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RESTRUCTURING AND REVITALIZATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS
IN THE ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND RELATED FIELDS

Report of the Secretary-General

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. In the annex to General Assembly resolution 45/264 of 13 May 1991 on the restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations in the economic, social and related fields, the Secretary-General was requested to submit an annual progress report to the General Assembly, starting with its forty-seventh session, on the implementation of the result of the restructuring and revitalization process in the economic, social and related fields. He was requested further to provide information on any recommendation agreed upon which had not been implemented as scheduled. In the same annex, the Secretary-General was requested to review the structure of the Secretariat in the economic, social and related fields and to streamline Secretariat operations in those fields in order to reinforce the restructuring and revitalization process directed by the Assembly and to report thereon, with recommendations as appropriate, to the Assembly at its forty-seventh session. In paragraph 2 of the same resolution, the Secretary-General was requested to implement the recommendations addressed to him and to report thereon.

2. The General Assembly also decided to conduct a review at its forty-seventh session of ways of enhancing the complementarity between the work of the Economic and Social Council and that of the Assembly in accordance with Article 60 of the Charter of the United Nations. The General Assembly is due to conduct that review in the context of the agenda item on restructuring and revitalization. The Secretary-General was not requested by the Assembly to submit a report on the issue of complementarity to the Assembly.

3. In its resolution 46/235 of 13 April 1992, the General Assembly took a number of actions to enhance the effective and efficient functioning of the United Nations system in the economic, social and related fields. In the annex to the resolution, the Assembly stated that the effectiveness of the regional commissions should be strengthened and requested the commissions to provide recommendations towards this end for consideration by the Assembly at its forty-seventh session. In paragraph 2 of the same resolution, it requested the Secretary-General to implement the restructuring measures as contained in the annex to the resolution and to report to the Assembly at its forty-seventh session on the action he has taken.

4. A number of issues relevant to the implementation of resolution 45/264 and related General Assembly resolutions were dealt with by the Secretary-General in his report to the Economic and Social Council at its substantive session of 1992 on the subject of revitalization of the Economic and Social Council, 1/ including the continued implementation of the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly as well as Economic and Social Council resolutions 1988/77 of 29 July 1988, 1989/114 of 28 July 1989, 1990/69 of 27 July 1990 and Council decision 1990/205 of 9 February 1990.

5. The present report has been organized on the basis of the format of the annex to General Assembly resolution 45/264.

II. MEASURES FOR THE RESTRUCTURING AND REVITALIZATION OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

6. In paragraph 5 (b) of the annex to resolution 45/264, the General Assembly decided that the Economic and Social Council should hold an organizational session not to exceed four days in New York in early February to determine its annual agenda and related organizational matters, taking into account the relevant provisions of the resolutions and decision mentioned in paragraph 4 above, particularly on the themes to be discussed in the high-level segment. The organizational session is also to select themes for the coordination segment, taking into account, *inter alia*, the recommendations of the joint meetings of the Committee for Programme and Coordination (CPC) and the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC). Moreover, confirmation of representatives on the functional commissions takes place during the organizational session. Elections, appointments and confirmations are to take place during a resumed organizational session of one or two days at the end of April.

7. At the 1992 organizational session of the Economic and Social Council, which took place from 5 to 7 February, the Council conducted extensive informal consultations on the agenda before it. As a result, the Council needed to hold only two formal meetings to dispose of its agenda. The Council, having taken into account the recommendations of the joint meetings of CPC and ACC of 1991, selected two themes for the coordination segment, namely, eradication of poverty and support to vulnerable groups, including assistance during the implementation of structural adjustment programmes, and the prevention and control of human immunodeficiency virus/acquired immune deficiency syndrome (HIV/AIDS) and programmes addressed to the mitigation of its negative socio-economic consequences. On 6 February, the Council confirmed the nominations by their Governments of the representatives on functional commissions of the Council and, exceptionally, elected 40 Member States to the new Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, 13 new Member States to the enlarged Commission on Narcotic Drugs and 6 new Member States to the Committee on Food Aid Policies and Programmes. Regular elections, appointments and confirmations took place at the Council's resumed organizational session, which was held on 29 and 30 April 1992.

8. A number of issues have emerged affecting the full implementation of these recommendations. In this regard, it may be noted that with the establishment of a coordination segment by the Council, a high-level dialogue between the executive heads of the agencies and Member States now takes place, in that context, on a regular basis. It would, therefore, seem appropriate to review the arrangements for the ACC/CPC Joint Meetings which might now be more appropriately held at the senior official level. Also, the Secretary-General remains concerned at the arrangement by which the themes for the coordination segment are selected in the same year that the Council will consider them. In his previously cited report to the Economic and Social Council, the Secretary-General stated his belief that:

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"it would be useful to maintain a multi-year work programme in respect of themes for the coordination segment. General Assembly resolution 45/264 anticipates that discussions on the themes should focus attention on the activities of the United Nations system in selected economic and social areas, taking into account the report of the Secretary-General as Chairman of ACC, which should contain a system-wide assessment of the status of coordination with regard to the themes and include recommendations as appropriate. The Secretary-General has been constrained in preparing the system-wide assessments on the selected coordination themes for 1992 owing to the relatively short time between the organizational session of the Council at the beginning of February 1992, at which time the Council selected the themes, and the commencement of the substantive session of the Council at the end of June 1992. The limited time placed at his disposal has made it difficult to engage in system-wide collection and analysis of data and consultations with the specialized agencies or in the identification of recommendations, which the Council would expect such reports to contain. As it is, the reports have not been made available six weeks or sufficiently before the opening of the Council, which is a matter for regret. The Secretary-General would therefore wish to suggest to the Council that it retain a multi-year work programme of themes on a roll-over basis with respect to the discussions to take place in the coordination segment of the Council." 2/

The Secretary-General wishes to take this opportunity to reiterate his views on the matter.

9. Experience has also suggested that it is not practical to confine elections, appointments and confirmations to a resumed organizational session at the end of April. This is due to the fact that in numerous instances regional groups have not been in a position to supply a full slate of candidates for particular subsidiary bodies at the time of the elections in April. If this provision is to be strictly maintained, it would mean that a number of subsidiary bodies of the Council would meet in the spring of 1993, prior to the resumed organizational session of 1993, with many of their seats unfilled. Accordingly, the Secretary-General arranged to also hold elections, appointments and confirmations at the organizational and at the substantive sessions of the Council of 1992. The Secretary-General plans to propose that the Council similarly dispose of postponed elections, appointments and confirmations at its organizational session of February 1993.

10. In paragraph 5 (c) of the annex to resolution 45/264, the General Assembly mandated one substantive session of the Economic and Social Council of four to five weeks to take place in alternate years in New York and Geneva between May and July. The substantive session of the Council of 1992 took place from 29 June to 30 July. It should be noted that some delegations continue to express a preference to hold the session earlier in the year. The Secretary-General believes that that would be practical only if significant adjustments to the calendar of conferences could be effected. At present the subsidiary bodies of the Council, as well as the Governing Council of the

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United Nations Development Programme and the Executive Board of the United Nations Children's Fund, meet between February and June of each year. (A suitable time will have to be found in the future for the meetings of the proposed Commission for Sustainable Development in that same time span.) Bearing in mind the large number of bodies that have to meet (some 14 subsidiary bodies in the first four months of 1993), it is simply not possible to fit their meetings into the present calendar and also allow the Council to meet in May with the reports of subsidiary bodies ready for the Council's consideration. Furthermore, a May starting time for the Council will not allow sufficient time for preparation of reports being submitted to the high-level and coordination segments of the Council unless the calendar for deciding on the themes for these two segments is adjusted as well.

III. HIGH-LEVEL SEGMENT

11. In paragraph 5 (d) (i) of the annex to its resolution 45/264, the Assembly decided that a high-level segment of the Council of four days open to all Member States in accordance with Article 69 of the Charter, with ministerial participation, should be devoted to "the consideration of one or more major economic and/or social policy themes to be determined at the organizational session, taking into account the Economic and Social Council multi-year work programme; adequate Secretariat preparation, including, in particular, one comprehensive background document for each theme; debate to follow an integrated and interdisciplinary approach; heads of the relevant organizations, agencies and other organs to participate actively".

12. The Council's first experiment with the holding of a high-level segment is generally regarded as having been successful. The Secretary-General appreciated the opportunity which it afforded for a useful exchange of views with members of the Council in the light of his report on "Enhancing international cooperation for development: the role of the United Nations system", 3/ particularly its foreword. Delegations prepared thoroughly for the session. A number of Ministers and other senior officials from capitals attended the high-level segment.

13. In order to enhance further the value of the high-level segment, it may well be necessary to organize the segment in such a way that less time is devoted to formal statements and more time employed to genuine debate, perhaps in an informal setting. Statements could be circulated in advance and the time allocated for the delivery of formal statements thereby reduced. It would also seem best to continue to limit the high-level segment to one theme so as to permit proper preparation and clear focus, while ensuring that high-level officials from capitals will remain for the duration of the segment. However, there will need to be a broadening of the geographic regions from which the Ministers come if the high-level segment is to continue to attract ministerial participation. At the high-level segment of this year, it was noteworthy that the preponderance of Ministers participating came from the industrialized countries.

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14. In paragraph 5 (d) (i) of the annex to resolution 45/264, the General Assembly further stated that a one-day policy dialogue and discussion on important developments in the world economy and international economic cooperation should be held annually. In this context, heads of multilateral financial and trade institutions of the United Nations system were invited to participate actively in the dialogue and discussion on matters of mutual interest with a view to building areas of understanding.

15. The one-day policy dialogue and discussion for 1992 was arranged and conducted in accordance with the provisions of the resolution. The one-day event met the intent of the resolution and allowed for an important and stimulating dialogue on the main issues relating to macroeconomic policy coordination. The executive heads of the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development were all present for the discussion and participated actively. A point for consideration in the future is whether a specific theme or themes for the one-day policy dialogue should be agreed upon in advance in order to achieve a better focus discussion.

16. In paragraph 5 (d) (i) of the annex to resolution 45/264, the Assembly also stated that the main features of the deliberations of the high-level segment would be presented to the Economic and Social Council by its President in the form of a summary, which would be incorporated in its final report. (For the 1992 summary of the President, see A/47/3, chap. II, para. 30.) It is also proposed that the deliberations of the high-level segment should provide political impetus for building areas of convergence and facilitate the consideration of the issues in question, including the emergence of new recommendations on the issues, in the relevant forums.

17. Following the conclusion of the high-level segment and in accordance with the relevant provision in the resolution, the President of the Economic and Social Council presented a summary on the work of the high-level segment. The summary was received with general satisfaction by the members of the Council. It would appear that the summary also provided "political impetus for building areas for convergence" and facilitated "the consideration of the issues in question, including the emergence of new recommendations on the issues", as anticipated in General Assembly resolution 45/264. Emerging from the deliberations was a consensus that the subject of the role of the United Nations system in enhancing economic cooperation for development needed to be further pursued, as a result of which the President was able to announce the establishment of the Ad Hoc Open-Ended Working Group to continue deliberations on the matter.

IV. COORDINATION SEGMENT

18. In accordance with the requirements of General Assembly resolution 45/264, the Secretary-General presented two reports on system-wide coordination themes for consideration by the Economic and Social Council in its coordination segment. These reports were "Policies and activities

relating to assistance in the eradication of poverty and support to vulnerable groups, including assistance during the implementation of structural adjustment programmes" 4/ and "Prevention and control of HIV/AIDS and programmes addressed to the mitigation of its negative socio-economic consequences" 5/. Some executive heads personally addressed the coordination segment. The reports and statements stimulated a lively discussion in the Council, which took place, for the most part, in an informal setting and allowed for a useful and candid exchange of views between members of the Council and representatives of organizations of the United Nations system.

19. There is still room for improvement in the organization of the coordination segment if the recommendations of resolution 45/264 are to be fully implemented. The Economic and Social Council did not adopt formal recommendations as a result of the discussions in the coordination segment. The President on his own authority made statements on both the coordination themes. While the statements contained recommendations in a number of areas which will be forwarded to the governing bodies of the organizations of the United Nations system for review, members of the Council made clear that the statement did not reflect a formal conclusion of the Council. Consequently, the outcome of the coordination segment was not as authoritative as it might otherwise have been.

V. OPERATIONAL ACTIVITIES SEGMENT

20. The operational activities segment did not result in policy recommendations on the coordination of operational activities on a system-wide basis as envisaged in resolution 45/264. One positive outcome of the segment, none the less, was the stimulating informal exchange of views between members of the Council and senior officials from the United Nations organizations responsible for operational activities.

21. The outcome of the operational activities segment confirms the comment made in the Secretary-General's report on the revitalization of the Economic and Social Council that "the decision to provide a specific institutional focus for considering operational activities through the establishment of an operational activities segment of the Council is an indication that the Council is still seeking ways and means to best fulfil its responsibilities in this area. More thought may yet need to be given by the Council as to how to strengthen its institutional capacity to deal with the issue of operational activities for development of the United Nations system". 6/ In this context, reference may also be made to a number of proposals made by individual delegations or groups of delegations at the high-level segment of the Council regarding the role of the Council vis-à-vis operational activities.

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VI. COMMITTEE SEGMENT

22. The experience of the committee segment of the Council of 1992 suggests strongly that further consideration needs to be given to the agenda before the Economic and Social Committees of the Council as well as to their methods of work. There is undoubtedly a degree of justified frustration among members about whether it is necessary to repeat discussions on the same issues on four separate occasions during the same calendar year, namely: (a) during the session of the particular subsidiary body of the Council; (b) during the sessional committee concerned; (c) at the level of the plenary of the Council itself; and (d) during the General Assembly. In this regard, it would appear beneficial for the Economic and Social Council to agree to eliminate certain levels of discussion on the same subject where repetition of discussion does not affect the eventual result to any serious degree. One possibility would be to eliminate the committee segment and to discuss all agenda items in the plenary of the Council itself. The potential drawback to this solution is that the Council's substantive session may have to be extended to eight weeks for the plenary to consider all the items before it, which might not necessarily prove to be productive. Any solution to the problem, whether through the elimination of the committee segment or other means, should be accompanied by an overall review by the Council of its agenda. The Council could decide, for example, to remove items which are duplicative of the agenda of the General Assembly.

VII. SUBSIDIARY MACHINERY IN THE ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND RELATED FIELDS

23. In paragraph 6 (3) of the annex to resolution 45/264, the General Assembly mandated "a review at the forty-sixth session of the General Assembly of the subsidiary bodies of the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly". In accordance with that resolution, the Assembly reviewed this question at its forty-sixth session and adopted resolution 46/235 entitled "Restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations in the economic, social and related fields". In that resolution, the Secretary-General was requested to implement restructuring measures concerning subsidiary bodies identified for restructuring and revitalization and to report to the General Assembly at its forty-seventh session on the action he has taken.

24. The General Assembly, in resolution 46/235, proposed, *inter alia*, that the Intergovernmental Committee on Science and Technology for Development and the Committee on the Development and Utilization of New and Renewable Sources of Energy (both subsidiary bodies of the Assembly), and the Committee on Natural Resources (a subsidiary body of the Economic and Social Council) would be discontinued. The authority to discontinue the Intergovernmental Committee on Science and Technology for Development and the Committee on the Development and Utilization of New and Renewable Sources of Energy was contained in resolution 46/235. With regard to the Committee on Natural Resources, the Secretary-General brought this recommendation to the attention of the Council at its resumed organizational session of February 1992, as a result of which

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the Council, by decision 1992/218 of 30 April 1992, abolished the Committee. Assembly resolution 46/235 also mandated the establishment by the Council of new bodies in the fields of science and technology for development, natural resources and the development and utilization of new and renewable sources of energy and energy for development. Accordingly, the Secretary-General brought these recommendations to the attention of the Council at its resumed organizational session of 1992, as a result of which the Council, by its decision 1992/218, formally established a Commission on Science and Technology for Development, a Committee on Natural Resources and a Committee on New and Renewable Sources of Energy and on Energy for Development. At its substantive session of 1992, the Council agreed on the terms of reference of the new bodies and decided on the specific regional allocation of seats for each of the bodies (decision 1992/222 of 22 May 1992). During the substantive session of 1992, the Council held elections for membership in the new bodies.

VIII. REGIONAL COMMISSIONS

25. In the annex to resolution 46/235, the General Assembly determined, *inter alia*, that the regional commissions should be enabled fully to play their role under the authority of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council and that their effectiveness should be strengthened. In this context, the regional commissions were requested to provide recommendations for consideration by the General Assembly at its forty-seventh session. The recommendations which have been developed in this regard are contained in the annex to the present document.

IX. SECRETARIAT

26. Issues concerning the review of the structure of the Secretariat in the economic, social and related fields and the streamlining of Secretariat operations referred to in General Assembly resolution 45/264 were addressed in the Secretary-General's foreword to his report to the Economic and Social Council. 7/ Experience with the first phase of reorganization was being reviewed, while steps were being initiated to extend the reform effort to other parts of the economic and social sectors of the Organization. The document pointed out that a main consideration in the forthcoming phases of the reorganization - which will include adjustments, as required, in the new structures put in place in the first phase - will be the introduction of a more effective Organization-wide distribution of responsibilities and a better balance between functions performed at Headquarters and those that can best be carried out by the regional commissions and the United Nations programmes, based on clear priorities and a well-articulated sense of the comparative advantage of each. 8/

27. The changes introduced in the first phase of restructuring, including the consolidation of the various economic and social units of the Secretariat in New York into a single Department of Economic and Social Development, have been incorporated in the revised estimates presented to the General Assembly

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(A/C.5/47/2 and Corr.1). In addition, the Secretary-General is to report to the Assembly at its current session on institutional arrangements within the Secretariat for the follow-up to the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development. The Secretary-General will, in that context, also inform the Assembly of the further measures he intends to introduce to streamline structures and achieve greater coherence and impact of Secretariat activities in support of development in line with the objectives of General Assembly resolution 45/264.

Notes

- 1/ E/1992/86.
- 2/ Ibid., para. 6.
- 3/ E/1992/82 and Add.1.
- 4/ E/1992/47.
- 5/ E/1992/67.
- 6/ E/1992/86, para. 13.
- 7/ E/1992/82/Add.1.
- 8/ Ibid., para. 31.

ANNEX

Recommendations of the regional commissions on the implementation
of General Assembly resolution 46/235

1. In paragraph 6 of the annex to its resolution 46/235 of 13 April 1992 on the restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations in the economic, social and related fields, the General Assembly called for the regional commissions to be enabled fully to play their role under the authority of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council and for the strengthening of their effectiveness. It also requested the regional commissions, in this context, to provide recommendations for consideration by the General Assembly at its forty-seventh session.

2. Each of the five regional commissions has responded to this request by the General Assembly as follows:

(a) ECE: The Economic Commission for Europe adopted, at a special session on 5 October 1992, resolution 1 (1992-S) on restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations in the economic, social and related fields: Strengthening the role and functions of the regional commissions, particularly the Economic Commission for Europe;

(b) ESCAP: The Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, through its resolution 48/12 of 23 April 1992, directed the Advisory Committee of Permanent Representatives and Other Representatives Designated by Members of the Commission (ACPR) to seek the views of members and associate members and to draft a response to the General Assembly. ACPR, on 21 September 1992, agreed to its response to General Assembly resolution 46/235 on restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations in the economic, social and related fields;

(c) ECLAC: The Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean adopted, on 15 April 1992, resolution 520 (XXIV) on restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations in the economic and social fields: role and functions of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean;

(d) ECA: The Conference of Ministers of the Economic Commission for Africa adopted, on 22 April 1992, resolution 728 (XXVII) on the restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations in the economic and social fields: strengthening the role and functions of the regional commissions, and resolution 726 (XXVII) on strengthening the Economic Commission for Africa to face Africa's development challenges in the 1990s;

(e) ESCWA: The Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia adopted, on 2 September 1992, resolution 191 (XVI) on the restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations in the economic, social and related fields.

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3. The texts of the above resolutions and responses are reproduced below.

I. RESOLUTION 1 (1992-S) ENTITLED "RESTRUCTURING AND REVITALIZATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS IN THE ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND RELATED FIELDS: STRENGTHENING THE ROLE AND FUNCTIONS OF THE REGIONAL COMMISSIONS, PARTICULARLY THE ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE", ADOPTED BY THE ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE ON 5 OCTOBER 1992

The Economic Commission for Europe,

Recalling General Assembly resolution 46/235 of 13 April 1992 on the restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations in the economic, social and related fields, and noting in its paragraph 6 that the regional commissions are requested to provide recommendations, for consideration by the General Assembly at its forty-seventh session, on strengthening their effectiveness,

Bearing in mind its mandate, for raising the level of European economic activity and for maintaining and strengthening the economic relations of the European countries both among themselves and with other countries of the world, and conscious of its role as an instrument for the implementation of the principles and aims of the United Nations Charter at the regional level,

Noting that the ECE membership has increased from 34 in 1990 to 43 at the present time, among them a considerable number of newly independent States, a further increase being likely to occur,

Aware that this recent development adds a new dimension to the Commission and has placed new and urgent demands on ECE and its secretariat, in terms of economic cooperation and assistance, in particular in the context of the transition process,

Convinced that the strengthening of cooperation in the economic and related fields within the framework of ECE constitutes a major contribution from the United Nations system to the efforts presently undertaken in the region to assist countries in their transition to market economies and their integration into the world economy, and represents an important contribution to global economic and social development,

Taking into account the increased efforts made by the international community to assist the economies in transition by actions taken in other fora such as, among others, IMF, IBRD, EBRD, OECD and the G24,

Noting the recognition by the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe in its Charter of Paris for a New Europe (November 1990) and in its Helsinki Summit Declaration and Decisions (July 1992) of "a key role" to be played by ECE, together with EBRD and OECD, in the construction of a new Europe,

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Convinced of the necessity to ensure, in response to Economic and Social Council decision 1992/43, that all ECE member States can participate fully and effectively in the work of the Commission,

1. Draws the attention of the General Assembly to the following elements:

(a) The comparative advantages of ECE as a multilateral forum for all-European cooperation in the economic and related fields, with an important trans-Atlantic dimension, where all member States participate on an equal footing; the longevity of cooperation among all countries of ECE region, which has over the years provided ECE with a profound knowledge of those countries, their problems and their priorities; its well-established intergovernmental machinery and network of government contacts; and its capacity for an interdisciplinary approach and for the adaptation of its programme of work;

(b) The important contribution made by ECE to the process of restructuring and the revitalization of the regional commissions of the United Nations, called for in General Assembly resolutions 32/197 and 45/264, through its decisions O (45) and P (45) adopted, on 14 December 1990, in response to the rapid and radical changes in the region after an in-depth review of its programme and methods of work, namely by establishing five priority areas of work and by streamlining the structure and the activities of the Commission;

(c) The necessity to strengthen the cooperation and the coordination of activities between ECE and other international organizations, institutions and programmes both within and outside the United Nations system in order to avoid duplication of work and to ensure optimal use of resources;

2. Stresses:

(a) The concern of the ECE member States regarding the timely provision of adequate resources for servicing of the priority sectors of ECE, requested in its decision B (47), and hindered by the temporary suspension of external recruitment; the protracted procedure for the appointment of staff; and delays in the allotment in ECE's budgetary allocation;

(b) The importance of a speedy and effective implementation of the ECE programme in favour of the countries in transition initiated by ECE decisions D (45), O (45) and D (47), and the need to explore ways and means of releasing and obtaining adequate resources for this programme;

3. Recommends, in the light of the experience gained by ECE since its internal restructuring and revitalization process started in December 1990 and in order to continue in the future to fulfil efficiently its mandate, that the following measures should be taken:

(a) As recommended in paragraph 26, section IV, of the annex to Assembly resolution 32/197, the necessary authority should be delegated from

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Headquarters to ECE and adequate budgetary and financial provision should be made to enable ECE to implement its mandated programme of work and to discharge its responsibility for coordination and cooperation at the regional level within the United Nations system, in close cooperation with the efforts undertaken by other relevant international bodies;

(b) In order to avoid duplication of work under way in ECE by other United Nations programmes and to ensure a more rational use of available resources, action should be taken to achieve a more effective distribution of responsibilities and a better balance of functions between ECE, on the one hand, and Headquarters and global programmes outside Headquarters, on the other hand;

(c) The results of ECE activities should continue to constitute regional inputs for global policy-making processes and conferences of the competent United Nations organs, and ECE should be invited to participate fully in the regional implementation of the relevant policy and programme decisions taken by those organs;

(d) The results of ECE's programme and operational project activities, wherever appropriate, should continue to be made available for the benefit of the countries of the other regions, by means of a strengthened outreach programme, such as UN/EDIFACT, and interregional cooperation with the other regional commissions and the global programmes of the United Nations;

4. Also recommends that the activities undertaken at the regional level, in the economic, social and related fields, by relevant United Nations organs, be regularly and efficiently evaluated, in order to reach a high quality of work and an efficient use of available resources;

5. Decides to transmit this resolution to the forty-seventh session of the General Assembly of the United Nations as a contribution of ECE for the restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations in the economic, social and related fields being currently undertaken by the General Assembly.

II. RESPONSE OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMISSION FOR ASIA
AND THE PACIFIC TO GENERAL ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION 46/235 ON
RESTRUCTURING AND REVITALIZATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS
IN THE ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND RELATED FIELDS

At its forty-eighth session held at Beijing in April 1992, the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific took note of General Assembly resolution 46/235 on restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations in the economic, social and related fields. It focused its discussion on paragraph 6 of the annex to that resolution, in which the regional commissions were requested to provide recommendations for consideration by the General Assembly at its forty-seventh session.

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In view of the need for comprehensive study, the Commission, through its resolution 48/12, directed the Advisory Committee of Permanent Representatives and Other Representatives Designated by Members of the Commission (ACPR) to seek the views of members and associate members and to draft a response to the General Assembly. ACPR, after receiving responses to the letter sent by the Executive Secretary on its behalf, agreed to the points set out below.

1. Members and associate members of the Commission noted that the effectiveness of the regional commissions, particularly those located in developing countries, should be strengthened in terms of their activities and participation in the operational activities of the United Nations system.

2. In the restructuring and revitalization process under way in the economic and social fields of the United Nations, due consideration should be accorded to the usefulness of the regional, multidisciplinary and multisectoral approach which has characterized the work of the Commission.

3. Strengthening the participation of regional commissions in the United Nations system would reflect their advantageous position in identifying common approaches and translating these into concrete proposals for all the parties concerned. They can also make a positive contribution in promoting constructive dialogue within the United Nations system regarding economic and social development issues.

4. The process of strengthening regional commissions and improving their responsiveness to the needs of members and associate members can be enhanced through further consensus-building, broad democratic participation, and transparency in all decision-making processes. The importance of political will and commitment in enhancing international cooperation, particularly in the United Nations system, should also be noted.

5. ESCAP members and associate members wish to emphasize to the General Assembly that the recent experience of the Commission in agreeing to, and commencing the implementation of, a new intergovernmental structure subsidiary to the Commission represented an important contribution to both the restructuring in the ESCAP region and the United Nations system as a whole.

6. The new thematic approach will, in the view of ESCAP members and associate members, considerably improve the responsiveness of the Commission to the needs of members and associate members and therefore contribute to the revitalization of the United Nations. They also believe that this restructuring will contribute to an effective, as well as accountable and transparent, utilization of resources in achieving the goals of the Commission.

7. ESCAP members and associate members recognize that the strengthening of the role of the regional commissions must be accomplished despite zero growth in the regular budget of the United Nations, and must reflect the overall objective of an efficient organization, which underlies the restructuring and revitalization process.

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8. The members and associate members of ESCAP, therefore, recommend that in the restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations in the economic, social and related fields being undertaken by the General Assembly, the desirability of the following should be considered:

(a) Increased decentralization in the execution of activities in the new organizational structure of the United Nations, based on the concept that endeavours of the Organization in these fields can be carried out more efficiently and effectively at the regional and subregional levels;

(b) Enhanced access by the Commission to more of the resources under the regular programme of technical cooperation of the United Nations available under section 12 of its programme budget; and increased funding from programmes and agencies of the United Nations system for the regional technical cooperation activities of the Commission;

(c) Revised allocation to ESCAP of regular budget resources taking into account the region's share of the world population, geographical scope, expanding membership, considerable economic and social diversity, and active Commission programming, and efforts to restructure work programmes based on a thematic approach;

(d) Improved effectiveness of the technical cooperation activities provided by the United Nations to countries, through strengthening the technical and financial capacity of the Commission to undertake relevant and balanced operational activities and technical cooperation projects at the regional and subregional levels in Asia and the Pacific. The Commission, by virtue of its mandate and in the light of its structural reorientation, is in a better position to respond effectively to the changing needs of the region;

(e) Improved coordination and Secretariat-wide coherence by reinforcing the activities of the regional commissions aimed at mutually supporting the activities of the specialized agencies of the United Nations system in their respective regions through, inter alia, intensifying joint activities, programming exercises and coordinating meetings;

(f) Clearly divided responsibilities between the regional commissions and the funding agencies of the United Nations on regional and subregional technical cooperation activities. In view of the decision of the Governing Council of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to reduce the UNDP and United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) allocations for regional IPFs (indicative planning figures), regional and subregional programmes must be prioritized to avoid costly duplication, in the course of project formulation and subsequent implementation and monitoring;

(g) Mandating ESCAP as the primary executing agency for regional and subregional programmes, within the United Nations system, so as to centralize coordination tasks and reduce costs. Regional commissions have been designated as the lead coordinators of inter-agency functions and regional activities, and as the main general economic and social development centres

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within the United Nations system for their respective regions for coordination at the regional and subregional levels. This mandate should not prevent the regional commissions from inviting other United Nations funding agencies to function as team leaders for specific programmes, when appropriate;

(h) Strengthening of the professional capacity of the Commission, so as to improve the technical response of ESCAP to specific needs and requests of developing countries, particularly the least developed, land-locked developing and island developing countries and in relation to new issues identified by the Commission of which transitional disadvantaged economies are examples;

(i) Establishing more pragmatic and flexible rules relating to the provision of non-reimbursable loan experts at the regional level so as to increase the will of donor countries to raise the level and importance of their contributions in kind in response to priority needs;

(j) With a view to strengthening and increasing the effectiveness of regional institutions under the auspices of ESCAP, consideration should be given to providing financial support from the United Nations regular budget;

(k) Broader participation in Commission sessions and regional intergovernmental meetings from countries facing onerous travel expenses through the provision of special travel funds from the regular budget for land-locked developing, least developed and Pacific island developing countries.

III. RESOLUTION 520 (XXIV) ENTITLED "RESTRUCTURING AND REVITALIZATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS IN THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL FIELDS: ROLE AND FUNCTIONS OF THE ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN", ADOPTED BY THE ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN ON 15 APRIL 1992

The Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean,

Recalling General Assembly resolutions 40/237, 41/213 and 43/174 on the review of the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations,

Bearing in mind General Assembly resolutions 44/103 and 45/177 on the restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations in the economic and social fields,

Bearing in mind also section IV of the annex to General Assembly resolution 45/264, which calls for a review of the subsidiary bodies of the Economic and Social Council to be carried out at the forty-sixth session of the Assembly with the objective of possible restructuring and revitalization and with a view to avoiding duplication,

Noting the steps already announced by the Secretary-General regarding the restructuring of the Secretariat in order to respond effectively to the challenges facing it,

Noting also General Assembly resolution 46/235,

Recalling Committee of the Whole resolution 419(PLN.14) on the rationalization of the institutional structure and the pattern of meetings of the ECLAC system, and resolution 489(PLN.19) on the intergovernmental structure and functions of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean,

Re-emphasizing its conviction that the activities entrusted to the Commission by Economic and Social Council resolution 106 (VI) are fully consistent with the development efforts of its member countries, within the broader context of a revitalized programme of the United Nations in the economic and social fields,

1. Expresses its appreciation for the effective work performed by the Commission and for its significant contribution to economic thinking and to Latin American and Caribbean development efforts in both the analytical and operational fields and in the realm of intraregional and international economic cooperation;

2. Expresses its conviction that the restructuring and revitalization process under way in the economic and social fields of the United Nations should accord due consideration to the usefulness of the regional, multidisciplinary and multisectoral approach which has characterized the work of the Commission;

3. Recommends that the restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations in the economic and social fields being currently undertaken by the General Assembly consider the desirability of:

(a) Increased decentralization in the execution of activities in the new organizational structure which is being created, based on the concept that the endeavours of the Organization in these fields can be carried out more efficiently and effectively at the field level on a regional and subregional basis;

(b) Improved coordination and Secretariat-wide coherence by reinforcing the activities of the regional commissions aimed at mutually supporting the activities of the organizations and agencies of the United Nations system in their respective regions through, inter alia, intensifying joint activities and emphasizing joint programming exercises and meetings;

(c) A clear division of responsibilities regarding regional technical cooperation activities between the regional commissions on the one hand and the United Nations Development Programme and the United Nations Population

Fund on the other, in particular by requesting coordination prior to the submission of regional projects and activities to Governments;

(d) Improved effectiveness of the technical cooperation activities provided by the United Nations to countries - through the intermediary of the regular programme of technical cooperation - by decentralizing more of the resources allotted to the Commission under section 12 of the budget and by strengthening its capacity as an agency responsible for executing operational activities and technical cooperation projects at the regional level in Latin America and the Caribbean, where the Commission, by virtue of its programme of work, is in a better position to take action;

4. Expresses the conviction that the simplicity of the intergovernmental structure of the ECLAC system (which includes ILPES and CELADE) and the procedure of holding meetings of the Commission in biennial sessions have proved to be effective in meeting the objectives of the Commission;

5. Decides to transmit this resolution, together with the relevant section of the report of the twenty-fourth session of the Commission and, as a background paper, the document entitled "Restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations in the economic and social fields: role and functions of ECLAC" (LC/G.1716(SES.24/18)) to the intergovernmental bodies which are currently charged with the restructuring exercise.

IV. RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED BY THE CONFERENCE OF MINISTERS OF THE ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA ON 22 APRIL 1992

A. Resolution 728 (XXVII) entitled "Restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations in the economic and social fields: strengthening the role and functions of the regional commission"

The Conference of Ministers,

Recalling the terms of reference of the Commission as adopted by Economic and Social Council resolution 671 (XXV) of 29 April 1958 and amended by its resolutions 974 D.I (XXXVI) of July 1963, 1343 (XLV) of 18 July 1968 and 1978/68 of 4 August 1978,

Recalling further the Economic and Social Council's decision to endorse ECA Conference of Ministers resolution 718 (XXVI) of 12 May 1991 on the revitalization of the mandate and operational framework of the Economic Commission for Africa,

Bearing in mind General Assembly resolutions 45/177 of December 1990, 45/264 of 13 May 1991 and 46/235 of 13 April 1992 on the restructuring and

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revitalization of the United Nations in the economic, social and related fields, in which the regional commissions should be enabled fully to play their role under the authority of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council and those located in developing countries should be strengthened in the context of the overall objectives of the ongoing restructuring and revitalization process,

Convinced that the Economic Commission for Africa plays a vital catalytic role in the coordination and execution of intercountry programmes and projects aimed at strengthening regional cooperation and integration, especially by pursuing the establishment of the African Economic Community,

1. Reaffirms the continuing validity of the role of the regional economic commissions as important organs of the United Nations for promoting the socio-economic development of their respective regions;

2. Appeals to the Secretary-General that, in the context of the ongoing restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations in the economic and social fields, due recognition is accorded to the vital role of the regional commissions.

B. Resolution 726 (XXVII) entitled "Strengthening the Economic Commission for Africa to face Africa's development challenges in the 1990"

The Conference of Ministers.

Recalling the terms of reference of the Commission as adopted by Economic and Social Council resolution 671 (XXV) of 29 April 1958 and amended by its resolutions 974 D.I (XXXVI) of July 1963, 1343 (XLV) of 18 July 1968 and 1978/68 of 4 August 1978,

Recalling further the various resolutions that have implications on the mandate and operations of the Commission including, in particular, General Assembly resolution 32/197 of 20 December 1977 on the restructuring of the economic and social sectors of the United Nations system, and General Assembly resolutions 33/202 of 29 January 1979 and 44/211 of 21 December 1989,

Noting with appreciation the endorsement by the Economic and Social Council of ECA Conference of Ministers resolution 718 (XXVI) on the revitalization of the mandate and operational framework of the regional commission for Africa,

Bearing in mind General Assembly resolutions 45/177 of 19 December 1990, 45/264 of 13 May 1991 and 46/235 of 13 April 1992 on the restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations in the economic, social and related fields, in which the regional commissions should be enabled fully to play their role under the authority of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council, and those located in developing countries strengthened in the

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context of the overall objectives of the ongoing restructuring and revitalization process,

Reiterating the validity of the general orientation of the work programme of the Commission as outlined in the medium-term plan for the period 1992-1997, including the identified individual subprogrammes,

Convinced that the many and important changes that are taking place in the member States of the Commission, the international environment as well as in the United Nations system as a whole will necessitate new approaches by the Commission in carrying out its mandate and new relationships with its constituency and partners, with a view to increasing its impact,

Having examined the in-depth analysis made by the Acting Executive Secretary of the Commission as contained in document E/ECA/CM.18/4 entitled "The Economic Commission for Africa in the 1990s: a policy and management framework for facing Africa's development challenges",

1. Congratulates the Acting Executive Secretary of the Commission for the initiative he took to establish a Task Force to review and appraise the Commission's policy orientation, programmes and management capacity and for the excellent analysis of the pertinent issues and useful and innovative proposals he has made;

2. Requests the Executive Secretary of the Commission to ensure that there is a clear and concrete balance between the research and operational activities of the secretariat of the Commission and to sharply focus all such activities of the Commission on the specific realities and characteristics of the African region and of individual subregions;

3. Also requests the Executive Secretary of the Commission to ensure that its activities are fully grounded in sound data and information systems, through the strengthening of the Pan-African Development Information System, which should be provided with adequate financial resources;

4. Further requests the Executive Secretary to ascertain that the implementation of all subprogrammes contained in the work programme of the Commission is geared to the full attainment of the identified basic indicators of achievement of the objectives of the Commission with regard to: strengthening its advisory role on socio-economic questions; promoting regional cooperation and integration; enhancing the efficiency of the public sector; promoting private initiative and entrepreneurship; promoting the development, dissemination and utilization of science and technology; ensuring a desirable balance between food supply, population, human settlements and environment; fostering human-centred development; securing the structural transformation and diversification of African economies; and promotion of women in development;

5. Welcomes the process of frequent and close consultations of the secretariat with the member States and donors through the regular briefing sessions held with their representatives at Addis Ababa, Ethiopia;

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6. Recommends the establishment, within existing resources, of a consultative mechanism that would advise the Executive Secretary on the grouping of conferences along specific themes, including scheduling and the preparation of conferences, meetings, seminars and workshops, taking into account the need to harmonize them with those of the Organization of African Unity and the African Development Bank, to avoid duplication and achieve greater efficiency;

7. Urges the Executive Secretary of the Commission to explore every possibility of establishing or strengthening the relationships of the Commission with African intergovernmental organizations, the United Nations specialized agencies, bilateral and multilateral development cooperation agencies and non-governmental organizations including, in particular, the possibility of establishing joint units or special programmes with the various United Nations specialized agencies, and the creation of a special unit within the secretariat of the Commission to coordinate its increased joint activities with non-governmental organizations;

8. Expresses appreciation to the General Assembly for providing additional resources to the Multinational Programming and Operational Centres (MULPOCs) and consequently recommends that in conformity with ECA Conference of Ministers resolution 702 (XXV) of 19 May 1990 on transforming and strengthening the MULPOCs of the Economic Commission for Africa, the Centres should be further strengthened through redeployment of resources and be given specific assignments with respect to technical assistance and advisory services for the execution of joint projects of member States within the framework of the intergovernmental organizations, in their respective subregions, and thus be enabled to act as the major subregional focal points for the collection and dissemination of information on all aspects of economic cooperation and integration;

9. Also expresses its gratitude to the General Assembly for providing a grant to the African Institute for Economic Development and Planning for funding four additional posts for the 1992-1993 biennium thus enabling the Institute to contribute to the process of strengthening the operational capacity of the Commission in meeting the challenges facing Africa in the 1990s, and requests the redeployment of resources which would enable the Institute to assume additional responsibility;

10. Requests the Executive Secretary, in close cooperation with the Secretary-General of the Organization of African Unity, to undertake a thorough examination of the problems and constraints facing the ECA-sponsored institutions and subsequently to make concrete proposals aimed at alleviating their various problems including consideration of such options as the merging of some of the institutions;

11. Appeals to bilateral and multilateral donors to increase their financial and other forms of assistance to the Commission to enable it to shoulder its responsibilities to the member States by conducting extrabudgetary operational activities;

12. Requests the Executive Secretary to undertake, as may become necessary, reforms in the structure of the secretariat so as to achieve full consistency with the new orientations recommended herein so as to boost the efficiency and capability of the secretariat as an effective tool for the economic and social development of Africa;

13. Requests the Executive Secretary to report on the progress made in the implementation of this resolution to the nineteenth meeting of the ECA Conference of Ministers and twenty-eighth session of the Commission.

V. RESOLUTION 191 (XVI) ENTITLED "RESTRUCTURING AND REVITALIZATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS IN THE ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND RELATED FIELDS", ADOPTED BY THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMISSION FOR WESTERN ASIA ON 2 SEPTEMBER 1992

The Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia,

Recalling General Assembly resolution 32/197 of 20 December 1977 on the restructuring of the economic and social sectors of the United Nations system, and the leading role therein assigned to the regional commissions as regards the coordination of activities of the system within their regions,

Recalling also General Assembly resolutions 45/264 of 13 May 1991 and 46/235 of 13 April 1992 on restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations in the economic, social and related fields, and in particular paragraph 6 of the annex to resolution 46/235 concerning the strengthening of the regional commissions,

Recalling further the terms of reference of the Commission as contained in Economic and Social Council resolution 1818 (LV) of 9 August 1973,

Referring to Commission resolution 175 (XV) of 18 May 1989 on the strengthening of the role and performance of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia,

Aware of the advantages to be derived from the capacity of the regional commissions in operational activities, particularly at the regional level,

Noting the steps already taken by the Secretary-General in restructuring the Secretariat,

1. Expresses its appreciation of the manner in which the secretariat of the Commission has addressed the obstacles encountered as a result of recent events in the region, regaining a level of operations close to the pre-crisis level in a relatively short period of time;

2. Commends the secretariat for the valuable services rendered to countries of the region in convening major meetings, providing advisory services and preparing analytical reports;

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3. Reiterates its conviction that the Commission has a central role to play within the United Nations system and in coordination with other concerned entities to improve economic and social conditions in the region;

4. Recommends that the potential of the Commission for coordinating, initiating and realizing development activities for the benefit of member States be strengthened;

5. Recommends also in this connection that the following objectives be made part of the process of the restructuring currently under way in the United Nations:

(a) Decentralization of those activities that could be more effectively undertaken by the regional commissions and of the human and financial resources required (e.g. as regards regional advisory services);

(b) Improvement of the arrangements for coordination of development activities carried out by parties inside and outside the United Nations system, through exchange of information among agencies and institutions involved;

(c) Promoting joint programming of the activities of the United Nations involving the regional commissions and active participation of the regional commissions in the programming and budgeting process as it relates to their activities, inter alia, thorough representation on the Programme Planning and Budgeting Board; a/

(d) Strengthening the role of the regional commissions as executing agencies for regional and subregional technical cooperation projects in particular;

(e) Confirmation of the distinction between funding and executing agencies;

(f) Pursuit of joint activities with other organizations of the United Nations system, as appropriate;

6. Authorizes the Executive Secretary to reorganize the secretariat of the Commission in consultation with the Secretary-General to enhance the effectiveness of its activities;

7. Invites member States to replenish the Trust Fund for ESCWA Regional Activities in order to bolster the operational activities of ESCWA for the benefit of countries of the region and requests the Executive Secretary to follow up with member States;

a/ With reference to the report of the Secretary-General on regional cooperation (E/1992/65, para. 169 (c)).

8. Decides to transmit the present resolution and the ESCWA report on the subject b/ to the intergovernmental bodies with the current restructuring process of the United Nations Secretariat.

b/ E/ESCWA/16/10.