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ANNUAL REPORT OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE ON
CO-ORDINATION FOR 1978/79

1. This report is submitted in accordance with the new reporting procedures agreed upon by the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination (ACC). These procedures, as set out in the report submitted to the Economic and Social Council by ACC pursuant to paragraph 7 of General Assembly resolution 32/197 of 20 December 1977 (E/1978/107), envisage that issues of system-wide scope on the agenda of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council will be dealt with separately rather than in a single annual report as in the past. It was considered, however, that there would be continuing value in a brief annual statement by ACC, providing an overview of the work carried out by the ACC machinery over the previous 12 months.
2. The present report, the first submitted under these new reporting arrangements, is limited to a factual account of the results of meetings of ACC and its subsidiary bodies held over the past few months, since more general policy issues concerning the directions of intersecretariat work and regarding ACC assistance to intergovernmental bodies in the field of development and international economic co-operation have already been dealt with in some detail in the two reports submitted by ACC in 1978 pursuant to General Assembly resolution 32/197 - the progress report in document E/1978/107, referred to above, and the report on the restructuring of the ACC subsidiary machinery in document E/1978/144.
3. The two reports referred to above were acted on by the Economic and Social Council in decision 1978/70 of 4 August 1978 and by the General Assembly in resolution 33/202 of 29 January 1979. The latter resolution, *inter alia*, requested ACC to "give the highest priority in its work to substantive questions of central importance to the development of developing countries and to international economic co-operation and to keep its functioning and reporting systems geared to the concerns, directives and programmes of work of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council".
4. It is hoped in the future to use the annual overview reports of ACC to assist intergovernmental bodies in reviewing progress made in the implementation of the above provision and, generally, to highlight policy issues requiring attention and discuss achievements as well as difficulties encountered, so as to enable

intergovernmental organs to provide the necessary guidance and direction to intersecretariat work. In addition, as noted in paragraph 47 of the ACC progress report (E/1978/107), efforts will be made to ensure that all reports emanating from ACC become more analytical in nature and provide, whenever possible, alternative approaches and suggestions for consideration by intergovernmental bodies.

5. In addition to this annual overview report, ACC is submitting separate reports on progress achieved in the field of nutrition under the new institutional arrangements (E/1979/43) on interagency action in rural development (E/1979/44) and on the co-ordination of information systems (E/AC.51/102), as well as a summary of the discussions held in the Consultative Committee on Substantive Questions (Programme) of ACC on the in-depth study of the planning process of the United Nations.

6. As regards the new intersecretariat structures developed pursuant to General Assembly resolution 32/197, the two ACC reports referred to above describe the new arrangements agreed upon by ACC for its own functioning, including the new functions assumed by it as a result of the merger of the Environment Co-ordination Board (ECB), the Inter-Agency Consultative Board (IACB), and the Advisory Committee of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) with ACC, as well as the new structures adopted for the ACC subsidiary machinery. These new structures centre around the Organizational Committee and two main consultative committees - the Consultative Committee on Administrative Questions (CCAQ) and the Consultative Committee on Substantive Questions (CCSQ). The structures of the former committee were left basically unchanged. The latter committee is organized into two distinct components, dealing respectively with programme and related matters (CCSQ (PROG)) and with operational activities (CCSQ (OPS)). CCSQ has assumed direct responsibility for the tasks previously carried out by various subsidiary bodies operating in substantive areas, which have accordingly been discontinued, with the exception of four permanent subsidiary bodies dealing respectively with statistics, nutrition, public information and information systems.

7. In decision 1978/70, the Economic and Social Council expressed its appreciation of the measures taken by ACC and commended them to the General Assembly for its consideration. The General Assembly for its part, in resolution 33/202, took note inter alia of the progress made by ACC in streamlining its continuing subsidiary machinery and requested it to keep its ad hoc subsidiary machinery to the absolute minimum necessary to meet specific intergovernmental requirements and to support the work of its continuing machinery.

8. The new arrangements described above have now been set in motion. Thus, the Organizational Committee held its first meeting from 20 to 22 February 1979 and adopted a biennial programme of work for ACC and its subsidiary machinery. CCSQ (PROG) held its first regular session, 1979, from 12 to 16 March, and CCSQ (OPS) is scheduled to hold its first regular session, 1979, at Headquarters from 25 April to 1 May. The conclusions of the former are outlined below and those of the latter will be set out in an addendum to the present report. The Consultative Committee on Administrative Questions (Personnel) (CCAQ (PER)) met from 22 January to 2 February 1979 and the Consultative Committee on Administrative Questions (Financial and Budgetary Matters) (CCAQ (FB)) met from 5 to 9 March 1979.

9. The ACC held its first regular session, 1979, from 2 to 4 April at the headquarters of the World Intellectual Property Organization. The Committee was informed of the arrangements made at the intergovernmental level for the formulation of a new international development strategy for the third United Nations development decade. The Committee accordingly gave preliminary consideration to its own contribution to the preparatory process for the strategy. In that context it decided to make available to the Preparatory Committee a report of the Task Force on Long-Term Development Objectives and reviewed a paper on options and alternative approaches which the Director-General for Development and International Economic Co-operation intended to use as a basis for a statement to be submitted to the Preparatory Committee. The ACC will, of course, continue to follow closely the work of the Preparatory Committee with a view to providing continuing substantive support to its work.

10. The ACC also reviewed an outline of the report requested by the General Assembly in resolution 33/201 for the comprehensive policy review on operational activities.

11. ACC gave further consideration to the implementation of paragraph 34 of the annex to General Assembly resolution 32/197. It approved the text of a standard letter of designation of "single officials" at the country level for the United Nations system's operational activities for development (see annex), and requested CCSQ (OPS) to discuss practical arrangements for the exercise of the functions of this official.

12. The ACC decided at its seventy-fourth session to review the progress made in the preparations for the Conference on Science and Technology for Development at each of its sessions held prior to the Conference. The ACC accordingly reviewed the preparations for the Conference at its first regular session, 1979, and decided that a discussion paper on institutional matters, to be submitted to the United Nations Conference on Science and Technology for Development under item 3 of its agenda, should be prepared on an interagency basis and should take fully into account the views of all the concerned organizations of the system.

13. Other activities and decisions of ACC are set out below.

I. PROGRAMME MATTERS

14. At its first regular session, 1979, CCSQ (PROG) focused its attention on the planning process, joint planning among organizations of the system and cross-organizational programme analyses. A summary of the Committee's discussion on the planning process, which concentrated on the interagency aspects of the questions dealt with in the Secretary-General's report on the planning process (E/AC.51/97), was to be before the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination (CPC) at its nineteenth session.

15. In relation to joint planning, the Committee agreed on preliminary measures to be taken in order to lay the basis for the general framework, "which will assist in

identifying areas amenable to joint programming and planning" in accordance with the ACC decisions pursuant to restructuring. The Committee discussed how areas for joint planning could be identified so as to ensure that they were in line with intergovernmental priorities and noted that one possibility for identifying such areas was provided by General Assembly decisions on subjects for intensified international attention, such as world conferences, which required collective efforts by the organizations of the system during the preparatory process as well as follow up in the implementation of plans of action. It was also agreed that experience gained in the current cross-organizational programme analyses could assist in the development of joint planning. The Committee emphasized that initially joint planning exercises should be undertaken selectively and should be confined to a small number of well-defined areas in which comparatively coherent activities were taking place, until more experience had been gained. Preliminary consideration was also given to the modalities for carrying out joint planning exercises, including the possibility of organizing joint interagency planning teams.

16. The Committee also had a preliminary discussion on how the results of joint planning exercises would ultimately be reflected in the programme budgets and work programmes of organizations, in relation to the unquestionable right of the governing bodies concerned to decide on such programme budgets. It was felt that since joint planning had to grow out of the existing activities of the organizations concerned, with the object of increasing the collective potential impact of activities, there would be no inherent conflict between the collective action agreed upon through joint planning exercises and the individual action taken in a given agency.

17. In its discussion of cross-organizational programme analyses, the Committee considered a number of difficulties that had been encountered in preparing past analyses, in particular the lack of a clear definition of the scope of subjects selected and of a common conceptual framework, which would accommodate programme differences in the various organizations. It was felt that a more precise definition would also facilitate the provision of financial information. The Committee agreed on procedures for the development of a conceptual framework for the preparation of the analyses. It was suggested that when CPC was considering subjects for future cross-organizational analyses, the organizations concerned could advise CPC on the scope of the area being considered.

18. The Committee also discussed what proposals could be made to CPC at its nineteenth session regarding areas for future cross-organizational programme analyses. It recalled that CPC had provisionally identified the areas of rural development and statistics for cross-organizational analyses in 1980, but since a report on the co-ordination of statistics had been requested for the Statistical Commission in 1981 and the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) was also currently evaluating the United Nations Statistical Office, it was felt that CPC might wish to have some possible alternative to statistics. The Committee suggested that marine affairs and youth activities might be possible alternatives. For 1981, the Committee suggested that public administration and new and renewable sources of energy could be suitable areas, the latter in the light of the United Nations Conference on New and Renewable Sources of Energy.

19. Finally the Committee discussed how to carry out continuing interorganizational programme co-ordination tasks called for by intergovernmental bodies in a large number of substantive areas, including science and technology, outer space activities, population, the interrelation between resources, environment, population and development, education and training, activities relating to the United Nations Decade for Women, disability prevention and rehabilitation of the disabled, and migration of trained personnel. In many instances this involved co-ordinating the preparatory work for international conferences and years; in other cases substantive co-ordination was needed of interrelated activities carried out by different organizations. In addition, the organizations needed to arrange for the preparation of reports of system-wide concern for submission to intergovernmental bodies.

II. OPERATIONAL ACTIVITIES

20. A summary of the decisions taken at the first regular session, 1979, of CCSQ (OPS) will be issued as an addendum to the present report.

III. ADMINISTRATIVE QUESTIONS

21. In the area of administrative policies, the work of ACC centred on the immediate tasks assigned to the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC) in the regulation and co-ordination of the United Nations common system and on the improvement of the means for review and assessment of the budgetary and financial practices of the organizations by the central United Nations bodies responsible for system-wide co-ordination.

22. Through its subsidiary body, CCAQ, ACC provided the Commission with the information and views it required for the discharge of its responsibilities under the statute. Among the more important questions examined by the Commission at its most recent sessions were:

(a) The effect of currency instability on the operation of the salary system generally and on the determination of pensionable remuneration in particular;

(b) Policies, standards and methods of recruitment and career development;

(c) Surveys of local conditions of employment in headquarters duty stations for the purpose of recommending the salary scales of the General Service category;

(d) Review of certain allowances requested by the General Assembly.

23. As part of its own co-ordination activities, ACC undertook a study of the feasibility of establishing a single administrative tribunal for the common system. A report on this study, which is being carried out in response to General Assembly resolution 33/119, of 19 December 1978, will be submitted to the General Assembly at its thirty-fourth session.

24. Following its work on the harmonization of programme budgets and medium-term plans, which was undertaken in response to Economic and Social Council resolution 2098 (LXIII) of 3 August 1977, 1/ ACC went on to draw up a revised standard classification of the programme activities of the organizations of the United Nations system. This new programme classification will form the basis for its 1979 report to the Council on expenditures of the United Nations system in relation to programmes, which will also be presented in an improved and more concise format. ACC also agreed in a preliminary manner on procedures for reporting expenditures of the organizations on a compatible basis in the framework of cross-organizational programme analyses and evaluation reports in areas selected for review by central intergovernmental organs.

25. Pursuing its study of the problems involved in budgeting for the effects of currency instability and inflation, ACC agreed on several further measures aimed at harmonizing the treatment of cost increases in the budgets of the organizations. These were communicated to the General Assembly at its thirty-third session in the Secretary-General's report on the impact of inflation on the budgets of the organizations of the United Nations system (A/C.5/33/47), submitted in response to General Assembly resolution 32/212 of 21 December 1977. In addition, ACC gave further attention to the question of arrangements for the reimbursement of support costs incurred by the organizations in connexion with extrabudgetary activities and formulated views for consideration by the Intergovernmental Working Group on Support Costs, established by the Governing Council of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to study this question.

26. The increasing number of requests formulated by central intergovernmental organs in connexion with their reviews of system-wide financial and budgetary questions placed considerable demand on the organizations of the system and on the subsidiary machinery of ACC to provide information, analyses and common views. To meet this demand, ACC agreed to seek the necessary strengthening of its subsidiary machinery.

27. In the organizational development of the United Nations common system, the year under review was marked by the admission of the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), which by General Assembly resolution 32/107 of 15 December 1977 had been brought into relationship with the United Nations in accordance with Articles 57 and 63 of the Charter, thereby increasing the number of participating organizations to 14.

IV. THE FUTURE OF THE INTER-ORGANIZATION BOARD FOR INFORMATION SYSTEMS AND RELATED ACTIVITIES

28. The ACC decided as part of its restructuring recommendations (E/1979/144, para. 31) to review the terms of reference and functioning of the Inter-Organization Board for Information Systems and Related Activities (IOB) in the light of the recommendations of the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) and the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ).

1/ For an account of the results of this work, see part III of the ACC annual report for 1977/78 (E/1978/43/Add.2).

29. An ad hoc interagency meeting on the future of IOB was held at Headquarters on 9 and 10 March 1979. On the basis of the conclusions reached at that meeting, ACC decided that IOB should continue as a focal point for furnishing comprehensive information to intergovernmental bodies about the information systems and services of the United Nations family. It was also decided that for the present, there should be no change in the terms of reference of IOB as far as Board membership, representation at meetings and financial arrangements were concerned, although in future the requirements for the co-ordination of activities in the substantive administrative areas must be determined by CCSQ and CCAQ.

30. It would be the task of IOB to advise the Consultative Committees on whether the cross-organizational requirements that had been identified called for information system efforts and, when efforts were identified, on how they could be mounted. The ACC agreed that no major development of an interorganizational system should be undertaken until organizations had assessed the costs they would probably incur and had made their necessary budgetary arrangements.

31. The ACC appointed Dr. S. Flache (World Health Organization) as Chairman and Mr. Hansen (United Nations) as Vice-Chairman of the Board and noted that the Board would hold a meeting from 3 to 5 May 1979.

V. CLOSER RELATIONS BETWEEN THE UNITED NATIONS AND NATIONAL PARLIAMENTS

32. At its 123rd meeting on 4 September 1978, the Council of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (ACC/1979/R.25) adopted a resolution in which it recommended to international organizations that they take all appropriate steps to meet parliaments' needs for information regarding their activities, and in particular to ensure that (a) the documentation they issued would reach parliaments and their sources, or was better known to them; (b) the services of their regional or national offices were strengthened; and (c) familiarization courses on their activities and documentation were made available to parliamentary officials.

33. The ACC was informed of this resolution and agreed that executive heads of organizations, bodies and agencies of the United Nations system, in agreement with respective Governments, should supply commissions of parliaments with relevant information regarding their activities and should, where possible, organize visits by parliamentarians to their headquarters or regional offices and arrange for meetings with parliamentary groups. The ACC also proposed that the Joint United Nations Information Committee prepare information and material addressed specifically to parliamentarians.

VI. THE FINANCIAL SITUATION OF DEVELOPMENT FORUM

34. The ACC expressed its deep concern at the financial situation of Development Forum - which it recognized as the single periodical of the organizations of the United Nations system reflecting the joint purposes of their public information activities, in particular in the economic and social field - and recommended that

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the organizations of the United Nations system make such financial contributions to the General Edition of Development Forum as their respective policy and financial resources permit, in order to solve the immediate liquidity problem of the periodical and to guarantee its continuation during 1979.

35. The ACC instructed the Joint United Nations Information Committee to undertake immediately a study of the long-term situation of Development Forum and to present to ACC proposals aimed at strengthening the financial and organizational structure of the publication, including the recommendations for such annual financial contributions by the organizations of the United Nations system as were possible within the limits of the policies and financial resources of those organizations. The ACC further asked the Joint United Nations Information Committee to prepare a statement on the editorial policy of Development Forum.

Annex

TEXT OF THE STANDARD LETTER OF DESIGNATION OF THE RESIDENT
CO-ORDINATOR OF THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM'S OPERATIONAL
ACTIVITIES FOR DEVELOPMENT

1. Pursuant to General Assembly resolution 32/197 on the restructuring of the economic and social sectors of the United Nations system and with the consent of your Government, I have the honour to designate, after consultation with the heads of the various organizations of the United Nations system, Mr/Ms as the Resident Co-ordinator of the United Nations system's operational activities for development in He/she will be responsible to me for exercising the functions outlined in paragraph 34 of Assembly resolution 32/197, the relevant portion of which states that "on behalf of the United Nations system, over-all responsibility for and co-ordination of operational activities for development carried out at the country level should be entrusted to a single official to be designated, taking into account the sectors of particular interest to the countries of assignment, in consultation with and with the consent of the Government concerned, who should exercise team leadership and be responsible for evolving, at the country level, a multidisciplinary dimension in sectoral development assistance programmes. These tasks should be carried out in conformity with the priorities established by the competent national authorities and with the assistance, as necessary, of joint interagency advisory groups".

2. In respect of all matters connected with the management of the UNDP programme, the Resident Co-ordinator of the United Nations system's operational activities for development, in his/her capacity as UNDP Resident Representative, will be directly responsible to the Administrator of UNDP. He/she will be responsible to the heads of those organizations that utilize the UNDP Resident Representative as their field representative in matters concerning their respective activities.

3. It is recognized that these arrangements, which aim at a better co-ordination of operational activities for development by the United Nations system, do not affect relations between your Government and individual organizations of the United Nations system or the direct lines of authority and communication between the representatives of these organizations at the country level and their own executive heads.

4. Guided by the intentions of the General Assembly, I have the honour to invite you to arrange for, in the performance of his/her functions, to receive the co-operation of the appropriate authorities in and to express the confidence that this designation will serve to strengthen the collaboration between your Government and the organizations of the United Nations system engaged in operational activities for development in your country.
