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PROGRAMME PLANNING

Report of the Fifth Committee

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. At its 3rd plenary meeting, on 23 September 1988, the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the General Committee, decided to include in the agenda of its forty-third session the item entitled "Programme planning" and to allocate it to the Fifth Committee.
2. The Fifth Committee considered agenda item 115 at its 19th, 25th, 26th, 29th, 31st, 34th and 50th meetings on 28 October 1988, 4, 8, 11, 15 and 17 November and 18 December 1988. Statements and observations made in the course of discussion of the item are reflected in the relevant summary records (A/C.5/42/SR-19, 25, 26, 29, 31, 34 and 50).
3. At its 19th meeting, on 28 October 1988, the Committee heard introductory statements by the Chairman of the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination and the Director-General for Development and International Economic Co-operation.
4. For its consideration of the item, the Fifth Committee had before it the following documents:

(a) Report of the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination on the work of its twenty-eighth session (A/43/16 (Part I) and Add.1 and (Part II) and Add.1); 1/

1/ To be issued as Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-third Session, Supplement No. 16 (A/43/16 and Add.1 and 2).

(b) Proposed revisions to the medium-term plan for the period 1988-1989 (extended to 1991) (A/43/6 and Corr.1); 2/

(c) Report of the Secretary-General on the application of evaluation findings in programme design, delivery and policy directives (A/43/179);

(d) Report of the Secretary-General on the programme performance of the United Nations for the biennium 1986-1987 (A/43/326 and Corr.1 and Add.1 and Add.1/Corr.1 and 2);

(e) Notes by the Secretary-General on preparation of the next medium-term plan (A/43/329 and A/C.5/43/CRP.4) and on the calendar of consultations on the medium-term plan for the period starting in 1992 (A/43/329/Add.1);

(f) Report of the Joint Inspection Unit on reporting on the performance and results of United Nations programmes: monitoring, evaluation and management review components (A/43/124) and comments of the Secretary-General (A/43/124/Add.1);

(g) Report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (A/43/626).

II. CONSIDERATION OF DRAFT RESOLUTION A/C.5/43/L.18

5. At its 50th meeting, on 18 December 1988, the Chairman introduced draft resolution A/C.5/43/L.18, which had been elaborated following informal consultations held under the chairmanship of Mr. Even Fontaine Ortiz (Cuba).

6. At the same meeting, the Committee adopted draft resolution A/C.5/43/L.18 without a vote (see para. 8).

7. Also at the same meeting the representatives of Mexico, Japan, Algeria and the United States of America made statements in explanation of position.

III. RECOMMENDATION OF THE FIFTH COMMITTEE

8. The Fifth Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft resolution:

2/ To be issued as Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-third Session, Supplement No. 6 (A/43/6).

Programme planning

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 31/93 of 14 December 1976, 32/197 of 20 December 1977, 37/234 of 21 December 1982, 38/227 A and B of 20 December 1983, 40/240 of 18 December 1985, 41/213 of 19 December 1986 and 42/215 of 21 December 1987 and Economic and Social Council resolutions 2008 (LX) of 14 May 1976, 1988/62 and 1988/64 of 27 July 1988 and 1988/77 of 29 July 1988,

Having considered the report of the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination on the work of its twenty-eighth session 3/ and the relevant parts of the report of the Economic and Social Council for 1988, 4/

Having considered also the proposed revisions to the medium-term plan for the period 1984-1989, 5/ the reports of the Secretary-General on the programme performance of the United Nations for the biennium 1986-1987 6/ and on the application of evaluation findings in programme design, delivery and policy directives, 7/ and the notes by the Secretary-General on the preparation of the next medium-term plan 8/ and on the calendar of consultations on the medium-term plan for the period starting in 1992, 9/

Having considered further the views expressed in the Main Committees of the General Assembly on the proposed revisions to the medium-term plan for the period 1984-1989 (extended to 1991) and on the draft introduction to the medium-term plan for the period beginning in 1992, 10/

3/ To be issued as Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-third Session, Supplement No. 16 (A/43/16 and Add.1 and II).

4/ To be issued as Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-third Session, Supplement No. 3 (A/43/3/Rev.1).

5/ To be issued as Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-third Session, Supplement No. 6 (A/43/6).

6/ A/43/326 and Corr.1 and Add.1 and Add.1/Corr.1 and 2.

7/ A/43/179.

8/ A/43/329.

9/ A/43/329/Add.1.

10/ See A/C.5/43/36.

Taking note of the report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions on the proposed revisions to the medium-term plan for the period 1984-1989, the calendar of consultations on the medium-term plan for the period starting in 1992 and the preparation of the next medium-term plan, 11/

Taking note also of the report of the Joint Inspection Unit on reporting on the performance and results of United Nations programmes: monitoring, evaluation and management review components 12/ and the comments of the Secretary-General thereon, 13/

Reaffirming the importance of the programming and co-ordinating functions within the United Nations carried out by the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination as the main subsidiary organ of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council for planning, programming and co-ordination,

Reiterating the need to improve continuously the programme planning, budgeting, monitoring and evaluation process in the Organization and the need for the participation of Member States from an early stage and throughout the process,

Emphasizing that future programme performance and evaluation reports should assist Member States in measuring results against established objectives,

I

REGULATIONS AND RULES GOVERNING PROGRAMME PLANNING, THE PROGRAMME ASPECTS OF THE BUDGET, THE MONITORING OF IMPLEMENTATION AND THE METHODS OF EVALUATION

Stresses the need to implement fully all the provisions of the Regulations and Rules Governing Programme Planning, the Programme Aspects of the Budget, the Monitoring of Implementation and the Methods of Evaluation;

II

PROGRAMME PLANNING

1. Reiterates the importance of the medium-term plan as the principal policy directive of the United Nations;

11/ A/43/626.

12/ See A/43/124.

13/ A/43/124/Add.1, annex.

2. Stresses the role of the medium-term plan in contributing to the improvement of the efficiency and the effectiveness of the United Nations in the implementation of its mandated activities, and thus to the enhancement of the role of the United Nations as set out in the Charter;
3. Adopts the revisions to the medium-term plan for the period 1984-1989 (extended to 1991), 4/ as modified by the recommendations of the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination at its twenty-eighth session 14/ and the Economic and Social Council at its second regular session of 1988, 15/ taking into account the views expressed in the Main Committees of the General Assembly, 10/ and taking note of the observations made by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions; 16/
4. Decides that the next medium-term plan of the United Nations shall cover the period 1992-1997;
5. Requests the Secretary-General to ensure effective co-ordination with the specialized agencies, including those having a different planning cycle, and to review, through the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination, the question of harmonization of planning and budgeting cycles in the United Nations system;
6. Endorses the recommendations of the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination 17/ on the calendar of consultations proposed by the Secretary-General for the preparation of the medium-term plan for the period 1992-1997 9/ in the light of the recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions to the extent that they are feasible; 18/
7. Requests the Secretary-General, in revising his draft introduction and preparing the proposed medium-term plan for the period 1992-1997, including its structure, to take into account the views expressed by Member States on the preparation of the next medium-term plan and to act in full accordance with the pertinent Regulations and Rules Governing Programme Planning, the Programme Aspects of the Budget, the Monitoring of Implementation and the Methods of Evaluation concerning the content, formulation and presentation of the medium-term plan;

14/ See A/43/16 (Part I), paras. 100-141.

15/ See A/43/3, chap. VI, sect. D.

16/ A/43/626, paras. 2-7.

17/ A/43/16 (Part II), paras. 67-73.

18/ A/43/626, paras. 8-17.

8. Invites all intergovernmental bodies, when considering in 1989 the pertinent portions of the proposed medium-term plan for the period 1992-1997, to give due attention to the most appropriate structure for the major programme or major programmes, programmes and sub-programmes submitted for their consideration, as compared with the current structure and in the light of an analysis of the objectives, trends and general orientations derived from the mandates of the intergovernmental bodies, to be provided by the Secretary-General;

9. Requests the Secretary-General to provide intergovernmental bodies with relevant evaluation studies as approved by the General Assembly, where available, to facilitate their consideration of pertinent portions of the proposed medium-term plan for the period 1992-1997;

10. Also requests the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly, through the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination and the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, a consolidated summary of the comments and recommendations made by Member States and the relevant intergovernmental bodies referred to above, in particular concerning the structure of the plan, together with his proposed medium-term plan for the period 1992-1997;

11. Endorses the recommendations of the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination and the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions regarding the need for a new and more practical type of presentation of the medium-term plan and of its revisions, preferably in loose leaf format, in order to improve the utility of the plan document and to facilitate its review and use by the intergovernmental bodies concerned and by the Secretariat;

III

MONITORING, EVALUATION AND REPORTS OF THE JOINT INSPECTION UNIT

1. Stresses again the need for improving the monitoring and evaluation functions in the United Nations in accordance with the Regulations and Rules Governing Programme Planning, the Programme Aspects of the Budget, the Monitoring of Implementation and the Methods of Evaluation, so as to provide adequate feedback for the formulation of the medium-term plan and of programme budgets and for the effective implementation of programmes, as well as to provide Member States with a basis for more informed decision-making;

2. Requests the Secretary-General to submit a report on the methodological and practical aspects concerning implementation of recommendation 1 of the Joint Inspection Unit as contained in its report on the performance and results of United Nations programmes; monitoring,

evaluation and management review components, 19/ with some specific examples using the sample form contained in annex II to that report;

3. Endorses recommendation 2 of the Joint Inspection Unit 19/ in the light of the comments of the Secretary-General thereon; 20/

4. Requests the Secretary-General to submit concrete proposals on the means of implementing recommendation 3 of the Joint Inspection Unit 19/ in the current circumstances;

5. Takes note of recommendation 4 of the Joint Inspection Unit 19/ and endorses the views of the Secretary-General thereon; 21/

6. Endorses the conclusions and recommendations of the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination contained in paragraphs 86 and 87 of its report 22/ and requests the Secretary-General to present a timetable on the implementation of the recommendations on self-evaluation contained in his report on the application of evaluation findings in programme design, delivery and policy directives 7/ as well as on completing initial evaluation training and providing central evaluation services;

7. Requests the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its forty-fourth session, through the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination, a consolidated progress report on the various requests contained in this section of the present resolution;

8. Reiterates its request to the Secretary-General that the programme performance and in-depth evaluation reports, together with the conclusions and recommendations of the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination thereon, as endorsed by the General Assembly, be submitted to the relevant intergovernmental and expert bodies to ensure follow-up action;

IV

JOINT MEETINGS OF THE COMMITTEE FOR PROGRAMME AND CO-ORDINATION AND THE ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE ON CO-ORDINATION

Takes note of Economic and Social Council resolution 1988/64;

19/ See A/43/124, sect. I.

20/ See A/43/24/Add.1, annex, para. 12.

21/ Ibid., para. 14.

22/ A/43/16 (Part I).

V

OTHER CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Endorses those other conclusions and recommendations of the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination at its twenty-eighth session which have not otherwise been approved by the General Assembly at its forty-third session.
