

UNITED



NATIONS

INTRODUCTION
TO THE
ANNUAL REPORT OF
THE SECRETARY-GENERAL
ON THE
WORK OF THE ORGANIZATION
16 June 1955 - 15 June 1956

GENERAL ASSEMBLY
OFFICIAL RECORDS : ELEVENTH SESSION
SUPPLEMENT No. 1A (A/3137/Add.1)

UNITED NATIONS

INTRODUCTION
to the
ANNUAL REPORT OF
THE SECRETARY-GENERAL
ON THE
WORK OF THE ORGANIZATION

16 June 1955 - 15 June 1956



GENERAL ASSEMBLY

OFFICIAL RECORDS : ELEVENTH SESSION

SUPPLEMENT No. 1A (A/3137/Add.1)

New York, 1956

NOTE

Symbols of United Nations documents are composed of capital letters combined with figures. Mention of such a symbol indicates a reference to a United Nations document.

Introduction

When I submitted the eleventh annual report of the Secretary-General on the work of the United Nations, for the period 16 June 1955 to 15 June 1956, I informed the Member States that the review of the role of the Organization in world affairs usually included as an introduction to the report would be transmitted at a later date, closer to the postponed opening of the eleventh regular session of the General Assembly on 12 November 1956.

Universality and its consequences

In the period under review the most important development bearing upon the future role of the United Nations in world affairs is the decisive step that has been taken toward universality of membership.

When the General Assembly convenes next month, sixteen new Member States will be represented and the Assembly will have before it the unanimous recommendation of the Security Council for the admission of three additional new Members. Thus, after many years of deadlock, the United Nations will have increased its membership within a single year by approximately one-third. Furthermore, important additions have been made to the membership of the specialized agencies. The whole United Nations system, therefore, enters its second decade far closer than before to becoming, in fact, a system fully representative of the diversity of the world community.

The new Members of the United Nations will be welcomed in their own right. Their admission, and the admission of other nations which may be expected to follow in due course, will also be welcomed because of the opportunities for more effective service to the purposes of the Charter that the wider membership will give to the Organization.

We live in a period of fundamental and rapid changes in the relationship of nations and peoples having differing cultures and social systems. The new age that is emerging is an age of promise. It could also become one of disaster. We are seeking to cope with world issues of great difficulty but equally of high challenge. The hope of finding peaceful, just and constructive solutions of these issues rests upon our ability to foster the growth of understanding, co-operation and mutual accommodation of interests among all the nations.

Because its Charter is a world Charter, the United Nations is a unifying force in a divided world. Because its institutions are world institutions, they are fitted to determine the common interest and enlarge the area of common grounds. This applies in full measure, I believe, to three great challenges of our times. These are: first, the relationship of the peoples of Asia and Africa with the peoples of western traditions; second, economic development for that majority of mankind which has so far shared so little in the fruits of the industrial age; third, the unresolved conflict between the ideologies

that divide the world. Because the United Nations is now becoming more widely representative, its capacity to serve as an influence for peace and constructive progress in meeting these great challenges has been increased.

To make good use of this increased capacity for service presents, in itself, a challenge of considerable difficulty. The admission of many new Members creates new constitutional, political and organizational problems for the United Nations. There are such constitutional questions as those raised by proposals to enlarge the membership of the Security Council and of the Economic and Social Council. There are problems of political adjustment to the fact that changes in world relationships will henceforth be more fully reflected in the debates and decisions of the United Nations. There are procedural problems relating to the orderly, responsible and expeditious conduct of business which increased membership inevitably brings and there are, for the Secretariat, organizational and administrative problems to which I shall refer later. These problems are, however, far outweighed by the opportunity to build a more effective world organization.

The United Nations can grow in real strength only to the extent that ways are found to use the Organization to full advantage for the purposes it was created to serve. The events of the past year have in some respects given encouraging evidence of such growth.

The role of the United Nations in a changing world

Article 1 of the United Nations Charter states that one of the main purposes of the United Nations is "to develop friendly relations among nations based on respect for the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples". This recognition of the principle of self-determination as a basis for friendly relations among nations means that democratic ideals, which have carried many peoples to new heights, are given a world-wide application. The Governments signatories to the Charter have formulated here a policy which, in the light of history, may well come to be regarded as one of the most significant landmarks of our times.

The United Nations, of course, is not the cause of the great change through which more than half of mankind, for centuries voiceless, has grown into or is now moving toward membership of the world community as citizens of independent national States. But the Organization is inevitably a focal point for efforts so to guide the difficult and delicate development that this progress may be achieved in peace and become a means to reinforce peace.

To say this is not to overlook that, in many cases, other procedures than those created by the Charter may

provide possibilities of working out fundamental elements of the new relationship. The Charter itself foresees negotiations between parties as an initial step in the solution of conflicts which are unavoidable during a period of fundamental change. But I believe that such negotiations gain by being conducted against the background of the Purposes and Principles of the Charter and that the results can usefully be brought within the framework of the United Nations. If the negotiations prove unsuccessful, they should then be followed up on the basis laid down and in the forms prescribed by the Charter.

It is important to remember that the Charter endorses self-determination as a basis for friendly relations among nations. Both unrealistic impatience in the movement toward self-determination and wasteful resistance to it would contradict this philosophy of the Charter by leading to conflicts which might threaten peace. Under the Charter, the nations concerned are therefore called upon to further the movement toward self-determination in such a manner as to strengthen the bonds of world community instead of weakening them.

Forces that stimulate this movement have also led to the emergence of a new nationalism. This nationalism can be a constructive element, raising the dignity and stature of peoples and mobilizing their best moral resources. But, in a period of severe emotional strains, it may also find expressions which are in fact hostile to the steady growth of the very national life it aims to serve. The United Nations may help in avoiding such a self-defeating development.

Within the community of nations, so great a change in the political relationships must arouse deep emotions on all sides. Positions long vital to great nations are involved. And on the other side the intensity of aspirations for equal status creates pressures for extreme action. I am convinced that in this situation the United Nations could be a source of greater assistance to Governments than it has so far been. The give and take of public debate has been firmly established within the Organization and plays a valuable role in the determination of the common interest, but the resources for reconciliation, which the Organization can also provide, have not received equal recognition. The tensions of our time are too severe to permit us to neglect these resources and should impel us to use the United Nations in such a manner as to widen the possibilities for constructive negotiation which are inherent in the nature of the Organization.

We should, I believe, seek a development which would give greater emphasis to the United Nations as an instrument for negotiation of settlements, as distinct from the mere debate of issues. The Charter does not envisage settlements imposed by force. But the obligation of States to settle their disputes by peaceful methods does not mean that principles of justice and international law may be disregarded. The Charter reconciles the obligation of peaceful settlement with the objective of justice and equity through its emphasis on peaceful negotiation in which the full weight of the world community, as organized in the United Nations under the Principles of the Charter, is brought to bear on the issue at stake.

The preceding observations have, in varying degree, a bearing on several problems which will come up for consideration in the forthcoming session of the General Assembly. What has been said about the role of the

United Nations also has a bearing on the Suez problem which, when this is written, is before the Security Council. I shall make no further comment on any of these problems here.

The Palestine question has a position more independent of the general development to which I have referred, but it is not unrelated in certain of its aspects. Since I have recently submitted several reports to the Security Council on the situation in Palestine, I do not consider it necessary to give here any further summary of developments since the last session of the Assembly. It may, however, be appropriate to stress my continuing belief, in spite of the difficulties and disappointments encountered, that the approach chosen by the Security Council last spring is one that should be followed up with all possible energy. I believe that the Council has improved the chances of developing a policy helpful to the Governments and peoples working for peace in the area, by adding to its public debate of the issues involved a direct diplomatic approach to the Governments in the region, along the lines of its resolutions of last spring.

Atomic energy

Since my last report, much progress has been made toward building a world-wide partnership in the development of atomic energy for peaceful purposes which will place the common interest above political differences.

The International Atomic Energy Conference convened by the United Nations in the summer of 1955 at Geneva proved to be an important turning-point in this direction. At this Conference, channels for the free exchange of peaceful atomic knowledge, which had been closed, were opened wide. The Conference resulted in a sharing of scientific and engineering knowledge of unprecedented scope in this field. This, in itself, will benefit the world for years to come. It laid the foundation for further and more rapid progress toward mastery of the practical applications of this new source of energy. But the Conference did more than this. It was a successful re-assertion of faith in international co-operation for the common benefit. In a time of tension and anxiety, it gave evidence that our generation was capable of a political initiative worthy of its scientific and technical achievements.

The spirit of co-operation was evident also in the successful outcome of the discussions and negotiations on a new International Atomic Energy Agency, culminating in the conference of eighty-two nations on the draft statute now in session at United Nations Headquarters. It was equally evident in the unanimous decisions of the General Assembly last year to hold a second United Nations conference for the exchange of technical information on peaceful uses and to establish the fifteen-member Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation. The Advisory Committee to the Secretary-General on atomic matters has recommended that the second conference should take place on or about 1 September 1958. The Radiation Committee has made a good start upon its important work of assembling and evaluating available information in this field and will hold its second meeting later this month. Finally, on the basis of the progress made during the past year, there is good reason to hope that the International Atomic Energy Agency will come into being next year, and that it will function in close relationship with the United

Nations and with the specialized agencies, in accordance with the recommendations of the General Assembly. Such a relationship will undoubtedly be to the mutual benefit of the organizations and safeguard that unity of action, with freedom of initiative, which is essential for the success of this new development.

Our knowledge points to the probability that atomic energy will become in the not too distant future a major new source of power for a second industrial revolution. The new capacity for economic expansion that will be ours when this time comes can be turned to the support of economic progress in all countries. It can, in particular, facilitate a faster rate of economic development in those parts of the world where the standard of living continues to lag dangerously far behind the industrialized areas. It can also help our efforts to reduce tensions and conflicts by removing some of their economic and social causes. It can do so, and the inequities and weaknesses which marred the industrial revolution of the last century can be avoided, under one condition. We must continue to guide the development in the same spirit of co-operation that has marked its beginnings. And we must entrust to the new International Atomic Energy Agency and other United Nations activities in this field responsibilities commensurate with the central role of world organization in matters which vitally concern the common welfare of all nations.

Disarmament

The past year has been a time of re-assessment of the problem of disarmament in the nuclear age. Strong evidence has been given of the growing mutual recognition that the immensely destructive power of the new weapons has made another world war incompatible with national survival on both sides. This, in itself, should help to pave the road toward agreement on a system for the international control and reduction of armaments. Also, the advances in and wider sharing of atomic knowledge and technology, together with the evolution that is under way in international political affairs, are leading Governments to re-think and re-examine the problems of effective controls.

The main new proposals that have emerged in the disarmament discussions during the past year have been advanced primarily as partial or limited steps of a confidence-building nature. There have been the proposals of the United States and of the USSR aimed at preventing a surprise attack, the proposals of the Western Powers and of the USSR for a limited initial reduction of armed forces, the proposal of France for the publication of military budgets, the proposal of the United Kingdom to try out inspection and control in a limited area and the proposal of India to end experimental explosions of nuclear weapons.

Little, if any, progress toward the necessary measure of agreement on any of these proposals has been evident in the disarmament discussions that have taken place since the last session of the General Assembly. This should not, however, discourage renewed efforts to further an atmosphere of greater mutual confidence. If the nations have found it possible to join together in a constructive programme to use atomic energy for man's peaceful progress, they should also be able to find a way in time to join together in a disarmament programme that will provide them all with safeguards against destruction.

Africa

It becomes steadily more significant to the rest of the world that the Continent of Africa, with some two hundred million inhabitants, is in a crucial state of transition. Changes in political, economic and social ways are taking place in much of the Continent, at times perhaps with a rapidity too great for proper assimilation. On the other hand, there is a growing restiveness, born of impatient nationalism, racial handicaps, and frustrated aspirations, that is virtually endemic to some areas. The urgency of the time factor in seeking peaceful and orderly solutions for Africa's basic problems has become even more evident in the year under review than before.

It is quite clearly in prospect that the voices of Africa which will be heard henceforth in the United Nations will be increasingly those of the Africans themselves. Morocco, Sudan and Tunisia, having achieved independence, are in process of admission to membership. This will expand to eight the number of Member States in the African Continent. The Gold Coast is well on the way to becoming a fully sovereign member of the British Commonwealth under the name of Ghana, and may be seeking membership within the coming year. Nigeria is advancing rapidly along the same road. The independence promised by the General Assembly to Somaliland under Italian administration becomes due in 1960.

In the interest of the common good, the United Nations must seek to be as helpful as possible to this Continent in transition—to its independent and dependent areas alike. Last May, the United Nations supervised the plebiscite in the Trust Territory of Togoland under United Kingdom administration, in which a majority of Togolese voters favoured union with an independent Gold Coast. Subsequently, the Trusteeship Council recommended to the General Assembly termination of the trusteeship when the Gold Coast attains independence within the British Commonwealth. These were precedent-making and historic steps toward fulfilment of the Charter objectives for dependent peoples.

There are clear constitutional limitations to the extent of other United Nations contributions to orderly progress in Africa. Nevertheless, even within these limitations, the United Nations can, I believe, be more helpful than it has been. Its necessarily modest efforts can be undertaken on a wider basis and possibly in some new directions.

The broad assurances of the United Nations Charter might be spelled out more specifically in their application to individual territories. The question of the course of development that a people may anticipate is no less valid for the peoples of Africa than for any other peoples. It would seem to be in the best interest of all the nations concerned with Africa and its future that Africans should be as fully advised as possible on this score.

It is evident that in the immediate future the pace of economic, social and political development in many places will have to be substantially accelerated if serious stresses are to be averted. The pace in the past, when confronted with the new demands and pressures of this day, inevitably appears too casual and leisurely. The international community, through its various channels of technical aid, affords, upon call, a ready means of assistance toward more rapid development, whatever

the existing status of the people and territory concerned. A preliminary United Nations technical assistance mission is about to visit Morocco and Tunisia at the request of the Governments of these two countries. The need being so large, there is a sound basis for expecting more requests for such assistance. The United Nations should be prepared to meet these growing needs.

As concerns those economic and social programmes and activities relating to Africa which are undertaken within the United Nations family, there is undoubtedly a need for further efforts toward developing effective co-ordination and a common perspective. I shall, in due course, offer some suggestions in this direction within the area of Secretariat responsibilities.

Economic and social questions

THE ECONOMIC SITUATION

At its summer session this year the Economic and Social Council marked its tenth anniversary by reviewing the main economic trends of the past ten years and the development of international action during that period in support of the objectives of Article 55 of the Charter. The United Nations economic surveys and the statements of representatives of Member Governments pointed to many positive achievements, both national and international, which provide good foundations for further progress. They also made clear that some of the most important economic and social problems confronting the world are almost as far from solution as they were ten years ago.

Most serious is the continued widening of the gap between the industrially advanced countries and the under-industrialized countries in the relative rate of growth of *per capita* incomes since before the war. This has occurred in spite of all the effort and attention that have been directed over the past decade in national, bilateral, regional and United Nations programmes toward the economic development of those vast areas of the world where poverty continues to be the law of life for the great majority of mankind.

While we have not yet succeeded in bridging the gap between economically developed and under-developed countries, we have come to understand better that the problem has roots in the world structure of demand.

With the growth of output and income in most of the industrial countries, it is true that the demand for primary production may be expected to rise, but experience over a long period has shown that this rise is far from proportional. Even if supplies of primary products were to keep pace with the demand and the terms of trade were to remain unchanged, the growth of income earned in primary production would lag considerably behind the growth in income of industrial countries.

As is demonstrated in the *World Economic Survey, 1955*, the growth of total output in the economically under-developed countries has lagged behind that of the developed countries, not so much because of lesser progress in each of the major sectors of production taken separately, but because agriculture, which accounts for a much higher proportion of the total in these countries, almost everywhere has expanded at a much lower rate than has industrial production.

If the economically under-developed countries are even to maintain, let alone increase, their relative share of the world's total output, they cannot rely exclusively

on expanded exports of primary products to industrial countries, but must embark upon a programme of broad economic development. It is true that, because of the great difference in their productive capacity, the economically under-developed countries cannot hope in many years to come to match in absolute terms the rate of growth in the economically advanced countries. Unless, however, at least a higher percentage rate of growth in the economically under-developed countries than in the developed countries can be achieved, it will be impossible ever to increase the share of the total world income of the developed countries in the distribution of the *per capita* income of the world. This should be a reasonable and attainable target for economic development. So far, this target has not been reached and the trend persists in the other direction. Even in percentage terms, the poor have become relatively poorer.

Put this way, it is easy to see how wrong and how dangerous it would be to permit such a trend to continue. The political, economic and social consequences of failure to take adequate and timely remedial action upon the hopes of all nations for peace and a better life are only too apparent. We must intensify our efforts, both national and international, to reverse this trend by stepping up, on a considerable scale, the processes of economic development.

I would be the last to minimize the difficulties and complexities that confront the nations in this field. The many-sided character of the problem of economic development is abundantly clear; we have grown increasingly aware not only of its economic dimensions but also of its diverse social ramifications. The goal of economic development implies for many countries a concerted undertaking to set up an industrial revolution more rapid than that which transformed western European civilization, and yet does not involve the extreme social costs which were then incurred. It is self-evident that the primary responsibility for such an undertaking must rest with the under-developed countries themselves. Nevertheless, I believe there are several areas open to more effective international action which would contribute to the ends we seek.

STABILIZATION OF COMMODITY PRICES

There is, first, the problem of attenuating fluctuations in commodity markets upon which the economically under-developed countries are so heavily dependent both for their income and their foreign exchange requirements. To the extent that we can progress toward a solution of this problem we shall be better able to place the problem of assistance through the flow of international capital in proper perspective.

Since the economically under-developed countries depend to so large an extent upon exports of primary products for their export earnings, they are especially vulnerable to the extreme price fluctuations that have continued to characterize the world commodity markets. As I pointed out to the Economic and Social Council last July, the vital importance of stabilization of commodity prices to economic development is shown by the fact that even in highly prosperous times fluctuations in commodity earnings frequently cancel out several times over the international assistance a country may be receiving from all sources. Furthermore, a change of only 5 per cent in average export prices is approximately equivalent to the entire annual inflow of private and public capital and government grants to under-developed countries.

The stabilization of the prices of primary products should, I believe, have a high priority in an intensified programme for economic development. I do not suggest new international machinery for this purpose. What is needed is greater understanding and goodwill on the part of both Governments and people in using the machinery that already exists. We have long ceased to accept unemployment as the price for keeping an industrial economy in balance. We have also accepted full employment as an international as well as a national obligation. Equally, we must come to realize that violent price fluctuations in the commodity markets are not productive of economic balance in the world, but of economic chaos, with all its political and social consequences in the under-developed countries. And we must learn to accept commodity price stabilization as an international obligation inseparable from the increasing economic inter-dependence of the world community. A more stable and expanding foreign trade is the most essential economic condition of, and will supply the greatest financial resources for, the necessary acceleration of the processes of economic development.

INTERNATIONAL CAPITAL FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

We have also to face the fact that the flow of international capital has failed in the past ten years even to regain its importance of only a generation ago; this is the case in relation both to trade and to income and investment. It is evident that we must seek ways to increase the supply of foreign investment capital, both public and private, available for economic development. The past several years have witnessed an increase in governmental action, both in capital-exporting and capital-importing countries, designed to promote the international flow of private capital, but the results have thus far been rather limited. Recent events have once again brought to the forefront the importance of international confidence for the flow of private capital.

In the field of international organization, the International Finance Corporation is now in being and is a step in the right direction. So would be the establishment of the proposed Special United Nations Fund for Economic Development. But an adequate solution of the problem involves, of course, considerations much wider than can be answered by new institutions alone.

It has often been said that heavy expenditures for armaments to defend national security make it difficult to increase the flow of capital for economic development. However true this may be, to make adequate progress in economic development dependent upon disarmament is to put the cart before the horse. We need a wider understanding and acceptance of the fact that a successful programme of economic development is one of the most necessary elements in building up the conditions of stability and confidence which will make possible real progress toward disarmament. Such a programme would be one of the greatest and most lasting contributions we could make toward strengthening the security of all nations.

THE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMME

In addition to new measures for stabilizing the foreign trade of the economically under-developed countries and in other ways increasing the financial resources available for economic development it is evident that we need also to increase the flow of skills and experts.

This year's review of the United Nations Expanded Programme of Technical Assistance has confirmed the growing usefulness of the programme. In the political sense, it is a living demonstration that it is possible for diverse and differing nations to work effectively together for the common good. It has shown itself to be well adapted to the requirements of the countries seeking help. On the other hand, it is also clear that the technical assistance needs of those countries far exceed the present financial resources of the programme. A realistic re-appraisal of the role of multilateral technical assistance in economic development will lead, I believe, to the conclusion that the resources available to the programme should be increased in order to enable it to respond more fully to the needs that are so evident.

THE ADMINISTRATIVE GAP IN NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES

The administrative problem confronting nations which are entering the industrial age for the first time deserves more attention than it has received. The lack of a sufficient number of experienced officials to administer national economic development plans is common to most of these countries. In the long run, as a social structure better adapted to the requirements of modern technology is built up, they will develop a class of national administrators adequate to their needs. But for many years the shortage of such a class will be strongly felt.

In the short run there is, for many of these countries, no way to fill the administrative gap without outside help. It is for this reason that I have suggested consideration of creating a new type of international civil service, whose members would be seconded for duty as administrators to Governments needing them for their national development programmes. As distinct from experts under the technical assistance programme, who give advice but are not normally entrusted with executive responsibilities, such officials would be expected to serve in an executive capacity the Governments to which they were seconded. They would, at the same time, help the Governments to build up more rapidly the trained personnel needed for their national administrations, both by their contribution to "on-the-job" training and by service in administrative training programmes such as those to which the United Nations Technical Assistance Administration is giving increasing aid.

I recognize, of course, that there are many legal and organizational questions that require study and clarification before an international service of this kind could be established. The creation of such a service should, of course, be attempted only if it would be welcomed by the interested countries themselves. But there is evidence that the urgency of the need is becoming ever more apparent to Governments now struggling, with insufficiently manned administrations, to cope with the complex and difficult problems that confront them. I also believe that the political circumstances which dominate our age point to the world community as the best source of outside assistance of this kind. The world community should be prepared to respond to this need.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Four years ago, the first United Nations *World Social Report* found that the people of the villages were the forgotten men of economic development. While

their problems remain far from solution it is fair to say that today most Governments are undertaking in some degree the extension to its rural population of technical services in agriculture, health, education and welfare. This extension has been most effective in countries which have undertaken these programmes with full attention to the importance of community participation. We have witnessed a real surge of interest in many Member States in these community development programmes. The results are not always spectacular in physical terms, the improvements effected are small in themselves, but they are clearly expressive of a new spirit of self-confidence which has started people on a forward move. We shall be mistaken if we lose sight of the great potential for contributing to material advancement through the voluntary mobilization of individual human resources and the awakening of dormant incentives. This has a special significance for development in those areas where scarcities of capital, skills, and managerial competence now operate as inhibiting factors.

The difficulties attendant upon social and institutional changes at both national and local levels are only too evident. It seems to me that the United Nations can make a constructive contribution in assisting Governments to achieve this new orientation, which holds such great promise not only for economic development but also for enhancing the "dignity and worth of the human person".

OTHER PRACTICAL STEPS

The international community can also help to strengthen economic and social development programmes in two areas where knowledge of the basic facts is frequently insufficient for sound planning. Intensified efforts are required to assist many countries in improving the content and methodology of national statistics and in training statisticians. And we need to know more about the relation of population growth and other demographic problems to development, particularly with respect to internal migration from rural areas to the cities. I hope to give to the Economic and Social Council an analysis of these problems in the forthcoming *World Social Report*.

We should, I feel, take further steps to encourage the development of regional economic co-operation within the United Nations framework. The work of the Economic Commissions for Europe, for Asia and the Far East and for Latin America provides one of the most promising avenues open to the Member Governments for common action leading to more effective results in programmes of economic and social development.

AID TO CHILDREN AND REFUGEES

The United Nations programmes for children and for refugees were established by the Member nations as responses of conscience by the international community to clearly felt needs. The United Nations Children's Fund is increasingly effective in its work because of the support that Members are rightly providing in growing measure. But support for the programmes of aid to refugees continues to lag far behind despite repeated appeals. Surely it is incumbent upon all concerned that the comparatively small amounts needed for these victims of war and political upheaval should be forthcoming.

HUMAN RIGHTS

The Organization has continued to deal with some human rights questions in the traditional manner—that is to say, through the preparation of international conventions on particular aspects of human rights. During the past year agreement was reached on the substantive provisions of the Convention on the Nationality of Married Women, and a United Nations conference, attended by representatives of over fifty States, approved and opened for signature an international instrument outlawing debt bondage, serfdom and other forms of servile status. This "Supplementary Convention on the Abolition of Slavery, the Slave Trade and Institutions and Practices Similar to Slavery", also includes an agreed solution of a problem which has long preoccupied the United Nations, namely, the question of the application of United Nations conventions to Trust and Non-Self-Governing Territories. The compromise solution reached at this conference might help in removing one of the obstacles to an agreement on the covenants on human rights.

The United Nations will soon be engaged in studying developments in the observance of human rights throughout the world by means of a periodic reporting system which may prove to be of considerable significance. Combined with this system there will be a series of intensive studies of the evolution and application of specific rights or groups of rights, including a series of studies of discrimination in various fields. An encouraging development during the past year has been the willingness of nearly all Governments to co-operate with the United Nations in the preparation of such global studies as a prelude to further action. This reporting system should not be allowed to develop into a vehicle for the criticism of Member States, and the studies of particular rights should not become mere catalogues of instances in which those rights have been violated or denied. The purpose of these activities should be to share experiences and techniques that may help us to make more progress in promoting human rights.

In response to government requests, preparations are going forward to develop the programme of advisory services in the field of human rights which the General Assembly authorized at its last session. When addressing the Commission on Human Rights earlier this year, I confessed to some scepticism about applying in this area certain methods usually associated with technical assistance programmes. Since then proposals have emerged which, I now believe, may well contribute to the clarification of some human rights problems. I refer particularly to the sharing of experience through seminars under the new programme of advisory services.

Budget and administration

ECONOMY AND CONCENTRATION OF EFFORT

The need to devote additional resources to the most urgent of the tasks which the United Nations system exists to serve underlines the importance of economy in the allocation and use of the total resources that can be made available. On the administrative side, Member Governments are familiar with the views of the Secretary-General and the steps he has taken toward reducing administrative costs. But economy is also, and primarily, a question of the number and scope of pro-

grammes that Member Governments ask the United Nations to undertake. Many efforts have been exerted over the past three years—in the specialized agencies as well as in the United Nations itself—by representatives of Governments and by the Secretariat to achieve a greater measure of concentration upon major tasks. Nevertheless, the tendency still persists to proliferate programmes which are then frequently endowed with inadequate resources.

This dichotomy has proved to be one of the most stubborn ailments afflicting the participation by Member Governments in international organization. So long as it continues the capacity of the world community to respond adequately to the really great needs of our time will be impaired. Economy must not be achieved at the expense of effective performance of the major tasks which are rightly entrusted to the United Nations. But economy by concentration of resources upon these tasks is an objective greatly to be desired. I warmly welcome the resolution recently adopted on this subject by the Economic and Social Council.

INTERNAL ORGANIZATIONAL QUESTIONS

As already indicated, the wider membership and the growing responsibilities of the Organization create problems also of an administrative nature. Within a framework set by the greatest possible economy, the main task of those responsible for the administration of the Secretariat is to see to it that the personnel resources are so utilized and co-ordinated as to provide for the highest efficiency. In the reorganization which has been put into effect over the last few years, considerable attention was given to the question of the balance between officials on the most senior level and the rest of the staff. It was pointed out that a streamlining operation reducing the total number of staff necessarily must increase the responsibilities for leadership on high levels and that, therefore, a reduction of the senior posts could never be expected to be proportionate to the general reduction of the staff. In spite of that, the reorganization led to a reduction of the total cost for officials on the top level of close to 25 per cent.

The lack of necessary experience with the new arrangements and certain adjustments made in order to facilitate the transition from the older system, gave to the new organization on the senior levels a tentative character, and it was my declared intention to submit for the approval of the General Assembly such definite proposals concerning arrangements on the senior level as might emerge from the experiences gained during a trial period. I hope to present at the twelfth session of the General Assembly a report containing such proposals. However, it may be appropriate for me, in anticipation of that report, to give a brief evaluation of the situation as it appears now.

The whole question of the organization at the senior level is closely related to the development of the position and functions of the Secretary-General himself. In the administrative field, an important element in the reorganization was that the previous arrangement by which an Assistant Secretary-General was the normal link between the Secretary-General and the Principal Directors in charge of personnel problems and budgetary questions was abandoned so that, instead, a Director of Personnel and a Controller, both with rank of Under-Secretary, would report directly to the Secretary-General. It was then assumed that close co-

operation should be established between the two officials just mentioned, but that they would both have such access to the Secretary-General as would render it possible for him to exert a direct and personal leadership in the two main administrative fields. It is my experience, from the two years that this new system has been functioning, that it has led to increased efficiency and smoothness of operation without in any way increasing the burden on the Secretary-General personally. It has recently been suggested that it might be advisable to revert to the previous arrangement, presumably because of a feeling that the other responsibilities of the Secretary-General would render it difficult for him also to put his full weight behind administrative policies, especially the important activities pursued by the Director of Personnel and the Controller. As indicated, experience so far does not lead me to believe that such a reversal of the present arrangement would be to the advantage of the Administration. I would, however, like to postpone my final judgement. Next year the longer experience gathered would also make it easier for Member Governments to reach a definite conclusion.

The suggestion referred to above draws attention to the increased responsibilities which the Secretary-General has had to shoulder in recent times. These responsibilities have, especially in the course of 1956, made it necessary for the Secretary-General to be absent from Headquarters for considerable periods and have engaged an increasing part of his time when at Headquarters. This development has been linked primarily to the special tasks entrusted to the Secretary-General by the Security Council in relation to the Palestine problem. It is, of course, too early to say to what extent such special tasks may indicate a continuing trend in the development of the functions of the Secretary-General. In any event, they have demonstrated the desirability of a system sufficiently flexible to enable the Secretary-General to devote a major part of his time to specific political problems. Although, in the light of experience, I would consider it premature to put forward any proposals now which would help to increase this flexibility, I feel that the Organization is facing here a question which merits attention on a long-term basis.

With a Secretariat whose executive head under the Charter is the only elected officer and who, for that reason, can delegate his responsibilities only to a limited extent, the possibilities of creating such a flexibility are necessarily restricted. One is indicated by the proposal to reintroduce a senior post above the posts of Director of Personnel and Controller. Other possibilities might be to regularize a system by which part of the specific responsibilities of the Secretary-General are delegated for longer periods, for example one year, in rotation among the senior officials. Still another possibility would be to create an intermediary post of Deputy Secretary-General either elected by the General Assembly or appointed by the Secretary-General himself as his personal representative for all questions which he, because of his other duties, might not be able to follow in the way and to the extent which is desirable. None of these possible solutions is free from serious objections. So far I do not consider that the responsibilities of the Secretary-General have been such as to overburden him personally or to restrict his possibilities of fulfilling his various functions. Were it to become necessary, it might be possible to overcome temporary difficulties by an *ad hoc* arrangement, cover-

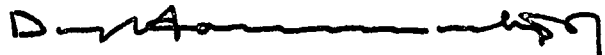
ing, for example, such a special assignment as the one the Secretary-General now has in relation to the Palestine problem. In a final consideration of the question raised here no innovations should, of course, be made which might weaken the unity of policy and introduce elements of political controversy or lead to administrative inadvertencies.

Belonging to the same category of problems is the question of the proper number of Under-Secretaries and other officials on the most senior level of equal rank. The view has been expressed that the number of officials on this level at present is unduly large. It has been felt that this represented a lack of economy, was bound to lead to difficulties in the co-ordination of the various activities, and might put the Secretary-General under an unnecessary pressure in his efforts to maintain current contact with all the senior officials. In part, the present number of senior officials is explained by historical circumstances; it is my hope that, at the end of the trial period, the proposals put forward can be framed independently of such considerations. I have given the matter constant and careful thought and my conclusion is that, even on a purely rational basis, only a minor reduction of the present number of senior officials is possible. To some extent that is explained by the need to provide for a wide geographical distribution. The main reason, however, is of another character. It should not be overlooked that the Secretariat has to cover a field not much less diversified than that of a national cabinet and that, therefore, specialization on the top level must be pushed fairly far. A simple enumeration will indicate what I have in mind. Senior officials are necessary for all the three Councils and for servicing the General Assembly and its committees. Such officials are likewise necessary for public information and for legal matters. In the purely administrative field, it is necessary to have special senior officials in charge of the Executive Office of the Secretary-General, of the Office of Personnel, of the Office of the Controller and of the very numerous problems relating to the administration of the buildings and technical services of the Organization. Likewise, a senior official must be in charge of the administration of technical assistance. Finally, there are three regional commissions and the European Office. In at least one of the Departments—the Department for Economic and Social Affairs—there is, further, an undeniable need for a deputy with responsibility also for relationships with the specialized agencies. In the special case of the Technical Assistance Board, which has an inter-agency secretariat, there must be a senior official, appointed by the Secretary-

General in consultation with the heads of the organizations participating in the Expanded Programme of Technical Assistance, to serve as Executive Chairman. This enumeration, which represents the number of specialized responsibilities requiring the leadership of a senior official reporting directly to the Secretary-General, already amounts to seventeen different posts. When attention is paid also to a reasonable geographical distribution and certain vital needs which may be expected to arise from time to time, such as the atoms for peace programme, it is difficult not to exceed this figure, which differs from the present number of senior posts only by four.

For a comparison it may be pointed out that, in the system prevailing before the present reorganization, the number of posts of Assistant Secretaries-General and Principal Directors, taken together, was higher than the present number of posts on the present unified Under-Secretary level. This is explained mainly by the fact that, in the earlier system, in a number of the enumerated cases, both an Assistant Secretary-General and a Principal Director functioned—all of them reporting to the Secretary-General—where now only an Under-Secretary is in charge. I have already mentioned that this simplification, which in my view has functioned well, has reduced the impact on the Secretary-General, has led to better co-ordination, and has likewise rendered possible considerable savings. One consequence of the change, which in my view later experience has fully borne out, is that the officials on the new Under-Secretary level all carry greater responsibilities than the previous Principal Directors, together with responsibilities which, although slightly different in direction, are at least comparable in importance to those previously exercised in theory by the Assistant Secretaries-General. The change is characteristic of what is a general trend in foreign service from what might be called political diplomacy to diplomatic administration of a policy-making type.

My justification for raising in this Introduction in a preliminary way these various organizational problems, which may seem peripheral and too technical properly to be included, is the considerable interest attached to them by Governments at the present juncture when, more than ever, the highest standards must be requested, not only of the individual members of the Secretariat, but also of the organization of the Secretariat if it is to meet the increasing demands that justly are put on it in face of the growing responsibilities of the United Nations.



Dag HAMMARSKJÖLD
Secretary-General