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DEVELOPMENT AND INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC CO-OPERATION: RESTRUCTURING
OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL SECTORS OF THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM
IMPLEMENTATION OF GENERAL ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION 35/203

Report of the Secretary-General

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OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL SECTORS OF THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM:
IMPLEMENTATION OF SECTION VIII OF THE ANNEX TO GENERAL ASSEMBLY
RESOLUTION 32/197 AND SECTION IV OF ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION 33/202
(A/35/527)

I. INTRODUCTION

1. It will be recalled that, in response to General Assembly resolution 34/215 of 19 December 1979, the Secretary-General submitted to the General Assembly at its thirty-fifth session of 19 December 1979 a progress report (A/35/527 and corr. 1) on the restructuring of the economic and social sectors of the United Nations system, dealing with the implementation of section VIII, on secretariat support services, of the annex to General Assembly resolution 32/197 of 20 December 1977, and section IV of General Assembly resolution 33/202 of 29 January 1979. In the introduction to that report, the Secretary-General outlined, by way of background, relevant developments since the adoption, in 1977, of General Assembly resolution 32/197, which initiated the process of restructuring of the economic and social sectors of the United Nations system. The report then dealt in turn with the implementation of the various recommendations adopted by the General Assembly concerning the functions of the Office of the Director-General for Development and International Economic Co-operation, and with those relating to the rationalization, streamlining and adjustments in the functioning of other relevant organizational entities of the United Nations Secretariat.

2. In its resolution 35/203 of 16 December 1980, the General Assembly, inter alia, took note of the report and requested the Secretary-General to effect the adjustments required in the existing reporting arrangements, as indicated in paragraph 25 of his report, in order to reflect fully the authority and responsibilities envisaged for the Director-General with respect to all services and organs of the United Nations and set forth in General Assembly resolutions 32/197 and 33/202, particularly 5 (c) of section IV of the latter, and to submit to the Assembly at its thirty-sixth session, a report including a revised chart incorporating these adjustments. In the same resolution, the General Assembly invited the Secretary-General to include in his report to the thirty-sixth session information on the measures envisaged by him in respect of the issues dealt with in his previous report concerning the rationalization, streamlining and adjustments in the functioning of other relevant organizational entities within the Secretariat.

3. The present report, prepared pursuant to that resolution, follows the same structure as the earlier report, and sets out under each heading the further measures taken or envisaged by the Secretary-General to give effect to the provisions of the resolution.

4. It may be noted that in a related development the General Assembly in its resolution 35/9 of 3 November 1980, acted on a recommendation made by the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination (CPC) for the preparation by the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) of a study regarding the impact on the Secretariat of the restructuring of the economic and social sectors of the United Nations system and, in resolution 35/223 of 17 December 1980, requested JIU to be guided in this work by the priorities identified in General Assembly resolution 35/203. In response to this request, JIU has recently prepared a report on relationships between the Office of the Director-General and other United Nations entities in the economic and social fields which will also be before the General Assembly at its thirty-sixth session, together with the Secretary-General's own comments thereon.

II. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROVISIONS OF GENERAL ASSEMBLY
RESOLUTION 35/203 CONCERNING THE OFFICE OF THE
DIRECTOR-GENERAL FOR DEVELOPMENT AND INTERNATIONAL
ECONOMIC CO-OPERATION

A. Consultative arrangements on policy issues pertaining
to economic and social activities and on planning,
programming, budgeting and evaluation

5. The report submitted by the Secretary-General to the General Assembly at its thirty-fifth session (A/35/527 and corr.1) described a number of new arrangements which he intends to establish at the secretariat level in order to enhance the coherence of the activities of the Organization and their responsiveness to the over-all policy guidelines established by the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council. These arrangements were intended in particular to strengthen the capacity of the Director-General to ensure the efficient management and co-ordination of all United Nations activities in the economic and social field. The arrangements included annual meetings of United Nations senior officials in the economic and social field, under the chairmanship of the Secretary-General, as well as consultative arrangements on policy issues pertaining to economic and social activities and on planning, programming, budgeting and evaluation, under the chairmanship of the Director-General.

6. In resolution 35/203, adopted on the recommendation of the Second Committee, the General Assembly welcomed this initiative and requested the Secretary-General to arrange for all concerned United Nations entities at the secretariat level to extend the necessary co-operation and assistance to the Director-General in the effective functioning of the new consultative arrangements. The arrangements were also endorsed by the General Assembly in resolution 35/223, adopted on the recommendation of the Fifth Committee.

7. These arrangements have now been put into effect. The first annual meeting of the United Nations senior officials, chaired by the Secretary-General, was held at Geneva on 15 April 1981. Discussions at the meeting focussed on the budgetary situation of the Organization, with particular reference to the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1982-1983. The Secretary-General outlined the policy of budgetary restraint which he had decided to adopt for the biennium and underlined the need for procedures which would facilitate a more systematic review of priorities and the identification of activities which are of low priority or of marginal usefulness and effectiveness. In that context, the meeting reviewed arrangements for the work of the Ad Hoc Group which had been established by the Secretary-General, under the chairmanship of the Director-General, to conduct an enquiry into the continued usefulness and validity of activities included in the ongoing work programme.

8. Attention was also given at the meeting to the future functioning of the consultative arrangements. Three main purposes were identified:

(a) To provide for the co-ordinated follow-up of decisions taken by United Nations intergovernmental bodies and for coherent approaches to the formulation of policy recommendations for consideration by these bodies;

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(b) To work out common positions at the secretariat level for the purpose of intergovernmental and interagency meetings;

(c) To advise the Secretary-General on policy issues arising in connexion with the elaboration of medium-term plans and of programme budgets.

9. A first meeting of the consultative arrangements on policy issues pertaining to economic and social activities and on planning, programming, budgeting and evaluation was held at Geneva on 2 July 1981, under the chairmanship of the Director-General and with the participation of the heads of the United Nations Departments, organs and programmes concerned. The Director-General briefed participants and sought their advice and co-operation on a number of issues affecting preparations for the launching of global negotiations as foreseen in General Assembly resolution 34/138, and the implementation of the International Development Strategy for the Third United Nations Development Decade. The meeting also reviewed the preparations for, and the main policy and institutional issues to be considered by, the United Nations Conferences on New and Renewable Sources of Energy and on the Least Developed Countries. It was agreed that these issues would be the subject of regular consultations among the United Nations organizational entities concerned in the course of the two Conferences. Attention was also given to the implications for the United Nations of the results of the Meeting of the Group of 77 on Economic Co-operation among Developing Countries, held at Caracas in May 1981. It was agreed that, as envisaged in the Director-General's guidelines for the 1984-1989 medium-term plan, every effort would be made to use the plan as a vehicle to provide for a strengthening of the contribution of the Organization to the promotion of economic co-operation among developing countries. The Meeting also had a preliminary exchange of views on the results of the work of the intergovernmental group of experts on the new financing system for science and technology. In addition, the Meeting was informed of the progress being made in the preparation of the Director-General's annual report on the operational activities for development of the United Nations system in pursuance of resolution 35/81.

10. As far as management and programme issues are concerned, the meeting reviewed progress in the work of the Ad Hoc Group appointed by the Secretary-General to conduct a review of the work programme of the Organization. The suggestion was discussed that while General Assembly resolution 35/209, on the identification of activities that are obsolete, of marginal usefulness or ineffective, provided the framework for the exercise, the main emphasis in the Secretary-General's report should be on the identification of activities which because of certain objective criteria (such as the age of the relevant mandate, or cost effectiveness) may warrant reconsideration by the General Assembly, with a view, inter alia, to their possible replacement, if Governments so wish, by new or higher priority activities.

11. The Meeting was also invited to review responses received so far to the substantive guidelines and technical instructions for the preparation of the 1984-1989 medium-term plan, and to discuss, in that context, the preparation of the Director-General's introduction to the plan. It was recognized that the introduction should constitute a key integral element of the planning process,

highlight the main policy orientation of the United Nations and indicate the medium-term objectives, strategies and trends responding to the priorities set by the intergovernmental organs. It was decided to revert to the matter at the next meeting to be held in October 1981.

12. The Secretary-General attaches considerable importance to the effective functioning of these arrangements. He believes that they will prove increasingly useful in identifying objectives and interests common to the organizational entities concerned within the Secretariat and in ensuring that their various initiatives and actions are mutually supporting and serve, in their totality, to maximize the responsiveness of the Organization to the agreed policy directives of Member States, particularly the developing countries.

B. Reporting arrangements

13. In his report to the General Assembly at its thirty-third session (A/33/410/Rev.1), the Secretary-General provided information on the manner in which he intended to implement the provisions of resolution 32/197 concerning the responsibilities of the Director-General for "ensuring within the United Nations coherence and efficient management of all activities in the economic and social fields financed by the regular budget or by extrabudgetary resources". The Secretary-General stated that he attached high importance to delineating the Director-General's responsibilities in such a way as to ensure the commitment and full co-operation of all concerned. He considered that such commitment and co-operation could best be achieved by following a pragmatic approach, taking into account the result of experience and consultations. The reporting arrangements made by the Secretary-General in the light of these considerations provided that while the Secretary-General might require the assistance of other senior colleagues who would continue to have direct access to him as appropriate, those senior colleagues should keep the Director-General fully informed and report to him or through him to the Secretary-General on matters affecting the Director-General's responsibilities.

14. In his most recent report, (A/35/527 and corr. 1, paras.21-25), the Secretary-General reviewed the functioning of these arrangements in the light of, inter alia, the provisions of paragraph 5 (c) of section IV of General Assembly resolution 33/202, which affirmed the authority of the Director-General, in the exercise of his responsibilities, over all United Nations secretariat entities in

the economic and social sectors. ^{1/} The report concluded that these reporting arrangements had not functioned as effectively as had been expected and that adjustments would be required in order better to reflect the dimensions of accountability implicit in section IV of General Assembly resolution 33/202.

15. Following its consideration of the matter, and in the light of the Secretary-General's conclusions, the General Assembly, in its resolution 35/203, reaffirmed the need for further measures for the effective implementation of the provisions of section IV of General Assembly resolution 33/202 and requested the Secretary-General to effect the adjustments required in the existing reporting arrangements, as indicated in paragraph 25 of his report, in order to reflect fully the authority and responsibilities envisaged for the Director-General for Development and International Economic Co-operation with respect to all services and organs of the United Nations and set forth in General Assembly resolutions 32/197 and 33/202, particularly paragraph 5 (c) of section IV of the latter, and to submit to the Assembly at its thirty-sixth session, a report including a revised chart incorporating these adjustments. In the same context, the General Assembly reaffirmed the responsibilities of the Director-General for Development and International Economic Co-operation under the direction of the Secretary-General for establishing policy-related guidelines for all activities undertaken by United Nations services and organs in the economic and social fields, in order to ensure their coherence, co-ordination and efficient management, and for exercising in that context a general oversight of proposals and actions at the secretariat level in the economic and social fields, particularly from the point of view of their policy and institutional implications for the Organization as a whole. Pursuant to the above requests, the Secretary-General has decided to issue instructions calling upon all senior officials concerned to report systematically to or through the Director-General on all matters affecting the Director-General's responsibilities, bearing in mind the provisions of General Assembly resolution 35/203 quoted above and of previous resolutions on the subject. The relevant instructions will be reflected in a new Secretary-General's Bulletin concerning the Office of the Director-General, as well as in amended Bulletins concerning other entities, for inclusion in a revised edition of the Manual on the organization of the Secretariat, currently under preparation.

^{1/} The paragraph reads as follows:

"The Director-General, under the direction of the Secretary-General, should have, fully and effectively, authority over all services and organs within the United Nations at the level of the secretariats in the economic and social sectors, without prejudice to their respective spheres of competence or the terms of reference as contained in their relevant legislative mandates, in discharging the functions envisaged in paragraph 64 (b) of the annex to General Assembly resolution 32/197, and in carrying out, inter alia, the specific tasks assigned to him by the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council and, inter alia, in establishing the policy-related guidelines for all activities undertaken by those services and organs in order to ensure their coherence, co-ordination and efficient managements."

16. As already noted in paragraph 4 above, a report on relationships between the Office of the Director-General and United Nations entities in the economic and social fields, prepared by JIU, pursuant to General Assembly resolution 35/223, 2/ as well as the Secretary-General's comments thereon, will be before the thirty-sixth session of the General Assembly, together with the present report. The Secretary-General has, therefore, decided to await the results of the General Assembly's consideration of the JIU report, before finalizing the instructions referred to above, so as to avoid pre-empting any conclusions which the General Assembly may reach on the matter, and to ensure that these conclusions are fully reflected in the relevant texts. A new organizational chart reflecting the necessary adjustments in reporting arrangements along the lines indicated above, and taking into account conclusions reached by the General Assembly on the relevant recommendations of JIU, will then be prepared and submitted to the General Assembly at its thirty-seventh session.

C. Interagency co-ordination

17. In its resolution 35/203, the General Assembly took note with interest of the efforts made by the Secretary-General, as reported in section II B of his report on the restructuring of the economic and social sectors of the United Nations system, to ensure that the Director-General for Development and International Economic Co-operation exercised effective leadership and over-all co-ordination within the United Nations system, and requested the Secretary-General to ensure, in accordance with the recommendations outlined in his report, that the provisions of paragraph 64 (a) of the annex to resolution 32/197 were fully complied with. It decided to consider at its thirty-sixth session, in the light of the information provided in the above-mentioned report of the Secretary-General (A/35/527 and corr.1), the issues involved in the effective exercise by the Director-General for Development and International Economic Co-operation of his functions, as defined in paragraph 64 (a) of the annex to General Assembly resolution 32/197, on the basis of the principles pertaining to interagency co-ordination contained in resolutions 32/197 and 33/202.

18. The information on interagency co-ordination contained in paragraphs 26 to 33 of that report has been reproduced for convenience of reference in the annex to the present document. As may be seen, the relevant section of the report sought, inter alia, to place the issues involved in the exercise by the Director-General of

2/ Paragraph 2 of that resolution reads as follows:

"Requests the Joint Inspection Unit, in establishing its work programme for implementation of the recommendations of the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination regarding a study on the impact on the Secretariat of restructuring of the economic and social sectors of the United Nations system, to be guided by the priorities identified in General Assembly resolution 35/203 and to take into account the report of the Secretary General."

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his functions relating to interagency co-ordination within the broader framework of the over-all objectives of the restructuring process. These were defined in General Assembly resolution 32/197 in terms of making the system:

"... more fully capable of dealing with problems of international economic co-operation and development in a comprehensive and effective manner, in pursuance of General Assembly resolutions 3172 (XXVIII) of 17 December 1973 and 3343 (XXIX) of 17 December 1974, and to make it more responsive to the requirements of the provisions of the Declaration and the Programme of Action on the Establishment of a New International Economic Order as well as those of the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States".

19. In the Secretary-General's view, the problems involved in implementing the recommendations pertaining to interagency co-ordination contained in General Assembly resolution 32/197 and subsequent resolutions cannot be assessed in isolation from the progress made in the attainment of the substantive objectives indicated above. In considering the matter the General Assembly may wish to take into account the conclusions contained in the report of the Director-General entitled "Towards the New International Economic Order: analytical report on developments in the field of international economic co-operation since the sixth special session of the General Assembly", submitted to the General Assembly at its eleventh special session pursuant to resolutions 33/198 and 34/207, particularly the concluding observations contained therein (A/S-11/5, paras. 368 to 405). Also relevant in this context are some of the information provided and issues raised in the report submitted by the Director-General to the General Assembly at its thirty-fifth session, entitled "Some policy issues pertaining to the operational activities for development of the UN system (A/35/224 and corr.1)," as well as in the first annual report on operational activities for development submitted by the Director-General to the current session of the General Assembly.

20. It may also be noted that, in its resolution 34/214, the General Assembly decided to carry out at its thirty-seventh session a comprehensive review of the implementation of the provisions of section VII, on interagency co-ordination, of the annex to General Assembly resolution 32/197, and requested the Secretary-General to submit a report in this regard to that session.

D. Resource requirements

21. In his previous report to the General Assembly at its thirty-fifth session (A/35/527 and corr. 1, paras. 34-39), the Secretary-General recalled the assumptions on which his original recommendations concerning the staffing of the Director-General's Office, pursuant to General Assembly resolution 32/197, had been based, and outlined subsequent developments and considerations affecting the Office's resource requirements. In particular, the Secretary-General noted that his assumptions concerning the Director-General's ability "to draw on a continuing basis on the resources and expertise within the United Nations, and as appropriate, on the system as a whole" had proved valid only to a limited extent, and that it was sometimes difficult for the units, services and organizations concerned, operating under tight budgetary restrictions, to spare resources and staff time

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already engaged in implementing approved time-bound work programme. The report also referred, in this context, to the increasing number of tasks, calling for the Director-General's personal involvement, which could not be delegated below a certain level of seniority, and concluded that there may be "a need for the Director-General to have assistance at a higher managerial level than is currently provided for in the staffing table of this Office".

22. In its resolution 35/203, the General Assembly took note of these considerations. The Secretary-General intends to elaborate further on this matter in the context of his comments on the JIU report on the relationships between the Director-General's Office and other United Nations entities (see para. 4 above).

III. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROVISIONS OF GENERAL ASSEMBLY
RESOLUTION 35/203 CONCERNING THE RATIONALIZATION,
STREAMLINING AND ADJUSTMENTS IN THE FUNCTIONING OF
OTHER RELEVANT ORGANIZATIONS AND ENTITIES WITHIN THE
SECRETARIAT

23. In paragraph 10 of its resolution 35/203, the General Assembly invited the Secretary-General to include [in the present report] information on measures envisaged by him in respect of the issues dealt with in section III of his report (A/35/527) on the restructuring of the economic and social sectors of the United Nations system. The issues under reference relate to the rationalization, streamlining and adjustments in the functioning of the new organizational entities established at United Nations Headquarters pursuant to General Assembly resolution 32/197 and to the implications of the restructuring process for other offices and departments within the United Nations secretariat. In paragraph 3 of its resolution 35/223, the Assembly decided to revert to the question of adjustments in the functioning of the relevant entities of the Secretariat at its thirty-sixth session in the light of the report requested of the Secretary-General and the report of JIU.

24. There are no further developments to report concerning the allocation of functions, posts and credits between the new organizational entities (i.e. the Departments of International Economic and Social Affairs and Technical Co-operation for Development and the Office of Secretariat Services for Economic and Social Matters) established at United Nations Headquarters pursuant to General Assembly resolution 32/197. The review of arrangements in respect of the Statistical Office, referred to in the 1980 restructuring report, 3/ is still under way. Continuing attention is being given to the strengthening of co-operative arrangements among the new entities.

3/ At present the Office remains within the Department of International Economic and Social Affairs, but provides statistical support to all economic and social sectors.

25. A review by the Administrative Management Service of the internal structures of the Department of Technical Co-operation for Development, in the light, inter alia, of the Department's initial experience with the functioning of the provisional arrangements described in the Secretary-General's report to the General Assembly at its thirty-fourth session (A/34/736), is underway. The Secretary-General hopes to be in a position to provide information on the results in such further reports as may be requested by the General Assembly concerning the restructuring process.
26. Questions relating to the strengthening of, and the redeployment of resources to, the regional commissions are dealt with in separate reports, 4/ currently before the General Assembly.
27. The Secretary-General's report to the Assembly at its thirty-fifth session (A/35/527 and corr. 1), also reviewed the implications of the restructuring process for offices and departments, other than the new entities established at Headquarters pursuant to General Assembly resolution 32/197, and raised in this connexion a number of issues concerning, among others, the Department of Administration, Finance and Management, the Office of Financial Services in that Department and the United Nations Office at Geneva.
28. It is the intention of the Secretary-General to bring these and other matters relating to the implications of the restructuring process for the functioning of the Secretariat to the attention of the Committee of Governmental Experts to evaluate the present structure of the Secretariat in the administrative, finance and personnel areas, being established pursuant to General Assembly resolution 35/211. The Secretary-General would then return to questions relating to the Department of Administration, Finance and Management in the light of the outcome of the Committee's work and the action that may be taken thereon by the General Assembly.
29. As far as the Office of Financial Services of the Department of Administration, Finance and Management is concerned, the above-mentioned report of the Secretary-General described the new arrangements - involving the Office of the Director-General for Development and International Economic Co-operation, the Office of Financial Services of the Department of Administration, Finance and Management and the Office of Programme Planning and Co-ordination of the Department of International Economic and Social Affairs - that had been established within the Secretariat for the preparation of the programme budgets and medium-term plans. The report also indicated that the Secretary-General had requested the

4/ These include the section of the report of CPC on its 1981 session dealing with issues relating to the distribution of tasks and responsibilities between the regional commissions and other United Nations entities; and a further report by the Secretary-General on the implications for the regional commissions of the restructuring process which expands, in the light of the results of discussions on the matter in the plenary sessions of the commissions, on information contained in a previous report submitted to the General Assembly at its thirty-fifth session (A/35/546).

Administrative Management Service to consider any changes, consequent upon these arrangements that may be required in the relevant sections of the Secretary-General's Manual on the organization of the Secretariat. This request will be taken into account in the preparation of the revised edition of the Manual, referred to in paragraph 15 above.

30. In the same context, the 1980 report on restructuring indicated that the Office of Financial Services of the Department of Administration, Finance and Management, in co-operation with other units concerned, would undertake a review of recent intergovernmental decisions on the planning, programming and budgeting process in order to consider whether such decisions, as well as the new Secretariat arrangements referred to above, required any changes or updating of the financial rules and regulations of the United Nations. This review will be completed in 1982, so as to enable the Secretariat to take into account the results of the work of the above-mentioned Committee of Governmental Experts as well as the outcome of relevant discussions in CPC, including its conclusions concerning the establishment of a new system of priority setting. In this context, CPC has, inter alia, recommended that the General Assembly should adopt official rules and regulations governing programme planning, the programme aspects of the budget, performance monitoring and evaluation procedures, and has requested the Secretary-General to submit proposals to the Assembly at its thirty-seventh session, through CPC at its twenty-second session. Relevant aspects of the restructuring process are also being taken into account in the review, currently underway, of Trust Fund policies and procedures. The Secretary-General will include information on the outcome of these reviews in such reports as the General Assembly may request under the present item.

31. Finally, the Director-General of the United Nations Office at Geneva has completed his review of issues relating to the allocation within that Office of the expanded tasks devolving upon it, including, in particular, its Interagency Affairs Unit, consequent upon the restructuring of Secretariat support services at Headquarters. The tasks just mentioned were outlined in the report of the Secretary-General to the General Assembly at its thirty-fifth session (A/35/527 and Corr.1, para. 63). The Director-General of the United Nations Office at Geneva has concluded that no changes are for the time being required in the internal structures of that Office.

ANNEX

Excerpt from the report of the Secretary-General on restructuring of the economic and social sectors of the United Nations system: implementation of section VIII of the annex to General Assembly resolution 32/197 and section IV of Assembly resolution 33/202 (A/35/527)

B. Interagency co-ordination

26. As already noted, paragraph 64 (a) of the annex to General Assembly resolution 32/197 provides that, under the direction of the Secretary-General, the Director-General should be in charge of ensuring the provision of effective leadership to the various components of the United Nations system in the field of development and international economic co-operation and in exercising over-all co-ordination within the system.

27. In his report to the General Assembly at its thirty-third session (A/33/410/Rev.1), the Secretary-General elaborated the responsibilities flowing from this provision in terms, among others, of ensuring: co-ordinated support for policy-making by central United Nations intergovernmental bodies, a full appreciation of the concerns of these bodies in other fora, concerted execution of the decisions taken by such bodies, the co-ordinated implementation of the restructuring process initiated by resolution 32/197, the provision of direct assistance to the Secretary-General in the context of ACC, and appropriate action to meet the objectives of the General Assembly as regards the operational activities of the United Nations system.

28. In paragraph 5 (a) of section IV of resolution 33/202, the General Assembly affirmed that the Director-General should be fully and effectively utilized as the official in charge of the functions outlined in paragraph 64 (a) of resolution 32/197. In paragraph 7 of the same section of the resolution, the Assembly urged the specialized agencies and the International Atomic Energy Agency to offer their full and effective co-operation and assistance to the Director-General in discharging the functions as defined in paragraph 64 (a) of the annex to resolution 32/197. In section II of the same resolution, the Assembly also addressed recommendations to ACC that are relevant in this context and which will be the subject of a subsequent report to be submitted to the General Assembly at its thirty-seventh session, in accordance with its resolution 34/214.

29. The initial response of ACC to the recommendations addressed to it and, generally, to the system as a whole, in General Assembly resolution 32/197, as reflected in its reports to the General Assembly at its thirty-third session, was both positive and forthcoming. The ensuing period has, however, been characterized by certain difficulties in achieving the appropriate balance between the need for greater efforts by the organizations of the system to give full and prompt effect to over-all policy recommendations emanating from the General Assembly and the

Economic and Social Council, and the contributions of the organizations of the system to the process of policy formulation (see annual report of ACC for 1979/1980, E/1979/34, chap. V).

30. Concern has been expressed in some organizations that United Nations organs may be moving the system towards excessive centralization, and that this trend, if left unchecked, will prove detrimental to the system of functional decentralization provided for in the Charter, and to its capacity to serve effectively the varied interests of Member States. On the other hand, there has been increasing emphasis in central intergovernmental bodies on the need for comprehensive approaches to the problems of development, and on the responsibility of these bodies to establish clear over-all strategies, policies and priorities for the system as a whole, and for the harmonization of activities designed to implement such policies.

31. These are complex issues arising from intergovernmental perceptions and trends of opinion. Although secretariats bear an important share of responsibility in shaping the framework of the relevant intergovernmental discussions, the issues raised by their very nature relate to co-ordination at the national and intergovernmental levels. Also, these issues should be seen and approached in their proper perspective. Firstly, the tensions and difficulties referred to above should not necessarily be regarded as negative developments: strains can be expected to accompany any constructive process of re-evaluation and reappraisal of the direction and emphasis of the activities of the system. Secondly, recent debates on the matter in some agencies of the system, and in particular the discussions on the restructuring of the economic and social sectors of the United Nations system that took place at the 212th session of the Governing Body of the International Labour Organisation in March 1980 have contributed in a constructive manner to the search for a proper balance of the various elements involved. 3/

3/ The relevant conclusions of the Governing Body, as brought to the attention of the United Nations, included the following:

"(a) The constitutional position of the International Labour Organisation in the United Nations system is established by the Constitution of the ILO and the Declaration of Philadelphia, the relevant provisions of the Charter of the United Nations and the Agreement between the United Nations and the International Labour Organisation which confers upon the Organisation the status of specialised agency and recognises its competence defined in its Constitution as a tripartite organisation with its own international legal personality.

(b) The purpose of General Assembly resolution 32/197 is not to affect or modify this constitutional position but to apply the existing constitutional provisions in such a manner as to ensure a greater coherence

Thirdly, the difficulties for the most part relate less to substantive co-operation than to the co-ordination of overlapping global priorities set by different intergovernmental bodies, and each calling for concerted action by the organizations of the United Nations system.

32. In general, the network of institutional arrangements for substantive co-ordination, both formal and informal, have continued to yield constructive results in most areas. But discussions in many agencies have revealed jurisdictional concerns as well as preoccupation with the financial implications for agency budgets of activities substantive and co-ordinative alike, arising from

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and effectiveness of action by the United Nations system as a whole. This is to be welcomed in the mutual interest of all parts of that system.

(c) The aim of the resolution is to achieve a closer partnership between the United Nations and the specialised agencies. On the one hand, the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council, are to make a greater and more sustained exercise of their leadership and co-ordinating responsibilities under their existing powers while respecting the competence of the specialised agencies. On the other hand, the participation of those agencies in the functioning of the system is to be enhanced through a firmer commitment to the multidisciplinary approach advocated in the resolution, the use of agency inputs in the analytical work and the formulation of policy recommendations, joint planning and the enhanced role of the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination.

(d) The ILO stands ready to make its own distinctive contribution, as a tripartite organisation, to the collective efforts of the system and to support through its own action the work of the United Nations and the other agencies. At the same time, the ILO expects that its concerns will be shared by the other members of the system, just as it will share their concern, to the mutual benefit of all the partners.

(e) The ILO stands ready to provide advice on or to dispose of such issues within its competence as may be referred to it through the adoption of standards or other appropriate measures but expects that full use will be made of its expertise and machinery in regard to matters within its competence.

(f) In support of the common efforts, the ILO will make flexible use of its resources, but any major undertaking of an interagency nature involving significant expenditure should be planned and agreed to sufficiently in advance so that the necessary resources can be provided for."

recommendations of central United Nations intergovernmental bodies. 4/ Thus, disquiet has recently been expressed by one specialized agency, which the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ) has noted in a recent report (A/35/481, paras. 53-55), regarding what it considered to be an exaggerated tendency on the part of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council first, to step up their request for reports on subjects, some of which are of secondary importance or have already been abundantly discussed, second, to take decision on matters plainly falling within the province of the specialized agencies and, third, to create new specialized forums for decision-making in areas of activity already covered by these organizations. Concern has also been expressed by another agency that the problems of co-ordination will increase if they assume a dimension greater than the array of substantive activities to be co-ordinated and new co-ordinating mechanisms proliferate and impinge on the responsibilities and resources of existing competent organizations: co-ordination activities should, on this view, be kept within bounds in accordance with a careful prior analysis of their costs and benefits to all organizations concerned and their member States. In contrast to this approach, the view has been expressed that effective co-ordination is essential to and does lead to an increased flow of resources both in terms of human effort and the mobilization of financial and material resources.

33. These perceptions have a direct bearing on the manner in which the functions of the Director-General, outlined in paragraph 31 above, can be best exercised and

4/ See for instance the submissions made by their secretariats to the UNESCO Executive Board (110 EX/19) and the FAO Council (CL 78/13). At the conclusion of its discussion of the former submission, the UNESCO Executive Board adopted a draft decision, paras. 2 to 4 of which read as follows:

"2. Considering that the constitutional and contractual provisions governing the relations between the United Nations and UNESCO, namely the Constitution of UNESCO, the relevant provisions of the Charter of the United Nations and the Agreement concluded in 1946 between the United Nations and UNESCO, have stood the test of time and still provide a suitable framework for co-operation between the two organizations,

"3. Reaffirms that UNESCO, as a specialized agency of the United Nations system, whose constitutional position within the system is laid down by the international instruments mentioned in the preceding paragraph, enjoys intellectual and legal autonomy;

"4. Reaffirms at the same time the importance of close co-operation between the organizations of the United Nations system and of the efficient co-ordination of their activities in the service of the world community, within the framework of the priorities, policies and overall strategies laid down by the General Assembly."

the full and effective co-operation of the organizations concerned best assured. The underlying purpose of the resolutions cited above is to ensure greater coherence and effectiveness of action by the United Nations system as a whole together with a closer partnership between the United Nations and the other organizations of the system. This implies on the one hand that the central organs of the United Nations are to make a greater and more sustained exercise of their global policy-making and co-ordination responsibilities under the United Nations Charter, while respecting the competence of the specialized agencies. On the other hand, the participation of these other organizations in the policy-making and co-ordination processes just mentioned is to be enhanced through the effective use of their inputs, through their involvement in co-operative programme planning towards agreed objectives, and through a firmer commitment to multidisciplinary approaches.
