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REPORT OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

Note by the Secretary-General

1. The General Assembly has decided that the Fifth Committee should consider the administrative and budgetary aspects of chapters XVII and XVIII, section B of chapter XIX, and sections B and C of chapter XXI of the report of the Economic and Social Council. 1/ In addition, it feels that the following chapters of the Council's report may also be of interest to the Fifth Committee:

(a) Chapter VI, dealing with regional co-operation;

(b) Chapter XIV (section A 6), dealing with the participation of women in organizations in the United Nations system;

(c) Chapter XV (sections C and D), dealing with disaster relief co-ordination and measures to be taken following the natural disaster in the Philippines;

(d) Chapter XIX (section A), dealing with the review of the Council's co-ordinating machinery, methods of work and procedures.

2. Section A of chapter XVII of the Council's report deals with the pending reports of the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU). On the recommendation of its Co-ordination Committee, the Council took note of the pending reports of JIU and drew the attention of the administrations concerned to the observations made during the discussion in the Co-ordination Committee and to the observations of the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination (CPC) as contained in its reports on JIU under agenda item 79 (a).

3. Section B of chapter XVII deals with the report of JIU on the programme of recurrent publications of the United Nations. In addition to the report (A/8362)

1/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-seventh Session, Supplement No. 3 (A/8703).

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the Council had before it the observations of the Secretary-General (A/8540), the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ) (A/8624) and a note by the Secretariat (E/L.1498). It also had before it chapter XI of the report of the CPC on its twelfth session (E/5186). In its resolution 1713 (LIII) the Council recommended that the General Assembly allow further time for the views of the subordinate bodies of the Council to be taken into account. The Fifth Committee will again take up the JIU report on recurrent publications in connexion with its consideration of agenda item 80, Publications and documentation of the United Nations. It will also have before it the views of the Sixth (Legal) Committee concerning legal publications.

4. Section C of chapter XVII deals with the future of JIU. The Council had before it chapter VIII of the report of CPC on its eleventh session (E/5159). In its resolution 1714 (LIII), the Council (1) considered that the United Nations system should continue to benefit from the services of JIU; (2) further considered that the mandate of JIU, after its review by the General Assembly at its twenty-seventh session, could, if necessary, be reappraised as the occasion arose, with a view to its possible further strengthening in the light of additional experience; (3) stressed that any modifications made should not impair the autonomous nature of JIU, which should continue to have "the broadest powers of investigation in all matters having a bearing on the efficiency of the services and proper use of funds"; (4) expressed concern that recommendations of JIU should be thoroughly examined and, where appropriate, implemented by the organizations of the United Nations system; (5) urged the intergovernmental bodies concerned to ensure that proper follow-up action was taken on the recommendations of JIU and, to that end, to request the secretariats to supply them on a regular basis with a succinct systematic report on the status of implementation of JIU's major recommendations; (6) further urged all organizations of the United Nations system to continue their active participation in and co-operation with JIU. The Fifth Committee will take up the question of the continuation of JIU under agenda item 79 (b). It will have the views of the Economic and Social Council and the CPC on this matter before it at that time.

5. Chapter XVIII of the council's report deals with questions of programme and co-ordination. Section A covers the reports of the specialized agencies and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). In accordance with the terms of resolution 1642 (LI), the Council examined in depth the reports of the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) and the World Health Organization (WHO). The Fifth Committee will consider the question of interagency co-ordination in the administrative and budgetary fields under agenda item 78, Administrative and budgetary co-ordination of the United Nations with the specialized agencies and the IAEA, on the basis of reports submitted to the Assembly by ACABQ.

6. Section B of chapter XVIII covers the reports of CPC on its twelfth session (E/5186) and of the joint meetings of CPC and the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination (ACC) (E/5188). In addition to these reports, the reports of the Secretary-General (A/C.5/1429, Rev. 1 and 2) and ACABQ (A/8739) on the form of presentation of the United Nations budget were also made available to the Council.

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7. Section C of chapter XVIII covers the reports of ACC. For the discussion on this item, the Council had before it the annual report of ACC (A/5153 and Corr.2); the annual report of ACC on expenditures of the United Nations in relation to programmes (E/5153); chapters III and V of the report of CPC on its twelfth session (E/5186) and a note by the Secretary-General (E/AC.24/L.417) concerning the interim report of the Protein Advisory Group of the United Nations system.

8. In regard to items covered in chapter XVIII above, the Council took a number of decisions, which may be summarized as follows:

(a) The Council concluded that the new form of presentation of the United Nations budget as envisaged in the Secretary-General's report (A/C.5/1429) constituted a useful basis for proceeding towards the early implementation of a system of programme budgeting in the United Nations; expressed the hope that it would be possible to build on and improve the report in the light of the recommendations of ACABQ (A/8739); and drew the General Assembly's attention to the views expressed on the question by delegations during the discussions in CPC at its twelfth session and in the Co-ordination Committee at the fifty-third session of the Council. The Fifth Committee has considered the form of presentation of the budget and the duration of the budgetary cycle on the basis of the reports submitted to the Assembly by the Secretary-General and ACABQ. The views of the Economic and Social Council and CPC were brought to the Committee's attention at that time.

(b) In resolution 1728 A (LIII), the Council took note of the reports of ACC, the specialized agencies and the IAEA and decided that a report of the Protein Advisory Group on the world protein situation should be made available to the Council triennially or at greater intervals. The Council decided further that the system-wide study on programmes and spheres of competence in the field of natural resources being prepared in accordance with resolution 1673 C (LII) could serve as the in-depth sectoral study called for in Council resolution 1643 (LI). The Council also decided that in 1973 the reports of the International Labour Organisation (ILO), United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and Inter-Governmental Maritime Consultative Organization (IMCO) should be the subject of in-depth reviews.

(c) In resolution 1729 (LIII) the Council requested the Secretary-General to undertake a review of those programmes and projects for which the Council had responsibility and to include in the work programme only those activities and projects which directly contributed to the achievement of the goals and objectives of the Second Development Decade and to other priority concerns of the United Nations.

9. Section B of chapter XIX of the report deals with the documentation of the Council. In regard to the latter subject, the Council decided that requests for reports and studies should be limited to those which are strictly necessary and that automatic time schedules for progress reports should not be included in resolutions.

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10. Section B of chapter XXI covers the Council's calendar of conferences. Under this item, the Council had before it a draft calendar for 1973 and provisional calendar for 1974 (E/L.1491), as well as a statement of the administrative and financial implications of convening the Sub-Commission on the Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities at Geneva (E/C.1491/Add.1). At the conclusion of its discussion on the subject, the Council approved, as amended, the calendar of conferences for 1973; took note of the provisional calendar for 1974 and instructed the Secretariat to revise it in the light of decisions taken at the Council's fifty-third session. The Fifth Committee will consider the question of the pattern of conferences under agenda item 75.

11. Section C of chapter XXI covers the financial implications of the actions of the Council. The Council took note of reports of the Secretary-General on the financial implications of recommendations of the Council's Commissions and Committees (E/5157) and of decisions taken at its fifty-third session (E/5208). The financial implications of the actions taken by the Council will be presented, in the form of revised estimates, for consideration by the Fifth Committee.

12. Chapter VI of the Council's report covers regional co-operation. The Council had before it the annual reports of the regional economic commissions and of the United Nations Economic and Social Office in Beirut (UNESOB) and the report on the meetings of the Executive Secretaries (E/5168). At the conclusion of its discussions on this item, the Council decided to postpone to its resumed fifty-third session consideration of the establishment of an economic commission for western Asia. In its resolution 1654 (LII), the Council also amended the terms of reference of the Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East (ECAFE) to include Bhutan in its membership.

13. Section A 6 of chapter XIV covers the participation of women in organizations in the United Nations system. In that connexion, the Council adopted resolution 1676 (LII), in which it made several recommendations to the General Assembly regarding the employment of women in senior and other professional positions by the secretariats of the United Nations system. The question will be considered by the Fifth Committee as part of the question of the composition of the Secretariat, under agenda item 81 (a).

14. Section C of chapter XV covers disaster relief co-ordination. The Council had before it a report of the Secretary-General on assistance in cases of natural disaster and other disaster situations (E/5151). At the conclusion of its discussion on the subject, the Council took note of the Secretary-General's report and noted that a further report in the field of disaster relief co-ordination would be submitted to the General Assembly at its twenty-seventh session.

15. Section D of chapter XV covers measures to be taken following the natural disaster in the Philippines. In that connexion, the Council requested the Secretary-General to ask the Governing Council and the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), as well as the specialized agencies, to devote the largest possible volume of resources within their programmes to meeting, in liaison with the Disaster Relief Co-ordinator, assistance requests from the Government of the Philippines relating to reconstruction work.

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16. Section A of chapter XIX of the Council's report deals with the review of the Council's co-ordinating machinery, methods of work and procedures. At the conclusion of its discussion, the Council adopted resolution 1724 (LIII), in which it requested the Secretary-General to arrange for the Executive Secretaries of the regional economic commissions and the Director of UNESCO, in addition to the executive heads of the specialized agencies, including the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), as appropriate, and heads of other relevant organizations in the United Nations system, particularly the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) to participate at the beginning of the Council's summer session in the discussion of the item on international economic and social policy.
