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TRAINING AND RESEARCH

Unified approach to development analysis and planningReport of the Secretary-General

1. The interest of the General Assembly in the application by Governments of a unified approach to development analysis and planning was initially expressed in resolution 3409 (XXX) of 28 November 1975, which requested the Secretary-General, inter alia, to prepare a report based on information provided by Governments of Member States on national practices in applying such an approach. An aide-mémoire, dated 27 February 1976, was sent by the Secretary-General to request the required information and 20 Governments responded. At its thirty-second session, the Assembly adopted decision 32/418 of 8 December 1977, in which it invited those countries that had not yet done so, but would be willing to, to reply to the aide-mémoire. Five additional Governments responded to this second invitation. 1/ At its thirty-fourth session, the Assembly adopted decision 34/419 of 29 November 1979, in which Governments that had not done so were again invited to send their replies to the aide-mémoire. Seven more Governments sent relevant information. This new information, together with that provided in earlier replies, was used by the Secretary-General to prepare a report containing practical conclusions and recommendations on the application of such an approach in the process of socio-economic development. 2/

2. After taking note of that report and confirming Economic and Social Council decision 1981/107 of 4 May 1981, the General Assembly at its thirty-sixth session decided (36/405 of 19 November 1981) to "continue consideration on a regular basis of the question of a unified approach, taking into account its importance for the process of development as stressed in the International Development Strategy for the Third United Nations Development Decade". 3/ The Assembly further requested the Secretary-General, on the basis of information supplied by Governments, "to prepare a report on the experience acquired in applying a unified approach in the process of socio-economic development at the national level and in the activities of the United Nations economic and social organs and organizations" and to submit

that report to the General Assembly at its thirty-eighth session through the Commission for Social Development at its twenty-eighth session and the Economic and Social Council at its first regular session of 1983.

3. In response to that request, the Secretary-General sent another aide-mémoire, dated 5 April 1982, requesting the needed information from Governments of Member States. Information was requested on actual experience in applying such an approach at the national level, particularly as it related to (a) policy measures deployed to face changes unanticipated in the plan, such as changes in the trade-and-payments position, (b) the considerations taken into account in the formulation of those policies, particularly in relation to their implications on social development in the context of the development plan, (c) the use of tools and analytical models that would show the interrelationships among economic and social factors, both at a point in time and intertemporally, and (d) any ex post evaluation made on the achievements of the policies deployed, in terms of the development objectives and targets established in the plan. Information was also requested on assessments by Governments of Member States of the experience acquired in applying a unified approach in the activities of the United Nations economic and social organs and organizations.

4. In order to allow adequate time for the preparation, translation and distribution of a report, Governments of Member States were requested to send their replies to the Secretary-General by 15 July 1982. At the end of July, two replies had been received, one of which took the form of official publications. On 4 August 1982, a reminder was sent to Governments requesting replies as a matter of urgency. By 1 October 1982, the latest possible date on which preparation of a report could have been initiated, four additional replies had been received, one of which indicated that no information could be provided on the subject.

5. In view of the paucity of the replies, it was not considered feasible to prepare a report as requested. Replies received are available on request from the Secretariat.

Notes

1/ The two reports containing the information provided by the 25 Governments were entitled "Application by Governments of a unified approach to development analysis and planning" (E/CN.5/540 and E/CN.5/566).

2/ Report of the Secretary-General (A/36/69).

3/ Resolution 35/56, annex.
