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REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE FOR PROGRAMME AND CO-ORDINATION  
ON THE WORK OF ITS NINETEENTH SESSION

CHAPTER VI

PROPOSED PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 1980-1981

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## CHAPTER VI

### A. PROPOSED PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 1980-1981

1. The Committee considered agenda item 8, entitled "Proposed programme budget for the biennium 1980-1981", at its 606th to 614th meetings, held from 24 to 28 September 1979.
2. For its consideration of the item, the Committee had before it the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1980-1981 <sup>1/</sup> and the report of the Secretary-General on the identification of activities that have been completed, are obsolete, of marginal usefulness or ineffective (A/C.5/34/4 and Corr.1). An informal paper, containing supplementary information on subprogrammes and programme elements within programmes of the Department of International Economic and Social Affairs, was also made available to the Committee.
3. At an informal organizational meeting, held on 20 September, the Committee agreed to hold first a general debate on the proposed programme budget as a whole, including the methodology used, the co-operation within the Secretariat and the role of the Office for Programme Planning and Co-ordination. The Committee also agreed that, owing to the constraints of time, it would consider only sections 6, 7, 9, 15, 17, 19 and 21 to 23 of the proposed programme budget, and the transport and water programmes of the regional commissions.
4. Owing to constraints of time, the Committee could only review section 6 (Department of International Economic and Social Affairs) and the transport and water programmes of the regional commissions which are in sections 10 to 14.
5. In view of the fact that the Secretary-General was to submit a revised programme budget for section 7 (Department of Technical Co-operation for Development), the Committee held only a brief discussion on this section, as contained in the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1980-1981.
6. Some delegations made brief comments on other sections of the proposed programme budget: section 22 (Office of the United Nations Disaster Relief Co-ordinator), section 23 (Human rights) and section 28 (Administration, Management and General Services: Security Section at Geneva).
7. In his introductory statement, the Director of the Budget Division described the structure and presentation of the proposed programme budget for the 1980-1981 biennium, as well as the underlying basic concepts and methodology. Although these were largely the same as those used in the current biennium, several significant refinements were introduced with regard to the interpretation of the concept of "non-recurrent activities", the description of proposed activities and related resources, requirements in absolute amounts for each subprogramme and an identification, where possible, of the highest and the lowest priority

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<sup>1/</sup> Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-fourth Session, Supplement No. 6 (A/34/6 and Add.1).

programme elements, representing in each case 10 per cent of the resources requested. A detailed analysis of the methodology and the refinements introduced could be found in the foreword and the addendum to the proposed programme budget.

8. In compliance with General Assembly resolution 33/118 of 19 December 1978, the proposed programme budget had been prepared within the framework of the proposed medium-term plan for the period 1980-1983. Although the General Assembly did not specifically endorse the recommendations of the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination (CPC) on the relative real growth rates for the major programmes covered by the plan, as contained in paragraph 53 (a) of its report on the work of its eighteenth session, <sup>2/</sup> they remained the only available intergovernmental guidelines for resource allocation during the forthcoming biennium, and had been applied with a measure of discernment, as recommended by the Committee. The proposed programme budget provided for a real growth rate of 0.8 per cent reflecting a determined policy of budgetary restraint, in accordance with the commitment made by the Secretary-General to the Assembly at its thirty-third session. Considerable efforts had been made to formulate the proposed budget within this limit.

9. With regard to activities which had been completed, were obsolete, of marginal usefulness or ineffective, such information was provided, where possible, in the proposed budget and in the report of the Secretary-General (A/C.5/34/4), which had been prepared in compliance with General Assembly resolution 33/204.

10. The Committee deplored in the strongest terms the failure of the Secretariat to provide the necessary documentation on time, thereby forcing the Committee to schedule a resumed session and then again forcing a rescheduling of the resumed session at a time when the General Assembly was in session. The Committee could not accept such a serious failure on the part of the Secretariat, which had prevented the Committee from effectively carrying out its mandate. The untimely submission of the proposed programme budget had also forced the Committee to meet at a time when the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions had already concluded its work on the proposed programme budget, without the benefit of the views of the Committee. The Committee recommended that the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly should direct the Secretariat to take urgent and corrective measures to prevent the recurrence of such unfortunate and unacceptable conditions of work for intergovernmental bodies. The Committee reiterated that all documentation should be submitted on time and in accordance with the rules of procedure, that is, six weeks in advance of the meetings concerned.

11. With regard to the identification of activities that had been completed, were obsolete, of marginal usefulness or ineffective, it was generally felt that the information contained in the report of the Secretary-General (A/C.5/34/4 and Corr.1) was clearly inadequate. It was stressed that the identification of such activities should be prepared by the Secretariat where the necessary programme information which would support intergovernmental programme review was available.

12. Some delegations found that the format of the programme budget represented an improvement over previous ones, particularly with regard to its references to

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<sup>2/</sup> Ibid., Thirty-third Session, Supplement No. 38 (A/33/38).

the medium-term plan. It was noted, however, that there was still considerable room for improvement, particularly in connexion with an identification of priorities, and that many programmes did not provide indications of time-limits for completion of activities. It was also noted that there was no attempt to identify and analyse relationships among programme elements planned in the various organizational entities within the Secretariat, that performance indicators were lacking and that there should be an attempt to obtain the opinion of users to assert the usefulness of studies prepared by the Secretariat.

13. A number of delegations stressed the need to maintain close collaboration between all organs and agencies of the United Nations system, such as the World Health Organization, the International Labour Organisation and the United Nations Institute for the Advancement of Women, in order to avoid duplication of work.

14. Some delegations expressed satisfaction with the efforts made by the Secretary-General to restrict the growth rate of the budget and stated that they should be continued. However, other representatives pointed out that financial constraints should not impair the programmes of interest to the developing countries and should be carried out by the redeployment of resources on the basis of the priorities set.

15. The Committee raised a number of questions regarding the method of calculating the real growth rate. It was pointed out by some representatives that methods other than those used by the Secretariat could also be studied.

16. The Committee criticized the proposed programme budget because of the deficiencies in programmatic content and analysis and indicated that, in the future, the process of programme budget preparation should ensure that full account was taken of this criticism, in order to enable intergovernmental bodies to carry out a programme review of that process. Some delegations suggested that the Secretariat submit to the Committee, at its next session, a report setting out the precise procedure for the preparation of the programme budget; such a procedure could be examined and approved by the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly.

17. The Assistant Secretary-General for Programme Planning and Co-ordination informed the Committee that, as a result of its recommendations, a number of studies had been made. The Secretariat had collected information at the programme element level through the programme element information sheets, which had been received from most of the units of the Secretariat, including the regional commissions. Programme analysis had been carried out by a few units on the basis of the information provided by those sheets.

18. He recognized, however, that more internal programme analysis would be required in the future and that his Office had not actually begun the procedure of monitoring and evaluation of the programmes. As for the questions raised by some delegations on the process followed by the relevant intergovernmental organs in setting priorities, he responded by stating that it was the responsibility of the Secretariat to assist the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination in its analysis of programmes for the setting of priorities.

1. Department of International Economic and Social Affairs (section 6)

19. The Assistant Secretary-General for Programme Planning and Co-ordination, in his introductory statement, stated that the proposed resource requirements had been determined by the scope and substance of the programme activities, as well as by the need for budgetary restraint, and that the relative rates of real growth recommended by the Committee at its eighteenth session had been used as guidelines. He noted that the proposals might be modified as a result of the decentralization of activities to the regional commissions, as called for by General Assembly resolution 32/202 and Economic and Social Council resolution 1979/64; consultations on that subject had been held and were in the process of being completed and the Secretary-General would submit his proposals in that respect to the Assembly at its thirty-fourth session.

20. Some members of the Committee stressed that it should be given detailed information about programmes planned within the framework of extrabudgetary resources. Such resources would exceed the proposed regular budget appropriations during the forthcoming biennium. There was a real danger that the priorities established by intergovernmental bodies might be altered or even reversed by the execution of programmes funded by extrabudgetary resources; stringent monitoring of those programmes and the costs resulting from them was essential.

21. Several delegations raised questions regarding the sources of extrabudgetary funds and about the authority and the criteria for their apportionment among the programmes. They stated that extrabudgetary resources should not be used to finance activities of a permanent nature and that posts financed by extrabudgetary funds should not be transferred to the regular budget. They also pointed out that the utilization of extrabudgetary funds could distort the programme priorities set by the General Assembly.

22. The Under-Secretary-General for International Economic and Social Affairs stated that the apportionment of extrabudgetary funds was generally determined by the purpose set, for which such funds were made available to, and accepted by, the United Nations. While the Department had tried to avoid financing regular programme activities with extrabudgetary resources, it was, however, a fact that, during the past several years, some such activities in the statistics programme had been supported by extrabudgetary funds.

23. The question was also raised of a possible duplication between the activities of the Department and those of the Office of the Director-General for Development and International Economic Co-operation. The Under-Secretary-General for International Economic and Social Affairs assured the Committee that there was no such duplication. The Director-General, under the authority of the Secretary-General, provided over-all leadership, guidance and co-ordination for the concerted execution of relevant policy and programme recommendations emanating from the central intergovernmental bodies. In so doing, the Director-General drew upon the various parts of the United Nations, including the Department of International Economic and Social Affairs.

(a) Development issues and policies

24. The question was raised of a possible duplication between programme elements 1.2 (Direct governmental support for economic activities, trade-related adjustment assistance and protection policies in developing countries) and 1.4

(International financial flows and policies and the promotion of structural change), on the one hand, and certain activities of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) on the other hand.

25. The representative of UNCTAD stated that the subprogrammes were dealt with in a different context by UNCTAD. The Under-Secretary-General for International Economic and Social Affairs stated that complementarity existed between the programme activities of the Department and UNCTAD; UNCTAD was more oriented towards the support of negotiations it was requested to conduct, whereas the Department was more oriented towards research activities and assistance to Governments on a general level. He assured the Committee that the Department had taken fully into account the ongoing activities of UNCTAD when preparing its own programmes and would continue to do this with regard to new activities that might be proposed as a result of the fifth session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development.

26. The Committee sought clarifications as to where in the development issues and policies programme the activities redeployed from the social development and humanitarian affairs programme were included. The Under-Secretary-General for International Economic and Social Affairs indicated that the activities relating to rural development and global aspects of popular participation were reflected in programme elements 2.3 (Rural development in the context of over-all development) and 2.4 (Assessment of institutional factors affecting development patterns through enhanced technological capability and other qualitative determinants of the development process).

27. One delegation asked why follow-up studies to the World Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development <sup>3/</sup> were proposed under programme element 2.3 inasmuch as the recommendations of that Conference had yet to be considered by the General Assembly. The Under-Secretary-General for International Economic and Social Affairs explained that the Conference, in its conclusions, placed emphasis on the need for undertaking research relating to rural development within the context of global research. The Department had a major contribution to offer in this respect and, if provision were not made for such studies in the 1980-1981 biennium, the Department would have to wait until the subsequent biennium to follow up on the recommendations of the Conference.

28. One delegation questioned the continuation of work relating to international taxation, pointing out that the Group of Experts on Tax Treaties between Developed and Developing Countries was supposed to complete that work in 1979. A deadline had to be set for the completion of its work. The representative of the Office for Development Research and Policy Analysis replied that the Economic and Social Council had decided that further work on tax evasion and avoidance should be carried out and, therefore, the programme element had to be continued in the next biennium.

29. With regard to programme element 3.5 (Study on the possibility of the adoption by donor countries of budgetary procedures aimed at placing official development assistance on a more predictable basis), several delegations objected to the study from the standpoint of its usefulness and that it constituted

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<sup>3/</sup> The report of the Conference, held at Rome from 12 to 20 July 1979, was circulated to members of the General Assembly under the symbol A/34/485.

interference in the internal affairs of the donor countries; moreover, the legislative authority for such a study was not clear. It was also pointed out that there was duplication of work, since a study on the same subject was being carried out at present by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

30. Several other delegations expressed support for the study and pointed out that the need for making official development assistance more practicable had been stressed by the General Assembly at its seventh special session and that the study could be useful for this purpose. The donor countries would, nevertheless, have the discretion to use or not use the results of that study.

31. The Assistant Secretary-General for Programme Planning and Co-ordination stated that the legislative authority for the study was indicated in the relevant paragraph of the proposed medium-term plan for the period 1980-1983, and assured the Committee that consultations with the United Nations Development Programme would be held to ensure that there would be no duplication.

32. Some delegations recommended the deletion from the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1980-1981 of the activities for which no legislative authority had been given by intergovernmental bodies, such as, for example, in programme element 2.3, (The study of the interrelationships of socio-economic policies for rural and urban development, including localization of activities, internal migration, trade and price policies, and development of co-operatives).

(b) Ocean economics and technology

33. The Committee noted with satisfaction that, despite the small size of the programme, a programme element had been terminated as it was considered to be of marginal usefulness.

34. In reply to a question raised, the representative of the Ocean Economics and Technology Branch stated that activities of technical co-operation had been retained within the programme because programme element 3.3 (Substantive support for technical co-operation) was too small a component at the present time to warrant the establishment of a special unit within the Department of Technical Co-operation for Development.

35. Responding to a query about the limitation to island countries of the study in programme element 3.1 (Economic and environmental criteria for coastal area management in developing island countries), he explained that the study was a logical continuation of the previous one, which had been of broad application.

(c) Population

36. The usefulness of programme element 1.1 (Mortality analysis) and of programme element 5.6 (Population policy and the International Development Strategy of the 1980s) was questioned. The representative of the Population Division explained that mortality analysis had become of particular interest to the developing countries, especially in Africa, where the mortality rate had not declined as rapidly as expected. Mortality studies were also needed in the analysis of fertility and population growth. He stated that the report on the relationship between population policies and an international development strategy for the 1980s was meant to be an assessment of the impact of the strategy to population policies.

37. In response to questions regarding the extrabudgetary resources of the Division, he stated that such resources were provided by the United Nations Fund for Population Activities, and were thus subject to a control by an intergovernmental body. He further stated that, with regard to the magnitude of requirements for travel and consultants, those estimates arose mainly from the fact that the related projects had country components and that consultants' costs were intended to provide for the use of local experts and institutions to carry out specific aspects of the work.

(d) Science and technology

38. Since this programme was to be revised to take into account the results of the United Nations Conference on Science and Technology for Development, it was decided not to review its present programme budget proposals, which were tentative.

(e) Social development and humanitarian affairs

39. Several delegations expressed strong support for the objectives of this programme, but they pointed out that the presentation appeared vague and general. The programme elements were lacking in specificity and seemed, in many instances, to contain the same type of studies that could be found in the same programme during previous biennia, and were not action-oriented. The Assistant Secretary-General for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs pointed out that the general nature of the programme content might be attributable to the need to provide, in the proposed programme budget, information in an abbreviated manner, which did not permit elaboration on the details of the programme elements and their related output.

40. Strong protests were expressed because the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1980-1981 referred to a large number of publications, intended for a public audience, which were issued in a single official language, English, a practice which was discriminatory, and hence contrary to the Charter, and which confined the usefulness of those publications to English-speaking countries.

41. A number of delegations referred to the possibility of duplication between this programme and those of the ILO and WHO with regard to activities in the field of rehabilitation of the disabled, and they stressed the need to maintain close collaboration to ensure that no such duplication occurred.

42. The study on the social welfare problems of widowhood proposed under programme element 5.4 (Assessment of the situation of the elderly and the aged) was objected to on the grounds that it lacked legislative authority. It was proposed that the deletion of that study from the proposed programme budget be recommended.

43. One representative objected to the postponement to 1980 of the transfer to Vienna of staff working in the field of crime prevention and control. The Assistant Secretary-General for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs explained that the General Assembly, at the time it adopted resolution 33/181 of 21 December 1978, concerning accommodation at the Vienna International Centre, took into account the stated intention of the Secretary-General to retain temporarily in New York a small number of those staff involved in the completion of the preparatory work for the Sixth United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders.



44. A number of representatives expressed regret that the statement of the Secretary-General on the administrative and financial implications of the recommendations of the Advisory Committee for the International Year for Disabled Persons was not available to the Committee for its consideration of the programme content of the statement. It was not even available at the present late stage of the preparation of the activities, which should have been undertaken in accordance with General Assembly resolution 32/133.

45. Some delegations recommended that the Secretary-General should comply with the General Assembly resolutions concerning the transfer to Vienna of the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs as a whole, and that he should take all steps necessary to accelerate the transfer of the Section for Crime Prevention and Control, so that it could rejoin the Centre not later than January 1980.

46. Some delegations recommended the inclusion in subprogramme 3 (Participation of women in international co-operation and peace) of the measures provided for in the Plan of Action for the United Nations Decade for Women (E/5894, chap. II.C, paras. 1 and 2 (a) and (d)).

(f) Statistics

47. Several delegations raised questions relating to the following: the need to keep revising the Standard International Trade Classification (SITC) under programme element 1.4 (Standards, methods and classifications of international trade statistics) and to undertake programme element 4.7 (Statistics of the environment), when it was within the realm of UNEP; the basis of assigning lowest priority to programme element 6.1 (Co-ordination of statistical programmes of the United Nations); the use of both consultants and an ad hoc expert group in the preparation of the output of programme element 4.3; and, in general, the need for consultants and groups of experts in view of the large number of staff employed by the programme, and the fact that the Statistical Commission was composed of experts.

48. The Director of the Statistical Office prefaced his response to the queries with the statement that the Statistical Commission had approved the activities in the proposed programme. With regard to programme element 1.4, the periodic revision of the Standard International Trade Classification (SITC) was needed in order to keep up with the changing nature and increasing number of items covered by it. The work being undertaken by the Statistical Office related to environmental statistics was being done in collaboration with UNEP, which had the corresponding extrabudgetary support.

49. In assigning the lowest priority rating to programme element 6.1, he pointed out that account had been taken of the relationship among the programme elements whereby the output of one or several programme elements constituted an input to other programme elements of a higher priority.

50. As regards the need for both a consultant and an expert group for the same output in programme element 4.3, he explained that the task of the consultant would be to prepare the report on the basis of his highly technical expertise, while the task of the expert group, which would be composed of national statistical officials from different systems and regions, would be to infuse the report with the element of practicability in order to facilitate the application of its

conclusions and recommendations to the operation of the national statistical systems. These national officials were expert practitioners in the specific field treated in the report, whereas the members of the Statistical Commission were usually the heads of national statistical agencies and possessed much broader expertise. Thus, the ad hoc expert group would have the competence to give the required detailed review to the consultant's report that the Commission members would not necessarily possess.

(g) Programme planning and co-ordination

51. Questions were raised concerning the inclusion in this programme of the subprogrammes on water resources and transport development. The Assistant Secretary-General for Programme Planning and Co-ordination explained that these were two types of activities which fell within the responsibilities of the programme to provide substantive co-ordination throughout the United Nations system. Since the different aspects of the Plan of Action adopted by the United Nations Water Conference required implementation by various organizations of the United Nations system, the programme, free of any sectoral interest in this matter, was given the co-ordinating role.

52. With respect to transport development, it was recalled that the Committee recommended, at its seventeenth session, the decentralization of the land transport aspects of that subprogramme to the regional commissions and that Headquarters should retain the function of over-all co-ordination in matters involving several organizations, the responsibility for new transport technologies and for questions of transport institutions and technologies concerning more than one region and the responsibility for information storage and retrieval, providing an inventory of transport economics and technology studies and reports within the United Nations system.

53. In view of the limited resources left at Headquarters to undertake these wide-ranging activities, it had become difficult to formulate a programme that would effectively meet the requirements of the mandate. He therefore suggested that the Committee might wish to look into the question of the future of this subprogramme at one of its forthcoming sessions.

54. Two delegations inquired whether the maintenance of the computerized data bank mentioned under programme element 3.3 (Information services) meant the establishment of a separate computer system. The Assistant Secretary-General explained that the establishment of a separate system was not involved. It merely referred to the utilization of the procedures established within the Department for information storage and retrieval.

55. One delegation requested the Assistant Secretary-General to clarify an inconsistency in his comments: if the proposed information system activity involved merely the loan of procedures already established, then there would apparently be no activity that would require funding from the programme budget. If, on the other hand, the activity involved the further development of an information system for the Department of International Economic and Social Affairs, then funding for that activity had already been specifically limited by a decision of the General Assembly on the extrabudgetary sphere, and hence funding must not appear in the regular budget.

56. In response to a question concerning the need for the output under programme

element 8.1 (Liaison with regional commissions), the Assistant Secretary-General confirmed that the regional commissions had not outposted staff to Headquarters and that the Regional Commissions Section, which undertook this function, was expected to be separated from this programme, in accordance with a decision taken at the recent meeting of the executive secretaries of the regional commissions.

57. The point was made, to which the Assistant Secretary-General agreed, that programme element 5.1 (Preparation of medium-term plans) should be revised in light of the decisions taken by the Committee that the medium-term plan for the period 1980-1983 should be brought up to date, that a model medium-term plan in two programme areas should be prepared and that a draft calendar of preparation for the proposed medium-term plan for the period 1984-1989 should also be prepared. In response to questions raised, the Assistant Secretary-General indicated that those tasks, which replaced the preparation of a new medium-term plan for 1982-1985, would not result in a reduced work-load under this subprogramme that could free resources for redeployment to the subprogramme on evaluation. He described the output that could be produced from alternative resources under subprogramme 7 (Evaluation of programmes in the United Nations system), and emphasized that the level of the quality and quantity of evaluation studies of United Nations activities was directly related to the capabilities of the unit assigned to perform those tasks. A single substantive staff member could hardly be expected to deliver the kind of evaluation studies required by the Committee.

58. Some representatives stated that adequate resources should be provided to subprogramme 7 in order to enable the Programme Planning and Co-ordination Office to carry out effectively its substantive support services to the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination.

59. Some other representatives, however, stated that whatever resources might be necessary should be provided through the redeployment of existing resources.

## 2. Department of Technical Co-operation for Development (section 7)

60. In the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1980-1981, the Secretary-General had stated that, since the structure of the Department of Technical Co-operation for Development had not yet been finally determined when the proposed programme budget had been prepared, a separate report containing the revised 1980-1981 programme and budget proposals for the Department would be submitted to the General Assembly at its thirty-fourth session.

61. The Committee regretted the unavailability of the proposed programme budget for the Department, even at this late stage, and requested information on progress made towards the final determination of the Department's structure in order to implement the relevant section of General Assembly resolution 32/197, when the revised programme budget would be available for intergovernmental review, how that revised budget would relate both to the resources in funds and posts allocated to the Department in the programme budget for 1978-1979 and to the medium-term plan for 1980-1983 and whether any overlap or conflict would exist between the activities proposed and those of other organizational units of the United Nations.

62. The Under-Secretary-General for Technical Co-operation for Development expressed his thanks for the Committee's concern and assured the Committee of his Department's readiness to co-operate in providing the necessary information. He explained that the Department's budget had been in preparation over the past several months in the context of proposals for the Department's realignment. Since assuming his post on 1 June 1979, he had been involved in the ongoing realignment plans designed for improving the system of support for technical co-operation project implementation and better service to developing countries. Within one month of assuming that post, he had submitted the Department's realignment proposals to the Secretary-General. However, since the realignment related to matters concerning other departments and bodies within the United Nations, consultations with them had been necessary. The time required for those consultations and other meetings in which the parties were involved in July, August and September had led to a situation in which the Department did not yet have the approval necessary for action. Consequently, the Department did not have a budget for presentation to the Committee at this time. In view of the efforts currently under way to expedite a discussion on realignment and with budget preparations already started in the Department and taking into account the time required for review by the Secretariat, translation and reproduction of the documentation, he hoped that it would be possible for the revised budget proposals to be available by early November.

63. The Committee welcomed the presence of the Under-Secretary-General and emphasized the importance of the Department's work for the benefit of developing countries. Some delegations stated that the Secretary-General would have to confirm as soon as possible decisions on departmental realignment, in order to make it possible for the work of the Department to be carried out in a normal fashion, and hope was expressed that the Secretariat as a whole would support the activities of that Department for the benefit of the developing countries. The Committee expressed concern that answers had not yet been provided to a number of questions raised concerning the level of regular budget funding to be proposed, the amount of extrabudgetary resources expected to be available, the current number of regular and extrabudgetary posts, the intention of the Secretariat to propose new posts and to transfer posts from extrabudgetary to regular budgetary funding, the criteria employed in deciding on the use of extrabudgetary resources, the locus of such decision-making in the Department and, finally, the possibility of an overview of the total of programmes of activity envisaged by the Department.

64. The Under-Secretary-General replied that decisions on departmental realignment were still in process and had yet to be confirmed by the Secretary-General. He was therefore not yet in a position to provide the answers to many of the questions raised. He indicated that he was most willing to provide complete answers after the approval of the realignment and was taking full note of the questions raised. With regard to the budget as a whole, the Under-Secretary-General felt that there might be some modifications to that previously proposed. In connexion with current posts, he drew the Committee's attention to table 7.4. Concerning decisions on the use of extrabudgetary resources, he reported that for priorities in allocating resources to substantive backstopping of technical co-operation activities, country requests were the determining factor; the Department then provided support in accordance with requests. Within the Department, decisions on the managerial aspects of extrabudgetary resource allocations were his responsibility.

65. Some delegations expressed concern that the questions on total resources, post transfer and the relation of the eventual budget of the Department to the over-all level and growth rate of the United Nations budget remained unanswered. The Committee recognized that the absence of documentation on the Department's programme activities meant that there was no context within which finances could be discussed. The Committee expressed its regret at that situation, which had left it unable to fulfil its task of reviewing programmes and their co-ordination. The Committee urged that action be taken as soon as possible to place the necessary information before the intergovernmental bodies concerned.

66. Some delegations recommended that the reorganization of the Department of Technical Co-operation for Development should take place within the financial resources allocated in the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1980-1981.

### 3. Economic Commission for Europe (section 10)

67. No comments were made on the water programme. With respect to the transport programme, one delegation expressed the view that the importance given by the Commission to its transport programme could perhaps be reduced; she felt that the description of programme elements could be more precise and singled out programme elements 1.2 (Co-operation with Senior Economic Advisers to ECE Governments on the over-all economic perspective for the ECE region to 1990), 2.9 (Problems of special interest to member countries of the ECE region which are developing from an economic point of view), 3.1 (Selected technological problems in the development of operation of inland waterway transport) and 3.2 (Selected problems of technological and economic aspects of urban transport systems, in co-operation with other principal subsidiary bodies). She questioned the usefulness of frequent reviews of conventions and agreements, and she raised the question of possible duplication of work between the Commission and individual Governments in the case of programme elements 1.3 (Development of a coherent navigable inland waterway network in Europe), 1.7 (Road traffic censuses) and 1.8 (Maps of inland waterways used in international traffic). She noted that no priorities had been set among the various studies listed in subprogramme 2 (Traffic facilitation) and that their wording was too vague; there might be a duplication of work between the Commission and UNCTAD in the case of programme element 2.5 (Convention on international intermodal transport and preparatory work on container standards (drafting work in co-operation with UNCTAD)). The Commission should proceed to an in-depth internal review of the programme and set priorities as well as time-limits for the completion of the work of various working groups and groups of experts.

68. The representative of the Commission stated that the States members of ECE did not view the importance granted to the programme as excessive; an internal review and re-evaluation was being carried out. Programmes were also carefully reviewed by Governments themselves. At the last session of the Commission, guidelines aiming at the reduction in the number of meetings had been established: meetings taking place at Geneva were compressed and serviced by limited interpretation services. Furthermore, when Governments had a special interest in specific seminars or meetings, an attempt was made to have the Governments host those seminars or meetings and thus defray most of the expenses.

69. Regarding programme element 1.2, the study had already been completed and the Inland Transport Committee had been required by the Commission to concentrate its work on economic problems in the region; with regard to programme element 2.5, consultations had been held with UNCTAD to avoid any overlapping or duplication of work. Wording of programme elements might seem to be vague, but their results were concrete, such as regulations which were adopted by Governments and incorporated in their own legislation. He stated that there was a built-in mechanism in the Commission to determine priorities. He stressed that the Commission had submitted a budget with a zero growth rate, and so it was necessary that all items of expenditure be kept under constant review and that resources be utilized in the most effective way.

70. Replying to a question on decentralization, he stated that a project on the establishment of a waterway link between the Danube and the Aegean Sea, which had been previously handled by Headquarters, was handled now by the Commission; negotiations were being held to obtain the redeployment of a post.

71. One delegation expressed appreciation to the Commission for having submitted a budget with a zero growth rate and, at the same time, having set deadlines for completion of its programmes.

#### 4. Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (section 11)

72. One delegation drew attention to the fact that the water programme should take into account the proclamation of the Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation Decade in 1980-1990. She also suggested that all information activities contained in programme element 3.4 (General publications and exchange of information and experience) should be centralized by a clearing house, in order to avoid proliferation of information institutions.

73. The representative of the Commission stated that the objective of programme element 3.4 (ii) (Promotion of an information exchange system) was to establish a system whereby member countries could be kept informed and also exchange information. The Commission had been requested by member countries to establish a better organizational clearing house; a computer service had been set up and it was hoped to establish a computerized system covering all information activities.

74. In response to a question regarding studies on various economic aspects of air transport development in the ESCAP region, with emphasis on land-locked and island countries, listed under programme element 1.2 (Development of transport planning), the representative of the Commission stated that the International Civil Aviation Organization participated in those studies and was consulted on all activities involving air transport. The programme of work of the Commission had been drawn up with the active participation of a representative of ICAO.

75. Regarding the question of decentralization, the representative of the Commission informed the Committee that the activities transferred to the Commission were programme elements 1.2 (II) (Promotion of integrated transport systems in countries of the ESCAP region), 1.3 (Technical assistance among developing countries in respect of transport development), 1.8 (II) (Studies relating to rural transport planning and development with emphasis on improvement of rural transport equipment/vehicles and road construction technology) and 1.10 (Construction and maintenance of low-cost roads in arid, marshy and wet areas). One Professional and one General Service post had been redeployed from Headquarters.

76. One delegation observed that it might prove difficult to realize such a large programme comprising many significant studies and construction projects within a restricted budget; in his view, programme element 1.10 (Construction and maintenance of low-cost roads in arid, marshy and wet areas) could hardly be handled by one Professional only. He noted with surprise the absence of recourse to consultants in projects requiring a high degree of specialization.

77. The representative of the Commission replied that programme element 1.10 did not involve the actual construction of roads; the initial step would be a survey of the problems involved in such construction in several countries of the region and an inventory of their capabilities in that regard. Part of the work would be carried out through redeployment of existing resources. She also indicated that the implementation of the four decentralized activities would require the use of extrabudgetary resources. Regarding the use of consultant services, she noted that a certain amount of extrabudgetary resources had been set aside for that purpose.

78. In response to a question concerning the studies to compare the options of freight transportation from the countries of the region to Europe via Turkey/Middle East and via the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics listed under programme element 1.14 (Trans Asian Railway including intermodal aspect of integrated rural development), the representative of the Commission stated that the objective of those studies was mainly to increase the capacity of the railway system of the region and rehabilitate the existing system.

5. Economic Commission for Latin America (section 12)

79. In reply to a question raised, the Assistant Secretary-General for Programme Planning and Co-ordination indicated that the vacant posts in the Water Unit of the Department of International Economic and Social Affairs had been filled and that the Unit had become fully operational two months ago.

80. One delegation observed that, in compliance with Economic and Social Council resolution 2121 (LXIII), the creation of a water unit had been approved by the Economic Commission for Latin America; however, that unit did not appear in the proposed programme budget of the Commission. The representative of the Commission indicated that the proposed programme budget had been prepared in February; the decision creating the Water Unit had been adopted later in April and could thus not be reflected in the programme budget. One post had been requested from the Department of International Economic and Social Affairs, which could not accede to the request in view of the importance of its own work on water. However, the Department of Technical Co-operation for Development had agreed to the redeployment of one post to the Commission. The Water Unit of the Commission was functioning and recruitment was being actively pursued; however, it was difficult to predict when the Unit would become fully operational, since the date of completion of recruitment as well as the date of availability of the post redeployed from the Department of Technical Co-operation for Development were not known.

81. In reply to a question regarding the date of completion of the programme, the representative of the Commission stated that programme elements 1.1 (Horizontal co-operation in water resources) and 1.4 (Support to ECLA/ILPES training and advisory programmes of water) were activities of a permanent nature and therefore had no date of completion; the date for the completion of programme element 1.2 (Environmental dimensions or water management) was September 1981, as indicated in the proposed programme budget; programme element 1.3 (River navigation within river basin management) would start in March 1980 and be completed by December 1981.

82. In response to an inquiry regarding the extent of the co-ordination between the Natural Resources and Environment Division in Santiago and the Natural Resources, Energy and Transport Unit of the Mexico office, the representative of the Commission stated that the programme of work had been approved by the Commission headquarters after review and close scrutiny by the Office for Programme Planning and Co-ordination of the Commission.

83. One delegation noted that resolutions 409 XVIII and 411 XVIII adopted by the Commission at its session held at La Paz from 18 to 26 April 1979, were adopted after the proposed programme budget of the Commission had been drawn up and asked whether additional appropriations would be requested to implement them.



84. In response to a question as to the extent of decentralization, the representative of the Commission stated that, among several projects suggested for decentralization, the Commission had chosen a project on river navigation, which was of particular interest to the region and which the Commission had the capacity to implement. The resources redeployed included one Professional post, one General Service post and a certain amount of funds for travel of staff and consultant services. In reply to a further question, the representative of the Commission indicated that the results of studies undertaken for projects of interest to several regions, such as those listed under programme element 1.2 (Transport network modelling), were made available by the Commission to other regions and that there was co-operation between regions in that respect.

85. In reply to a question regarding the date of completion of the study on intra-Caribbean air transport, listed as output of programme element 1.5 (Co-ordination of intra-Caribbean air transport), the representative of the Commission stated that no date for completion had been set. The study was a very complex one, since Caribbean island countries had more means of communications with the rest of the world than among themselves; however, phases had been established. He indicated that the study was carried out in co-operation with ICAO.

86. One delegation raised the question of a possible duplication between programme element 1.3 of the water programme (River navigation within river basin management) and programme element 1.3 of the transport programme (Integrated river basin planning).

87. The representative of the Commission stated that there was no overlapping, since the studies under each programme element were two different approaches to the same problem; one related to water resources and their impact on the environment, whereas the other related to transport problems.

88. One delegation asked whether the achievement of greater efficiency had motivated the establishment of ECLA offices in many different countries.

89. The representative of the Commission explained that experience had shown that it was difficult to view from Santiago the problems of all countries of the region. The Mexico Office was first created to deal with Mexico, Central America and Panama. The Trinidad and Tobago Office was created because the Caribbean countries had inherited a different structure within the frame of the Commonwealth. The Washington Liaison Office was created to establish a closer working relationship with the various intergovernmental organizations located in that city. The offices in Bogotá, Buenos Aires, Caracas and Montevideo, although they served several countries, were created at the request of their host Governments.

#### Other questions

90. In reply to questions raised regarding subprogramme 2 (Integration of women in development) of the social development and humanitarian affairs programme of ECLA, the representative of the Commission stated that the extrabudgetary funds allocated to the budget amounted to \$400,000; those funds were used to assist countries in the implementation of specific projects.

6. Economic Commission for Africa (section 13)

91. The Committee made no comments on the water programme. With regard to the transport programme, one delegation inquired whether the two additional Professional posts were new, or were posts redeployed as a result of decentralization. The representative of the Commission informed the Committee that they were new posts requested for the implementation of activities relating to the Transport and Communications Decade in Africa. In reply to a question raised, the representative of the Commission stated that the document containing the global strategy of the Transport and Communications Decade in Africa would be distributed shortly (E/CN.4/726, vol. II).

7. Economic Commission for Western Asia (section 14)

92. No comments were made on the water and transport programmes of the Commission.

8. Office of the United Nations Disaster Relief Co-ordinator (section 22)

93. One delegation stated that his delegation did not support the proposal of the Secretary-General to transfer to the regular budget nine posts currently financed from extrabudgetary resources.

Human rights (section 23)

94. Some delegations stated that the section on human rights should be revised, taking into account that only intergovernmental organs were legislative bodies and that the list of legislative bodies in paragraph 23.4 and table 23.6 included several expert groups. It appeared, in fact, that the secretariat had prepared the proposed programme budget while taking into account the recommendations of expert bodies and not those of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council. That fact was reflected in the allocation of resources, whereby 44.5 per cent was envisaged for subprogramme 1 (Implementation of international instruments and established United Nations procedures in the field of human rights), 28.5 per cent was envisaged for subprogramme 2 (Standard-setting, research, studies and prevention of discrimination), 18.5 per cent was envisaged for subprogramme 3 (Advisory services and publications) and only 8.5 per cent was envisaged for subprogramme 4 (Implementation of the Decade for Action to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination).

95. Subprogramme 4 had received the highest priority in the work of the United Nations system, especially after the adoption by the General Assembly of resolutions 33/99 and 33/100 in which it requested that a number of activities be carried out in pursuance of the recommendations of the World Conference to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination, held at Geneva from 14 to 25 August 1978. <sup>4/</sup> Four additional posts were requested, although not for subprogramme 4. In relation to that request, mention was made of General Assembly resolution 33/51, but paragraph 23.20 failed to reflect the fact that in that resolution, the Assembly had requested the Secretary-General to take into account Assembly resolutions 3534 (XXX) of 17 December 1975 and 31/93 of 14 December 1976 on the medium-term plan and to consider, therefore, the redeployment of resources. Nothing in paragraph 23.20 indicated that those two resolutions, adopted by the Assembly on the recommendation of the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination, had been considered.

9. Administration, Management and General Services (section 28)

96. One delegation expressed concern about the need to examine the proposals in the programme budget related to the Security Section at Geneva.

B. CONSIDERATION OF THE PROVISIONAL AGENDA FOR THE TWENTIETH SESSION

97. In paragraph 2 (e) of Economic and Social Council resolution 1979/41 on the control and limitation of documentation, the Council decided:

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<sup>4/</sup> For the report of the Conference, see United Nations publication, Sales No. E.79.XIV.2.

"That, in future, the provisional agenda for its subsidiary bodies, together with the list of requested documentation, should be submitted to the Council for its review in order, inter alia, to establish greater consistency between the documentation of those bodies and the over-all documentation requested by the Council and other subsidiary bodies and greater consistency between the requests for documentation and the medium-term plan and the programme budget".

98. The Committee considered the provisional agenda and documentation for its twentieth session at its 614th meeting. The Committee had before it an informal paper prepared by the Secretariat.

99. The Committee's attention was drawn to Economic and Social Council resolutions 1979/1 of 9 February 1979, 1979/41 of 10 May 1979 and 1979/69 of 2 August 1979 and General Assembly resolution 33/56 of 14 December 1978 on the control and limitation of documentation.

100. The Secretary informed the Committee that the provisions of those resolutions were to be implemented without exception, including the provision of a 32-page limit to the length of Secretariat documents.

101. In the light of the heavy programme of work for its twentieth session, the Committee agreed to evaluate only the manufactures programme in 1980, on the understanding that it would be necessary to limit the scope of that study.

102. During the first part of its nineteenth session, the Committee had agreed to evaluate the programme on human settlements in 1980. However, in view of the recent establishment of that programme, it was agreed to defer evaluation to a later session.

103. With respect to cross-organizational analyses, the Committee decided to conduct an analysis of the energy programmes in 1980 on the understanding that the Secretariat would provide supplementary information to that provided in documents E/AC.51/99 and Corr.1 and E/AC.51/99/Add.1, which the Committee could not consider during its current session. The Committee also agreed to carry out, in 1980, a cross-organizational programme analysis in the area of rural development and, in 1981, to carry out a cross-organizational programme analysis in the area of youth.

104. Some delegations proposed that a cross-organizational programme analysis be conducted in the field of the public sector. The Committee agreed to carry out such an analysis in 1981, on the understanding that, at its organizational session in 1980, the Committee would review that decision with a view to defining the scope of the documentation to be prepared by the Secretariat.

105. With respect to regional co-operation and development, the Committee agreed that the report to be prepared by the Secretariat on that item should be based on the implementation of General Assembly resolution 32/197 of 20 December 1977 and bearing in mind the new role of the regional commissions.

106. The Committee stressed the fact that the postponement of the consideration of items or reports did not imply that the Committee attached little importance to them, but rather that, owing to constraints of time, the Committee had to limit its work programme.

107. The Assistant Secretary-General for Programme Planning and Co-ordination informed the Committee of the difficulties that would be encountered in producing documentation such as, cross-organizational programme analyses and in-depth evaluation studies in the format and with the content decided upon by the Committee, if there were to be strict adherence to the 32-page limit.

108. The Secretary of the Committee reiterated that the Secretariat had no choice but to implement the decisions taken by the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council in that regard.

109. For the recommendation of the Committee, see section C-3 below.

### C. RECOMMENDATIONS

110. The Committee adopted the following recommendations:

#### 1. Proposed programme budget for the biennium 1980-1981

The Committee for Programme and Co-ordination recommends:

(a) That the activities for which no legislative authority has been given by intergovernmental bodies should be deleted from the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1980-1981;

(b) That the programme budget for the biennium 1982-1983 and the report on the performance of the budget for 1980-1981 should include a clear identification of activities that have been completed, are obsolete, of marginal usefulness or ineffective.

#### 2. Control and limitation of documentation

The Committee for Programme and Co-ordination:

(a) Deplores in the strongest terms the failure of the Secretariat to provide documentation on time in all the working languages, in accordance with paragraph 4 of rule 13 of the rules of procedure of the Economic and Social Council, 5/ which literally paralysed the work of the Committee and prevented it from carrying out fully the work entrusted to it, particularly in its examination of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1980-1981;

(b) Expresses its deep appreciation to the Economic and Social Council for taking the necessary action required for the control and limitation of documentation in order to resolve the growing crisis in the timely provision of documentation to intergovernmental bodies;

(c) Recommends that the General Assembly should:

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5/ United Nations publication, Sales No. E.75.I.15.

- (i) Endorse Council resolutions 1979/1 of 9 February 1979, 1979/41 of 10 May 1979 and 1979/69 of 3 August 1979 on the control and limitation of documentation;
- (ii) Take the necessary measures to apply the same provisions on the control and limitation of documentation submitted to the General Assembly and its subsidiary bodies;
- (iii) Request the Secretary-General to take all necessary steps for the strict implementation of the provisions of those resolutions, as well as of General Assembly resolution 33/56 of 14 December 1978.

### 3. Provisional agenda of the Committee for its twentieth session

Pursuant to paragraph 2 (e) of Economic and Social Council resolution 1979/41 of 10 May 1979, the Committee submits to the Council for its review the provisional agenda for its twentieth session, together with the requested documentation:

#### 1. Process of programme planning in the United Nations.

Documentation:

Report of the Secretary-General on model medium-term plan programmes:

- (a) Commodities programme;
- (b) Transnational corporations programme;

Report of the Secretary-General on a draft calendar of preparation for the proposed medium-term plan for the period 1984-1989.

#### 2. Evaluation.

Documentation:

Programme evaluation for the period 1976-1979: Manufactures programme: report of the Secretary-General.

#### 3. Cross-organizational programme analyses.

Documentation:

Cross-organizational analysis of the energy programmes of the United Nations system (E/AC.51/99 and Corr.1 and Add.1-2); 6/

Cross-organizational programme analysis in the area of rural development;

Report on the Common Register of Development Activities (CORE).

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6/ E/AC.51/99/Add.2 is to be prepared.

4. Review of operational activities.

Documentation:

Comprehensive policy review of operational activities: report of the Director-General for Development and International Economic Co-operation;

Report of the Joint Inspection Unit on some aspects of backstopping of technical co-operation activities in the United Nations system (DP/302);

Report of the Joint Inspection Unit on the role of experts in development (DP/334 and Add.1-2).

5. Regional co-operation and development.

Documentation:

Report of the Secretary-General.

6. Reports of the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination.

Documentation:

Annual report of the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination for 1979/1980;

Revised report of the Secretary-General on costs of public information programmes in the United Nations system.

7. Medium-term plan.

Documentation:

Updated version of the programmes of the 1980-1983 medium-term plan;

Programme performance of the United Nations for the biennium 1978-1979: report of the Secretary-General;

Establishment of internal work programmes and procedures for reporting on programme implementation: report of the Secretary-General;

The identification of programme outputs in the programme budget of the United Nations: report of the Secretary-General.

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