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PROGRAMME OF WORK AND PRIORITIES
1982-1983

(Note by the Executive Secretary)

Programme of Work and Priorities, 1982-1983

1. The programme budget (E/ECWA/118) which constitutes the Commission's programme of work and priorities for the biennium 1982-1983, has been drawn up in accordance with specific instructions from United Nations Headquarters based on pertinent resolutions of the General Assembly.
2. The proposals are subject to review by the Budget Division of the United Nations Secretariat in New York before being submitted as proposals of the Secretary-General to the legislative organs of the United Nations.
3. The review of the proposals of ECWA has taken place, although not all details are available. Initially, in view of the zero-growth policy adopted by the Secretary-General, the ECWA proposals for additional growth (summarized in the introduction to document E/ECWA/118) which would have allowed for the expansion of certain programme activities and the establishment of new ones, were not acceptable to the Budget Division. Only the post decentralized to the Commission in the programme of executive direction and management was to be included in the Secretary-General's proposals. Following consultations on the matter, the Budget Division agreed to include also in the Secretary-General's proposals one local-level post in the Statistics Programme and the reclassification of the P-5 post to the D-1 level in the same programme. Thus, seven proposed new Professional posts and six local-level posts will not be included in the Secretary-General's proposals.
4. With regard to ad hoc expert groups, the Budget Division agreed to forward proposals for five meetings instead of the seven proposed by ECWA. The expert groups proposed under programme elements 1.3 and 2.2 of the Food and Agriculture Programme (E/ECWA/118, p. 21) and the Industrial Development Programme (ibid., p. 60) respectively will not be included.
5. Other items of the proposed budget will be maintained at the 1980-1981 levels, allowing only for inflationary adjustments. This implies, with regard to the proposals for consultants and travel, a substantial reduction in the real terms.

6. The Budget Division's decision to reduce the budget proposals submitted by ECWA will reduce both the number and the scope of the final outputs of the programme elements affected. The resultant changes, together with the observations of the Commission, will be reflected as appropriate in a revised programme budget for 1982-1983.

Programme of work and priorities, 1982-1983, for regional advisory services

7. The secretariat's proposals for regional advisory services contained in document E/ECWA/118/Add.1 have not yet been reviewed by the Budget Division. The Commission is invited to review this programme of technical co-operation.

Programme of work and priorities, 1982-1983: publications programme

8. The secretariat considered it appropriate to submit from now onwards its proposed publications programme (E/ECWA/118/Add.2), so that the necessary legislative authority may be obtained and that the programme may become increasingly responsive to the needs of member States. These proposals constitute a considerable expansion of the current programme in terms of the number of recurrent publications. While in the course of the present biennium (1980-1981), the secretariat will issue six recurrent publications covering the programmes on development issues and policies and statistics, the publications programme proposed for 1982-1983 will increase the number of recurrent publications to ten. Recurrent series in food and agriculture, industrial development and natural resources will be added to the existing ones. The expansion of its publications programme will imply some reduction in the number of copies published, but the secretariat deems this justified if it allows for the launching of new publications. Budgetary provision for the publications programme has been maintained at the 1980-1981 levels, adjusted for inflation.

9. The Commission is invited to review the secretariat's proposals, which will be taken into account by the Commission's Publications Committee, established to make recommendations regarding all aspects of publications.

Programme of work and priorities, 1982-1983: conferences, meetings and expert groups

10. The secretariat's proposed programme budget contains proposals for 22 meetings. Of these, 15 are expert groups and 7 are intergovernmental meetings. Five ad hoc expert groups will be financed under the proposed programme budget, 1982-1983. Temporary assistance for six intergovernmental meetings is included under the proposed programme budget. The remaining expert groups and intergovernmental meetings are expected to be financed from extrabudgetary resources. With the exception of 3 meetings to be financed by UNFPA, the extrabudgetary resources allocations for these meetings are only indicative and tentative, since such allocations will be subject to the agreement of funding organizations or Governments contributing towards the implementation of the Commission's work programme.

11. All meetings are planned to be held at ECWA headquarters, unless member States offer to act as host to any of them. For easy reference, document E/ECWA/118/Add.3 lists these meetings and the dates envisaged for them.

Identification of activities which are obsolete, of marginal usefulness or ineffective

12. In the context of item 6(a) on the progress made in the implementation of the work programme, the secretariat has reported on activities identified for the biennium 1980-1981 (E/ECWA/117/Add.1). These activities were pursuant to General Assembly resolution 35/209, terminated.

13. Resolution 35/209 requests the Secretary-General to identify obsolete, marginally useful and ineffective activities for the biennium 1982-1983. At the same time, intergovernmental bodies are called upon to be involved in the identification process. With regard to the 1982-1983 biennium, the secretariat has no specific proposals to make. Activities for the 1980-1981 biennium so identified have not been included in the proposed programme budget, 1982-1983. The Commission, in considering the proposed programme budget 1982-1983, may wish to make proposals in regard to such identification.