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JOINT INSPECTION UNIT

Implementation of the recommendations of the Joint
Inspection Unit

Report of the Secretary-General

1. The General Assembly at its thirty-second session adopted resolution 32/199 by which it decided that the future reports of the Secretary-General on implementation of the recommendations of the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) should provide concise information only with regard to those reports that have been indicated by the Unit to be of interest to the General Assembly, one of its Main Committees, or its other subsidiary organs. This report is submitted in accordance with that decision.

2. Consequently, in this report, the Secretary-General has included the status of implementation of the recommendations of the Joint Inspection Unit relating to the following reports:

(a) Implications of additional languages in the United Nations system (A/32/237; A/33/340; A/33/368);

(b) Programming and evaluation in the United Nations (A/33/226 and Add.1 and 2);

(c) Evaluation in the United Nations system (A/33/225 and Add.1);

(d) United Nations Programme in Public Administration and Finance 1972-1976 (A/33/227 and Add.1);

(e) General Service staff of the United Nations and Geneva-based specialized agencies (A/32/327; A/33/129);

* A/34/150.

(f) Women in the Professional category and above in the United Nations system (A/33/105 and Add.1);

(g) First-class travel in the United Nations organizations (A/32/272/Add.1).

A. Report on the implications of additional languages
in the United Nations system

3. The report of JIU on the implications of additional languages in the United Nations system (JIU/REP/77/5), 1/ undertaken at the joint suggestion of the United Nations and the World Health Organization, was submitted to the General Assembly at its thirty-third session, together with the comments thereon of the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination (ACC) (A/33/340) and the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ) (A/33/368). The report gave a brief structural and analytical survey of the existing language services in the United Nations system. It dealt mainly with services directly related to meetings (including interpretation, the drafting and revision of records, the translation of basic documents and of meeting records, and the printing and distribution of documents).

4. The Inspectors noted among the main problems the difficulty of recruiting qualified staff for interpretation and translation from and into new languages, the high cost of employing free-lance staff, and what they called the "multiplier effect" of adding new languages. The advantages of permanent staff with career prospects were weighed against those of free-lance staff which offer greater flexibility in the use of available resources. The possibility was mentioned of establishing permanent cadres within the United Nations to provide services to other organizations on a reimbursable basis, subject to certain specified priorities.

5. The Inspectors set forth 16 specific recommendations, dealing first with the use of additional languages and then with the related question of economies in existing services.

6. In their comments on the JIU report (A/33/340), the organizations expressed general agreement with the conclusions reached and reported that where feasible and within their competence they had already taken, or were taking, the action recommended.

7. In its observations (A/33/368), ACABQ recommended that the General Assembly refer the report of JIU and the related comments of ACC to the Committee on Conferences. Pursuant to that proposal, the Secretary-General has brought the matter to the attention of that Committee.

1/ Submitted to the General Assembly at its thirty-second session under cover of a note by the Secretary-General (A/32/237).

8. Of the 16 recommendations put forward by the Inspectors, 13 related to action that could be taken only by Member States. The other three, which are partly within the competence of the Secretary-General, are dealt with below.

Recommendation 8. Further and continued efforts should be made to reduce and control the production of documents, especially records of meetings.

9. Although the United Nations Secretariat is required to produce all documents for which it has legislative authority, the Secretary-General has given constant attention to specific measures that can be taken at the Secretariat level to reduce the volume of documentation. In an administrative instruction of 5 January 1977 (ST/AI/189/Add.20), for example, he directed that documents originating in the Secretariat for submission to United Nations organs and bodies should not, except in certain carefully controlled cases, exceed 32 pages in their mimeographed version.

10. On a proposal by the Secretary-General, endorsed by the Committee on Conferences, the General Assembly, in its resolution 33/56 of 14 December 1978, authorized the Secretary-General to take certain measures to control and limit documentation.

Recommendation 9. A study should be undertaken with a view to determining whether the permanent language staff at United Nations Headquarters, both in New York and Geneva, should be increased in order to reduce dependence on temporary staff. This should include possible ways of making language services more attractive from a career point of view.

11. The United Nations is continuing to review its working methods with a view to achieving savings. The specific question of the most economical balance between permanent and temporary language staff is reviewed in the preparation of the biennial programme budget estimates, taking into account actual experience. In this connexion, the question of improving career prospects for United Nations language staff is currently being examined within the United Nations Secretariat. The subject of career development in its broader sense is also being reviewed by competent bodies, among others, the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC).

Recommendation 16. The potentialities of technical developments, and especially of the facsimile transmission, by cable or radio, or documents for translation at a central point, should continue to be investigated.

12. The United Nations Secretariat is continuing to investigate the potentialities of technological innovations, but has no specific proposals at this time.

B. Report on programming and evaluation in the United Nations

13. JIU in its report (A/33/226 and Add.1 and 2) reviewed the planning, programming, monitoring and evaluation system in the United Nations and as at the date of its review identified six "gaps" in the programming system which it claimed prevented its effective and efficient functioning. The "gaps" identified were as follows:

(a) The objectives and target dates of subprogrammes are not sufficiently precise and identifiable in the medium-term plan;

(b) Outputs are not well-defined in the programme budget;

(c) Information on work programmes submitted is unreliable, not monitored and no methods exist for determining the actual costs of each activity;

(d) Detailed internal planning at the division and section levels is inadequate and the implementation of programmes is never completed within the target period;

(e) In the budget performance report, there is no monitoring of programme performance and the emphasis is on financial aspects;

(f) The objectives of the subprogrammes do not contain built-in indicators and neither are there regular comprehensive evaluations.

14. To correct the "deficiencies" of the system, JIU listed six recommendations which were endorsed by ACABQ and the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination (CPC) for implementation by the Secretary-General. Details of the recommendations and the stages of implementation are given below:

Recommendation 1. Format of descriptions of subprogramme objectives in the medium-term plan; adoption of a system of time-limited objectives.

(a) There should be explicit criteria distinguishing between portions of a programme which represent continuous functions and those with fixed target dates;

(b) More time-limited objectives should be used in the subprogrammes;

(c) Under the heading "Descriptions of subprogramme objectives" in the medium-term plan, the following items should also be added:

(i) Under the subheading "Objective", a distinction should be made between:

The objective to be attained by the date of completion of the subprogramme; and

The objective of the intermediate stage covered by the medium-term plan concerned.

- (ii) Under the subheading "Problem addressed", there should be a brief but precise description of the present status of the activity considered;
- (iii) Under the subheading "Strategy", the description of the resources that are to be employed should show the relationship between the outputs and the objectives, and the relationship between the strategy for the immediate and intermediate periods. It should also show the relationship between the over-all strategy for the full period of implementation of the subprogramme and the strategy for the period covered by the plan (for example, up to 1981);
- (iv) A list of achievement indicators should be shown in the section on "Expected impact".

15. In its discussion of the JIU report (A/33/226 and Add.1 and 2), CPC agreed on the intent of recommendation 1 and selected 13 programmes to test the feasibility of the recommendation. CPC requested these results to be shown in the medium-term plan of 1982-1985.

16. The Secretary-General, acting in advance of the reporting date set by CPC, submitted experimental results for three programmes to CPC at its 1979 May session (E/AC.51/97 and Add.1 and 2). It is anticipated that the medium-term plan for the period 1982-1985 will show, to the extent possible, those subprogrammes which can be considered to have time-limited objectives and those which do not. The subprogrammes with time-limited objectives will also be classified according to the status expected to be reached at specific cycles in the programme planning process. In the programme element information sheet, (PEIS) (see para. 19 below), the relationship between the outputs and the goals of the subprogrammes are described. Work is continuing in the development of specific indicators.

Recommendation 2. System of identifying "outputs" in programme budgets.

- (a) The system used to identify outputs should be improved by the use of:
 - (i) An identification number of the output including the target date;
 - (ii) The name of the programme element to which the output corresponds;
 - (iii) An accurate description of the nature of the output by an approved nomenclature;
 - (iv) A listing of the primary and, possibly, secondary users of the output;

- (v) One, or more, achievement indicators providing a concise measurement of the expected impact.

- (b) The Secretary-General should prepare a report for consideration by CPC and ACABQ on nomenclature and definition of outputs.

17. A note by the Secretary-General on the identification of output in the programme budget of the United Nations (A/C.5/34/2) has been issued and will be reviewed by CPC and ACABQ. Full implementation is expected by the 1982-1983 biennium when sufficient progress will have been made.

Recommendation 3. Establishment of internal work programmes in divisions.

An internal work programme drawn up by outputs and specifying a precise completion date and production time-table for each output should be established.

18. The Secretary-General has reported in document A/C.5/34/3 on the progress of the development of an internal work programme. The first step has been the development of the PEIS as a basis for the 1980-1981 programme budget formulation. Following adjustment by intergovernmental bodies and approval of the budget by the General Assembly, the implementation schedule (form B) of the PEIS will then be converted to internal work plans for each programme element. This will be the responsibility of each programme manager.

Recommendation 4. Information process for ongoing programme implementation and output costing.

- (a) Documents summarizing the implementation of programmes should be communicated to heads of departments, the budget division and the appropriate intergovernmental committees informing them of the implementation of internal work programmes;

- (b) An exercise in costing of outputs should be undertaken.

19. The internal work programme together with the PEIS referred to in paragraph 5 of the Secretary-General's report will be the basis of an internal system of monitoring. Form C of the PEIS is devised to serve as an effective instrument on the reporting of programme performance. An experimental exercise in actual costing at the programme element level was undertaken in the 1980-1981 programme budget.

Recommendation 5. Monitoring of programme budget performance.

- (a) A biennial report should be prepared in May of the second year of each biennium containing:

A list of all the outputs which, although included in the current programme budget, will not be implemented during the biennium;

Statistical data on the percentage of implementation of each programme and subprogramme;

A detailed report in respect of programmes where implementation rates fall below 70 per cent.

(b) The report on the financial implications of programme changes should be submitted in October of the second year of the biennium.

20. A final report on programme budget performance for the 1978-1979 biennium will be submitted to CPC in May 1980 and the mid-biennial report for the 1980-1981 period will be submitted in May 1981 to CPC using the format suggested by JIU. The final report of the 1978-1979 biennium dealing with financial implications of programme changes will be submitted to the General Assembly at its thirty-fourth session.

Recommendation 6. Evaluation methods and the use of built-in achievement indicators.

(a) Evaluation methods should be improved by the use of achievement indicators;

(b) Achievement indicators should be established according to objective and user;

(c) Achievement indicators should be based on the concept of a clientele or users;

(d) A biennial report on achievement indicators for each programme should be made to the competent intergovernmental committees;

(e) All special evaluation reports concerning a particular programme should provide information on possible improvements to the achievement indicator evaluation methods and make proposals on means of determining the impact of the programme in question.

21. The use of achievement indicators in evaluation methods will be implemented subject to the qualifications in paragraphs 51 to 58 of the Secretary-General's report on this matter (A/33/226/Add.1). Achievement indicators for each programme element are specified to the extent possible in the PEIS. These achievement indicators will be used in the process of monitoring the programme performance as well as in-depth programme evaluation studies.

C. Report on evaluation in the United Nations system

22. In its report on evaluation in the United Nations system (A/33/225 and Add.1), JIU recommended, among other things, that priority should be given to the establishment of an effective internal evaluation system within each organization and the development of broad guidelines for each system.

23. In its discussion of the JIU report on evaluation, CPC at its eighteenth session agreed that evaluation is an integral part of the planning process and should be used as a tool for examining the impact of the various activities performed in the United Nations. In accordance with the suggestion of CPC, an evaluation unit was established and placed in the Programme Planning and Co-ordination Office in the Department of International Economic and Social Affairs. A standing high-level Steering Committee was also established to ensure effective and continuing support of evaluation at all levels of management.

24. The Steering Committee is under the chairmanship of the Director-General for Development and International Economic Co-operation with the rest of the membership consisting of the Under-Secretary-General for Administration, Finance and Management, the Under-Secretary-General for International Economic and Social Affairs, the Assistant Secretary-General for Programme Planning and Co-ordination, the Assistant Secretary-General for Financial Services and the senior personnel of the programme being evaluated. The mandate of the Committee is to establish guidelines and provide assistance in resolving difficult issues encountered by the Evaluation Unit.

25. The first exercise completed under the above arrangement was an evaluation of the transnational corporations programme for the period 1976-1978 (E/AC.51/98 and Add.1 and 2) requested by and submitted to CPC. The methodological approach used in the first exercise was based on guidelines established by the Steering Committee which incorporated recommendations from the pertinent reports of JIU (JIU/REP/77/1 and JIU/REP/78/1), the views expressed by CPC at its eighteenth session and the format presented in the related report of the Secretary-General (E/AC.51/91). However, these guidelines are considered preliminary as the Evaluation Unit, in addition to the evaluation of two other programmes requested by CPC, has scheduled, as one of its activities to be performed in 1980, the development of methodologies for the monitoring and evaluation of programmes in the economic and social sectors of the United Nations system. In the performance of this task, all organizations within the United Nations system will be consulted for suggestions and inputs and will be informed of the results.

D. Report on the United Nations public administration and finance programme, 1972-1976

26. The Secretary-General had submitted detailed comment in his report on the JIU report to CPC (E/1978/42/Add.2) and the General Assembly (A/33/227/Add.1) in 1978. CPC discussed the JIU recommendations and the Secretary-General's report at length at its eighteenth session. The JIU recommendations were also

discussed in the Economic and Social Council at its first and second regular sessions in 1978 as part of the review of the United Nations programme in public administration and finance for development. The present status of major JIU recommendations is indicated below.

Recommendation 1. Reorientation of the public administration and finance programme and design of its objectives.

27. The recommendation had three main elements: (a) reorienting the programme activities more towards the direct support of technical co-operation field projects; (b) changing the formulation of objectives for inclusion in the medium-term plans; and (c) introducing dated objectives. [Objectives to be met by a specific date.]

28. The discussions in CPC revealed that some members agreed with JIU in that the future thrust of the programme should be towards direct support of technical assistance, while others were in favour of orienting the programme more towards the implementation of General Assembly resolution 32/179, which meant also carrying out general studies and surveys. The Economic and Social Council, when reviewing the programme in 1978, requested the Secretary-General to continually monitor changes and trends in public administration and finance with a view to identifying institutional and managerial dimensions of development under different circumstances and to publish results for use of national authorities and international agencies (see document E/1978/6). General Assembly resolutions 32/179 and 33/144 and Economic and Social Council resolution E/1978/60 invite the Secretary-General to continue to study the role of the public sector in the socio-economic development of developing countries.

29. There is a consensus about the importance of the public administration and finance programme, as evidenced particularly from the point of view expressed by the developing countries (see, inter alia, the CPC report in document A/33/38, paras. 588 to 599) and the discussions in the Economic and Social Council. The problem is that, given the limited resources available to the programme, it becomes necessary to establish priorities in respect of the two kinds of activities, i.e. the preparation of technical handbooks and monographs which can be directly used in the technical co-operation programmes and the more general surveys and policy guidelines for consideration by the international legislative bodies and the national authorities which, though foundation for improving public administration and finance capabilities of developing countries generally, are not specifically related to technical co-operation projects. In view of the decisions by the pertinent legislative bodies, the Secretary-General has no choice except to carry out both kinds of activities under the programme.

30. As to the design of objectives for the programme for inclusion in the medium-term plans, it was agreed that the question could only be resolved as part of the over-all planning and programming system for the United Nations.

31. As to the question of "dated" objectives, it was agreed that it was difficult to apply time-limited objectives to the programme under the existing

format and procedures for the preparation of the medium-term plans, and that any Secretariat-wide decisions would automatically apply to the programme, as appropriate.

Recommendation 2. Compilation and completion of an up-to-date list of correspondents with the Division of Public Administration and Finance.

32. This recommendation has already been implemented, and steps are being taken to keep the list of correspondents up to date.

Recommendation 3. Building up a network of co-workers for the implementation of the public administration and finance programme.

33. The recommendation has been taken into account in the preparation of the medium-term plan for 1980-1983. A related aspect of the problem is the co-ordination of activities of the United Nations and specialized agencies. The matter was reviewed by the Consultative Committee on Substantive Questions which has indicated its intention to propose to CPC that an organizational analysis be carried out as a first step in identifying the nature of the problem and possible measures for its solution.

Recommendation 4. Preparation of publications.

34. The recommendation touched upon both the content and format of publications issued by the programme. As to the content, the views expressed under recommendation 1 above regarding the reorientation of the programme are also applicable to this question to the extent that the studies called for by the legislative bodies must remain general and comparative in scope. At the same time, the Secretariat has striven to improve the content of its general publications, as well as that of technical monographs and handbooks, to make them more action-oriented for use by the developing countries. The question of the format is linked to the larger question of the publications of the United Nations and is the subject of a separate study by the Secretariat.

Recommendation 5. Institution of more clear-cut internal methods of work: internal work plans and simplified methods of calculating time spent on jobs.

Recommendation 6. Relationships between research activities and technical co-operation activities.

Recommendation 7. Internal reorganization of the research sections of the Division of Public Administration and Finance.

35. As part of the restructuring of the economic and social sectors of the United Nations system, the public administration and finance programme has been placed in the Department of Technical Co-operation for Development. The Department

is now in the process of formulating its internal organization and working methods, which will automatically apply to the programme.

E. General Service staff of the United Nations and Geneva-based specialized agencies

Recommendation 1. In revising the job classification system for the General Service category, the United Nations organizations and the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC) might consider the possibility of establishing common occupational groups for all organizations and especially for those located in one duty station, particularly in Geneva. The common occupational groups should be as broad as possible, in order to permit adequate mobility and career possibilities within each group and avoid the drawbacks which too specific a definition would create for personnel management.

36. The task of determining the modalities of a classification system for General Service staff at Geneva was entrusted by the United Nations Office at Geneva in 1978 to a Joint Committee composed of representatives of the staff and the administration. Its mandate concerned the formulation of recommendations on the classification system itself and also of conclusions to be used as a basis for the establishment of occupational groups. The draft report of the Committee, which has not yet been formally presented, contains proposals for a job classification system based on points, given in conformity with job factors related to the knowledge and experience required, the responsibility of the post and the physical and mental effort required. It also provides for a measure of career development within and between occupations. The proposals in the report will be used to harmonize, to the maximum extent possible, the definitions of occupational groups in all the organizations of the United Nations system in Geneva, taking into account the requirements of each organization.

Recommendation 2. Consideration should be given to introducing a new rule which would provide that non-local status for a General Service staff member is granted only to staff members actually recruited outside the area of the duty station. Persons residing in the area of the duty station, even temporarily, should be recruited as local.

37. Pursuant to this recommendation, appendix B of the Staff Rules applicable in the United Nations Office at Geneva were amended in September 1978 to reinforce the priority given to the recruitment of local staff into the General Service category. Under the terms of the rules governing the appointment of short-term staff at Geneva, persons residing in the area of the duty station, regardless of the length of that residence, are always recruited on a local basis.

Recommendation 3. Before any candidate is appointed to the General Service post on a non-local basis the Personnel Officer responsible should certify that no qualified local candidate is available. Such certification should be considered and approved by the Chief of Personnel and endorsed by the Chief of Finance, when appropriate.

38. The change in the Staff Rules referred to in the comments on recommendation 2 above underlines the determination to appoint General Service staff at Geneva, whenever possible, on a local basis. Staff are appointed by the Personnel Division on behalf of the Director-General. The decision to appoint a non-local candidate is taken only when local candidates are not available. Further certification is not therefore considered necessary. Moreover, since the appointment of staff is the responsibility solely of the Personnel Division, it would be inappropriate to make such decisions subject to the endorsement of other services which, in fact, have no means of ascertaining the availability of candidates.

Recommendation 4. A general examination given to candidates for General Service posts (called 'clerical test') such as that given at the United Nations (New York), where it is mandatory with few exceptions, should be introduced for all candidates being seriously considered for appointment to General Service posts by Geneva-based organizations. The introduction of such an examination should, of course, be consistent with the requirements of each organization concerned and take into account local practices in this matter.

39. As a result of the introduction of a job classification system for General Service staff of the United Nations at Geneva, planned for the second half of 1979, it will be necessary to review the requirements of tests for all occupations in that category. Plans to introduce these tests should be seen in that context.

Recommendation 5. In order to improve the efficiency of recruitment it is recommended that rosters of candidates for General Service posts be established in all organizations. Consideration should be given to introducing a common roster for General Service posts for all Geneva-based organizations.

40. Rosters of candidates for General Service posts continue to be maintained by the Personnel Division. In view of the divergent recruitment needs and practices of the organizations concerned, it is not feasible, at this time, to establish a common roster for all the organizations at Geneva. On the other hand, progress has been made in the establishment of common testing standards for the recruitment of some categories of General Service staff.

Recommendation 6. The Geneva-based organizations should consider the possibility of creating a common recruitment service at Geneva, responsible for prospecting of candidates, including short-term, establishing and maintaining a roster, administering tests, proposing a short list of candidates for each vacancy with decision on appointment from among the candidates on the short list being made by the organization concerned.

41. In its comments on the recommendation, contained in paragraphs 14 and 15 of document A/33/129, ACC noted that the adoption of a common recruitment service would cost at least as much as the present arrangements, would also suffer from other flaws and would tend to be cumbersome in operation. For these reasons, the organizations concerned have not found the present recommendation feasible.

Recommendation 7. In order to avoid the concentration of General Service staff members at higher grades in the middle of their career, staff members should work not less than two to three years in each grade before promotion to the next grade, depending upon the nature of his/her duties and responsibilities.

42. The present promotion criteria for General Service staff, as established in the Staff Rules and interpreted by the Appointment and Promotion Board, meet the requirements of the present recommendation. Further improvement in the promotion practices and procedures is expected to be one result of the job classification system to be established for the General Service category.

Recommendation 8. The majority of the established posts for the General Service category should be filled by staff members with fixed-term appointments. The initial fixed-term appointment should be for not more than two years, which, in the case of satisfactory performance, could be renewed and only after four years' satisfactory performance a staff member could be proposed for a one year probationary appointment, and then for a permanent appointment.

43. In its comments on the present recommendation, ACC stated that this question was one that fell within the competence of ICSC and that it should therefore be examined in conjunction with the other matters referred to in the Commission's report.

Recommendation 9. The rules under which short-term General Service staff are engaged should, to the extent possible, be uniform for all organizations at one duty station. The Geneva-based organizations should take the necessary steps to review the rules applicable to short-term staff with a view to bringing about more uniformity.

44. At present, the rules applicable to short-term General Service staff at Geneva are being revised with a view to bringing them into line with the rules applicable to such staff at Headquarters. This revision is being undertaken on a priority basis. It is also recognized that advantages can be gained from the harmonization of these rules with those applied by organizations at Geneva and consultations to that end are being initiated.

Recommendation 10. It is necessary to stop promotion of General Service staff to the Professional category as a reward for long service. The General Service staff members should be given an opportunity to be promoted to the Professional category by means of competitive examinations. The admission to the examinations should be decided on the basis of established criteria and taking into account the necessity for equitable geographical distribution.

45. Pursuant to General Assembly resolution 33/143, which contains a provision along the lines of the present recommendation, it has been decided that General Service staff of the United Nations will be promoted to the Professional category only on the basis of competitive examinations held for that purpose and open to all such staff who meet established requirements concerning qualifications and length of service in the Organization. These examinations will be held annually for a proportion of all vacant posts at the P-1 and P-2 levels, not to exceed 30 per cent of the total. The first of such examinations are scheduled to be held in November 1979.

Recommendation 11. The flexible working-hour system can be recommended for units where the nature of the work does not prevent its application, and if a mechanical time-recording mechanism is established for recording arrival and departure time of each staff member in order to ensure effective control of working hours, and reduce the clerical work for time recording. An experimental period should be provided to test the practicability of the flexible working-hour system to a given unit before introducing this system on a permanent basis.

Recommendation 12. The organization should consider the possibility of introducing a rule permitting staff members to work part-time, as has already been done by ITU and WHO.

46. Schemes for both flexible working hours and part-time employment are at present in use in certain areas of the United Nations Office at Geneva. The first pilot project on flexible working hours was carried out in the Office between March and June 1975. On the recommendation of the Joint Advisory Committee, the Director-General of the Office agreed to an extension of the project commencing on 1 July 1976. Since then, a flexible working-hour scheme has been applied in the Personnel Division, the Budget Division and the International Narcotics Control Board, on an experimental basis. A part-time employment scheme has also been in use at Geneva for a number of years, applying mostly to cleaning staff. The operation of both schemes is being taken into account in the establishment of modalities for schemes to apply generally throughout the Organization.

Recommendation 13. In each organizational unit of sufficient size the stenographers/typists and secretaries should be grouped into a unit pool, except for the secretary to the head of the unit. Each member of the unit pools should have a primary assignment for one or a group of Professional staff members, but should be available for other work in the unit, when the workload of the primary assignment permits, or when priority work is required.

47. This recommendation has been partially implemented at the Office where several divisions or smaller units have established the recommended secretarial and clerical pools.

Recommendation 14. It is necessary that the organizations which have no productivity standards for typists in the pools /would/ introduce them. Some organizations (for example, the United Nations at Headquarters, New York, and at ESCAP, Bangkok) might consider the possibility of increasing their productivity standards for typists in the pools. The productivity standards established by ILO and ITU, for example, could be considered as a guide.

48. Standards of productivity for conference typists in the United Nations require a ratio of 1:1 of typists to translators for languages into which documentation is translated. For the original language, one typist is required to produce 3,300 words or 10 pages per day. The average daily productivity for all typing units in the Stenographic Section taken together and for a full year was 3,413 words in 1977 and 3,663 words in 1978. For the first quarter of 1979, the average daily productivity amounted to 3,710 words. The above figures clearly indicate that the productivity standards are carefully applied and better results have been obtained.

Recommendation 15. In order to improve the cost-effectiveness of the secretarial work, it is important to make more use of modern office equipment, such as the "Call-Director" telephone apparatus and dictating machines. It is worth-while also to consider the possibility of replacing the old-fashioned and relatively inefficient typewriters by modern word-processing machines.

49. A study on word processing and related needs for the Office, containing guidelines in terms of potential costs and benefits to be derived from the use of word-processing equipment is under review by the Conference and General Services Division of the Office. The Division has already commented on a number of issues, and is continuing its consideration of some of them. In addition, it is envisaged to introduce in the near future pilot tests, in particular in the typing pools, to assess the gain in productivity which could be achieved and the extent to which savings in personnel expenditures could be considered. In addition, a similar pilot project is envisaged for reproduction areas.

Recommendation 16. The organizations should examine the relative cost-effectiveness of carrying out some work (maintenance and repair of office machines and other equipment, building maintenance and repair, gardening, catering, cleaning of offices, etc.) by their own General Service staff or by outside contact in order to select the most effective and economical method.

Recommendation 17. For the Geneva-based organizations, it would be worth while to undertake a study of the feasibility of establishing common services for carrying out some specific work mentioned above, in order to ensure more rational use of their staff and funds.

50. Progressively greater use is being made of contractual cleaning of United Nations premises at Geneva. Part of the gardening and grounds maintenance of the external premises have also been carried out under outside contract, and a study is now being conducted on the cost-effectiveness of contractual maintenance of typewriters and other office machines located in outlying premises. Catering services and microfilm services have long been on a contractual basis, and all building maintenance projects are closely studied to determine how best to carry them out. These studies are based on a comparison of costs and services to determine the most effective and economical method.

51. Through the Joint Purchase Service of the United Nations and specialized agencies at Geneva, constant contacts and dialogue are maintained between the Office and the specialized agencies on the feasibility of common activities in various fields of interest in which costs may be reduced.

F. Report on women in the Professional and higher categories
in the United Nations system

52. The report of JIU on women in the Professional and higher categories in the United Nations system (JIU/REP/77/7) was transmitted to the General Assembly at its thirty-third session under cover of a note by the Secretary-General of 24 May 1978 (A/33/105). In addition, the report was the subject of comments by the executive heads of the organizations of the United Nations system in the framework of ACC. These comments were transmitted to the General Assembly by the Secretary-General in document A/33/105/Add.1, of 23 October 1978.

53. After considering the JIU report and the related comments of ACC, the General Assembly adopted its resolution 33/143 of 20 December 1978, some of the provisions of which bear upon the contents of the JIU report.

54. The JIU report dealt with the situation of women in the United Nations system, discussing, in particular, their employment status, recruitment and promotion, and agency management as it relates to the question. The report provided an over-all review of the current situation, an examination of its possible causes, and 16 recommendations for corrective action. These recommendations refer to the role of the administrations, measures to improve recruitment, measures to ensure equality of treatment in service, and measures

to prevent discrimination on account of marriage and maternity. The following is a summary of the recommendations and an account of the steps being taken by the Secretary-General to carry them out in the light of the requests of the General Assembly in resolution 33/143.

Recommendations 1 and 2. JIU proposed that ACC should review annually the status of women in the Professional and higher categories on the basis of statistics collected by the Consultative Committee on Administrative Questions.

55. In resolution 33/143, the General Assembly invited ACC to review the situation regarding recruitment of, and career development opportunities for, women in the secretariats of the organizations within the United Nations system and to submit periodic reports to the General Assembly incorporating specific proposals from the thirty-fourth session of the Assembly onwards. It is the intention of the Secretary-General to participate actively in this task, in his capacity as Chairman of ACC. Statistical data on women in the Secretariat, which are already being collected in connexion with the Secretary-General's efforts to attain an equitable proportion of female staff and equality of opportunity, will be transmitted to ACC as appropriate to assist it in its review of the situation.

Recommendation 3. JIU proposed that the executive heads of the organizations should issue policy statements and lay down instructions for their application and advocated the involvement of departmental heads and directors in the process.

56. The General Assembly endorsed this recommendation in resolution 33/143, in which it requested the Secretary-General and the executive heads to issue, in accordance with the principle of equitable geographical distribution, policy statements and directives necessary to foster equal employment and career development opportunities for women. The Secretary-General has been taking action along these lines for some time, notably with the issuance, on 8 March 1977, of his Bulletin on the equality of men and women in the Secretariat (ST/SGB/154). On 8 March 1979, the Bulletin was supplemented through the issuance of an information circular containing guidelines for promoting equal treatment of men and women in the Secretariat (ST/IC/79/17). The Secretary-General has also taken into account the importance of the involvement of department and office heads and directors in the process. Appropriate measures are being taken to impress upon them that the recruitment, conditions of service and advancement of women are of great concern to the Secretary-General and to secure their co-operation in the attainment of the objectives set forth in these respects. Since 1978, the heads of departments and offices are requested to submit to the Secretary-General an annual progress report on the situation of women in their staff, to be prepared in consultation with the heads of the major units under their charge and on the basis of reports made by them at the divisional level. They are asked to comment on the proportion of women in their staff and to describe the measures they are taking

to improve this proportion and to establish conditions of equality of opportunity. They are, moreover, encouraged to set out their views on the situation not only in their departments but also in the Secretariat as a whole.

Recommendation 4. JIU proposed that a person or panel should be appointed in each organization to serve as a focal point for the concerns and interests of women.

57. The General Assembly did not include any provision in support of this recommendation in resolution 33/143. In the Secretariat, the functions described in the recommendation have been entrusted to several separate bodies. At Headquarters, the Joint Advisory Committee (JAC) and its Standing Committee on the Employment of Women in the Secretariat review policies concerning the recruitment of women and the establishment of conditions of equal opportunity for women staff. The Panel to investigate allegations of discriminatory treatment, established in 1977 in conformity with General Assembly resolution 31/26 of 29 November 1976, deals with individual cases. At offices away from Headquarters, these functions are performed respectively by the local JAC and by subsidiary panels. Panels have been established now at Addis Ababa, Bangkok, Beirut, Geneva, Nairobi, Santiago and Vienna.

Recommendation 5. JIU proposed that each organization should set an over-all target figure and, where possible, specific targets for its major units, to be used as a guide in formulating recruitment programmes and in gauging progress in their implementation.

58. Target figures have now been established by the General Assembly, which has requested the Secretary-General to take the necessary measures to increase the number of women in posts subject to geographical distribution to 25 per cent of the total over a four-year period, in accordance with the principle of equitable geographical distribution. In response to this request of the Assembly, the Secretary-General is striving to meet the established objectives, not only in the Secretariat as a whole, but also in each major unit within it. The proportion of female staff is brought to the attention of heads of each department or office every year in conjunction with the preparation of their annual progress reports on the situation of women described in paragraph 56 above. They are expected to make efforts at least to bring the proportion of women in their staff in line with the proportion prevailing in the Secretariat, which is at present approximately 22 per cent, and eventually to reach the proportion of 25 per cent established by the General Assembly. Those departments and offices that have already attained, or even surpassed, the proportion of 25 per cent, are urged to pursue their efforts. The second part of the recommendation, concerning the designation of specific positions for women, was not retained by the General Assembly and, consequently, no measures are being taken in respect of it.

Recommendation 6. JIU proposed that, in meeting the objectives the organizations should pay special attention to the development of sources of recruitment, urge Governments to nominate qualified women candidates for all Professional posts and encourage them to invite recruitment missions to their countries. They should enlarge their contacts with other possible sources of candidates and give wider publicity to their employment needs.

59. In resolution 33/143, the General Assembly expressly endorsed some of these suggestions, notably by calling upon Member States to nominate more qualified women candidates and to co-operate with the Secretary-General in other recruitment measures. The attention of Member States has subsequently been drawn to these provisions by the Secretary-General in communications with them concerning recruitment. Other measures outlined by JIU in the present recommendation are being taken in accordance with provisions of resolution 33/143 relating to the recruitment not only of women but also of nationals of unrepresented and underrepresented Member States.

Recommendation 7. JIU urged organizations to focus special attention on the recruitment of qualified young professional women staff at the P-1/P-2 levels.

60. The Secretary-General is bearing in mind this recommendation in the context of the steps being taken in response to the requests of the General Assembly concerning these levels, i.e. the organization of competitive examinations and the reduction of the average age of staff through the recruitment of young professional persons.

Recommendation 8. JIU proposed for a limited period of time some flexibility with regard to the recruitment of professional women staff in relation to geographical distribution.

61. The General Assembly did not support this recommendation. On the contrary, it made clear in resolution 33/143 that measures to increase the proportion of women should be taken in accordance with the principle of equitable geographical distribution. The Secretary-General is therefore not considering the introduction of any special flexibility with respect to geographical distribution in the recruitment of women.

Recommendation 9. JIU proposed that the Office of Personnel should include qualified women, whenever possible, among the candidates submitted for any Professional post, and detailed justification should be asked in case of rejection, has been adopted by the Secretariat.

62. The attention of the heads of departments and offices has been drawn to this procedure and their co-operation requested to ensure its success.

Recommendation 10. JIU proposed that the existing machinery for the review of the appointment and promotion procedures be examined to ensure that they provide equality of opportunity to both women and men on appointment and subsequently in advancement to posts for which they may be qualified.

63. The Secretary-General has been making all efforts to ensure not only that the existing machinery conforms objectively to the requirement of equal opportunity for men and women staff but also that those who are responsible for recruitment, promotions and assignments, both in the personnel offices and in other departments, are aware of this requirement and sensitive to it. In addition, recommendation 16 proposed a review of the Staff Rules and recruitment information and publicity with a view to eliminating from them any discriminatory features. In accordance with the requests of the General Assembly, which endorsed both JIU recommendations, a fresh examination of existing promotion procedures, recruitment literature, publicity, internal training programmes and the Staff Rules has been undertaken.

Recommendation 11. JIU proposed that organizations should examine the cause for the significant drop in the proportion of women above the P-3 level and appropriate action taken, including training and study leave, to upgrade their qualifications.

64. Although the Secretary-General considers that a comprehensive examination of the causes behind this percentage drop might prove of interest, no action is currently being taken to carry it out, in the absence of specific instructions from the General Assembly. The resources which this task would require are already committed to other objectives expressly laid down by the Assembly. It should be noted, however, that the Secretary-General is in disagreement with the explanation for this drop given by JIU in its report - that most Professional women who have been promoted from the General Service lack qualifications for advancement beyond the P-3 level. Many such staff have qualifications comparable with those of outside recruits. A large number of them, however, have completed their education while in the service of the Organization and, therefore, enter the Professional category at a relatively late age, thus having shorter Professional careers. It is the shorter duration of their service in the Professional category, and not the level of their qualifications, which limits their opportunities for advancement. The new system of competitive examinations for promotion to the Professional category being established in conformity with the request of the General Assembly will undoubtedly have as a result that those qualified General Service staff who enter the Professional category will do so at an earlier age and, consequently, will have an added length of service at the Professional level in which to advance to more senior positions. As indicated in paragraph 45 above, the first such competitive examinations are scheduled to take place in November 1979.

Recommendation 12. JIU proposed the equitable representation of women on all personnel advisory and administrative boards, such as appointment and promotion boards and committees, appeals boards and disciplinary committees.

65. The Secretary-General attaches great importance to the inclusion of women among the members appointed by him to such bodies. He has moreover taken note of the endorsement of this recommendation by the General Assembly in resolution 33/143. At Headquarters, women currently account for 4 out of 15, or 27 per cent, of the membership of JAC, including its Chairman: 8 out of 34, or 24 per cent, of the Appointment and Promotion Board and Committee; and 6 out of 30, or 20 per cent, of the Joint Appeals Board.

Recommendation 13. JIU proposed that encouragement be given to women to take advantage of training opportunities offered by the organization and the establishment, where possible, of a few trainee posts for which women would be given preference.

66. The Secretary-General is taking every step to expand and upgrade the choice of training courses offered and to open them to all staff. Efforts are also made to impress upon the heads of department and offices the need to facilitate and indeed encourage the attendance of training courses of the staff, under their supervision, particularly women staff. As to the possibility of establishing trainee posts for women, little merit has been seen in this proposal either by the Secretary-General or ACC. Since the General Assembly did not endorse the proposal either, no action is being considered in connexion with it.

Recommendations 14 and 15. JIU proposed that amendments to the Staff Rules should be considered, first, to enable both husband and wife to be employed by the organization, subject only to the condition that one does not work for the other, and, secondly, to liberalize provisions concerning maternity leave, parental leave, part-time employment, flexible working hours, and the establishment of day-care facilities.

67. In accordance with the requests of the General Assembly, Staff Rules and procedures covering assignments of married couples to the same duty station, maternity leave, part-time employment and flexible working hours are being reviewed. A draft administrative instruction on assignments of married couples to the same duty station is currently before the Headquarters JAC. The question of maternity leave is before the Standing Committee of JAC on the Employment of Women in the Secretariat. Flexible working hours have been introduced on an experimental basis in the United Nations Industrial Development Organization and the United Nations Office at Geneva. The question of parental leave, which was not the subject of specific instructions of the Assembly, is one which falls within the competence of ICSC, which will examine it during its study of the development of common staff regulations. At Headquarters, all attempts to provide day-care facilities for the children of staff members have hitherto failed because of the high cost of the project and the economic situation of

the City of New York, which prevents it from lending assistance. The Secretary-General, however, has repeatedly indicated his sympathy with the project, most recently on the occasion of International Women's Day, on 8 March 1979. The matter is currently being considered by the Standing Committee of JAC on the Employment of Women in the Secretariat.

Recommendation 16. JIU proposed that all organizations should re-examine their staff rules in order to make certain the discriminatory features have been completely eliminated.

68. A complete revision of the Staff Rules designed to eliminate all discriminatory features, including discrimination based on sex, was carried out in 1977. Pursuant to the instructions of the General Assembly in resolution 33/143, continued efforts are being made to ensure that every possible manifestation of discrimination has been eliminated from all United Nations documentation.

G. Report on the implementation of the recommendation
on first-class travel

70. In accordance with the JIU report on first-class travel paid by United Nations organizations (A/32/272 and Add.1), the General Assembly at its thirty-second session adopted resolution 32/198. A separate report on the implementation of this resolution is being submitted, on an annual basis, by the Secretary-General.
