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DEVELOPMENT AND INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC CO-OPERATION: SCIENCE  
AND TECHNOLOGY FOR DEVELOPMENT

Report of the Director-General for Development and International  
Economic Co-operation, on behalf of the Secretary-General, on  
the Preparatory Meeting on the United Nations Financing System  
for Science and Technology for Development

Introduction

1. Pursuant to resolution 3 (VI) of the Intergovernmental Committee on Science and Technology for Development, 1/ a preparatory meeting was convened on 30 and 31 October 1984, inter alia, to enable Governments to indicate their individual contributions to the United Nations Financing System for Science and Technology for Development. This report is being submitted to the General Assembly in pursuance of this resolution requesting the Secretary-General to inform the Assembly on the outcome of the preparatory meeting. In calling upon the Secretary-General to arrange a preparatory meeting, the Committee had also invited him to take appropriate measures, in particular, to undertake intensive consultations with Governments.
2. The Secretary-General had sent a letter of appeal to Governments on 31 July 1984 in which he emphasized that the successful conclusion of negotiations on the Financing System would be highly desirable because of the efforts already made and even more so because of the importance of the issue itself.

Consultations prior to the Preparatory Meeting

3. The Director-General for Development and International Economic Co-operation and the Administrator of UNDP undertook, on behalf of the Secretary-General, a series of consultations with individual Governments and with major groups. During those consultations, the significance of science and technology in the development

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\* Reissued for technical reasons.

process was once again emphasized by the representatives. It was also stated in the consultations that interested Governments wished to continue efforts to mobilize resources for the Financing System. There was emphasis on the very useful work that had been, and continued to be, done by the Financing System to strengthen science and technology for development. During the consultations, several participating Governments emphasized the significance that they attached to the legislative arrangements for the long-term Financing System that had been worked out in the past few years. At the same time, some participating Governments indicated their willingness to approach the issue in a flexible manner.

4. In the course of the consultations, the Administrator of UNDP indicated that as a result of savings realized through staff reductions and new earnings, resources existed to meet the Financing System's administrative budget requirements through 1985. However, both the Director-General and the Administrator reiterated that in the absence of progress towards meeting the long-term resource targets and without adequate operational funds, it would be neither desirable nor responsible to maintain the present Financing System as an administrative entity only.

#### Discussions and conclusions of the Preparatory Meeting

5. The Preparatory Meeting addressed the following issues:

(a) Indication by interested Governments of individual contributions to the long-term Financing System in the first year, and if possible, the succeeding two years. It was recognized that at the current stage, precise and binding financial commitments were not expected;

(b) Depending on the outcome of the assessment of the total resources likely to be available, consideration of such follow-up action as Governments might desire.

6. Individual delegations were invited to indicate their intentions regarding financial commitments to the Financing System for 1985 and beyond. In response, 16 Governments and the interested member States of the European Economic Community indicated their readiness to contribute a total sum of about \$10 million for the first year of the Financing System. Of those Governments, three also made indications of financial contributions for the succeeding two years. Twelve other Governments stated that they intended to contribute but would announce the amount at a later time. Several other Governments indicated that while they fully recognized the importance of science and technology for development, they were not in a position to state their intentions during the course of the meeting. A few Governments also indicated their interest in providing substantial amounts of non-core resources to the System.

7. Most Governments indicating individual contributions stated that those resources would be made available only if the requirements of the relevant legislation were fully met. Some of those Governments referred explicitly to specific requirements, among others, that the amount for the initial year should be at least \$50 million in core resources, with a progressive build-up in the following years, and that the System should represent a joint and mutual undertaking by both developed and developing countries, and equitable sharing of resources also within groups. Another Government was of the view that

contributions should be made without pre-conditions, as was the case in regard to that Government's contribution. However, despite these differences, the overall view was a desire on the part of interested Governments to ensure a viable System, one that had a good chance for effective long-term operations.

8. As it was evident that the aggregate amount likely to be available was substantially below the envisaged target and that, therefore, an important requirement for launching the System on a long-term basis had not been met, it was agreed at the meeting to consider further steps to be taken.

9. During the meeting on 31 October, the implications of the shortfall in available resources were reviewed. It was clear from the many statements made that Governments wished to continue to explore the possibilities of establishing long-term arrangements. It was suggested therefore that the possibility of conducting such negotiations should be given upper as soon as possible. To this effect, a suggestion was put forward that an informal, non-extended intergovernmental working group should be constituted to continue the negotiations. Such a working group would, with the assistance of the Secretariat, prepare recommendations for consideration by the Intergovernmental Committee on Science and Technology for Development at its seventh session, in 1985. This could be accomplished without any additional financial implications.

10. A large number of Governments indicated their support for that proposal and offered clarifications and suggestions regarding the procedures of such a working group. It was generally emphasized that the working group should explore all possibilities that would help launch the System on a viable, long-term basis with as wide a participation as possible.

11. It was recommended that the working group should begin its deliberations as soon as practicable during the current session of the General Assembly and could, if necessary, continue beyond the end of the session. It was recommended that the Secretariat could be requested to assist the working group and, in particular, to present suggestions regarding possible approaches to facilitate the establishment of the long-term System. A suggestion was made that the working group should, also, address the question of the continuity of operations of the present Financing System.

12. Since the seventh session of the Intergovernmental Committee was scheduled for May/June 1985, there was some urgency for the General Assembly at the current session to consider these suggestions for further action. In the meanwhile, both the Director-General and the Administrator of UNDP reiterated the appeal of the Secretary-General to Governments to ensure adequate contributions to the present Financing System at the annual United Nations Pledging Conference for Development Activities on 7 and 8 November.

#### Notes

1/ See Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-ninth Session, Supplement No. 37 (A/39/37), annex.