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JOINT INSPECTION UNIT

REPORTS OF THE JOINT INSPECTION UNIT

Note by the Secretary-General

1. With the concurrence of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions the Secretary-General transmits herewith the report submitted by the Joint Inspection Unit on its activities during the period 1 July 1973-30 June 1974.
2. Where this has not already been done, the Secretary-General will be submitting comments on the various reports mentioned that are of concern to the United Nations. The Advisory Committee will also provide the General Assembly with its comments on such reports.

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MEMBERSHIP OF THE JOINT INSPECTION UNIT  
1 July 1973-30 June 1974

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SIXTH REPORT ON THE ACTIVITIES  
OF THE  
JOINT INSPECTION UNIT  
JULY 1973-JUNE 1974

Palais des Nations  
Geneva  
July 1974

## A. INTRODUCTION

1. This report, the sixth<sup>1/</sup> prepared by the Joint Inspection Unit since its creation on 1 January 1968, gives an account of the Unit's main activities and a summary of reports it has issued, during the twelve-month period 1 July 1973 to 30 June 1974.
2. Also, in paragraphs 20 and 21 reference is made to some of the major problems which, while they are not new, have perhaps taken on particular significance during the period under review. They concern delays in the consideration of the reports, and the requests by legislative and other intergovernmental bodies to the Unit to undertake in-depth studies of a far-reaching character.

## B. WORK PROGRAMME

3. In accordance with established practice the Unit's programme of work was drawn up after Unit discussions in which all members participated. It covers, as hitherto, a number of broad problems concerning efficiency and the rational use of funds to which Member States have attached, and continue to attach, importance. Details of the programme were circulated by the Secretary-General of the United Nations in document A/C.5/L.1169.
4. In drawing up its programme of work the Joint Inspection Unit took into account specific requests and suggestions made to it by the General Assembly and ECOSOC as well as by executive heads of the participating organizations.

## C. ACTIVITIES

5. Between 1 July 1973 and 30 June 1974 the Inspectors issued eight reports, a summary of which will be found in section E of this report. Of the eight reports, five were requested by the General Assembly, ECOSOC, or executive heads, while three were prepared upon the initiative of members of the Unit. Two<sup>2/</sup> of the reports were

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<sup>1/</sup> The previous reports were distributed by the Secretary-General as documents A/C.5/1241, A/C.5/1304, A/C.5/1368, A/C.5/1433 and A/C.5/1515.

<sup>2/</sup> (a) Report on the need for a revised concept on UNDP regional training programmes in the least-developed countries: the East African case (JIU/REF/73/5);

(b) Report on medium-term planning in the United Nations System (JIU/REF/74/1).

system-wide and six<sup>3/</sup> concerned individual organizations. Among the latter, some reports, although addressed primarily to individual organizations, were of interest to other organizations or involved them to some extent. Another report concerning the decentralization of United Nations economic and social activities has been completed and will be issued in July 1974.

6. Several other reports are expected to be completed before the end of this year. They concern:

- (a) the regional training centre for the preservation of cultural and natural heritage at Jos, Nigeria, requested by the Director-General of UNESCO;
- (b) regional structures in the UN system, requested by ECOSOC in resolution 1756 (LIV);
- (c) the use of travel funds in FAO (following similar reports on UN and WHO);
- (d) the cost measurement system in UN organizations (new report) requested by the Governing Council of UNDP;
- (e) utilization of office accommodation in the UN system, requested by the General Assembly at its twenty-eighth session (A/9450, paragraph 90) - first part of report.

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<sup>3/</sup> (a) Report on the use of experts and consultants in the United Nations (JIU/REP/73/3);

(b) Report on the UNESCO Regional School Building Centre for Latin America and the Caribbean (CONESCAL) (JIU/REP/73/4, dated November 1973);

(c) Report on the UNESCO Regional Centre for Book Development in Asia (Karachi) (JIU/REP/74/2, dated April 1974);

(d) Report on UNICEF-assisted transport operations (JIU/REP/73/6, dated December 1973);

(e) Report on the use of travel funds in the World Health Organization (JIU/REP/74/3, dated April 1974);

(f) Report on the pattern of conferences of the United Nations and the possibilities for more rational and economic use of conference resources (JIU/REP/74/4, dated June 1974).

7. Other studies, already in hand, will be carried over into 1975. They are concerned with:

- (a) utilization of office accommodation in the UN system, requested by the General Assembly at its twenty-eighth session (A/9450, paragraph 90) (second part of report);
- (b) country studies in the UN system;
- (c) arrangements for insurance in the UN and the specialized agencies;
- (d) selected activities in the field of public information.

8. In preparing this report on their activities the Inspectors have taken note of the observations made by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions in paragraphs 6 and 7 and in the first sentence of paragraph 5 of its report (A/9216) to the General Assembly at its twenty-eighth session, with which the General Assembly concurred.

9. The Unit wishes to observe that there was no consultation with it before these observations were submitted to the General Assembly. If the Unit had been so consulted on this matter which related to its functioning, it would have pointed out some serious problems in complying with paragraph 5.

10. The Unit appreciates the concern that the Activities Report should show what it had accomplished during the year; and details of travel, offices visited by the Inspectors, the duration of such visits, the time spent on preparing individual reports, etc., are perhaps considered relevant for this purpose. In this connexion the Unit believes that the best measure of the work accomplished by its members are the reports themselves. It is for this reason that summaries of the contents of reports issued in any year are incorporated in the annual Activities Report; and if it is so desired, the summaries could be more detailed than hitherto. However, the compilation and submission of some of the detailed information mentioned in paragraph 5 of the ACABQ report would give rise to problems which the Unit feels should be placed before the General Assembly.

11. The terms of reference of the Unit as approved by the General Assembly on the recommendation of the Ad Hoc Committee of Fourteen clearly lay down that an Inspector is personally responsible for his reports. Consequently, he exercises his individual judgement not only in making recommendations but also in the method of investigation,

and in the choice of organizations and offices that need to be visited by him, etc.. Further, the letter of appointment of an Inspector states: "The official location of the Joint Inspection Unit shall be Geneva (Switzerland); the Inspectors must be prepared to travel widely and to spend substantial periods of time away from the official location.".

12. JIU reports require not merely perusal of documents in Geneva but personal observation and consultations with officials at the various headquarters and in the field, the extent and the geographical coverage of which are determined by the nature of the subject under investigation. In regard to matters concerning management and co-ordination and covering a large number of organizations such observations and consultations have to be extensive. The individual approach, the methodology adopted and the speed of work of the Inspectors necessarily vary, if only for the reason that they are drawn from different countries and have different experience and background.

13. Furthermore, the visit of an Inspector to an office of the United Nations system is often concerned with more than one subject under study by him. Likewise, sometimes an Inspector may utilize his visit to collect information and material not only on matters related to the subject currently under study but also on one which is of prospective interest to him and in regard to which he may wish to identify a problem or problems for future study. Sometimes, again, an Inspector in the course of his visit, may look into particular aspects of a subject under investigation by a colleague at the latter's request.

14. The facts and circumstances indicated above make it clear that information of the detailed nature requested in paragraph 5 of ACABQ's report, in regard to the time spent on travel or the time taken for preparation of reports, might to some extent be inaccurate, or even misleading.

15. The Inspectors took the opportunity of having an informal exchange of views with the ACABQ in Geneva in May 1974 as to the interpretation that should be placed upon its observations referred to above. Following this discussion it is the understanding of the JIU that the first sentence of paragraph 5 was not intended to compromise the JIU's independence and freedom of action as envisaged by the Committee of Fourteen or to suggest that its activities should be monitored. The sentence did not mean that the JIU should be asked to report where each Inspector was physically located and what he was doing each day of the year. What was intended by the suggestion that more information should be given on travel undertaken and units visited in the course of



the year was that Member States should be given a general but comprehensive picture of the manner in which the JIU deployed its resources and that they should be informed of the geographical coverage of the JIU's activities in order to know where the thrust of its efforts was directed.

16. The Unit considers that if relevant information of the type mentioned is to be furnished to Member States, it would be more appropriate to include it in each individual JIU report and is prepared to do this in the future if the General Assembly so desires.

17. As for paragraphs 6 and 7 of the ACABQ report, it is the understanding of the JIU that it was intended to invite the JIU to mention in its Activities Reports cases in which consideration of the Inspectors' reports, or the implementation of recommendations contained therein, were subject to undue delays. It was not intended that the JIU undertake a systematic check on action taken, or not taken, by the various organizations on the basis of recommendations made by the Inspectors. And it was certainly not intended to suggest that the Unit should become involved in the implementation of its recommendations.

#### D. CONSULTATIONS

18. As in previous years the Unit has maintained contact and exchanged programmes of work with the ACABQ, the UN Panel of External Auditors, and the Administrative Management Service of the United Nations. It has also had its annual exchange with ACC during the latter's spring session in New York.

19. One of the main subjects discussed with the ACABQ has already been referred to in paragraphs 15-17 above.

20. Another matter discussed with the ACABQ is the delay in considering JIU reports. While it is accepted that system-wide reports are likely to require more time to reach decision-making bodies than a report which concerns a single organization, there have been examples of delays in the submission of comments and in their consideration which necessarily detract from the value of a report.

21. Yet another matter which was discussed both with the ACABQ and ACC, and which in the Inspectors' view should be given serious consideration by Member States, is the change in the nature of the Unit's work. Originally, the JIU had been able to work out its programme independently as proposed by the Ad Hoc Committee of Fourteen and to decide when and what its members would inspect. The Unit had, it was true, asked the

executive heads for suggestions on items that could be inspected but recently a tendency seemed to be emerging on the part of the legislative bodies, particularly the General Assembly, to request in-depth studies of a far-reaching character. Naturally, the Unit has felt obliged to comply with those requests and consequently has had much less control over its own programme and much less time than formerly to devote to inspecting operations on its own initiative. If the trend continues, the Unit might be forced to ask for more secretariat assistance and a larger budget. The Unit does not wish to imply that the new practice is necessarily undesirable, but merely to draw attention to it particularly because it appears to be the result, not of a considered judgement by Governments, but of a series of ad hoc decisions. If the trend continues, it would also change the character of the assistance that JIU could provide.

E. INSPECTION REPORTS ISSUED BETWEEN 1 JULY 1973 AND 30 JUNE 1974

22. The following reports were issued between 1 July 1973 and 30 June 1974:

- (a) Report on the use of experts and consultants in the United Nations (JIU/REP/73/3, dated July 1973)

23. The Fifth Committee, at the twenty-sixth session of the General Assembly, requested the Joint Inspection Unit to include in its work programme for 1972 "an overall review of the question of experts and consultants hired by the different services of the United Nations" and to submit its findings to the General Assembly at its twenty-seventh session. However, for the reasons mentioned in the Fifth Report on the Activities of the Joint Inspection Unit - July 1972-June 1973 (A/C.5/1515), the Inspectors were able to present only an interim report by the date requested (JIU/REP/72/5, dated August 1972 - A/8811).

24. In their study, the Inspectors address themselves to the following issues: whether the tasks performed by consultants and experts are of a high priority and are required by decisions of legislative bodies; whether expenditure on this type of temporary assistance is justified; whether existing procedures for the selection and recruitment of experts and consultants and the evaluation of their work are adequate, and, if not, what is wrong with them and how they can be improved.

25. Their review shows that recourse to outside expertise "has, in the past ten years, spiralled quantitatively and evolved qualitatively". Between 1962 and 1972 expenditure on individual experts and consultants increased more than five times and on ad hoc expert groups more than doubled. Also, during this ten-year period, the variety of

services performed by outside expertise multiplied to such a degree that the terms "consultant" and "expert" now describe virtually anyone contracted to do jobs which, for one reason or another, the Secretariat is unable to do itself. While agreeing that occasional recourse to outside expertise is inevitable, given the changing role of the United Nations and the consequent evolution of the functions of the Secretariat, the Inspectors think that it has become excessive.

26. Their investigations show that a great number of projects conducted through outside experts have been merely "by and large satisfactory", while others were outright failures. The Inspectors ascertained that these poor results could be attributed almost invariably to faulty controls, or their absence altogether, in the following areas: (i) substantive programming; (ii) the selection of consultants; (iii) the application of administrative and financial procedures; and (iv) substantive control during their implementation. They noted also that in the most recent years there has been a consistent and often deliberate over-budgeting of funds for outside expertise. Lastly, the Inspectors found that the United Nations has no administrative arrangements and procedures drawn up specifically for outside experts and that their selection left much to be desired.

27. After consideration of the various factors mentioned above, the Inspectors came to the conclusion that there is room for a substantial reduction in expenditure on the account for "Outside expertise", without prejudicing the essential and priority activities of the United Nations in the field of economic and social development. They believe that (a) the ceiling of the annual expenditure for "Outside consultants"<sup>4/</sup>, in 1974 and 1975, should not exceed \$2.25 million, (b) the administrative and financial rules should be enforced, and if necessary strengthened, (c) at the end of this period, the General Assembly may wish to assess the results of such measures. These ideas are developed through seven main recommendations which deal specifically with budgeting methods, criteria for consideration of requests for funds, formulation of programmes, ad hoc expert groups. It is also suggested that "the Secretary-General should be invited to submit to the General Assembly a report as to the measures he proposes to take in the light of" the report.

28. The report, together with the Secretary-General's comments thereon, was presented to the twenty-eighth session of the General Assembly (A/9112 and Add.1) which decided to defer its consideration until the twenty-ninth session "when it should be considered as a matter of priority".

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<sup>4/</sup> Individual experts and consultants and ad hoc expert groups combined.

(b) Reports on UNESCO regional centres

29. In January 1973, the Director-General of UNESCO requested the Joint Inspection Unit to undertake an inspection of certain regional centres which were due to cease receiving the Organization's aid in 1973 or 1974.

(i) Report on the Regional School Building Centre for Latin America and the Caribbean (CONESCAL) (JIU/REP/73/4, dated November 1973)

30. The Inspector's philosophy underlying the evaluation of the work of this Centre is based on the need for the adoption of a unified approach to economic and social development. Education being a fundamental ingredient of social development, he thinks that the whole education process - and therefore the educational facilities - should be reassessed.

31. The report comments on: (a) the legal and institutional position of CONESCAL; (b) its programme of work; (c) its administration and finances; and (d) its future activities. CONESCAL was established in Mexico City in September 1963. After a detailed survey of the various agreements ruling the life of the Centre, the Inspector reaches the conclusion that CONESCAL's legal and institutional position is irregular and that its status should be reviewed so as to make it truly international.

32. CONESCAL's basic functions are concentrated on the following aspects: support for the modernization of the educational service; assistance in rationalizing the components of education; promotion of the study and definition of educational programmes and projects; maintenance, as a priority function, of the technical advice services; and promotion of more joint research and technical co-operation activities with the more highly-developed countries.

33. These objectives are reflected in the Centre's fundamental activities: (a) direct technical assistance; (b) training courses; and (c) publications, including applied research and information. In his evaluation of these activities, the Inspector recognized that the most important result achieved by CONESCAL has been to promote an appreciation of the place that school building construction should occupy in development plans. He thinks, however, that direct technical assistance should be considerably changed in the future, and in particular be adapted qualitatively and quantitatively to the needs of different sub-regions. Training courses and the programme of research and publications should also be realigned to meet new needs.

34. The Inspector considers that the administrative management of CONESCAL has improved and is presently acceptable, but he foresees financial difficulties in the coming years and thinks that expenditure may have to be considerably reduced. He makes a number of suggestions in order to find additional sources of financing and once again emphasizes the need for CONESCAL to have a really international status which would enable it to benefit from regular sources of income.

35. Based on the above-mentioned observations, the Inspector's recommendations are divided into three categories addressed to: CONESCAL; UNESCO; and CONESCAL and UNESCO combined. The first category concerns CONESCAL's legal and institutional aspect, its administrative and financial aspect, and the programming of its work. In the second category, the Inspector recommends that UNESCO should continue to support CONESCAL in every possible way other than by direct assistance. He also suggests that, in future, inspections of centres or institutes should take place earlier. In the third category, he recommends that CONESCAL and UNESCO establish a new technical co-operation relationship.

36. This report, sent to the Director-General of UNESCO on 22 November 1973, was transmitted to the ninety-fourth session of the Executive Board, together with the Director-General's comments thereon (94 EX/8).

(ii) Report on the UNESCO Regional Centre for Book Development in Asia (Karachi)  
(JIU/REF/74/2, dated April 1974)

37. In a first part, the Inspector recalls the various resolutions adopted by the General Conference from 1954 to 1972, which show the development of ideas from "the planning and the production of reading material especially designed for new literates" to "the formulation of book-development programmes and development of the national book industries".

38. The UNESCO Regional Centre for Reading Material in South Asia was established in Karachi on 1 August 1958. During a first phase, which ended on 31 December 1968, the Centre's mandate was to assist Member States in the provision of non-educational books and reading material for new literates. The Inspector thinks that the work accomplished during this period is impressive.

39. In 1968, the General Conference approved a reorientation of the Karachi Centre. It was to become the focal point of UNESCO's book-development activities in the Asian region and its title was changed to that of Regional Centre for Book Development in Asia. Among the many activities performed by the Centre, the Inspector notes with

interest the special emphasis given to the institution in each Asian country of a National Book Development Board. In his opinion, "these bodies ... are a prerequisite to any well co-ordinated, realistic and meaningful book-development programme ...". He further outlines the budget and the staff of the Centre, and indicates its programme of work for the years 1973-1974 and 1975-1976.

40. In evaluating the work of the Centre, the Inspector says that, despite the impressive task performed, book production is far from reaching the necessary level, mainly in the less-developed of the developing countries of the region. He thinks that UNESCO should concentrate its efforts on helping these countries, both with respect to reading material and book development. While recognizing that more recently the Centre has been placing emphasis on book production, the Inspector points out that he was unable to detect any type of planning related to reading material development. In his opinion, the urgent need of the Asian countries is in the field of "reading material" - rather than "books" as defined by UNESCO itself - and therefore the reorientation of the Centre in 1968 was not a fortunate move.

41. Referring to the Tokyo Book Development Centre, established by Japan in 1969 and assisted financially by UNESCO, the Inspector notes that there is a clear duplication with some of the activities of the Karachi Centre. He suggests that UNESCO should study in depth the idea of assigning one region of the Asian continent to the Karachi Centre and another region to the Tokyo Centre.

42. The Inspector recalls the UNESCO General Conference's statement that the formulation of national book-development programmes should be "integrated in overall economic and social planning", and the General Assembly and ECOSOC request for a "unified approach to development". The inclusion of functional literacy programmes in development planning would be one way of fulfilling this aim.

43. Surprised by the lack of co-ordination between, respectively, the book development, the libraries development, and the educational programmes, the Inspector wonders if the vertical structure of UNESCO prevents any multi-disciplinary approach to the promotion of cultural activities. Concerning the libraries, he thinks that in developing countries the old concept of "library-museum" should be replaced by that of informal and easy-to-reach "reading-centres" provided with light reading material. Mentioning the critical shortage of printing paper, especially in Asia, he suggests that UNESCO should study ways and means of improving the situation in the developing countries.

44. The Inspector's recommendations, based on the principle that UNESCO should keep helping the Asian countries in the above-mentioned fields, bear essentially on the creation of National Book Development Centres in each country; on the priority to be given to the less-developed countries; on the necessity to formulate a long-term inter-disciplinary programme; on the possibility of helping Asian countries on a sub-regional basis. He further suggests that UNESCO, and other specialized agencies concerned, should assist Member States in drafting overall comprehensive socio-economic development plans; should make joint efforts to avoid the wastage of printing paper and to increase its production.

45. This report was sent to the Director-General of UNESCO on 30 April 1974.

(c) Report on the need for a revised concept on UNDP regional training programmes in the least-developed countries: the East African case (JIU/REF/73/5, dated December 1973)

46. This report is a review of UNDP-assisted regional training institutions in East Africa. Its main purpose is to evaluate the basic concept and the practical steps taken in the UNDP programmes and to see: (a) if these really meet the needs of those countries; (b) if UNDP could improve the use of resources in these programmes. In pursuit of this objective, the Inspectors made a field inspection of the following six major regional training institutions all located in the East African Community:

RAF-66-081 (UNDP-ICAO)	The East African School of Aviation	- Nairobi
RAF-70-149 (UNDP-ICAO)	The East African Flying School	- Soroti
RAF-68-109 (UNDP-UN)	The East African Railways and Harbours Training and Development	- Nairobi
RAF-71-199 (UNDP-WMO)	The East African Institute for Meteorological Training and Research	- Nairobi
RAF-71-201 (UNDP-ILO)	The Vocational Training Centre	- Arusha
RAF-71-155 (UNDP-ITU)	Telecommunications and Postal Training, East Africa	- Nairobi

47. They explain their choice of the East African projects by the fact that it covers countries which are members of the East African Community - which, in their opinion, constitutes a solid basis for regional co-operation in East Africa - and also because ten of Africa's sixteen least-developed among developing countries belong to this sub-region, some of which are also land-locked.

48. After a description of the general background to the training needs in East Africa, in particular of the East African Community and of its role concerning the training projects, the Inspectors make a detailed appraisal of the operations of each of the six regional training projects they have inspected. They were able to identify on the one hand a number of important defects concerning both the selection of projects and their execution: wrong choice, substantial differences between objectives and goals achieved, administrative delays, duplication, staff problems, particularly the delays in the appointment and training of the national counterpart personnel; and on the other, commendable achievements in furthering regional co-operation.

49. The Inspectors' evaluation leads to a general discussion on the need for a revised concept of the UNDP training programmes in the least-developed countries. Recalling that many General Assembly, ECOSOC and UNCTAD III resolutions have indicated the very special problems faced by these countries, they think that "the urgency, the quality and the quantity of the training of trainers required for the least-developed countries are unique, and unique methods of approach are called for ...".

50. In their conclusions, the Inspectors say that the UNDP regional training programmes in East Africa could be considered to have had 33 per cent success and 67 per cent failure. The failures are attributed to: the frequent lack of appointment of counterpart personnel; the poor quality of some projects; poorly drafted project documents; insufficient training and briefing of the project personnel and managers; and the weak institutional framework within which they operate. Bearing in mind the special socio-economic and political set-up of the countries concerned, the Inspectors believe that priority should be given to the training of government personnel and technicians able to fulfil the essential administrative functions and "to prepare the inventory of human, natural and institutional resources as basic data for any rational developing programme". They also recommend greater emphasis in the training of local instructors, so that when the project comes to an end there will be local instructors qualified to carry on the work.

51. Although based on the observations made in East Africa, the Inspectors' recommendations could be extended to other UNDP training projects in developing countries. They suggest that such projects should be attached to an already existing institution or university to facilitate their survival; multinational



training institutions should be encouraged; the project documents should be more carefully drafted and contain specific provisions for: the follow-up by the executing agency after the termination of the project; the appointment on time of counterpart personnel; the administrative delays, the share of the responsibility to be vested in the UNDP Resident Representative, in addition to efforts made by the Project Manager and the Executing Agency, for ensuring the timely appointment of the counterpart personnel by the host government, and their timely training by the Executing Agency. In the selection of projects, the "training-for-development" concept should have priority. Co-ordinated guidelines on the management of training institutions should be produced urgently.

52. The Inspectors' last two recommendations deal with the question of IPF for EAC and the briefing and preparation of the project personnel. The first recommendation requests UNDP to give the EAC and similar regional groupings their own IPF in accordance with the UNDP Governing Council Consensus of 1970 on the introduction of the country programming approach to inter-country projects. This stated that the programming of assistance should be based broadly on the same general principles as set for country programming and that it should be systematically related to the development priorities of the countries concerned and as far as possible planned in advance over a period of years. The other recommendation requests the executing agency to prepare project personnel, especially the project managers, more thoroughly than they have done in the past, on the objectives of the projects, their role in execution of the projects and on the local conditions and national needs.

53. This report, which concerns directly seven executing and participating agencies of the United Nations family (UNDP, ICAO, UN/ESA, WMO, ITU, UPU and ILO) was sent to the Secretary-General of the United Nations and to the executive heads of the specialized agencies on 25 January 1974 for transmission to their governing organs.

(d) Report on UNICEF-assisted transport operations (JIU/REP/73/6, dated December 1973)

54. This report was prepared at the request of the Executive Director of UNICEF in July 1972. It was subsequently agreed that the survey should be carried out in 1973 on a world-wide basis.

55. Firstly, the Inspector indicates the essential elements of UNICEF policy in regard to transport, and the administrative machinery (instructions and guidance to UNICEF representatives, appointment of Vehicle Management Advisers in New York and the regional offices, etc.) which has been set up to carry it out. He points out that,

since the beginning of UNICEF's activities, the provision of vehicles has been an essential part of its services; UNICEF expenditure on programme transport (i.e. vehicles, spare parts, equipment for workshops, etc.) for the three-year period 1970-1972 inclusive is about 16 per cent of total programme expenditure.

56. In the second part, the Inspector presents a survey of the situation, and attempts to assess the progress achieved, in the six regions visited, i.e. the Eastern Mediterranean, South Central Asia, East Asia and Pakistan, East Africa, West Africa, and Latin America. His assessment is based on discussions and interviews in the various regions with UNICEF staff, UNDP resident representatives and other senior UN officials, and with officials in the Ministries concerned. He also visited over thirty UNICEF-assisted vehicle management and repair workshops. In a special section, he deals with the maintenance and repair of health equipment, a problem which came to his notice during his inspection.

57. In the last part of his report, the Inspector attempts to answer two main questions: (a) how far has UNICEF's transport policy succeeded? (b) what measures are needed to remedy any shortcomings? Following a brief recapitulation of the basis and objectives of UNICEF's transport policy and of the methods adopted to achieve those objectives, he concludes that, despite many shortcomings, the general situation is not discouraging. Therefore his recommendations do not call for any fundamental changes, but "are designed to make existing policy and procedures more flexible and to adapt them to changing circumstances". It is also hoped that they will lead to net savings.

58. In his main recommendations, the Inspector gives special emphasis to the question of supply and selection of vehicles. He thinks that the need for economy and restraint in the provision of project vehicles should be written into standing instructions to programme officers; that the Regional Vehicle Management Advisers should be consulted on all aspects of transport requirements for projects; and that the potential advantages of purchasing locally-assembled and/or locally-manufactured vehicles should be borne in mind. He also enumerates a number of measures aimed at economy in this field. Further recommendations include a higher priority to the poorer countries; a greater emphasis on the training of transport personnel, where possible in co-operation with other UN agencies; a strengthening of the system of vehicle management advisers, including the appointment of a separate adviser for the East African region; a more

flexible policy in regard to the ownership of vehicles; and the revision of standing instructions relating to transport.

59. This report was sent to the Secretary-General of the United Nations and to the Deputy Executive Director of UNICEF on 31 January 1974. It was transmitted to the UNICEF Executive Board (1974 session) together with the Executive Director's comments thereon (E/ICEF/L.1302).

(e) Report on medium-term planning in the United Nations System (JIU/REP/74/1, dated January 1974)

60. Despite its title, this report directly concerns only five organizations (United Nations, the ILO, UNESCO, FAO and WHO) and UNDP. It might possibly affect the other organizations, but the recommendations are not addressed to them directly. This report also deals with the problems created by the country programming of operational activities in UNDP in relation to medium-term planning.

61. The Inspector recalls that, in a first stage, the need for a more rational and clearer presentation of the activities of the international organizations has led to the gradual adoption of programming and planning methods, a movement which began very early and has been speeded up considerably in the last few years. Now it seems necessary to sum up the situation in order to define clearly the next stage in progress towards a more efficient system for the programming and planning of economic and social activities. This definition should emerge from the combination of two exercises: on the one hand, formulation of better programming and planning methods, and, on the other, review of the purpose and general conception of the activities of the international organizations, in order to give a new orientation to these activities.

62. Accordingly, the Inspector considers successively: (a) the present situation: programme budgets, medium-term plan documents, reactions of the governing bodies of the various organizations, and country programming; (b) existing priorities and present objectives: what the international organizations are doing; (c) the necessary review of the decision-making procedures as regards the identification of problems, priorities and objectives; (d) the reorientation of technical co-operation activities and of study and research activities; (e) the problem of the "intergovernmental machinery" and the establishment of the second stage in the construction of a programming system.

63. While noting that experience with the two-year programme budgets has been fairly satisfactory, the Inspector believes that decisive improvements can soon be made and methods of presentation harmonized and he suggests a number of measures to achieve

this end. Concerning medium-term planning, he thinks that a satisfactory method of presentation is still very far from having been realized and he analyzes the main difficulties which the organizations have to face. The Inspector observes that if the governing bodies have in general adopted programme budgets, there are very serious misgivings on medium-term planning. In the field of country programming, the results are not really satisfactory either, apparently for lack of a rational and coherent link between the needs of each country and the choice of projects.

64. From an examination of the content of the five organizations' programmes, the Inspector notes that the stages of advancement reached in defining the activities of each organization are very unequal. Consideration of the programmes as a whole brings out the following main points: differences between the "profiles" of the different organizations; importance of technical co-operation compared with other kinds of activity; marked stability in the distribution of funds to technical co-operation activities; tendency towards proliferation and continuous expansion of the programmes. The Inspector thinks that in most cases a correct choice of problems, priorities and objectives can only be made by means of "descriptive estimates" which should lead to "proposed medium-term intermediate-stage objectives".

65. The systematic use of such estimates should make it possible to change the present pattern of relationships between the secretariats and the governing bodies of the various organizations. The present three-step pattern should be replaced by a five-step pattern, slightly more complex, but which would be much more satisfactory both in theory and in practice. To make this pattern fully effective, it would appear essential to establish a system of complementarity between the decisions or recommendations of the governing bodies of the organizations and the Governing Council of UNDP, and the recommendations of the regional committees and decisions taken at the world level.

66. The Inspector thinks, however, that a mere adjustment of procedures will not be sufficient. It seems indispensable to modernize the hitherto elementary methods of technical co-operation, reduce the present dispersal of research activities and, lastly, establish some sort of complementarity between the two types of activity. Only through a rigorous method, necessarily based on "country studies", will it be possible to reorientate technical co-operation activities. The country studies could serve three purposes: to facilitate the dissemination of better economic and social information; to help in the preparation of technical diagnoses by economic and social sector; basically to provide the necessary raw material for the work of consolidation of

essential information for the establishment of medium-term plans and country programmes. Deriving from these country studies, the genuine information system should comprise two series of documents which would be fed into two circuits: one for the regional committees, the governing body of each organization and the Governing Council of UNDP; and the other, comprising in-depth studies, to provide a scientific basis for the reorientation of the technical co-operation activities.

67. While believing that there is no urgent need to solve the problem of modifying the "intergovernmental machinery", the Inspector suggests, as a first step, the organization of informal working meetings of representatives of the governing bodies of the various organizations on the one hand, and on the other, of the members of ACABQ and CPC. For the launching of the second stage in the construction of a programming system, he suggests the selection of a common period for the medium-term plans of the five organizations, and the adoption of a time-table for the preparatory work.

68. Based on this study, the Inspector's main recommendations bear on the following points: harmonization of programme budget presentation; country studies; consolidated country studies and "proposed medium-term intermediate-stage objectives"; introduction of a new system of information and decision-making in connexion with appropriation limits and programme content; studies regarding a new conception of the technical co-operation of the international organizations; comprehensive reorientation of studies and of the international framework of principles and methods; review of the conception of the International Development Strategy for the 1980's. In his concluding remarks, the Inspector lays stress on, inter alia, the fact that adoption of the methods proposed should not involve additional expenditure.

69. This report was sent to the Secretary-General of the United Nations and to the executive heads of the organizations concerned on 11 March 1974. It was also transmitted, for information, to the executive heads of the other specialized agencies.

(f) Report on the use of travel funds in the World Health Organization (JIU/REP/74/3, dated April 1974)

70. This report is limited to the use of travel funds at WHO Headquarters in Geneva. In a first part, the Inspector recalls the various resolutions and decisions governing the travel of delegates to the World Health Assembly, the travel expenses of members of the Executive Board and of members of expert committees. He thinks that the reasons which, twenty-five years ago, had dictated such rules no longer exist and that WHO should reconsider, in a restrictive way, both the entitlement to reimbursement of travel expenses and the standard of travel.

71. In a second part, the Inspector reviews the travel of staff on duty (mission). Before going into details, he notes how difficult it is to obtain a clear picture of funds spent under this item since the budget estimates do not provide any breakdown of the various categories coming under "travel on official business". He further says that the system in force in WHO for the control of the use of travel funds - i.e. the delegation of authority to the Directors of Divisions - has not proved to be fully effective.

72. As regards the presentation of duty travel requests in the budget estimates, the Inspector got the impression that it has become a routine matter; over the years, the formulation of justification is almost always the same and where an increase is requested, no explanation is given. For this area in which a rationalization of the use of funds is both necessary and feasible, the Inspector thinks that greater detail should be given in the budget estimates.

73. From the inspection of several itineraries, the Inspector questions the way in which they are drawn up. He found out that frequently "travel embraces all countries or cities of a region and sometimes amounts virtually to travel around the world". The explanation given to justify these itineraries did not convince the Inspector. In particular, the quality of the duty-travel reports, which are supposed to allow for an ex post facto assessment of the value of the journey undertaken, raises serious doubts in his mind. He suggests the creation of an evaluating unit in charge of both the evaluation of the proposed travel and the evaluation of the results of the travel.

74. In analyzing travel authorizations, the Inspector noticed how frequently certain cities were visited in the course of one year. He wonders if in some cases other means of communication (telephone, cables, etc.) could not achieve the same purpose. Through examples, he also shows how some staff members are frequently absent for long periods - sometimes those who are responsible for Divisions or units - and what a high percentage of the total staff in each service it represents. The Inspector thinks that this extensive travel should be reduced.

75. While agreeing that officials of different disciplines are needed to be present at meetings or other activities, the Inspector is of the view that there are cases where this multiple attendance from the same Division or unit is excessive. He also notes that there seems to be no co-ordination between the regional offices and Headquarters in the field of travel and thinks that many tasks could be performed by staff members from the regional offices which are adequately equipped.

76. The Inspector further reviews the question of excess baggage and of mode and standard of transportation. He considers that excess baggage should be limited to 10 kgs. and for trips longer than two weeks. Recalling the UN General Assembly resolution of December 1973 and the FAO Council decision of November 1972 which restrict considerably the entitlement to travel by air in first class, the Inspector suggests that WHO might follow along the same lines.
77. Based on the above-mentioned observations, the Inspector makes a number of recommendations concerning mainly the entitlement to reimbursement of travel expenses, the standards of accommodation, the reduction of travel funds for some Divisions (10 to 15 per cent), the introduction of an evaluating system, co-ordination between Headquarters and the regional offices, control of the long absence of some staff members from their post at Headquarters
78. This report was sent to the Director-General of WHO on 17 May 1974.
- (g) Report on the pattern of conferences of the United Nations and the possibilities for more rational and economic use of its conference resources (JIU/REP/74/4, dated June 1974)
79. This report was requested by the General Assembly in operative paragraph 5 of A/RES/2960 (XXVII) of 21 December 1972. In the introduction, the Inspectors recall and analyze the various resolutions and the reports of both the Secretary-General and the ACABQ which, since 1969, gradually led to the present study. In view of these, they decided that the study would have as its objective "the development of suggestions ... designed to ensure the most rational and economic use of the administrative premises in New York, Geneva and Vienna and of the staff assigned to conference and meetings services at these locations". The Inspectors also decided that the study, in its attempt to achieve this objective, would inter alia suggest possible changes in the present pattern of conferences.
80. As an essential basis to the discussion of the problem, the Inspectors first present a summary of the efforts made since 1952 to deal with the pattern of conferences. This is followed by a detailed analysis of the various factors which must be taken into account in any effort to handle the question. They consider successively: psychological factors; the United Nations conference capacity and its present use; the problem of providing interpretation services which has become very serious today; co-ordination within the United Nations and with the specialized agencies; meetings of UN bodies away from their established bases; the possibility

of transferring conference staff from New York to Geneva; the new UN programme and budget cycle; problems created for the conference programme by the establishment and the meetings programmes of subsidiary bodies; the final approval of UN conference programmes and their cost.

81. The Inspectors then make a comprehensive review of possible changes in the present pattern of conferences. Referring to A/RES/2609 (XXIV), they note that the basic principle of the present pattern is that, apart from certain stated exceptions, "United Nations bodies shall plan to meet at their respective established headquarters". They point out that this principle which, in their opinion should be maintained, is frequently disregarded by a number of United Nations bodies and their secretariats. In order to obtain a more even distribution of meetings throughout the year, in particular at present peak periods and especially the May-August period in Geneva, they examine one by one the various recognized exceptions to the basic principle and suggest a number of possible changes. The Inspectors further deal with meetings other than those covered by the calendar of conferences; meetings held away from established headquarters on the invitation of Governments which agree to pay the additional costs; major special conferences. Recalling the recommendations of the Ad Hoc Committee of Experts to Examine the Finances of the United Nations and the Specialized Agencies, they note that very little attention has been paid to their implementation and analyze the reasons for this failure.

82. Finally, the Inspectors say that, despite their initial lack of enthusiasm for the idea, the study has led them to conclude that the establishment of a committee on conferences is "essential in the present circumstances" and they explain the reasons why. They think that the General Assembly, through its Fifth Committee, "must have the last word" with respect to the conference programme and that the Fifth Committee must be assisted by a standing governmental committee on conferences which should be given proper authority and adequate terms of reference. The Inspectors enumerate the various terms of reference which, in their view, are essential to enable the committee to perform its task successfully in the present situation. These include acting for the General Assembly between sessions in making decisions on certain matters relating to the conference programme.

83. As requested by the General Assembly, the Inspectors further deal with the question of including Vienna in the UN pattern of conferences. They take into account the views of the Austrian Government, expressed in a Memorandum of 18 March 1974.



circulated later as a General Assembly document (A/9589), and particularly the announced intention of that Government to place conference facilities and office space at the disposal of the United Nations. They analyze the situation in Vienna during the period 1975-1977 - which coincides with both the probable duration of the next pattern of conferences and the period of construction by the Austrian Government of an International Centre - and the period thereafter. They compare the situation at the present time in New York and Geneva, on the one hand, and Vienna on the other, with regard to conference facilities, simultaneous interpretation staff, substantive staff, hotel accommodation and all related financial implications. The Inspectors suggest a number of decisions to the General Assembly in order to test, during the period 1975-1977, the potential of Vienna as a major UN conference centre. Turning to the period after 1977, they examine in detail certain points arising from the Austrian Memorandum. While recognizing that "there are promising possibilities for expanding the UN conference programme in Vienna after 1977", the Inspectors say that they are not "in a position to make specific suggestions with respect to the nature of such a possible expansion". They make, however, a number of recommendations.

84. The Inspectors' main conclusions, recommendations and suggestions can be summarized as follows: it is necessary to establish a committee on conferences, similar to that which existed in the 1967-1969 period, but with greater authority and additional functions; because of the serious problem today in providing interpretation services for conferences, especially for the Russian and Chinese languages, regular staff should be gradually recruited in Geneva within the next years instead of free-lance staff, up to a total of some fifteen teams; such an expansion should be conditioned upon the levelling off of the Geneva conference programme and co-ordination with the specialized agencies; at the same time, adequate training programmes should be arranged while recruitment policies and terms should be reviewed; in the meantime, the present overall level of the conference programme should not be significantly increased; co-ordination within the United Nations and with the specialized agencies should be improved. Regarding Vienna, the Inspectors recommend that consultations be initiated with the Austrian Government and with the IAEA; for the 1975-1977 period they suggest that certain specific conferences might be held in Vienna. They also suggest that under certain conditions the number of major special conferences be increased from one to five, that the General Assembly might wish to review the pattern of its sessions in the light of the biennial programme and budget cycle, that

the creation and the meeting programmes of subsidiary bodies be more carefully controlled and that a study be made of the optimum size of such bodies.

85. The Inspectors pay tribute to the staff who, despite some lapses, has maintained a high standard of conference servicing under difficult conditions. They note that for the biennium 1974-1975, the cost of the conference programme is about 20 per cent of the gross budget.

86. This report was completed in June 1974.