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PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 1980-1981

Organizational nomenclature in the Secretariat

Report of the Secretary-General

1. In resolution 34/233, section VIII, of 20 December 1979, the General Assembly took note of the report of the Secretary-General on organizational nomenclature in the Secretariat 1/ which had been submitted to it at its thirty-fourth session. In that report, the Secretary-General recalled that, on the advice of the interdepartmental working group on organizational nomenclature, which he had established to assist him in the reforms in organizational nomenclature, 2/ he had approved, with certain exceptions, the application of the new organizational nomenclature to 16 departments, offices and secretariats in 1978. The detailed organizational nomenclature approved by the Secretary-General for these 16 departments, offices and secretariats was announced in a Secretary-General's bulletin, ST/SGB/170 of 29 December 1978.

2. In A/C.5/34/32, the Secretary-General also indicated that the working group had made recommendations to him for the application of the new organizational nomenclature to an additional 15 departments, offices and secretariats. However, he reported that he had not yet taken decisions on these recommendations, because he was in the process of obtaining the views of his senior colleagues in the Secretariat on the recommendations. Since that time, the Secretary-General, taking into account the views received from his senior colleagues as well as further recommendations by the working group, has approved the application of the new organizational nomenclature to the following departments, secretariats and offices:

1/ A/C.5/34/32.

2/ A/C.5/32/17, para. 19 and A/C.5/34/32, para. 2.

- (a) Office of the Director-General for Development and International Economic Co-operation
- (b) Office of the Under-Secretaries-General for Special Political Affairs
- (c) Department of International Economic and Social Affairs
- (d) Office of Secretariat Services for Economic and Social Matters
- (e) Secretariat of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization
- (f) Office of the United Nations Disaster Relief Co-ordinator
- (g) Secretariat of the United Nations Environment Programme
- (h) United Nations Office at Geneva
- (i) Secretariat of the World Food Council
- (j) Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

The detailed organizational nomenclature for the 10 departments, offices and secretariats listed above was announced in ST/SGB/170/Add.1 of 30 June 1980. The new organizational nomenclature for the other five major organizational elements, that is, the secretariats of the five regional commissions, will be decided upon shortly and applied in 1981.

3. As indicated in the Secretary-General's first report on the new organizational nomenclature 3/ and in the subsequent reports made, 4/ the new organizational nomenclature entails six main hierarchical levels of organization, namely:

- Level 1: Department, Secretariat or Office
- Level 2: Centre
- Level 3: Division
- Level 4: Branch or Service
- Level 5: Section
- Level 6: Unit

In addition to the criteria for these designations given in paragraph 17 of A/C.5/32/17, the Secretary-General also adopted, as described in paragraphs 6 to 9 of A/C.5/33/6, certain modifications in the definitions and criteria.

4. For example, as previously reported, the Secretary-General accepted the use of certain other special designations for organizational elements denoted by technical terms which are commonly known and widely used in particular fields. To the group of special designations, such as "library" and "laboratory", approved in 1978 (see para. 9 of A/C.5/33/6) has now been added the special designation

3/ A/C.5/32/17, para. 17.

4/ A/C.5/33/6 and A/C.5/34/32.

"treasury". When an organizational element is authorized to be designated by one of these special terms, the hierarchical level of the organizational element is also indicated at the same time.

5. As a result of its reviews in 1979 and 1980, the working group recommended, and the Secretary-General has approved, additionally, the use of the terms "liaison office" and "regional office" as special designations. Neither of these terms (as is also the case for the special designations "information centre" or "secretariat" in the generic sense) 5/ has a hierarchical connotation. The term "regional office" has been adopted by the Secretary-General to apply to certain subsidiary units of a major organizational element (hierarchical level 1) which has global responsibilities. A "regional office" has programme or substantive functions covering a group of countries; it may also have liaison functions. In contrast, a "liaison office" has only liaison functions and no programme functions. In the 26 major organizational elements for which the new organizational nomenclature has been approved by the Secretary-General to date, eight liaison offices and four regional offices have been authorized.

6. Within the 10 major organizational elements listed in paragraph 2 above, the Secretary-General approved the designation of four organizational elements as offices at hierarchical level 1, conforming to that portion of the definition of office 6/ which provided that the term may be used to designate other major organizational elements within a department which are headed by an officer at the Assistant Secretary-General level. At the same time, only one organizational element was approved for designation as a centre (hierarchical level 2).

7. At hierarchical levels 3 to 6 inclusive, the working group recommended the designation of 15 divisions (all of them conforming in all respects to the established criteria set for hierarchical level 3), 19 services and 28 branches (hierarchical level 4), 117 sections (hierarchical level 5) and 108 units (hierarchical level 6).

8. It should be noted that the designations approved to date by the Secretary-General have been designed to ensure that a standardized and uniform organizational nomenclature is established throughout the Secretariat; thus, these efforts at rationalization have been addressed both to organizational designations (e.g., "division", "unit") as well as to the descriptive or substantive portions of the titles of organizational elements with similar functions. The translation of titles into the various official languages has been taken into account.

9. The major organizational elements which remain to be considered by the working group for the application of the new organizational nomenclature are,

5/ See A/C.5/32/17, foot-notes 11-13 and A/C.5/33/6, para. 6.

6/ A/C.5/32/17, para. 17.

with one exception, those whose respective organizational structures were under review in 1980 - namely, the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs of the Department of International Economic and Social Affairs, the Department of Technical Co-operation for Development, the Office of Financial Services, the Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat), the Division of Narcotic Drugs and the secretariat of the International Narcotics Control Board. In addition, one major organizational element was recently created and has yet to be considered by the working group. That is the Centre for Science and Technology for Development.
