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### JOINT INSPECTION UNIT

#### United Nations Department of International Economic and Social Affairs

#### Note by the Secretary-General

The Secretary-General has the honour to transmit to the members of the General Assembly the report of the Joint Inspection Unit entitled "United Nations Department of International Economic and Social Affairs" (JIU/REP/83/7).

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DEPARTMENT OF INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS

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Annex 1: ST/SGB/161

Annex 2: Organizational chart of DIESA

## I. INTRODUCTION

1. On 20 December 1977 the General Assembly adopted resolution 32/197 on the restructuring of the economic and social sectors of the United Nations system. The preamble of the resolution reaffirmed that the purpose of restructuring was to make the United Nations system "more fully capable of dealing with the problems of international economic co-operation and development in a comprehensive and effective manner... and to make it more responsive to the requirements of the provisions of the Declaration and the Programme of Action on the Establishment of a new International Economic Order as well as those of the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States". Section VIII of the annex to this resolution sets guidelines for restructuring the economic and social sectors of the United Nations Secretariat, outlines in general terms the functions of the new organizational entities and gives instructions to the Secretary-General to cluster various components together in view of their close substantive, methodological and practical relationships.
2. On 23 March 1978, the Secretary-General accordingly undertook a far-reaching re-organization of the economic and social sectors of the Secretariat, and established the Director-General for Development and International Economic Co-operation (DIEC) post, the Department of Technical Co-operation for Development (DTCD), the Department of International Economic and Social Affairs (DIESA), and the Office of Secretariat Services for Economic and Social Matters (OSSECS). A provisional statement of the functions of DIESA and an outline of its organizational structure were given in the Secretary-General's Bulletin ST/SGB/161 (see Annex I).
3. Since the adoption of resolution 32/197, the streamlining of the operational activities of the United Nations Secretariat has been under continuous discussion in the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), the Committee for Programme Co-ordination (CPC), and the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination (ACC), and the Secretary-General has presented to successive sessions of the General Assembly and ECOSOC progress reports on the implementation of the resolution and, where appropriate, on the performance of the new Departments 1/.
4. In response to proposals from CPC, ECOSOC, and the General Assembly, the JIU has undertaken a series of studies to assess the implementation of resolution 32/197. Three reports dealing with DIEC, the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), and DTCD have already been prepared. The present report is part of the series. It analyses the functions and organization as well as the programme of work of DIESA and its relationship with other departments of the United Nations Secretariat and the United Nations system's organizations, examines the major problems encountered by DIESA in performing its responsibilities envisaged by the restructuring resolution and presents recommendations.
5. The Inspectors discussed these issues with many members of DIESA, including its Under-Secretary-General, with the Director-General for Development and International Economic Co-operation and his staff, DTCD and many others. To all of them the Inspectors express their appreciation for their valuable observations.

1/ (a) Reports of the Secretary-General to the General Assembly

- A/33/410, 1 December 1978 and A/33/410/Rev. 1. 2 January 1979
- A/34/736, 29 November 1979
- A/35/527, 21 October 1980
- A/36/477, 29 September 1981

(b) Reports of the Secretary-General to ECOSOC

- E/1978/28, 21 April 1978
- E/1978/118, 9 July 1978
- E/1979/81, 17 July 1979

## II. FUNCTIONS AND ORGANIZATION

6. The main thrust of the restructuring resolution regarding DIESA was twofold: (a) separation of inter-disciplinary research and analysis from other developmental functions, and placing them in DIESA; (b) clustering of programme planning of the economic and social activities of the United Nations system with development research in DIESA. Thus inter-disciplinary research and analysis were separated from technical co-operation and one department, DIESA, was entrusted with the harmonization of the work of the organizations of the United Nations system on major inter-disciplinary economic and social development issues. The Inspectors have examined the five main functions which the restructuring resolution recommended be clustered in DIESA.

### A. Functions

7. Paragraphs 61(a) (b) and (f) of the restructuring resolution set out "guidelines" outlining five main functions for DIESA, the detailed implementation of which was left to the Secretary-General. These functions which are neither exhaustive nor limitative, were amplified in the Secretary-General's Bulletin SGB 161 of 23 March 1978, and the draft terms of reference of DIESA submitted to the Administrative Management Service (AMS) in November 1981. AMS has not reacted to these terms of reference. Therefore, DIESA has been operating with provisional functions for five years. The Inspectors recommend that action be taken as soon as possible to meet the needs for a definitive demarcation of the functions of the Department and for formal issuance of its terms of reference.

8. Economic and social surveys and projections This major function assigned to DIESA consists of "preparing on a regular basis, global economic and social surveys and projections to assist the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council in the discharge of their responsibilities" (sub-paragraph (i) of paragraph 61(a) of the restructuring resolution). The Inspectors found that this function had been generally fulfilled. The two main recurrent publications of DIESA, i.e. the World Economic Survey and the Report on the World Social Situation, are regularly issued and their presentation and content have improved. In preparing these documents, DIESA draws upon the work of the regional commissions, UNIDO and UNCTAD. There are many research officers capable of making a significant contribution to the development of opinion and exchange of knowledge on global economic and social issues. However, their potential has not been fully utilized for the purposes envisaged in the restructuring resolution.

9. Intersectoral analyses and syntheses Under this major function DIESA was expected to carry out "in-depth intersectoral analyses and syntheses of development issues and prepare concise and action-oriented recommendations in accordance with the requirements of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council...". These were to be prepared in close collaboration with those elements of the United Nations system which are engaged in similar work after taking into account the relevant work of the various sectoral components of the United Nations system (sub-paragraph (ii) of paragraph 61(a) of the restructuring resolution). So far, DIESA has submitted to the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council a wide range of documents in fulfilment of this function. But few of these have been sufficiently action-oriented with the result that discussions in intergovernmental bodies are less practical and concrete than they might be. The Inspectors noticed that intersectoral analyses and syntheses has been gradually replaced by analyses of structural changes in the national, regional and world economy with the emphasis on changes in competitiveness between countries and regions, and that "in-depth intersectoral analyses and syntheses of development issues" has not been sufficiently pursued. Most of this research seems to be carried out in isolation without significant contributions from other organizations on whose close collaboration it was to depend. If DIESA is to play a central role in the harmonization of these activities within the United Nations system and provide the General Assembly

and ECOSOC with action-oriented recommendations, which at present it appears not to be doing sufficiently, it should avoid working in isolation and endeavour to collaborate more closely with system organizations engaged in similar work. However, the Inspectors have often found in the course of their other work that inter-organization consultation and co-operation are difficult to achieve and maintain. Each organization has its own priorities as decided by its legislative bodies and it is difficult for them to devote resources to work which may appear marginal. A concerted effort by the General Assembly and legislative bodies of other organizations to harmonize their policies and directives to their secretariats may be a necessary prerequisite to enable DIESA to carry out this function more effectively. The Inspectors will return to this question in their concluding report on restructuring to be prepared in 1984.

10. Emerging economic and social issues The role assigned to DIESA was "to identify and bring to the attention of governments emerging economic and social issues of international concern" (sub-paragraph (iii) of paragraph 61(a) of the restructuring resolution). The Department is performing this function through the monitoring and analysis of socio-economic trends. To this effect, it is developing comprehensive, sectoral models with different time-horizons at inter-regional, regional and sub-regional levels designed to detect early signs of emerging strains and imbalances in the world economy. The main outputs of this activity are: preparation of reports to the Committee for Development Planning (CDP), ECOSOC and the General Assembly relating to the analysis of medium-term and long-term socio-economic trends and to the review and appraisal of the International Development Strategy; harmonization of models and expanding their scope to take into account socio-economic aspects, such as urbanization, rural development, environment, participation of women in development, health, education, income distribution; and developing models for trade between the major regions for important commodities. DIESA plays an essential role in the exchange of information on these problems and in co-ordination with the United Nations system including the ACC Task Force on long-term development objectives. The Inspectors consider that DIESA has succeeded in preparing studies which were presented to governments on behalf of the system as a whole. Some of these documents, in particular on energy problems, were used as a basis for discussions and exchanges of information by United Nations organizations such as IBRD, IMF, UNIDO, UNCTAD and the regional commissions, and DIESA was able to develop a programme of inter-agency meetings on these problems.

11. Programme planning and co-ordination DIESA has been entrusted with the preparation of "cross-sectoral analyses of programmes and plans in the economic and social sectors of the United Nations system with a view to mobilizing and integrating, at the planning and programming stages, the inputs and expertise of the organizations of the United Nations system, for the following tasks:

(i) concerting in an effective manner the implementation of policy guidelines, directives and priorities emanating from the General Assembly and ECOSOC;

(ii) developing co-operative and, wherever possible, joint planning and programme activities decided upon at the intergovernmental level with a view to system-wide medium-term planning at the earliest possible time." (paragraph 61(b) of the restructuring resolution).

12. To perform this function, DIESA used to prepare reports on cross-organizational programmes selected by intergovernmental bodies. In 1982, it was decided that CCSQ(PROG) would select the sectors for cross-organizational analysis and would nominate a co-ordinating agency to carry out this work. The Inspectors understand that CCSQ(PROG) has decided to select and allocate programme areas to the relevant agency for co-ordination, because the agencies are better equipped and have larger technical expertise than DIESA in the fields under their purview. The role of DIESA in providing cross-organizational analysis as a first stage of joint planning has therefore been shifted to the agencies.

13. DIESA also undertakes continuous analysis of the reports to ECOSOC of the United Nations system organizations and entities, to make sure that their work is presented uniformly and that they are contributing effectively towards the achievement of the goals of the International Development Strategy. DIESA is responsible for ensuring that General Assembly and ECOSOC recommendations are communicated to the organizations, and that progress achieved and problems encountered by the United Nations system organizations are reported to ECOSOC and the General Assembly.
14. In addition, DIESA collects the draft plans and programmes of the organizations of the United Nations system and circulates them for comments throughout the system before they are consolidated and submitted to the relevant intergovernmental bodies. The logistic of such work is very difficult to organize since meetings of the governing bodies of about thirty United Nations agencies and United Nations major components are spread all over the world and follow different cycles. However, in 1982 most of the agencies and United Nations entities were able, for the first time, to present orally, in a CPC meeting, notes concerning their medium-term plans and programme budgets. The Inspectors suggest that in the future these notes should reach DIESA one or two months prior to the CPC meeting to enable the Department to consolidate and circulate them.
15. Research, data collection and analysis in sectors not within the purview of other United Nations organs, programmes and specialized agencies (paragraph 61(f) of the restructuring resolution). The restructuring resolution left it to the Secretary-General to determine how this work should be deployed and to which "clusters of functions", including DIESA. The only guidance was contained in paragraph 62 of the resolution: it should be deployed to the clusters "on the basis of the substantive, practical and methodological relationships involved, and allowing for the possibility of deploying appropriate elements to regional commissions". There is reason to believe that some of these research functions were allotted to DIESA for practical reasons, rather than on the basis of substantive and methodological relationships. Only the Statistical Office (SO) falls within the purview of DIESA because of its substantive, practical and methodological relationships. The other functions, i.e. work on economic and social issues related to population, energy, fiscal and financial matters, ocean economics and technology, do not seem to have strong substantive and methodological relationships with the other activities of DIESA and they could better be placed elsewhere (see paragraph 22 below).
16. Performance DIESA has to some extent fulfilled the expectations of the General Assembly - notably in the preparation of global economic and social surveys and projections, various documents concerning intersectoral analyses and syntheses, analyses of medium-term and long-term social and economic trends and reviews and appraisals of the International Development Strategy system-wide, co-operation measures for programme planning and some significant achievements in the field of statistics. It is questionable, however, how far these results can be attributed to restructuring; some have not been used by the inter-governmental body for which they were prepared.
17. DIESA does not rely solely on current professional literature but also on primary sources of information on world economic and social developments. The Inspectors recognize that it has tried to organize more systematic co-operation with other departments and organizations and has been successful in some instances but it has not emerged as a dominant intellectual influence throughout the system, as seems to have been contemplated in the restructuring resolution.
18. This shortcoming is not of DIESA's making; other factors outside its control have been major constraints. Changes in international relations, particularly in international economic relations, the general reduction in real terms of development funds, deficiencies in the implementation of the restructuring resolution, etc.,

have also to be taken into account. These constraints should not constitute a complete reason for the non-fulfilment of some of the functions entrusted to DIESA, but they do to some extent explain why DIESA has not developed along the inter-sectoral lines envisaged in resolution 32/197.

## B. Organization

19. The Secretary-General has approved for DIESA an organizational structure in four main parts: the Office for Development Research and Policy Analysis (DRPA), the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs (CSDHA), the Office of Programme Planning and Co-ordination (PPCO), and the Statistical Office <sup>2/</sup>. The Secretary-General has also decided that with effect from 1 January 1983, the Director of the United Nations Centre on Transnational Corporations will report to him through the Under-Secretary-General for DIESA. DRPA is the largest part of DIESA and absorbs 36 per cent of total direct costs (see Table I). The Statistical Office ranks second with 29 per cent; CSDHA third with 19 per cent and PPCO fourth with 9 per cent. The Statistical Office, DRPA and CSDHA were partially or totally inherited from the old Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA). However, PPCO did not exist before the restructuring of the Secretariat.

20. Resolution 32/197 recommended that the clustering of research and technical co-operation into two separate entities "should be accompanied by a thorough rationalization and streamlining of the capabilities of the organizational units concerned" (paragraph 63 of the annex to the resolution). The implementation of this recommendation by DTCD has been discussed by the Inspectors in their report on DTCD (JIU/REP/83/2). As to DIESA, the Inspectors have no evidence that its structure and functioning have been thoroughly rationalized or streamlined. Indeed, the desire to maintain a balance in size between the two new organizational units, DIESA and DTCD, seems to have led in certain cases to the allocation to DIESA of some small units dealing with both technical assistance and substantive research which, while too small to be divided, would better have been allocated in their entirety to DTCD. The two sections in the Ocean Economics and Technology Branch are an example of this. (See paragraph 22 below.)

21. One example of the lack of a rational approach to the organization of the Departments is the fact that DTCD now transfers a substantial amount of programme support costs funds (\$US 1.9 million biennially) to DIESA to pay for backstopping of technical co-operation projects, some of which services may well be more advantageously undertaken by DTCD itself (see Table II).

22. In order to more fully implement paragraphs 61(f) and 62 of resolution 32/197 the Inspectors recommend that consideration be given to the following adjustments of the organization of DIESA:

(a) Possible transfer of the Energy Unit, attached to DRPA, to DTCD. Its substantive work is related more to the activities of the Natural Resources and Energy Division of DTCD. This would provide the information and material needed by DIESA for global analysis and surveys.

(b) Possible transfer of the Fiscal and Financial Branch to DTCD, for two main reasons: (i) its work is more closely related to that of the Public Financial Management Section of DTCD; (ii) the Fiscal and Financial Branch is at present concentrating on technical co-operation programmes rather than research and analysis activities.

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<sup>2/</sup> See organizational chart, Annex 2.

Table I

DIESA Direct Costs and Established Posts During the Biennium 1982-83

	<u>Direct costs (\$US million)</u>			<u>Established posts (units)</u>							
	<u>RB</u>	<u>EXB</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>1982-83</u>		<u>1982-83</u>			<u>Total</u>	
					<u>P</u>	<u>GS</u>	<u>P</u>	<u>GS</u>	<u>P</u>		<u>GS</u>
Executive Director and Management	1.9	0.2	2.1	4	11	7	1	2	12	9	21
DRPA	15.5	5.6	21.1	36	107	69	20	19	127	88	215
Statistical Office	12.6	4.0	16.6	29	74	76	21	19	95	95	190
CSDHA	9.8	1.2	11.0	19	54	39	6	5	60	44	104
PPCO	5.1	-	5.1	9	32	23	-	-	32	23	55
Administration and Common Services	1.7	-	1.7	3	5	15	-	-	5	15	20
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>46.6</b>	<b>11.0</b>	<b>57.6</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>283</b>	<b>229</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>331</b>	<b>274</b>	<b>605</b>

Source: Programme budget for the biennium 1982-83, Section 6, A/36/6

RB = Regular budget  
 EXB = Extra-budgetary resources  
 P = Professionals  
 GS = General Service staff



Table II

DIESA - Extra-budgetary resources

(\$US 000)

	<u>1980-81</u>	<u>1982-83</u>
(a) Services in support of extra-budgetary programmes	1,834	1,894
(b) Substantive activities:		
Trust Fund for Development Planning, Projections and Policies (FUNDPAP)	1,620	1,264
UN Fund for Population Activities (UNFPA)	3,429	4,630
Voluntary Fund for the UN Decade for Women	271	939
Trust Fund for the Mobilization of Personal Savings in Developing Countries	104	100
UN Fund for the Environment (UNEP)	532	537
UNICEF	610	750
Trust Fund for Shipping Statistics Project	282	437
International Comparison Project Trust Fund (ICP)	233	280
Trust Fund for Social Development	228	225
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TOTAL	9,143	11,056
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Source: Programme budget for the biennium 1982-83, Section 6, A/36/6

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(c) Possible transfer of the Mineral Resources Section of the Ocean Economic and Technology Branch to DTCD and its merger with the Minerals Branch to DTCD, thus avoiding conflicts and duplication. The future of the remaining section of the Ocean Economics and Technology Branch, namely the Uses of the Sea section, should be considered when the mechanisms for co-ordinating the work of the United Nations on marine affairs in the light of the conception of the Law of the Sea Convention are set up. The Secretary-General is to report to the General Assembly in 1983 on institutional arrangements for marine affairs in the light of discussions in the CPC on the report of the task force on this subject set up by the Director-General.

23. The above changes would be limited in scope and would only concern about 10 Professionals and 7 General Service staff out of a total of 600. There are other more important organizational issues which should be resolved and which have far-reaching implications. They concern in particular CSDHA, the Statistical Office, and PPCO. These issues are dealt with respectively under Chapters III, IV and V.

24. The Inspectors believe that the two inter-related steps envisaged by the restructuring resolution, (a) redeployment of staff resources, and (b) thorough rationalization and streamlining of the capacities of the Secretariat including DIESA, have not been fully implemented. They realize how difficult it would be to organize DIESA in such a manner as to enable it to perform global functions (preparing global surveys and studies, medium-term plans, evaluation systems, etc.) and at the same time service sectoral intergovernmental bodies such as the Population Commission, the Social Commission and the Second and Third Committees, where social and economic problems are separated. They urge the Secretary-General with the assistance of the Director-General to give continued attention to the rationalizing and streamlining of the functions and organization of DIESA accompanied by redeployment of resources, taking into account the suggestions presented in this and following chapters. They also recognize that DIESA's work is handicapped in that no intergovernmental body has looked into its programme of work in detail. ECOSOC has not had the time to devote to discussing in-depth DIESA activities. The Inspectors therefore urge ECOSOC to allow more time for considering the work of DIESA and providing the Department with guidance.

### III. ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL RESEARCH AND ANALYSIS

25. DIESA's main duty in carrying out research and analysis is to assist the General Assembly, ECOSOC and other intergovernmental bodies in adopting action-oriented recommendations. Co-ordination of research, not only within the Department but throughout the UN system, is also necessary if duplication and overlapping are to be kept at a reasonable level and if DIESA is to be able to draw on all relevant parts of the system, collaborate with elements of the system engaged in similar work and take into account relevant work done by the system as recommended by the restructuring resolution. Cross-fertilization between the research and analysis carried out by DIESA and the technical co-operation activities of DTCO is another major issue. It is dealt with in section B below. Within DIESA, DRPA has the main research responsibility but it is not the only part of the Department which does research. Most other DIESA parts do some research and analysis, notably CSDHA.

#### A. Research and policy issues

26. Research and policy analysis are the basic, essential functions of DRPA. Its global economic and social surveys and projections are intended to assist the General Assembly and ECOSOC to discharge their responsibilities, and its intersectoral analysis and synthesis of development issues to help these bodies to adopt concise and practicable recommendations on those issues. Approximately seventy full-time professionals, mostly in DRPA, work on these problems, and every year more than \$US 5 million is spent on research work, including numerous recurrent and non-recurrent publications and various seminars and meetings. In addition to DIESA major surveys and reports mentioned in paragraph 8 above, DIESA prepares biennial global reports on the Monitoring of Population Trends and Policies and on Population Projections; the World Survey on Women and Socio-Economic Perspectives of the World Economy to the Year 2000, and many other reports and studies. To make these documents more relevant to the situation prevailing in the world economy and ensure that they actually provide a sound basis for the adoption, by these bodies, of feasible decisions and recommendations, they should be more carefully reviewed and co-ordinated before being sent to the General Assembly or ECOSOC. It would be useful to arrange regular meetings of an informal intra-departmental group, which would review the contents of forthcoming DRPA research reports and studies and advise the Assistant-Secretary-General for DRPA on those documents to be submitted to the relevant intergovernmental bodies.

27. The evaluation of the achievement of DIESA research deserves particular attention, if the Department is to rationalize its work and make it more relevant. The Inspectors suggest that DRPA and PPCO, which is in the process of elaborating an evaluation system to be applied to United Nations programmes in the economic and social sectors, should consult each other and ensure that the evaluation system would be applied to research and would assist in assessing its contribution to the elaboration of pertinent policy measures. The Inspectors realize that it is not an easy task to adapt the concepts, methodologies and procedures of evaluation and apply them to research in its relationship with policy issues, as these are being overtaken by decisions adopted by the General Assembly, ECOSOC and other intergovernmental bodies. The Inspectors are, however, convinced that it should be possible to define the main objectives pursued by DIESA in the area of research (such as its relevance to the international economic situation; its contribution to the achievement of the International Development Strategy objectives) and to check at regular intervals if these objectives are being achieved. In a recent report on "Strengthening the capacity of the United Nations, evaluation units and systems and time-table for review of evaluation programmes" (document A/38/133), the Secretary-General has proposed that an in-depth evaluation study on "development issues and policy" be prepared for 1988. The Inspectors feel that this study of evaluation should be planned for an earlier date. This should provide

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a needed opportunity to re-consider the substance of the programme of studies and research in DIESA, and to make it more action-oriented. The matter is so important that it could be necessary to utilize external expertise of the highest calibre in the economic field for this purpose.

B. Research and technical co-operation

28. The Secretary-General informed ECOSOC in 1978 that, in working out the re-allocation of functions, posts and credits, from DESA to DIESA and DTCD, he would proceed on the premise that research and support for technical co-operation activities were two interdependent functions, and thus, even when the major portion of a particular programme with its resources was assigned to one of the two Departments, he would envisage that its services would be available to the other departments, according to need <sup>3/</sup>. But the provisional terms of reference of DTCD and DIESA, submitted to AMS in July 1980 and November 1981 respectively, make no reference to any arrangement designed to realize the interdependence mentioned by the Secretary-General in 1978.

29. Early in 1978, the then Heads of the newly-created DIESA and DTCD agreed that their two Departments would co-operate on a basis of:

(a) periodic policy review by the Heads of the two Departments and regular consultation between staff involved in research and those dealing with the implementation of technical co-operation; and

(b) rotation of staff between the two Departments to the extent applicable, and establishment of joint task forces on special programmes in research or technical co-operation.

30. These measures have been little used, and this is a matter for regret. The Inspectors were told on a number of occasions that consultation between "opposite numbers" in the two Departments is a rarity rather than a normal practice, and that it depends mostly on the chance of previous personal acquaintance between the two officers concerned. There is an informal modus vivendi under which in principle DIESA does "global" research and DTCD does research at the country level in relation to its technical co-operation work. This is an inadequate arrangement: in the first place, it has not prevented overlapping and duplication, and in the second place - and more important - it is negative in nature, designed merely to prevent duplication of work, when what is needed is a positive arrangement, designed to enrich the work of both Departments by constructive exchanges of information and advice. There should, for example, be close and fruitful relations between the Development Analysis Branch of DIESA and the Development Advisory Services Branch of DTCD.

31. A result of the absence of a conscious interdependence between the two new Departments is that in those parts of DIESA where technical co-operation work has for one reason or another not been moved to DTCD or the regional commissions, cross-fertilization between research and technical co-operation seems to be better and more productive than it is between units that have been divided between the two Departments.

32. The Inspectors are convinced that there is a need for action to bring DIESA closer to DTCD at all levels, so that the research work of the one and the practical work of the other can stimulate and enrich each other. They recommend that the Director-General, should consider this matter urgently, and that all

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<sup>3/</sup> Report of the Secretary-General on the restructuring of the economic and social sectors of the UN system (E/1978/118).

necessary steps should be taken to ensure that the Heads of the two Departments meet regularly and their senior staff likewise. The measures referred to in paragraph 29 above should be considered as a starting point. The Inspectors also recommend that the informal arrangements for the division of research work between the two Departments should be developed, with a view, through continued contact, to eliminating duplication and to encouraging each Department to draw on the other's work. JIU will examine the question of the relationship between research and technical co-operation as regards all United Nations entities in a concluding report on restructuring to be prepared in 1984.

### C. Co-ordination of research

33. As mentioned in Chapter II of this report, the restructuring resolution recommended that global and intersectoral research and policy analysis should be clustered in a single entity of the Secretariat (DIESA), thus implicitly leaving to the other United Nations entities (regional commissions, UNCTAD, UNIDO, UNDP, etc.) and to the specialized agencies the responsibility for sectoral research. Such a division of work is easy to prescribe but in practice it is difficult to achieve, within the Secretariat and the system.

34. A smooth co-operation based on a continuous exchange of information and practical working arrangements, especially between DIESA and the regional commissions, has, to a large extent, been achieved, and DRPA has benefited from their work on balance of payment matters and on the problems of least developed countries. On other issues, DRPA has drawn upon ECLA and ECWA and has provided them, as well as other regional commissions, with a global and consistent frame-work for economic analysis. In addition, DIESA has succeeded in organizing a more systematic relationship between its research and that of some of the United Nations entities, such as UNIDO on energy and UNCTAD on long-term development objectives. Fairly close relationships have also been established with the DIEC's staff in order to ensure overall coherence of the social and economic activities, including development research.

35. On the other hand, the attention of the Inspectors was drawn to a number of cases where co-operation was lacking. For example, there were still unsolved differences between the Population Division and UNEP.

36. The Inspectors recognize the difficulty of this problem. Two or more organizations or entities may legitimately have an interest in the same area of research, and it may also be reasonable that the same data should appear in more than one research document or publication in the system. It does not necessarily follow, however, that two or more units or entities should do closely similar or even identical research in the same area, addressing overlapping questionnaires to governments and national institutions and collating numbers of identical learned publications. Constant vigilance is required, and above all constant effort on the part of all concerned to establish collaborative rather than competitive relationships. The Inspectors have recommended in a previous report (JIU/REP/81/3) that the resolution of jurisdictional issues and the establishment of co-operative arrangements for undertaking activities in the economic and social field should become a continuing responsibility of the Director-General for Development and International Economic Co-operation, and research could be usefully included amongst the areas selected for joint programming and co-ordination by the CCSQ(PROG).

37. The Inspectors also suggest that the "major programme" headed "Development issues and policies" which in the medium-term plan covers research and which concerns only seven "programmes", i.e. those covered by DIESA, DTCD and the five

regional commissions, should also cover other United Nations entities <sup>4/</sup> involved in research such as UNCTAD, UNIDO, UNEP, UNITAR, UNRISD, UNCHS, CSTD, UNU, etc. This would provide an opportunity for enforcing a rational division of work between them and attributing to each of them a clear mandate indicating the area falling within its purview, thus avoiding conflicts and duplication.

#### D. Social issues

38. DRPA mainly covers the economic aspects of development leaving to CSDHA responsibility for the social aspects. The work of CSDHA covers a wide range of social issues, and concentrates on questions concerning the human element in the development process. The groups with which it particularly concerns itself are women, children, young people, the aging and the disabled.

39. In 1979 the Centre was moved from New York to Vienna where it was joined by the Social Affairs Division from Geneva. The separation of CSDHA from New York made communication with DIESA more difficult and expensive and created some major problems such as co-ordination on social subjects which are partly treated in New York and partly in Vienna.

40. Apart from its responsibility at the micro level, the CSDHA has a general function to perform in the work of DIESA - and that of other departments and entities as well - advocating the importance of the social aspects in all development and analytical activities, especially the needs of women and the under-privileged. This function is essential to the implementation of the "unified approach" to development that is called for in such important legislation as General Assembly resolutions 2681(XXV) and 3409(XXX) and ECOSOC resolution 1747(LIV). To this end, the Centre should be in close touch, not only with the two Commissions and one Committee of ECOSOC which at present meet in Vienna but also with the economic and research elements of DIESA and, as part of DIESA, with DTCD, UNDP, ECOSOC and the Second and Third Committees of the General Assembly. The Assistant Secretary-General for CSDHA should be in a position to attend the regular meetings of the Under-Secretary-General in charge of DIESA.

41. Relations with the numerous NGOs that are active in the social field are another important part of the work of all CSDHA Branches, and all the Branches issue publications, ranging from the Social Development Newsletter and the Bulletin on Aging to the International Review of Criminal Policy, with various technical and sales publications. These are programmed through the Publications Board in New York.

#### E. Problems related to the location of CSDHA

42. All this is, however, greatly impeded by the separation of the Centre from New York. Efforts, costing quite substantial sums, are of course made to overcome the difficulties of communications; but there is no full substitute for personal contact, especially when, as in this case, letters can take weeks to get from a desk in Vienna to the addressee's desk in New York, when the facsimile service to New York is suffering from difficulties of its own (see JIU report on Communications in the UN System, JIU/REP/82/6, paragraph 52), and when the telephone link is in practice restricted to three or four hours a day by the difference in clock time.

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<sup>4/</sup> See paragraphs 9 to 11 of document A/35/527 where the Secretary-General points out various differences amongst the entities concerned with economic and social questions.

43. These difficulties are compounded by some of the administrative arrangements concerning CSDHA, which are felt in Vienna - and the Inspectors agree - to be overly bureaucratic. For example, all travel by staff must be authorized from New York. All communications to governments must be approved in draft in New York before they can be issued and all documents have to be edited in New York.

44. The move of the Centre to Vienna has had some positive effects, above all the pooling of resources of CSDHA with a large part of the Social Affairs Division, and according to some CSDHA members at least, greater "visibility" for the Centre in Vienna, and closer relations with the other bodies now located in Vienna especially UNIDO and the Narcotics Division. These are in the Inspectors' view considerably outweighed by the weakening of the two-way flow of ideas and discussion between CSDHA and the rest of the Department that has resulted from the move.

45. The Inspectors are in no doubt that CSDHA should be in New York. Only then can it have a satisfactory dialogue with its Under-Secretary-General and with the rest of the Department and the Secretariat, and only then can it play its full part in the economic and social side of the UN by ensuring that the human and social purposes of development are consistently borne in mind. They therefore feel bound to recommend that the Secretary-General review the various aspects of moving CSDHA back to New York and recommend solutions to the problems involved. This proposal is in no way designed to imply that the importance of the Vienna office as a United Nations centre should be lessened.

46. Among these problems would be the question of expense. No figure is available to the Inspectors for the actual total cost of the move of CSDHA to Vienna, and it appears that none has ever been worked out. The Secretary-General submitted estimates to the General Assembly in 1976 (A/C5/31/34 of 11 November 1976), according to which the one-time cost of the move of the staff from New York (and the Social Affairs Division from Geneva) would be some \$US630,000, with annual recurring costs of \$US141,000, less savings of \$US239,000. The net annual savings were expected to recover the one-time cost of the move in rather more than ten years. The savings envisaged were expected to flow from a reduction in rental (accommodation in the Vienna International Centre being provided free of charge) and from the considerable difference, in 1976, between post adjustment in Vienna and Geneva; post adjustment was even at that date higher than in New York.

47. These expectations have not been realized. Three major factors can be identified: first, post adjustment in Vienna has continued to rise relative to New York and Geneva, thus eliminating or reducing savings from post adjustment differentials; the recurrent costs of the Vienna International Centre, of which CSDHA bears its apportioned share, have proved much higher than was expected, thus reducing savings on rental; and the original estimates never took account of the extra telephone and communications requirements, nor of the extra travel requirements, of a Vienna-based CSDHA. It therefore seems likely that the transfer of CSDHA and the Social Affairs Division to Vienna has been, and is, a source of additional expenditure rather than economy.

48. There can of course be no assurance that a move back to New York would prove to be a source of economy either, though the estimates for it could envisage substantial savings in post adjustment, communications and travel. The justification for the recommendation is simply that the whole Department, including the CSDHA itself, is suffering from being divided.

49. A return by the CSDHA to New York would also help to relieve the difficult situation which now exists relative to the Voluntary Fund for the UN Decade for Women (the Fund is to continue its activities beyond the Decade, which ends in 1985). The Fund is managed by the Centre, but the work on it has been split. Financial management, and liaison with UNDP, is done in New York, for which purpose

two professional officers of CSDHA are stationed there; substantive work on projects proposed or approved for execution through the Fund is done in Vienna. This division of functions is not efficient and it is desirable that the functions should be brought together again. The Secretary-General is to submit to the thirty-ninth session of the General Assembly (in 1984) his proposals for the timing and modalities for a re-location of the Fund within the Centre (resolution 36/129 of 27 January 1982). Re-transfer of the Centre to New York would obviously enable the financial and substantive management of the Fund to be re-united.

50. If the problems resulting from a re-transfer of CSDHA to New York are considered insuperable for the time being, some palliative action could be taken as long as the CSDHA remained in Vienna. It should be possible, for instance, for most correspondence to be approved locally, and many administrative actions could also be decided on the spot: travel authorization is an example. It might be necessary for this purpose to outpost one or two members of the Departmental Executive Office to Vienna. The most important measure would be to use modern communications technology (see JIU/REP/82/6) to provide the required links between CSDHA in Vienna and DIESA in New York. These should include improved transmission of memoranda and documents by facsimile, teleconferencing, etc. The cost would not be excessive in terms of benefits, i.e. reducing the problems caused by the separation of CSDHA from DIESA. But these and similar measures would be second best to reuniting the Department.



#### IV. PROGRAMME PLANNING AND EVALUATION

##### A. Programme planning

51. PPCO has a unique combination of responsibilities including assistance in preparing the programme budget for DIESA, review and analysis of the programme budget of the UN in the economic and social sectors and inter-organizational co-operation and joint planning of activities within the UN system, including system-wide medium-term planning. The budget responsibilities for DIESA have now been removed from PPCO to the Office of the Under-Secretary-General. PPCO now has both system-wide and UN entities coverage. PPCO continues to prepare a cross-organizational programme analysis for CPC and ECOSOC, with a view to mobilizing and integrating at the planning and programming stages the inputs and expertise of the UN system. It also serves an important support role on substantive issues with respect to ACC, particularly CCSQ(PROG). And it has the task of strengthening United Nations systems and units, including the design and establishment of an internal evaluation system.

52. With respect to certain specific programme areas of common concern to several or all agencies of the system, PPCO attempts to assist in further developing cross-organizational co-operation.

53. PPCO reports to CPC on various aspects of programme planning. It also reports to CPC on evaluations requested by CPC, one of which was an evaluation of UNIDO technical assistance projects in manufactures, and another was on evaluation on the minerals programme. These tasks have impeded PPCO's efforts to give highest priority to the development and establishment of an internal evaluation system.

54. PPCO also maintains a computerized development information system (ISU) which provides, within the Secretariat, and the Member States, public organizations and non-profit institutions working for international development: (a) access to unpublished reports prepared by or for DIESA, DTCO and the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) and (b) service in the form of on-line retrieval, specialized bibliographies, copies of documents, and a regular abstract bulletin.

55. The restructuring resolution recommended the clustering within one department of interdisciplinary research and analysis and cross-sectoral analysis of programmes and plans in the economic and social sectors of the United Nations system, in view of their particularly close substantive and methodological relationship. The Inspectors recognize that the request of the General Assembly to cluster research and analysis with programme planning is logical and justified. However, they did not gain the impression that organizational arrangements have been taken to establish within DIESA a constant and efficient working relationship between the research officers and the staff of PPCO. While the Inspectors admit that it has been difficult to organize a fruitful dialogue between research, and programme planning staff and services, not only within DIESA but also in other entities of the Secretariat, they recommend that attempts should be renewed to establish close links between PPCO and the Office for DRPA in order to reflect the pertinent findings of the development research carried out by DIESA in the programme planning and co-ordination activities entrusted to PPCO.

##### B. PPCO relationship

56. At the present time, PPCO works very closely with the Director-General and it could be argued that PPCO is more closely associated with the Director-General's Office than with DIESA. This is especially so now that PPCO is no longer responsible for the budget of DIESA and is primarily concerned with coverage of the system and all activities relating to economic and social affairs.

57. PPCO could be moved to the Director-General's Office so that the present association would become formal. This could give PPCO a stronger position in relation to other entities of the United Nations. The argument against this, however, is that the Director-General's Office should be kept small (JIU/REP/81/9, Relationships between the Director-General for Development and International Economic Co-operation and Entities of the United Nations Secretariat). If part of PPCO were added, this would increase the size of the Office and detract from its essential function as a policy-directing and co-ordinating unit.

58. Part of PPCO could be merged with the Department for Administration and Management (DAM). PPCO's responsibility on programme reviews and planning is related to the responsibilities of the Budget Division and especially to the Under-Secretary for Administration and Management. This merger would have to be under DAM in order to enable this single unit to cover all of the activities of the UN and not just economic and social matters. The intention is taken care of with the Programme Planning and Budgeting Board. The Board was established in 1982 and is chaired by the Secretary-General or, in his absence, the Director-General. Another possibility would be the merger of PPCO and the related components of the Office of Finance Service (OFS) of DAM and have this independent organization report directly to the Secretary-General. This would have the advantage of the programme planning and evaluation elements being placed together and available directly to the Secretary-General. One possible disadvantage is that this would be another major component reporting directly to the Secretary-General. The Inspectors do not recommend any change in the location of PPCO and hope that the Programme Planning and Budgeting Board resolves some of the problems which have existed for some time.

59. The Board is expected to assist the Secretary-General in the exercise of his responsibilities in respect of planning, programming and budgeting. This Board is intended to bring together the various components which are now PPCO, DIESA and DAM/OFS. It is not certain how successful this Board will be. (Specific functions are listed in ST/SGB/190, dated 7 April 1982.) By its resolution 37/234 of 21 December 1982, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its thirty-eighth session, through the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination at its twenty-third session and through the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, on the measures which he has considered appropriate to take, bearing in mind the views expressed on the matter by delegations, to further integrate the programme planning, budgeting, monitoring and evaluation functions in the Secretariat of the United Nations. The Inspectors believe that this integration requested by the General Assembly is very important in order to permit the functioning of an integrated management system comprising planning, programming, budgeting, monitoring and evaluation.

### C. Evaluation

60. Within PPCO programme budget high priority is attributed to the design and establishment of the evaluation system, including concepts, methodologies and procedures for evaluation programmes in the economic and social sectors. The first report of the JIU on evaluation (A/35/225) noted that the United Nations had started to introduce evaluation in 1975 and expressed the hope that selected "in-depth evaluation" reports to be prepared for CPC would lead towards an evaluation system within the management cycle. In 1981, the JIU evaluation status report observed that the United Nations had still made little progress towards development of an internal evaluation system. In 1982 this was still true. The evaluation staff of PPCO has been engaged in undertaking special evaluations for CPC which has diverted it from the setting up of a system. The need and urgency for developing guidelines and the necessary methodology for the entities of the United Nations is obvious. Some of these entities are establishing their own internal evaluation system without the guidance and assistance which the Evaluation Unit of PPCO is supposed to provide.

61. As indicated above, the evaluation unit of PPCO has the responsibility for developing methodology, assisting in studies and working with other United Nations entities in the economic and social sectors in order to develop an evaluation system. The programme analysis and evaluation unit of the Office of Financial Services of DAM is also responsible in the non-economic and social sectors for programme evaluation, methodology and certain evaluation functions, as well as for assisting in evaluation studies.

62. PPCO was expected to establish guidelines as a basis for an evaluation system for the United Nations and its entities by mid-1983. If an evaluation system is developed and implemented in the near future the Secretariat will gain an important tool for ensuring more effective UN programmes. In order to accomplish the high priority on evaluation and to monitor and provide assistance to other UN entities on evaluation, PPCO may need additional resources.

63. The Inspectors suggest that there should be only one central evaluation unit, and not two as at present, so designated in the United Nations. The present two units (in DIESA and DAM) could be combined into a central evaluation unit as part of a further integration of programme planning, budgeting, monitoring and evaluation functions. CPC made recommendations that the Secretary-General should continue to strengthen the evaluation capacity of units of the system in specific ways (E/AC.51/1983/L.3/Add.12). The Committee also recommended specific responsibilities for the central evaluation unit.

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## V. STATISTICAL ACTIVITIES

64. The United Nations cannot fulfil its wide responsibilities in the economic and social fields without sound statistical information. The organization called upon to provide this statistical information is the Statistical Office, which performs the following activities:

(a) Assistance to the Economic and Social Council through the Statistical Commission in promoting a co-ordinated system of international statistical programmes and activities;

(b) contributions to the development of national statistics through technical co-operation;

(c) promotion of international comparability of statistics through the standardization of statistical methods, classifications and definitions used by national statistical agencies;

(d) collection, processing, evaluation and dissemination of international statistics;

(e) provision of statistical services to the General Assembly and other United Nations bodies, secretariat services, the Statistical Commission and other United Nations conferences and meetings on statistics.

### A. Co-ordination of statistical activities

65. The strengthening of co-ordination within the Secretariat and with the system's organizations is essential if duplication is to be reduced to the minimum, and if statistics gathered and published by one institution are to be compatible with those of others. Difficulties still arise, despite close and regular consultations at the working level of the Statistical Commission and the ACC Sub-committee on Statistics. As far as the specialized agencies are concerned, some degree of duplication has occurred from failure to follow some of the recommendations of the Statistical Commission. But the reduction or elimination of overlapping in statistics beyond certain limits may become counter-productive, and in that case co-ordination may cost more than if a limited amount of overlapping were tolerated.

66. In the case of regional commissions, instances of overlapping seem to be unavoidable owing to the similarity of the two programmes - the sole difference being in the geographical coverage of their work - one covering a region and the other all regions.

67. The Inspectors also believe that consultations with the regional commissions are beginning to suffer because of the reduction of travel funds. One remedy for this, which is used extensively, is to take advantage of technical co-operation missions to various countries to consult regional commissions.

### B. Implementation of the restructuring resolution as regards the Statistical Office

68. The impact of the restructuring resolution on the work of the S.O. has been rather limited. This is mainly due to the decision to keep together the resources deployed on research and those engaged on technical co-operation. Another reason may well be the specific nature of statistics, i.e. it is an intermediate product which passes through a coherent process from collection, analysis, issuance and dissemination, where field operations, including technical co-operation, form an integral part not easily distinguished from other functions. The S.O. has maintained its capacity undiminished as well as its ability to provide substantive support and backstopping for technical co-operation projects.

69. However, one important area of contention in the implementation of the restructuring resolution regarding the S.O. is still causing difficulties in relations between DTCD and DIESA. The issue involved is related to the redeployment of technical co-operation resources from the S.O. to DTCD.

70. As indicated in the JIU report on DTCD, at the time of the redeployment of technical co-operation resources from the old DESA to DTCD, a provisional arrangement was reached by which the technical co-operation resources of the S.O. were left within DIESA on the understanding that this arrangement would be reviewed at the end of 1978. The arrangement also contained an understanding that the S.O. would continue to offer substantive support for technical co-operation in the way it had been doing before the restructuring resolution. Thus, 12 professional posts financed from extra-budgetary support funds and two out-posted inter-regional advisers under the regular programme of technical co-operation were left in the S.O.

71. This arrangement was reviewed in 1980 by a joint working group of the two Departments, which did not reach an agreed solution. The question was also raised on various occasions with the Director-General for Development and International Economic Co-operation, but no final decision was taken. Thus, the "temporary arrangement" agreed by the heads of DIESA and DTCD in 1978 is still maintained in spite of the Secretary-General's announced intention to report to the General Assembly on a solution (see JIU/REP/83/2 on DTCD, paragraph 91).

72. The Statistical Commission discussed this question at its twenty-first session in January 1981, endorsed the present arrangement and supported its continuation (see Statistical Commission's report, twenty-first session, supplement 2, paragraph 197).

73. Working relationships between the S.O. and DTCD were therefore never formalized and the S.O. and DTCD continued to follow an ad hoc procedure whereby the S.O. assists DTCD in the backstopping of technical co-operation activities in the statistical area: review of project documents, job descriptions for field experts in statistics and experts reports; and representation of DTCD in the tripartite review of statistical projects. DTCD hands over to DIESA part of the support funds allocated to it by UNDP to pay for its contributions to technical co-operation operations in the statistical field.

74. The Inspectors came to the conclusion that the functions of the Statistical Office should not be divided, and that in circumstances where there were considerable limitations on resources the transfer of statisticians could cause more harm to overall programmes than if they were kept together. In addition, they felt that the feedback argument, i.e. that experience gained from technical co-operation is inseparable from the process of research, was valid.

75. In view of the above, the Inspectors recommend that the Secretary-General should formalize the present situation, namely that he should terminate the "provisional arrangement" and decide that technical co-operation functions in statistics shall remain within the S.O. and request the Director-General for Development and International Economic Co-operation to work out, with DTCD and DIESA, an improved mechanism for co-operation on statistics between the two Departments.

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## VI. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

76. The restructuring resolution in Section VIII provided guidelines for the re-organization of the Secretariat support service for the economic and social sectors of the United Nations. These guidelines were followed by the Secretary-General when he created DIESA in 1978 by splitting the former Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) into two parts: DIESA and DTCD. He assigned to each of the new Departments functions which were prescribed by the restructuring resolution. He did not, in the view of the Inspectors, avail himself sufficiently of the general powers under the Charter referred to in paragraph 59 of the restructuring resolution, which states:

"The recommendations in this present section represent guidelines, the detailed implementation of which the Secretary-General would carry out in exercise of his powers under the Charter of the United Nations."

77. Nor did the Secretary-General follow sufficiently paragraph 62 of the restructuring resolution which called for "a programme of phased implementation" for the functions which were to be clustered in various departments. Finally, the clustering of functions was not accompanied "by a thorough rationalization and streamlining of the capabilities of the organizational units concerned" as requested in paragraph 63 of the restructuring resolution.

78. The Inspectors found that the application of the restructuring resolution by the Secretariat was a rather mechanical operation which did not pay sufficient attention to the fundamental requirements of the programme and concentrated instead on jurisdictional and bureaucratic aspects. It is not surprising, therefore, that DIESA has thus not been able to fully meet the expectations of the General Assembly when it adopted the restructuring resolution.

79. The study on DIESA has brought to light a number of major issues and problems which go beyond the immediate scope of this report. Although some of them are mentioned in this report and have been discussed in previous JIU reports on restructuring, they cannot be dealt with fully in the context of a report on a single department. They have Secretariat or system-wide implications. These issues include:

(a) The extent to which integration and feedback is required between technical co-operation activities and related substantive research and normative work. How best to achieve such integration through structural and procedural reforms.

(b) How to distinguish clearly between global or interdisciplinary research and analysis and sectoral research, while providing feedback between them. What structures and procedures will facilitate this relationship.

(c) How to ensure that the organizations of the United Nations system collaborate and profit mutually from each other's research and analysis and how to delimit the areas of responsibility of each organization to avoid excessive duplication of effort.

(d) How to strengthen cross-sectoral analysis so that it can contribute better to sound implementation of policies of the General Assembly and ECOSOC and provide a basis for system-wide medium-term planning.

(e) What criteria are needed to determine how to allocate research and related work falling within the competence of the United Nations to its various entities.

(f) How best to encourage the organizations of the United Nations system to act more cohesively for the implementation of the recommendations of the restructuring resolution. Are new directives required from the General Assembly, or would reforms in the ACC machinery suffice? Can ECOSOC play a more effective role?

(g) How can the role of regional commissions be best defined to ensure the most effective distribution of functions between the commissions and other parts of the United Nations system with a view to best use of limited resources?

80. All these issues concern DIESA, but they go well beyond the scope of a report on one department. JIU intends to address them more fully in its concluding report on restructuring which it will complete in 1984. They are considered in this report only as regards the structure and functioning of DIESA itself.

#### A. Functions and organization

81. DIESA functions are outlined in paragraph 61(a) (b) and (f) of the annex to resolution 32/197. They include preparing global economic and social surveys and projections; undertaking intersectoral analyses and syntheses of development issues and preparing concise action-oriented recommendations on these issues; identifying and bringing to the attention of governments emerging economic and social issues; and developing co-operative joint planning of programmes with a view to system-wide medium-term planning. The basic rationale underlying the creation of DIESA is the clustering of development research and programme planning in a single department.

82. In addition to its research and programme planning functions, DIESA provides support for technical co-operation projects financed by voluntary contributions through various funds. Some of these funds are diminishing. DIESA's work is also handicapped because the Department has no intergovernmental body which has looked into its programme in detail (paragraphs 6-24).

#### RECOMMENDATION 1

In order to rationalize the work and organization of DIESA, the Department should be provided with definitive terms of reference. Three small component units of the Department (see paragraph 22) should be considered for possible transfer to DTCD.

#### B. Research and analysis

83. This is one of DIESA's main functions, leading in many cases to the preparation of surveys, reports and studies for the intergovernmental bodies as well as for general distribution.

##### 1. Relations between research and policy issues

84. DIESA is increasingly involved in the preparation of documents on global economic and social issues for the use of the intergovernmental bodies. DIESA issues every year several recurrent and non-recurrent publications and holds seminars and meetings. Efforts should be renewed by DIESA to make sure that it provides the intergovernmental bodies with pertinent and timely documents which help them to make the right decisions in the social and economic fields (paragraphs 25-27).

## RECOMMENDATION 2

To make DIESA documents more relevant to the world economic and social situation and to ensure they provide a sound basis for the adoption by the inter-governmental bodies of action-oriented recommendations, an informal intra-departmental group should be set up within DRPA to review the contents of forthcoming research reports before they are sent to intergovernmental bodies.

### 2. Cross-fertilization between research and technical co-operation

85. Instead of endeavouring to maintain a constant exchange of ideas, with DIESA feeding research to DTCD and receiving in return a feedback from technical co-operation activities, the two Departments frequently act in isolation. In addition, an informal understanding by which, in general, DIESA deals with global research and DTCD undertakes research in relation to its technical co-operation activities at the country level has not always been fully observed (paragraphs 28-32).

## RECOMMENDATION 3

The Director-General, with the heads of DIESA and DTCD, should take a fresh look at the arrangements for collaboration devised in 1978 and ensure its implementation and development.

### 3. Co-ordination of development research

86. The resolution on restructuring recommended that global and inter-sectoral development research and policy analysis should be clustered in a single entity of the Secretariat, leaving to the other entities (regional commissions, UNCTAD, UNIDO, UNEP, etc.) the responsibility for covering sectoral research. Within the Secretariat, and in particular between DIESA and the regional commissions, a fair division of work has been achieved. However, the division of labour between DIESA on the one hand, and UNIDO, UNCTAD, etc. on the other, is not clear and co-operation has not always been satisfactory (paragraphs 33-37).

## RECOMMENDATION 4

Under the Director-General, agreements should be worked out by DIESA and each of the main United Nations entities and organizations involved in development research to establish a rational working relationship, exchange of information and contribution, and harmonization of the contents of their studies and publications.

### 4. Social issues

87. Research on social issues is done partly by DRPA in New York and partly by CSDHA in Vienna. CSDHA is responsible for social research at the "micro" level, while DRPA is responsible at the "macro" level. CSDHA covers a wide range of social issues and concentrates on questions concerning under-privileged human groups, particularly women, the aging and the disabled.

88. CSDHA was moved in 1979 from New York to Vienna, where it was joined by a large part of the staff of the Social Affairs Division from Geneva. The move has had some positive effects but these are outweighed by the weakening of the two-way flow of ideas and discussions between CSDHA and the rest of DIESA. Efforts are made to overcome the difficulties of communications but there is no full substitute for direct contacts (paragraphs 38-50).



#### RECOMMENDATION 5

The CSDHA should be moved back to New York and the Secretary-General should recommend solutions to the problems involved.

##### C. Programme planning and evaluation

89. PPCO is responsible for improving programme planning and evaluation in the economic and social sectors of the United Nations, including the programme budget, and for developing the co-operative, and, wherever possible, joint planning of programmes within the system. PPCO prepares a cross-organizational programme analysis in support of the CPC and ECOSOC with a view to integrating at the programme planning stages the inputs and expertise of the United Nations system.

##### 1. PPCO relationships

90. Many of PPCO's responsibilities, particularly in the field of programme planning come under the authority of the Director-General for DIEC (DG) rather than the Under-Secretary-General for DIESA. Therefore one possibility is to move PPCO to the DG's Office so that the present informal relationship would become a formal one. Another possibility is to merge part of PPCO with DAM into a single unit which would cover all activities of the United Nations and not just economic and social matters. A third possibility would be to merge PPCO with related components of DAM and have this independent organization report directly to the Secretary-General. But one possible disadvantage is that this would be another major component reporting directly to the Secretary-General. The General Assembly requested the Secretary-General by its resolution 37/234 to further integrate the programme planning, budgeting, monitoring and evaluation functions in the Secretariat of the United Nations. The Inspectors hope that the Programme Planning and Budgeting Board will resolve some of the problems which have existed for some time, and do not recommend any change in the location of PPCO (paragraphs 51-63).

##### 2. Evaluation

91. PPCO intended to give highest priority to the design and establishment of an evaluation system, including concepts, methodologies and procedures for evaluation programmes in the economic and social sectors. However, PPCO has been engaged in undertaking special evaluations for CPC and has therefore been diverted from meeting this task. In addition, the programme analysis and evaluation unit of the Office of Financial Services of DAM is responsible for evaluation methodology and certain evaluation functions in sectors other than the economic and social sectors.

92. There are at present two "central" evaluation units, one in PPCO and the other in DAM. This is at variance with the rational conception of a central evaluation system.

#### RECOMMENDATION 6

The Secretary-General should take action as soon as possible in order to present his views to the General Assembly regarding the further integration of programme planning, budgeting, monitoring and evaluation functions in the specific components of the Secretariat of the United Nations. As part of the integration, the present two evaluation units should be combined into one central unit. In the meantime, PPCO should be allowed to concentrate on the elaboration of guidelines as a basis for an evaluation system and its implementation.

D. Implementation of the restructuring resolution as regards the Statistical Office

93. At the time of redeployment of technical co-operation resources from the old DESA to DTCD, the technical co-operation resources of the S.O. were left within DIESA with the understanding that this arrangement would be reviewed. This was done on several occasions and the 1978 temporary arrangement was maintained because of the specific nature of statistical work. The separation of technical co-operation and research would cause harm to the overall programme of the S.O. (paragraphs 64-75).

RECOMMENDATION 7

The Secretary-General should formalize the present situation concerning the S.O. namely that he should terminate the "provisional arrangement" and decide that technical co-operation functions in statistics shall remain within the S.O. The Director-General for DIEC should work out, with DTCD and DIESA, an improved mechanism for co-operation on statistics between the two Departments.

94. The recommendations made in this report are intended to strengthen DIESA's contribution to the work of ECOSOC and this in turn might encourage ECOSOC to devote more time to re-considering the design of DIESA's research programme and supervising and guiding the Department.

ST/SCB/161  
23 March 1978

SECRETARY-GENERAL'S BULLETIN

To: Members of the Staff

Subject: ESTABLISHMENT OF THE DEPARTMENT OF INTERNATIONAL  
ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS

1. With effect from the day of issuance, there is established in accordance with General Assembly resolution 32/197 a Department of International Economic and Social Affairs.
2. The functions of the Department of International Economic and Social Affairs are:
  - (a) To undertake interdisciplinary research and analysis, drawing as necessary upon all relevant parts of the United Nations system, including the preparation of global economic and social surveys and projections to assist the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council;
  - (b) To undertake intersectoral analyses and syntheses of development issues in close collaboration with other organizations of the United Nations system, and to prepare appropriate recommendations for consideration by the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council;
  - (c) To identify and bring to the attention of Governments emerging economic and social issues of international concern;
  - (d) To undertake research and analysis in those economic and social sectors that do not fall within the purview of other United Nations units, organs, programmes and specialized agencies and which are necessary to support the functions described in subparagraphs (a), (b) and (c) above;
  - (e) To prepare for publication and dissemination the results of research and analysis relating to relevant economic and social issues;
  - (f) To assist, as required, jointly with all parts of the United Nations system involved in operational activities, the Economic and Social Council in carrying out comprehensive policy reviews of operational activities throughout the United Nations system;
  - (g) To undertake cross-sectoral analysis of programmes and plans in the economic and social sectors with a view to mobilizing and integrating, at the planning and programming stages, the inputs and expertise of the United Nations system;

(h) To function as the focal point for the development at the intersecretariat level of co-operative and joint planning of programme activities with a view to system-wide medium-term planning;

(i) To maintain liaison with regional commissions and non-governmental organizations;

(j) To prepare substantive documentation for the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council on the planning and programming of activities on a system-wide basis in the economic and social fields;

(k) To provide substantive services for the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination, the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination and its subsidiary bodies in the economic and social sectors, and for the Committee for Development Planning and other expert bodies of the Economic and Social Council.

3. The modalities of co-operation between the Department of Technical Co-operation for Development and the Department of International Economic and Social Affairs will be worked out by the heads of the respective Departments.

4. The Office of Technical Co-operation and those responsibilities of DAFO relating to executive office and budget control functions pertaining to OTC are transferred from the Department of ESA to the Department of Technical Co-operation for Development. The Economic and Social Council secretariat, except for the non-governmental organization section, is transferred from the Department of ESA to the Office of Secretariat Services for Economic and Social Matters. Further redeployment of resources is presently under review and will be the subject of a future Secretary-General's bulletin.

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