brito (Brazil), and Mr. Peter Hansen (Denmark) as Vice-Chairmen and Mr. Izzeldin Hamid (Sudan) as Rapporteur. The Committee agreed that during Mr. Hamid's absence, Mr. Abdel Mageed A. Hassan (Sudan) would replace him as Rapporteur.

6. The agenda for the session, adopted by the Committee at its 354th meeting, is reproduced in annex I of the report.

II. TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE COMMITTEE ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

7. The Committee considered the item at its 354th, 355th, 356th, 357th and 361st meetings. It had before it the report of the Secretary-General (E/5116) on the terms of reference of the Committee on Science and Technology, prepared in response to Economic and Social Council resolution 1621 B (LI), as well as a statement by the Advisory Committee on the Application of Science and Technology to Development (E/5122).

8. In introducing the item, the Director for Science and Technology pointed out that in paragraph 24 of the Secretary-General's report there was a list of duties and responsibilities which the Secretary-General suggested should serve as a basis for discussion by the Council of the terms of reference for the Committee on Science and Technology. He noted that the first of those (paragraph 24 (a)) provided a generalized sense of purpose for the Committee, and the following subparagraphs more specific definitions within that framework. The Secretary-General's report had been prepared after consultation with UNCTAD, UNIDO, the specialized agencies and the IAEA and other appropriate bodies.

9. All representatives who took part in the debate expressed the wish that due emphasis should be placed in the work of the Committee on the crucial role of science and technology in ensuring the development of developing countries. In this connexion, many delegations expressed their disappointment at the fact that the suggested terms of reference did not provide that emphasis. They indicated that the work of the Committee should be clearly geared to the needs and requirements of developing countries, stressing in this respect that the Council, in its resolution 1621 B (LI), had specified that the Committee's purpose is the application of science and technology to development.

10. Many delegations questioned whether the Committee's responsibilities should be limited to the application of science and technology to development of the developing countries or whether the term "development" should be interpreted in a broader sense to take account of the problems relating to science and technology which were of concern to developed as well as to developing countries.

11. Many delegations pointed out that the suggested terms of reference were too diffuse and too vague and doubted whether they would serve the intentions of the Council in establishing the standing committee. In their opinion, the committee was intended as a body which, through policy analysis, would enhance the application of science and technology to development, including the identification of points of constraint and the promotion of the scientific and technological development of developing countries through, inter alia, the advancement of indigenous technology by increased research and development in those countries, so as to promote the process of self-generating growth. Some delegations also considered that these terms of reference reflected an undue preoccupation with environmental and related issues, for which appropriate machinery already exists or is likely to be established within the United Nations system.

12. A number of delegations were of the view that various aspects of science and technology in developed countries which are essentially different from those of

the developing countries are adequately being dealt with in other forums of the United Nations system and that developed countries have the resources to meet their needs.

13. Many delegations expressed the view that it would be unwise to fix too rigid a framework for the Committee and that it should have sufficient flexibility in its terms of reference to allow it to have control of its agenda and to establish an appropriate work programme within a general framework.

14. Some delegations expressed the opinion that it would be useful to invite the new Committee, as an expert body, for its views on the suggested terms of reference, at its first session, so as to enable the Council to reach a final decision on the matter at its fifty-third session. Other delegations pointed out that the item was already on the agenda of the Council at its fifty-second session, and therefore felt that CPC should not prejudge the Council's action on the matter. They also stressed, in view of the vital importance of the work of the new Committee, that the Council should not lose sight of the urgent need for its establishment.

15. Attention was drawn to the importance of the relationships between the Committee on Science and Technology and the Advisory Committee on the Application of Science and Technology to Development. An important function of the Committee on Science and Technology would be the review of Advisory Committee recommendations at governmental level. Some delegations felt that the relationship between the Committee, the Advisory Committee and other bodies in the system should be spelt out more precisely.

16. Many delegations referred to the co-ordination functions of the Committee on Science and Technology in its role as a subsidiary body of the Economic and Social Council. Opinions varied regarding the weight which should be attached to this function.

17. The proposal contained in paragraph 24 (g) of E/5116 that the Committee on Science and Technology should carry out review and appraisal of the attainment of the goals and objectives of the International Development Strategy for the Second United Nations Development Decade in the field of science and technology gave rise to some discussion. Some delegations felt this would be an infringement of the responsibilities of the Committee on Review and Appraisal, while others held that the Committee on Review and Appraisal would welcome assistance from the Committee on Science and Technology in the areas of the latter's competence.

18. Several specific points in relation to the modalities of operation of the Committee were raised. It was not stated explicitly in the Secretary-General's report that the Committee on Science and Technology would report to the General Assembly, through the Economic and Social Council, as was stated in Council resolution 1621 B (LI), paragraph 1. It was agreed that it was essential to make this point clear. The question of the frequency of meetings was also raised and some members were of the view that the Committee on Science and Technology should meet every two years in accordance with two unanimous decisions of the Council to the effect that its subsidiary bodies should meet biennially. It could meet in alternate years with the Committee on Natural Resources. Other delegations considered that more knowledge and experience were necessary before a decision could be taken on the periodicity of meetings.

19. In response to questions concerning the activities of the Committee on Science and Technology and the co-ordination of its activities with those of the organization of the United Nations system, representatives of the ILO, UNESCO, IAEA and UNCTAD made statements (E/AC.51/SR.355 and 361).

20. All the representatives of developing countries who participated in the debate considered the Secretary-General's report (E/5116) and the terms of reference suggested therein for the Committee on Science and Technology were not acceptable as a basis for further discussion. Those representatives felt that the terms of reference of the new Committee should be such as to enable it to deal with policy issues and take substantive action on matters related exclusively to the application of science and technology to the development of developing countries. They accordingly proposed that the suggested terms of reference should be revised before submission to the Council.

21. Many other delegations agreed that the document provided a suitable basis for discussion by the Council, although some of them had certain reservations to specific points.

III. ASSISTANCE TO DEVELOPING COUNTRIES IN THE FIELD OF STATISTICS

22. The Committee considered this item at its 357th and 358th meetings. In accordance with Council resolution 1566 (L), it had before it the Secretary-General's report (E/5099), prepared in co-operation with the specialized agencies, on the existing arrangements, future directions and steps envisaged for concerted action in technical assistance in statistics rendered by the organizations of the United Nations system.

23. The Committee took note of the useful information contained in the report. It was noted, however, that the information in the chapter on finances was inadequate, especially in respect of some of the specialized agencies. The Committee suggested that figures for 1971 should also be provided, at least orally, at the Council's fifty-second session.

24. Many representatives stressed the importance of concerted action by the United Nations system in the field of technical assistance in statistics called for in Council resolution 1566 (L) for the implementation of paragraph 78 of the International Development Strategy for the Second United Nations Development Decade. First, many developing countries, particularly the least developed among them, lacked a satisfactory economic and social infrastructure which could serve as a basis for effective planning. Improved statistics were of vital importance in efforts to improve their infrastructure. Secondly, during the first United Nations Development Decade the lack of quantitative data had made assessment very difficult, and the hope was expressed by some delegations that the envisaged concerted effort of the United Nations system would result in a marked improvement in the supply of data. Furthermore, it was stressed that the entire system of review and appraisal during the Second United Nations Development Decade depended in a fundamental way on the availability of adequate statistics which were to the extent possible, comparable and uniform in coverage. The United Nations system could play an important catalytic role in this exercise through increased assistance in this field.

25. Several members of the Committee stated their position of principle that technical assistance activities should be financed by voluntary contributions and not from the regular budget of the United Nations. Some representatives also considered that such technical assistance activities should not be financed from the regular budgets of the specialized agencies. Other representatives, however, doubted that programmes financed solely from special voluntary funds would be sufficient to meet the developing countries' needs for statistical assistance. They also pointed out that the proliferation of special purpose voluntary funds, to the extent that it adversely affected the expected and required growth in general purpose voluntary funds and the regular budget, would tend to distort the priorities set in the national plans of recipient countries.

26. Several members considered that the concerted effort in statistical assistance required increased outlays on the main types of assistance. However, some doubts were expressed that the concerted programme of technical assistance would require additional financing.

27. The Committee considered that the idea of an integrated five-year scheme of technical assistance in statistics was acceptable in principle and agreed that the fundamental aims and contents of such programmes should be carefully defined in advance. The Committee recommended that the Working Group of the Statistical Commission on International Statistical Programmes and Co-ordination should bear this requirement in mind in the proposed review and consultations regarding the integrated scheme.

28. The Committee considered that information concerning progress in technical assistance in statistics should be incorporated in the report to be furnished by the Secretary-General in connexion with the review and appraisal of the implementation of the International Development Strategy. Some representatives pointed out that the suggestion that the Secretary-General should submit a progress report (E/5099, para 25 (c)) would add to the proliferation of documentation. Others, noting that United Nations expenditures on statistical activities had diminished in recent years, considered the progress report essential and emphasized that it would not duplicate the report on review and appraisal.

29. Several members of the Committee stressed that in the international technical assistance programme for statistics, particular attention should be paid to the increasing demands of the developing countries for trained personnel in electronic data processing and the availability of appropriate facilities for the rapid processing of their economic and social data. In that connexion it was noted that regional and interregional activities, such as the provision of regional and interregional advisers, the organization of seminars, and workshops and other training designed to meet the needs of groups of countries, resulted in great benefits at minimum costs. In the view of many members of the Committee, there was an urgent need to expand such activities in the cases of modern electronic data processing.

30. The Committee emphasized that in the framework of country programming it was for Governments to set their own priorities. Requests for assistance should come from countries and therefore it was not necessary that, as suggested in paragraph 24 (a) of the report, the Council should call the attention of the Governing Council of UNDP to the needs in respect of statistical assistance. On the other hand, it was recognized that the country programmes did not cover most of the regional and interregional activities in technical assistance in statistics and that it would, therefore, be useful for the Council to call the attention of the Governing Council to needs in those areas.

31. The Committee noted the special needs for technical assistance in statistics of the least developed among the developing countries. For those, countries' assistance in identifying their needs for statistics and in the establishment of national statistical plans was a necessary first step in developing a suitable system of statistics. It was therefore essential that assistance to them in helping them to evaluate their statistical situation should be expanded. The fact that programme formulation and backstopping of technical assistance activities in statistics, which is largely financed from the regular budget, was of particular importance in assisting the least developed countries, should, in the view of some delegations, be taken into account in considering the budget.

32. The Committee noted that, at present, only one representative of a developing country was included in the Working Group of the Statistical Commission and that greater emphasis was being given in the programme of the Working Group to the statistical problems and requirements of the developing countries during the Second United Nations Development Decade. In view of that, several delegations considered it desirable that its membership be expanded from six to nine to permit the participation of three statistical experts from the developing countries.

33. Many delegations stated that they were not ready to take a position in the matter and would make their views known in the Council.

IV. ARRANGEMENTS FOR CONSIDERATION OF REPORTS OF THE
SPECIALIZED AGENCIES AND THE INTERNATIONAL ATOMIC
ENERGY AGENCY

34. The Committee discussed the item at its 359th meeting. In resolution 1642 (LI) the Council had instructed the Committee to recommend for approval by the Council at its fifty-second session the choice of the reports of two or three agencies which the Council might appropriately examine in depth, and to recommend procedures to be followed, having regard to the desirability of ensuring that the reports of all the agencies should receive detailed consideration over a five-year period.

35. The majority of the members of the Committee agreed that the reports of one large agency and of one or two small agencies could be examined in depth by the Council and considered that the reports of WHO and WMO could be chosen for examination at the Council's fifty-third session. Some delegations expressed the view that the reports of the ILO and UNESCO should also receive in-depth study.

36. The Committee decided that in view of the importance of the procedures to be followed for consideration of the reports over a five-year period, they might be established at a later date in the light of the Council's experience at its fifty-third session. It was noted that the new arrangements for in-depth study would not make it necessary for the specialized agencies to submit additional documentation to the Council.

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

37. The Committee considered this item at its 359th and 361st meetings. In the course of the discussion members of the Committee suggested the following topics for possible consideration at the Joint Meetings of CPC and ACC in June 1972:

- (a) Human environment, with particular reference to the institutional implications of the recommendations of the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment;
- (b) Regional structures;
- (c) Developments relating to the International Computing Centre (ICC);
- (d) Reform of the Economic and Social Council;
- (e) Developments relating to the establishment of the Office of the Disaster Relief Co-ordinator;
- (f) The future of the Joint Inspection Unit.

38. With regard to the developments relating to the ICC, the view was expressed that it would be preferable to focus attention on "software" - i.e. the development of information systems and the work of the Inter-organization Board for Information Systems and Related Activities (IOB) - rather than on questions of "hardware". As for the developments relating to the establishment of the Office of the Disaster Relief Co-ordinator, the Assistant Secretary-General for Inter-Agency Affairs noted that its inclusion might be somewhat premature, in view of the fact that the Disaster Relief Co-ordinator had only taken up his duties on 1 March 1972.

39. One delegation objected to the inclusion of the topic on the reform of the Economic and Social Council in the list and noted that it would be improper for the Joint Meetings to discuss the matter before the Council had acted on it. Some delegations considered it premature, at the present stage, and until the question listed under (d) had been discussed at the appropriate intergovernmental level, i.e. the Economic and Social Council, to discuss the matter from the co-ordination and administrative point of view with the participation of the members of ACC.

40. A number of delegations drew attention to the need to improve the conduct of the Joint Meetings, so as to achieve more substantive and business-like discussions. Some delegations considered that the usefulness of those meetings would be enhanced by extending the range of the issues discussed and, if necessary, their duration. Many delegations, on the other hand, stressed that with only two days available for these Joint Meetings, it was important that not more than two or three topics be discussed.

41. The Committee agreed to request its Chairman to communicate the list of topics suggested to the Secretary-General, as Chairman of ACC, and looked forward to receiving the Secretary-General's observations and suggestions at its twelfth session.

VI. QUESTION OF THE SPECIAL RAPORTEURS

42. After an exchange of views at the 360th and 361st meetings, the Committee agreed that the possibility of appointing special rapporteurs might be considered at a later stage when problems arose that seemed appropriate for study by a special rapporteur or rapporteurs. Some delegations expressed reservations regarding the institution of special rapporteurs and a suggestion was made that such tasks might more appropriately be assigned to the Joint Inspection Unit. It was, however, agreed that the idea of the institution of a special rapporteur or rapporteurs should be preserved until a specific need arose.

43. It was stressed that if special rapporteurs were appointed on a subsequent occasion, due account should be taken of the difficulties encountered by the rapporteurs appointed at the seventh session, and every effort should be made to eliminate those difficulties. The Committee should in particular specify their task more precisely and limit its scope so as to enable them to carry it out effectively.

VII. PENDING REPORTS OF THE JOINT INSPECTION UNIT

44. The Committee discussed the pending reports of the Joint Inspection Unit at its 357th, 359th and 360th meetings. It had before it a report by Mr. R. M. Macy on United Nations activities in Indonesia (JIU/REP/71/3) and related comments (E/5048 and Add.1-6) and observations by Sir Leonard Scopes on the work of the Office for Technical Co-operation in Burma (JIU/REP/71/1-2) and related comments (E/5049 and Add.1-2).

45. Representatives who took part in the discussion expressed their appreciation of the reports under discussion. The view was expressed that the reports were models of their kind and provided a valuable analysis of problems that were not confined to the countries visited. It was noted that the reports were, however, more pertinent to UNDP and the specialized agencies than to the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination. Some representatives indicated that they shared the disappointment of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions that the Administrator of UNDP had not commented on a number of the inspectors' recommendations. Attention was drawn to the preliminary observations of the Director-General of UNESCO (E/5048/Add.6) which commented in detail on the matters of concern to UNESCO in the report on United Nations activities in Indonesia. Interest was also expressed in the decision of the Executive Board of UNESCO (E/5048/Add.6, Part B) requesting the Director-General to present annually to the Executive Board a succinct document reporting on the follow-up activities on the major recommendations of the inspectors accepted by the Director-General and the Executive Board. A representative of the Office for Technical Co-operation provided information concerning the procurement difficulties mentioned in the report on the work of the Office for Technical Co-operation in Burma (E/5049).

46. The Committee took note with interest of the reports and agreed that the comments made in the course of the discussion should be brought to the attention of the administrations concerned.

VIII. QUESTION OF THE JOINT INSPECTION UNIT

47. In response to General Assembly resolution 2735 A (XIV), paragraph 3, in which the General Assembly decided to review the question of the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) at its twenty-seventh session and, for that purpose, requested the views of, among others, the Economic and Social Council and the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination, the Committee held an exchange of views on the subject at its 360th and 361st meetings. The work programme of the Joint Inspection Unit for 1972 (A/C.5/L.1078) was made available to the Committee. At the request of the representative of the United States, the document (A/8658) which contained the suggestions of the United States for strengthening inspection and evaluation within the United Nations system was circulated. Several delegations expressed the view that the document was useful as a basis for further discussion of this question during the current year.

48. At the conclusion of the discussion, the Committee agreed that JIU had done good work and had justified its existence. It was noted that some reports had provided the basis for major reforms in the United Nations. In that connexion, a number of representatives referred to 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).

49. The Committee further agreed that the United Nations system should continue to benefit from the services of the Joint Inspection Unit. There was, and would continue to be, a need for independent, objective reports appraising shortcomings and diagnosing, and suggesting possible cures for, specific problems. The Committee considered that the mandate of JIU should be reviewed and revised in the light of experience. A number of suggestions were made concerning the organization of the Unit's work and possible measures to strengthen it. It was stressed that any improvements made should not impair the Unit's independence. The Committee noted that the Governing Body of the International Labour Office had taken a decision concerning the continuation of the Unit.

50. The Committee also expressed concern that recommendations of JIU should be thoroughly examined and, where appropriate, implemented by the organizations of the United Nations system. The majority of members endorsed the suggestion that the Secretary-General, as Chairman of the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination, should be requested to undertake a systematic review of follow-up action on the recommendations of the Joint Inspection Unit. Some delegations expressed the hope that such a report could be prepared in time for consideration by the General Assembly at its twenty-seventh session so that members might evaluate the impact of JIU on the United Nations system since its inception. One member drew attention to the possible text of the suggested review and stressed that a full statement of the financial and administrative implications of the suggestion should be provided when the matter was considered by the Council.

IX. QUESTION OF THE FORM OF PRESENTATION OF THE UNITED
NATIONS BUDGET, AND SELECTED PROGRAMME AREAS

51. Because the documentation, other than the Committee and commission reports, was not available, the Committee decided at its 362nd meeting to defer consideration of items 3 and 4 of its agenda to its twelfth session, provided the pertinent documentation was submitted in good time. The Committee expressed disappointment and concern at the failure to prepare the required documentation in time for consideration by the Committee at its eleventh session. The Committee noted the statement by the Secretary at the 363rd meeting that the document was expected to be distributed by 17 May.

X. PROVISIONAL AGENDA FOR THE TWELFTH SESSION

52. At its 363rd meeting, the Committee discussed the provisional agenda for its twelfth session, on the basis of the draft provisional agenda contained in document E/AC.51/59, and agreed upon the text reproduced in Annex II to the present report. It was noted that the subject matter of item 4 of the agenda for the eleventh session, Selected programme areas, would be included under item 7 of the provisional agenda for the twelfth session: Work programme of the United Nations in the ~~eeene~~ economic, social and human rights fields.

ANNEXES

Annex I

AGENDA OF THE ELEVENTH SESSION

1. Election of officers for 1972
2. Adoption of the agenda for the eleventh session
3. Question of the form of presentation of the United Nations budget
4. Selected programme areas
 - (a) Human settlements
 - (b) Population
 - (c) Natural resources
5. Assistance to developing countries in the field of statistics: report of the Secretary-General
6. Question of the Special Rapporteurs
7. Terms of reference of the Committee on Science and Technology: report of the Secretary-General
8. Arrangements for consideration of reports of the specialized agencies and the IAEA
9. Preparations for joint meetings of the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination and the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination
10. Reports of the Joint Inspection Unit
 - (a) Pending reports
 - (b) Question of the Joint Inspection Unit
11. Provisional agenda for the twelfth session
12. Adoption of the report of the Committee on its eleventh session to the Council

Annex II

PROVISIONAL AGENDA FOR 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 IAEA: 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. Reorganization of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs
10. Tourism
11. Measures to improve the documentation of the Council
12. Study on regional structures
13. Reports of the Joint Inspection Unit: report of the Joint Inspection Unit on the programme of recurrent publications of the United Nations
14. Adoption of the report of the Committee to the Council on its twelfth session

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