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JOINT INSPECTION UNIT

Note by the Secretary-General

In accordance with article 9, paragraph 2, of the statute of the Joint Inspection Unit (General Assembly resolution 31/192, annex), the Secretary-General has the honour to transmit to the members of the General Assembly the work programme of the Unit for 1989 and the nucleus of its work programme for 1990-1991.

* A/44/50.

ANNEX

Work programme of the Joint Inspection Unit

The following work programme was drawn up in accordance with article 9, paragraph 1, of the statute of the Joint Inspection Unit (annex to General Assembly resolution 31/192 of 22 December 1976) and takes into account the guidelines laid out in General Assembly resolutions 42/218 of 21 December 1987 and 43/221 of 21 December 1988. This multi-year work programme is divided into two sections: section I lists the Unit's work programme for 1989, and section II indicates those studies which the Unit contemplates undertaking after the current year. As hitherto, the work programme is subject to change in the course of the year; new studies may be added and planned studies may be modified, postponed or cancelled when circumstances warrant.

I. WORK PROGRAMME FOR 1989

1. Special study

Implementation of General Assembly resolution 43/221

As requested by the Assembly in paragraph 16 of the resolution, the Joint Inspection Unit will report to the Assembly at its forty-fourth session on progress made in the implementation of the resolution.

2. Development co-operation

(a) Human resource development through technical co-operation

Emphasis will be placed in this study on the educational aspects of human resource development, with special focus on the improvement of capabilities, through training and educational processes, to contribute effectively to the enhancement of the economies of developing countries in particular. The study's main aim will be to determine, through an analysis of the training components of the technical co-operation projects assisted by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the contribution that these projects have made in relation to their intended purposes. The concepts contemplated in the Istanbul Round Table, the Tokyo Round Table, the Salzburg Round Table and the Budapest Statement, in which the extension of the human dimension was amply considered, have been the motivating force behind this study, together with the efforts undertaken by the United Nations and its specialized agencies and by other related organizations.

- (b) Evaluation of rural development activities in three African least developed countries*

This study evaluates the general relevance and effectiveness of rural development activities within the United Nations system and their impact on the living conditions of their intended beneficiaries. Three African least developed countries have been selected: Burkina Faso, Burundi and the United Republic of Tanzania, and a sample of 25 projects has been studied. This sample has been drawn from projects executed by the organizations of the United Nations system most concerned with rural development activities, i.e. the United Nations, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the International Labour Organisation, the United Nations Children's Fund, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization and the World Food Programme.

- (c) An evaluation of the technical co-operation activities of the International Maritime Organization (IMO) in relation to maritime training*

The Unit was requested to do this study by the Secretary-General of IMO. It follows two earlier studies, one concerning general IMO operations (JIU/REP/84/4) and a second, also requested by the Secretary-General, on establishment of an internal evaluation system in IMO (JIU/NOTE/87/1). As maritime training has been given the highest priority in the IMO technical co-operation programme, this would appear to be an ideal moment to assess the progress made in implementing the programme, the directions it is taking and the existence of and remedies for any current difficulties in programme implementation. The study also helps meet the General Assembly's request that the Unit undertake more ad hoc programme evaluations, and provides an opportunity for it to review a significant area not previously studied, the evaluation of training.

- (d) Report on joint studies on Latin American economic integration (UNDP-assisted regional project RLA/79/031)*

The UNDP contribution to this project ended in 1987 after a period of about eight years of assistance. The report will take the form of a post-project evaluation to determine its real input into the integration processes in Latin America, emphasizing the support of UNDP to Latin American integration and looking at the possible need for further assistance to those economic and social processes at the regional level.

* Evaluation study.

- (e) A review of the specific development needs of small Member States and the responsiveness of the United Nations development system in meeting these needs

This study would suggest improved measures to identify activities corresponding to the needs and interests of these countries. The study would be developed around three main issues: the mechanisms and channels developed by the United Nations system; how small Member States can better organize themselves to overcome the handicap of a shortage of human resources; and how such countries can ensure their effective presence and participation in United Nations activities, hampered as they are by limited human and financial resources.

- (f) Technology transfer and the United Nations system*

In an increasingly technical world, the transfer of technology from the developed to the developing world is recognized as crucial to the transformation of the economies of the lesser developed countries. This study would aim at assessing existing capacities within the United Nations system - institutional, financial, managerial - to deal with the transfer of technology.

- 3. Management and conference services (organization and methods, budget and finance, personnel, general administration)

- (a) Concluding report on the implementation of General Assembly resolution 32/197 of 20 December 1977

So far, seven reports have been produced by the Joint Inspection Unit to measure to what extent General Assembly resolution 32/197 on the restructuring of the United Nations Secretariat has been put into effect at the level of major departments. The concluding report will attempt to assess the implementation of resolution 32/197 from the global point of view, taking into account and complementing the current work of the Special Commission of the Economic and Social Council on the In-depth Study of the United Nations Intergovernmental Structure and Functions in the Economic and Social Fields and that of the Office of the Director-General for Development and International Economic Co-operation and the Department of Administration and Management of the Secretariat to execute the recommendations of the Group of High-level Intergovernmental Experts to Review the Efficiency of the Administrative and Financial Functioning of the United Nations.

* Evaluation study.

(b) Report on the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia

This study will complete a cycle of studies carried out on the regional commissions. The Commission continues to face a number of administrative, organisational and logistic problems that have an adverse impact on its performance. The study reviews these problems, assesses the attempts that have been made to solve or attenuate them and, in co-operation with the Headquarters and Commission secretariats, tries to find durable solutions.

(c) Budgeting techniques used by organizations of the United Nations system - some comparisons

The budgets presented by the organizations are prepared differently as to format, terminology and budgeting technique. In the light of General Assembly resolution 40/250 of 18 December 1985, in which the Assembly recommended that "further efforts be made to achieve the maximum possible standardization and comparability in the budgetary and administrative practices of all organizations concerned", this study will attempt to make a comparative analysis of budgeting techniques used by the organizations in the preparation of regular budgets and also to determine the most desirable budgeting techniques for the organizations. It will examine the extent to which the differences in budgeting techniques should remain and consider necessary measures to be taken for standardization. The study will be composed of two volumes: one will comprise the comparative analysis and recommendations; the other will present comparative tables on main budgeting techniques utilized by the organizations concerned.

(d) Technical co-operation activities of the World Health Organization: management issues

The study will address management issues relative to the preparation and execution of programmes and field projects of the World Health Organization carried out in collaboration with developing countries. The report will deal with aspects of the formulation of health programmes in relation to national health plans in certain countries, as well as the formulation, financing and implementation of health projects, in particular those devoted to developing health infrastructures, promoting optimum co-ordinated use of resources and strengthening national capacities to prepare and implement national strategies for health for all by the year 2000.

(e) Study on the extrabudgetary resources of the United Nations

The extrabudgetary resources of the United Nations exceed regular budget resources by a substantial margin. However, Member States are not sufficiently informed about their origin, purpose, how they affect priorities decided by Member States or their eventual impact. The study

will attempt to suggest how these deficiencies may be overcome through the budgeting and reporting processes, as well as through the operational framework. Consultations will be held with the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, as necessary, throughout the preparation of the report.

- (f) A review of United Nations information and public relations networks: structure, operations, management

The goal of the study is to analyse the overall administration and management of the information network of the United Nations Secretariat world wide. This would include a review of the relation between Headquarters and offices away from Headquarters, and the relations between Headquarters and those offices and the United Nations information centres. The report will also review the public relations and information role of the United Nations information centres in the collection and dissemination of information pertinent to United Nations activities and to the development needs of the different countries. Constructive proposals will be made in an effort to assist the Department of Public Information both substantively and organizationally.

- (g) Practices and procedures aimed at a more equitable geographical distribution of sources of procurement for technical co-operation projects

For several years, Member States have sought a wider spread in the sources of procurement of goods and services provided in technical co-operation projects. They have specifically sought to improve procurement from developing countries and from those major donor countries which supply a relatively low level of goods and services. The results, however, have fallen short of the objectives and the General Assembly again addressed the issue in part V, paragraphs 27 to 29, of its resolution 42/196 of 11 December 1987. The study will include a comprehensive review of the policy, practices and procedures of executing agencies, with a view to determining which of these have been particularly successful and why, and, in other cases, what are the specific obstacles impeding a breakthrough. The study's aim will be to frame a set of proposals aimed at achieving this particular objective of Member States.

- (h) An appraisal of the optical disc pilot project at the United Nations Office at Geneva

A test project is underway at the United Nations Office at Geneva to demonstrate the feasibility and advantages of storing conference documents on optical discs and accessing them from remote locations; to evaluate the installation and running costs of such a system and the savings it would entail; and to determine other potential applications of such a system. This study would analyse the results of the test project in terms of its usefulness to the United Nations, as well as to other organizations of the system, and its potential for savings and improvements in productivity.

- (i) **Status of internal evaluation in organizations of the United Nations system***

Fourth report on evaluation in the United Nations system*

Every four years since 1977, the Joint Inspection Unit has produced reports on the status of evaluation in the United Nations system. The last set of reports was produced in 1985. Progress made since then will be documented, earlier themes will be re-examined and new directions will be explored.

- (j) **The co-ordination of activities related to early warning of possible refugee flows**

Various United Nations entities are engaged directly or indirectly in the movement of refugees and displaced persons. The monitoring and co-ordination of such activity needs improving. The purpose of this study therefore would be to search for the most rational ways and means of better harmonizing the individual activity of United Nations entities in this field, so as to provide an early warning of developing situations that might require the Secretary-General's attention.

II. NUCLEUS OF THE WORK PROGRAMME FOR 1990-1991

1. Development co-operation

- (a) **Technical co-operation between selected agencies of the United Nations system and development finance institutions, including the World Bank and regional development banks**

The aim of this study is to examine the effectiveness of the co-ordination arrangements between selected agencies and organizations of the United Nations system and the development finance institutions, including the World Bank and the regional development banks. The study will focus on such aspects as programming procedures, joint project execution and co-ordination arrangements both at Headquarters and in the field. The findings and recommendations of the study will assist Member States in their endeavours to obtain greater co-ordination between agencies of the United Nations system and the finance institutions. They will also benefit the agencies and finance institutions in indicating areas where co-operation could be strengthened and the different technical assistance programmes harmonized.

* Evaluation study.

(b) The environmental focus of UNDP-financed projects*

The many factors that have a bearing on maintaining and enhancing the quality of the environment are interrelated and have begun to be seriously investigated from a multidisciplinary and global perspective in the wake of growing public concern about its deterioration. Specific problems such as the causes and effects of global warming, the destruction of tropical forests and toxic waste disposal have also been addressed. This study would examine through a number of case studies, how well the United Nations system is responding to environmental concerns and would aim at recommending how best to organize and carry out such operational activities.

2. Management and conference services (organization and methods, budget and finance, personnel, general administration)

(a) The organization of the buildings management function

The aim of this study would be to review the administration of the buildings and facilities in the United Nations system and to provide suggestions for operational improvements in buildings management.

(b) The distribution of documents and publications of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), particularly in developing countries

The principal aim of this study, which has been requested by the UNESCO Executive Board, is to see how such documents and publications can better reach the target groups in those countries.

(c) African Institute for Economic Development and Planning

A comprehensive review of this Institute will be carried out in amplification of the more general treatment given in the Joint Inspection Unit report on autonomous research institutes of the United Nation (JIU/REP/87/4; A/42/540).

In addition to the five firm studies above, the Unit is considering another six topics for inclusion in the 1990-1991 work programme. The themes cover information networks, United Nations system interaction with private/public enterprises, the round-table process, grade overlap, staff rotation and methodologies for priority setting. These themes will be researched and elaborated upon in the course of 1989.

* Evaluation study.