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JOINT INSPECTION UNIT

Implementation of the recommendations of the Joint Inspection Unit

Report of the Secretary-General

In its resolution 2924 B (XXVII) of 24 November 1972, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit annually to the Assembly a succinct report on those major recommendations of the Joint Inspection Unit affecting the United Nations which had not been implemented, together with the reasons therefor. At its thirty-second session, the Assembly adopted resolution 32/199 of 21 December 1977, by which it decided that future reports of the Secretary-General in implementation of the recommendations of the Unit should provide concise information only with regard to those reports which have been indicated by it to be of interest to the Assembly, one of its Main Committees or its other subsidiary organs. Further, in its resolution 42/218 of 21 December 1987, the Assembly requested all bodies of the United Nations system to examine closely those reports of the Joint Inspection Unit which are within their respective areas of competence and to comment, as appropriate, on the recommendations contained therein. The present report is submitted in accordance with those decisions, and includes detailed information on the status of implementation of the recommendations contained in six reports of the Joint Inspection Unit.

* A/44/150.

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I. ROLE OF THE OFFICE OF THE UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES IN SOUTH-EAST ASIA (1979-1983)

1. A report on this subject was submitted to the General Assembly at its fortieth session (A/40/135). The report contained 10 recommendations concerning the activities of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in South-East Asia. The related comments of the Secretary-General are contained in document A/40/135/Add.1. Information concerning the status of implementation of the recommendations of the Joint Inspection Unit was included in a report of the Secretary-General submitted to the General Assembly at its forty-first session (A/41/658). This report provides further information on implementation in the intervening period.

2. As will be seen from the reporting on the individual recommendations, implementation can be considered completed on all but two, namely recommendations 5 and 6.

Strengthening the field establishment

Recommendation 1: Organization and staffing of field offices

- (a) With due regard to differences in refugee situations in the various countries and regions, UNHCR field offices in South-East Asia should be adequately equipped to perform the basic responsibilities and functions of UNHCR in the areas of international protection, programming and co-ordination of assistance activities, administration and financial management, and public information.
- (b) The administrative and financial management functions of the field offices should be upgraded and performed by qualified and experienced UNHCR regular staff.
- (c) Financial control and management functions should be established at the field office level and performed by qualified professional staff with specific responsibility to monitor all financial operations and maintain permanent control over disbursements, banking and bidding procedures. For relatively small offices, this function could be centralized at the subregional or regional level under the direct authority of a central comptroller. The above measures should be implemented preferably through decentralization from Headquarters, as recommended below.

3. Arrangements have been made for adequate staffing of UNHCR field offices in South-East Asia to perform protection and assistance responsibilities, including financial management functions.

Recommendation 2: Decentralization

A new field staffing policy should afford the High Commissioner sufficient flexibility and leeway to decentralize experienced Headquarters staff to

reinforce the UNHCR field establishment in countries and regions such as South-East Asia and perhaps other areas where the magnitude of refugee situations and UNHCR expenditure levels warrant adequate UNHCR field presence, as suggested in recommendation No. 1.

4. This recommendation has been implemented along the lines of the comments of the Secretary-General contained in document A/40/135/Add.1 relating to paragraphs 42 and 43 of the JIU report.

Recommendation 3: Regional emphasis

As a corollary to decentralization of Headquarters staff to the field, the High Commissioner should give due emphasis to the strengthening of the field regional structures of UNHCR, coupled with appropriate resources and authority. New arrangements should include the pooling of some specialist functions at the regional level, such as legal services, public information, project evaluation, financial monitoring and control functions, etc. Regional representatives should have sufficient authority to articulate an integrated regional perspective of refugee problems, foster active collaboration among country offices and redeploy staff resources from one country to another to meet evolving requirements.

5. This recommendation has been implemented along the lines of the comments of the Secretary-General relating to paragraphs 44 and 45 of the JIU report (A/40/135/Add.1).

Recommendation 4: National officer scheme

As an additional means of strengthening the field offices, UNHCR should intensify the use of experienced, senior-level national staff, preferably seconded from Governments for specific periods, but selected and paid by UNHCR.

6. Since the introduction of the national officer scheme in 1986, 15 national officer posts have been created in South-East Asia.

Protection functions

Recommendation 5: Durable solutions

- (a) The High Commissioner should pursue and broaden his high-level contacts with a view to exploring all avenues possible for achieving durable solutions for Indo-Chinese refugees under his protection.
- (b) In the context of recommendation 5 (a), the High Commissioner and the Executive Committee of UNHCR should examine the feasibility of convening a humanitarian regional meeting of all the parties concerned by the Indo-Chinese refugee problem, with the objective of working out concrete measures aimed at a permanent solution.

- (c) The High Commissioner should intensify his consultations with Governments in South-East Asia with the objective of achieving a relaxation of national asylum policies for refugees in general, and for asylum seekers rescued at sea in particular.

7. This recommendation is still under implementation subject to the limitations set out in the comments of the Secretary-General relating to paragraphs 30, 51, 60, 61, 62 and 69 of the JIU report (A/40/135/Add.1). The Secretary-General, particularly in light of recent events in the region, has continued to stress the need for the support and co-operation of Member States in ensuring that the statutory protection functions of UNHCR, particularly regarding the granting of asylum, can be carried out. Intensified efforts were deployed by UNHCR in the preparation of the comprehensive plan of action adopted by the International Conference on Indo-Chinese Refugees to promote voluntary repatriation as an alternative solution for Indo-Chinese refugees. More favourable conditions now exist for the voluntary repatriation of Laotian and Vietnamese refugees.

Recommendation 6: Validity of refugee claims

UNHCR should exercise more visible field leadership in assisting Governments in South-East Asia to determine the validity of claims to refugee status, and should establish a reliable refugee data base derived as far as possible from first-hand sources.

8. This recommendation has been partly implemented through the establishment of a status determination procedure for new arrivals from the Lao People's Democratic Republic. This procedure has been implemented since 1 July 1985 by the Government of Thailand in co-operation with UNHCR. It will now be extended to new arrivals from Viet Nam. The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and Hong Kong authorities also decided to introduce a status determination procedure on 16 June 1988.

9. The screening measures, as well as measures concerning the return of rejected cases in an orderly and safe manner to their country of origin, were also included in the plan of action adopted by the International Conference on Indo-Chinese Refugees held in June 1989.

Assistance activities

Recommendation 7: Assessing refugee needs

In the wake of a refugee problem, UNHCR should always strive to assume a prompt front role in assisting the Government concerned to establish reliable statistics on the scope of the refugee situation, the scale and nature of relief assistance required, and the local and external potential sources of such assistance. All UNHCR assistance projects and programmes should be preceded by such a thorough assessment, and UNHCR staff should assure the systematic monitoring and co-ordination of assistance projects with a view to achieving efficiency of operations and complementarity of inputs.

10. This recommendation has been fully implemented.

Recommendation 8: Implementing partners

UNHCR should intensify its project monitoring and financial control efforts to ensure that implementing partners fully observe the terms of project agreements, especially as regards the procurement of goods and services on a competitive basis. In this connection, additional efforts seem necessary on the part of UNHCR field staff to secure the effective application of the project management and financial control improvements recommended by the Board of Auditors in the past three years.

11. This recommendation has been fully implemented.

Recommendation 9: Gainful employment

In areas where refugees are engaged in gainful employment and other remunerative activities, the possibility should be examined of their contributing to upgrade camp conditions and infrastructure.

12. This recommendation continues to be accepted as desirable. No changes have occurred, however, in the situation previously described in the Secretary-General's comments on the recommendation (A/40/135/Add.1). Most of the camps for Indo-Chinese refugees in South-East Asia remain closed and opportunities for gainful employment and other remunerative activities are unfortunately still very limited.

Recommendation 10: Formal agreement with CCSIPT

UNHCR should establish a formal working agreement with the Committee for Co-ordination of Services to Displaced Persons in Thailand (CCSIPT). The agreement should spell out the respective responsibilities and tasks of both parties in relation to refugees under UNHCR protection in Thailand, and should fully protect UNHCR's statutory responsibilities and functions.

13. This recommendation should be considered as implemented even if no formal working agreement with the Committee for Co-ordination of Services to Displaced Persons in Thailand has been concluded. As mentioned in the comments of the Secretary-General relating to paragraph 93 of the JIU report (A/40/135/Add.1), UNHCR has had a formal agreement with the Committee since 1980. This agreement governs, on an annual basis, the UNHCR contribution towards the budget of this umbrella organization for non-governmental organizations in Thailand. UNHCR is satisfied with this arrangement; none of the concerns voiced in the report have yet materialized.

II. DRUG ABUSE CONTROL ACTIVITIES IN THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM

14. A report on this subject was submitted to the General Assembly at its thirty-ninth session (A/39/646). The report contained five recommendations addressed to the Secretary-General, as well as to the specialized agencies. The related comments of the Secretary-General and of the Executive Heads of the organizations concerned within the United Nations system were transmitted to the General Assembly in document A/40/260.

Recommendation 1: Initiative by the Secretary-General to propose in ACC positive concerted actions that could be taken on drug abuse control.

Drug abuse control needs to be considered at a high and responsible level in the intersecretariat machinery, in response to the General Assembly's resolutions. The Secretary-General should therefore take the initiative to propose in the ACC at regular intervals positive concerted actions which could be taken on drug abuse control.

15. This recommendation has been implemented. The topic of international drug abuse control strategy was considered, at the initiative of the Secretary-General, at the second regular session of the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination in 1985, at which time he appealed to the relevant specialized agencies to participate fully in ad hoc inter-agency meetings on co-ordination in matters of international drug abuse control. The Secretary-General also expressed his hope that organizations of the United Nations system would follow the lead of the United Nations in re-assessing their programmes dealing with drug control matters.

16. At its first regular session in 1989, having reviewed the international situation with regard to drug abuse and illicit trafficking, the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination adopted a special statement entitled "The need to accelerate the international fight against drug abuse", which was submitted to the Economic and Social Council (E/1989/72). In expressing its grave concern at this immense and escalating menace and the evils associated with the illicit use and trafficking of narcotic drugs, the Committee pointed out that the additional mandates stemming from the International Conference on Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking 1/ and the 1988 United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic on Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances 2/ could not be carried out adequately without additional funding. It therefore strongly appealed to States Members of the United Nations to make the necessary financial provisions in their national budgets and in the regular budgets of the relevant components of the United Nations system; it also called for vastly increased voluntary contributions. The Committee requested the ad hoc inter-agency meeting on co-ordination in matters of international drug abuse control to continue its work and to keep it informed of progress.

17. Ad hoc inter-agency meetings on co-ordination in matters of international drug abuse control have been convened under the auspices of the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination since September 1985. The meetings, held twice a year during the period from 1986 to 1989, have considered such issues as preparations for and follow-up to the 1987 International Conference on Drug Abuse and Illicit

Trafficking; the review of major developments relating to international drug abuse control; the co-ordination of drug abuse activities within the United Nations system; input to the reports prepared by the Secretary-General for submission to the Commission on Narcotic Drugs and the General Assembly; the availability of resources for international drug control-related programmes in the United Nations system; and progress made towards the elaboration of a convention against illicit traffic in narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances.

Recommendation 2: Development by the specialized agencies mentioned in resolutions 34/177 and 38/93 of specific drug control programmes and activities for consideration by their member Governments; regular reporting on them to their governing bodies and regular reviews of them by the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination.

The specialized agencies, particularly those mentioned in General Assembly resolution 34/177, should as requested in that resolution and in resolution 38/93 develop specific drug control programmes and activities for consideration by their member Governments. They should report on them regularly to their governing bodies and there should also be regular reviews of them by ACC.

18. Two inescapable conclusions have emerged from the discussions at recent ad hoc inter-agency meetings. Virtually no agency or organization within the United Nations system considers that its current programmes adequately address the aspects of the problem that fall within its purview, or the related new mandates flowing from the Comprehensive Multidisciplinary Outline 3/ or the International Conference on Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking and the new Convention, and all stress the debilitating paucity of resources in relation to needs.

Recommendation 3: Continuation of inter-agency co-ordination meetings held from time to time in different organizations. Emphasis on concerted system-wide approach.

The Inspectors believe that it will be useful to continue the inter-agency co-ordination meetings, and see merit in holding them in different organizations from time to time. At these meetings it is less important and useful to have a presentation of individual reports of what each organization is doing or planning than to have a constructive discussion on what can be done on a concerted basis and how each organization can help the others in this field.

19. This recommendation has been implemented. With the approval of the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination, inter-agency meetings have been convened twice a year either at Vienna, seat of the drug control units, or, on invitation, at the headquarters of a specialized agency. Inter-agency meetings have been held in Paris (United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), 1982), Geneva (World Health Organization (WHO), 1983; International Labour Organisation (ILO), 1984), Rome (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), 1985), at United Nations Headquarters (1986), and again in Geneva (WHO, 1988). The meeting in September 1989 is scheduled to be held at

the Administrator sets out the functions assigned to the Special Unit for technical co-operation among developing countries, the obstacles encountered in carrying out those functions fully and the steps to be taken to improve the situation as additional resources become available. It should be added that, in order to ensure that the concept and use of the modality constitute an integral part of the whole UNDP programming and project development and executive process, focal points have been established for many years in all the relevant offices of UNDP, at the level of deputy director.

33. In most other organizations, focal points for technical co-operation among developing countries have been established over the years and strengthened mainly by the accrual of experience. Very few of them report a need for new internal arrangements, although some feel handicapped by budgetary constraints. In the large organizations, the officers in charge of departments, divisions, sections or regional offices dealing with technical co-operation, or other senior officials of these units, act as the focal points. Responsibility in regard to technical co-operation among developing countries is one among other responsibilities, consistent with the general approach of the organizations that it should be an integral part of their total action in technical co-operation.

34. UNDP has organized working meetings between its own focal points and those of the other organizations and maintains contact with them in order to ensure harmony of action in the promotion and support of activities in technical co-operation among developing countries assisted with UNDP resources.

Recommendation 4 (a): Country programming:

- (i) In the course of country programming exercises, UNDP should examine with Governments the desirability of identifying development sectors, sub-sectors and projects, including project components (e.g., human resources development, appropriate technology, rural development, etc.) which may be more suitable for the TCDC modality and/or other innovative and less costly methods of technical co-operation delivery. Locally available capacities and TCDC potential should be indicated in country programme documents.
- (ii) At the project formulation stage, project requirements should be matched against TCDC capacities. Governments should be informed that the commitment of country indicative planning figure (IPF) resources will be approved only after the Administrator is satisfied that TCDC or another less costly modality of project implementation has been explored.
- (iii) The principle of continuous programming should be used for a fresh scrutiny of ongoing projects in order to find out whether some of these or parts thereof might not be more economically executed under the TCDC modality.

35. The Administrator accepts these and the following recommendations on UNDP regional, interregional and global programming as clear statements of the objectives to be sought. They are largely reflected in the policies and procedures

UNESCO headquarters. At each meeting held outside Vienna, a substantive presentation is made of the activities of the specialized agency acting as host. Following the JIU recommendation, presentation of individual reports has been minimized, with emphasis placed on discussion of future concerted action on a mutually reinforcing basis, and using to the extent possible the structure of the Comprehensive Multidisciplinary Outline 3/ adopted by the International Conference on Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking in June 1987. In order to present a comprehensive overview, it has also been agreed that in future the same structure will be adopted for the annual report of the Secretary-General. At its first regular session in 1989, the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination agreed on the need for a system-wide programme of action to achieve a concerted approach (ACC/decision 1989/5).

Recommendation 4: Participation by the Under-Secretary-General for Political and General Assembly Affairs in inter-agency meetings on drug abuse control, as well as in meetings of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs.

The Under-Secretary-General should participate actively, on behalf of the Secretary-General, in the inter-agency meetings on drug abuse control. He should also participate actively in meetings of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs. These roles should clearly demonstrate the desire of the Secretary-General to strengthen co-ordination in the United Nations itself as well as constructive and additional action within the United Nations organizations.

20. This recommendation has been implemented. In response to the Secretary-General's desire to strengthen co-ordination in the United Nations itself, as well as constructive and additional action within the United Nations organizations, the Under-Secretary-General for Political and General Assembly Affairs or his representative has chaired the inter-agency co-ordination meetings on drug abuse control since February 1986. Owing to other official responsibilities, the former Co-ordinator (the Under-Secretary-General for Political and General Assembly Affairs) was not available to participate at all meetings of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs. The present Co-ordinator (the Director-General of the United Nations Office at Vienna) has, in addition to chairing the inter-agency meetings held since September 1987, participated actively at special and regular sessions of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs.

Recommendation 5: Inclusion in drug abuse control projects of specific conditions requiring Governments involved to enforce the purpose and goal of projects.

Some of the more successful drug abuse projects in developing countries have recently specified certain conditions, which are resulting in actions taken by the Governments of those countries. Governments should be encouraged to take positive steps on drug abuse control and use their own resources whenever this is possible. Drug abuse projects should have specific conditions that would require Governments involved to enforce the purpose and goal of projects.

21. This recommendation has been implemented. In fact, drug control projects funded by the United Nations Fund for Drug Abuse Control always include a recipient

Government counterpart commitment to provide human and/or financial resources to achieve the purpose and goals of these projects. In addition, under specific circumstances, Fund assistance is provided in exchange for the commitment of a recipient Government to undertake the necessary action in the drug control field (e.g. elimination of illicit cultivation), which may not itself be covered by the projects in question. An increasing number of agreements containing such commitments have been concluded by the Fund since 1988.

III. UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM SUPPORT TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE BUENOS AIRES PLAN OF ACTION ON TECHNICAL CO-OPERATION AMONG DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

22. A report on this subject was submitted to the General Assembly at its fortieth session (A/40/656). The report contained five recommendations addressed to the organizations of the United Nations development system. The related comments of the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination are contained in document A/40/656/Add.1. In its resolution 40/196 of 17 December 1985, the General Assembly took note of the recommendations of JIU. Information concerning the status of implementation of the recommendations was included in a report of the Secretary-General submitted to the General Assembly at its forty-first session (A/41/658). The present report provides further information on implementation in the intervening period.

23. The JIU report and the comments of the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination, as well as a report by the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) containing the views of the United Nations development system (DP/1988/72), were reviewed by the Governing Council of UNDP at its thirty-fifth session in 1988. The Governing Council took note of the Administrator's report, which highlighted progress made and difficulties encountered by the organizations of the system in the implementation of the JIU recommendations.

24. The status of implementation of the recommendations was also provided in the report of the Administrator of UNDP to the High-Level Committee on the Review of Technical Co-operation among Developing Countries at its sixth session, held in June 1989 (TCDC/6/6).

Recommendation 1 (a): The United Nations development system organizations should consider the Buenos Aires Plan of Action for Promoting and Implementing TCDC as a binding legislative framework for their Technical Co-operation among Developing Countries (TCDC) activities. When specific legislation is enacted, it should clearly indicate concrete tasks to be accomplished in the area of TCDC and authorize allocation of resources required for that purpose.

25. As the JIU report noted, virtually all the governing bodies of the United Nations development system have endorsed the Buenos Aires Plan of Action. 4/ While establishing it as a binding legislative framework is a matter for those bodies to determine, the organizations supplying information for the present report generally describe the Buenos Aires Plan of Action as the framework for their action in

support of technical co-operation among developing countries or as an essential part of their mandate.

26. In the larger organizations that have regular programmes of technical co-operation, legislation in the form of resolutions or decisions on programmes usually identifies the technical co-operation among developing countries activities involved and authorizes the allocation of the resources as required.

Recommendations 1 (b) and (c): Governing bodies should avoid laying down mandates for economic co-operation among developing countries (ECDC) and TCDC in the same legislation; each should be addressed separately. Reporting and accountability should, similarly, be identified separately, and governing bodies should regularly, at least every two years, consider their organization's TCDC activities as a separate agenda item.

27. The information available suggests that organizations maintain different approaches to the idea - endorsed also by the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination - that economic co-operation and technical co-operation among developing countries should be dealt with separately. Some of them have taken action in that direction. Those not doing so have pointed out that their specific activities in those areas are so closely interlinked that separation is neither practical nor feasible.

28. In all the organizations providing information, including those where technical co-operation is linked with economic co-operation in legislative action, reporting and accounting for technical co-operation among developing countries is regularly carried out in a clearly identifiable and separate manner.

29. Some organizations place a separate item, or more usually a sub-item, on technical co-operation among developing countries activities on the agenda of the annual or other regular sessions of their governing bodies. This does not, however, preclude its consideration as an integral part of their total technical co-operation activities. Some organizations express concern about any tendency to pursue technical co-operation among developing countries as an end in itself rather than as a technical co-operation modality to be given its due consideration among all the techniques available.

Recommendation 2: In their support to TCDC activities, the UNDS organizations should observe the following main characteristics and definition of TCDC projects:

(a) Agreement between two or more developing country Governments participating in a TCDC activity. The terms of this agreement should be reflected in project documents. Specific TCDC techniques and mechanisms should be apparent.

- (b) Government execution arrangements with active UNDS participation in project initiation. The role of UNDS should be limited to the identification of TCDC solutions, bringing parties together and, at Governments' request, giving technical support to project elements not available under TCDC arrangements.
- (c) The financial support of UNDS should be limited to financing foreign exchange component(s) like travel expenses outside the host country and the cost of foreign equipment and supplies in accordance with UNDP rules.

30. Apart from a desire on the part of a number of organizations for greater flexibility in the United Nations development system's financing of local costs in particular, the organizations are virtually unanimous in agreeing that the elements set out in the JIU report should constitute the main characteristics and definition of a project in technical co-operation among developing countries. They report that they are acting accordingly. In their view, the characteristics described place in their correct light the respective roles of the Governments concerned and of the United Nations development system - the former as the party having primary responsibility for the initiation, organization and management of the project and the latter as playing a catalytic and supplementary role.

31. The organizations favouring and in some cases using their own resources to adopt a more flexible approach to the United Nations development system's financial support for technical co-operation among developing countries projects are mainly concerned with specific problems that have arisen in least developed countries in particular. Support is normally limited to such items as the international travel costs of experts and trainees and the cost of international freight for equipment. Some organizations report that Governments often expect them to play a larger financial role, and when this seems justified on a case-by-case basis they have used regular programme resources to finance part of the local costs of the activities concerned.

Recommendation 3:

- (a) The Administrator of UNDP should review the staffing level of the Special Unit for TCDC in the light of current responsibilities as well as any new functions which might arise as a result of recommendation 4 of this report.
- (b) Other organizations which have not yet done so should, within the limits of their existing resources, establish or strengthen their TCDC focal points by designating for this purpose a full-time post(s), with clear authority to disseminate the TCDC principle throughout the organizations' programmes and assist Governments in ensuring that the principle is translated into concrete TCDC projects. The smaller organizations may entrust TCDC focal point functions on a part-time basis - preferably to the heads of units responsible for technical co-operation. Programmers and field officers should be instructed to monitor and report regularly via the focal point to the executive head.

32. In the context of a report on strengthening the capacity of UNDP (DP/1988/71),

that UNDP has developed over the years and has recently issued in revised and improved form. It has taken time, however, for the understanding and knowledge to be disseminated and experience acquired by UNDP, organizations and Governments that are essential to the fullest possible utilization of technical co-operation among developing countries resources in UNDP programming and project development and implementation. Still more intensive efforts are required. The problems encountered and the Administrator's proposals for alleviating them are set out in his report on strengthening the capacity of UNDP.

Recommendation 4 (b): Regional programming:

- (i) The regional programming meetings organized by UNDP should henceforth include a detailed examination of TCDC opportunities. As in the case of country projects, the Administrator should be satisfied that TCDC possibilities have been explored prior to the approval of regional projects. This should involve active preparatory work and the participation of the Special Unit for TCDC at the meetings.
- (ii) United Nations system support to subregional and regional institutions should henceforth be oriented towards their transformation into effective instruments of TCDC along the following lines:
 - Existing and new institutions should come under full government management;
 - United Nations support should be provided using the TCDC modality as defined in recommendation 2 of this report, and should concentrate on building technical and project-executing capacities as far as possible;
 - The institutions should increasingly be used as executing agents of intercountry activities falling within their area of competence, either directly or through sub-contract arrangements with United Nations system organizations.

36. As indicated above, the Administrator fully supports the recommendations of the JIU report on the regional programming process. Here again, the recommendations largely reflect the existing approach, and efforts will continue to be made to apply this approach to the fullest possible extent, including a more effective role for the Special Unit for technical co-operation among developing countries. Regional programming, almost by definition, promotes the use of this modality. The regional offices, which play the key role for UNDP in regional programming, have increasingly and with increasing success sought with Governments the fullest possible utilization of the technical co-operation among developing countries resources of intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and institutions of a regional and subregional character. In many cases these organizations have participated actively at all stages of project identification, formulation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. Emphasis is also placed on the development of training and other collaborative arrangements between regional and subregional institutions and corresponding national entities in the participating countries. The need, as in country programming, is not for a change

of direction, but for an intensification of the efforts that have already proved fruitful.

37. With respect to the recommended transformation of the institutions supported by the United Nations development system into effective instruments of technical co-operation among developing countries, many of them are already carrying out this function in varying degrees by such means as the provision of experts, consultants and training facilities. These services are being developed, often with the catalytic support of the United Nations development system, not only within regions but between different regions. In many cases, however, the ability of regional institutions to provide such resources on a large scale remains dependent on the readiness of the participating Governments, and especially their financial ability, to take over the full management and staffing of the institutions.

Recommendation 4 (c): Interregional and global programming:

- (i) Based on positive experience with the interregional project, "Promotion of Action-oriented TCDC Activities", this project should be made a continuing programming component of UNDP.
- (ii) Training of government operational staff on the processing and implementation of TCDC projects similar to the Associate Expert Scheme of UNDP, should be developed. An umbrella TCDC project to that effect could be the most appropriate solution.
- (iii) Both of these should be entrusted to the Special Unit for TCDC and should be financed from interregional and global indicative planning figure resources.

38. The existing project has been continued into the fourth UNDP programming cycle with the allocation of funds from Special Programme Resources. The project is supervised by the Special Unit. The Administrator recognizes the need in several countries for assistance in the training of government staff concerned with technical co-operation among developing countries activities and a programme proposal is being prepared. The question of allocation of additional resources for these activities is being dealt with separately.

Recommendation 5 (a): All organizations of the United Nations development system with the exception of UNDP, should earmark no less than 10 per cent of their technical co-operation resources for TCDC activities, and additionally establish TCDC trust funds when appropriate. Support to TCDC should be explicitly emphasized in medium-term plans and should be introduced in programme budgets as a separate subprogramme of technical co-operation.

39. The organizations with regular programmes of technical co-operation do not feel that it is necessary to earmark fixed percentages of their resources to technical co-operation among developing countries. While a few of them do identify in their programme budgets specific amounts of resources to be devoted to promoting technical co-operation among developing countries (and in one case both economic and technical co-operation among developing countries), the general attitude is one

of caution against any arrangements that would be counterproductive to the need, stressed repeatedly in the JIU report, to integrate concepts of technical co-operation among developing countries into all activities of the United Nations system. Some organizations estimate that such activities already amount to about 10 per cent of their technical co-operation activities and that this proportion can be expected to grow.

Recommendation 5 (b): The Governing Council of UNDP should review its decision on the 10 per cent limit on country indicative planning figures for TCDC with a view to its elimination and the relaxation of existing policies on the reimbursement of national expenditure for TCDC operational projects.

40. The Administrator notes that these recommendations are addressed directly to the Governing Council. It may be recalled that the so-called 10 per cent limit applied only, and as an experiment, to the indicative planning figure of a country wishing to provide technical co-operation among developing countries for the benefit of one or more other countries. No such limit applies to the use of a country's indicative planning figures for its own benefit.

41. The Administrator has recommended that the existing provisions for the use of country indicative planning figures for technical co-operation among developing countries projects and activities within the country programmes should continue in effect (TCDC/6/6). These provisions include the arrangements covering local costs.

Recommendation 5 (c): The developing countries should, in keeping with their regional priorities, consider earmarking a reasonable percentage of the regional indicative planning figure for the financing of regional TCDC projects.

42. The Administrator notes that this recommendation is addressed to the Governments of the developing countries. He has proposed that, as far as UNDP is concerned, renewed efforts should be made to increase the use of such modalities in the regional programmes (DP/1988/71).

Recommendation 5 (d): The Governing Council should consider allocating a sizeable percentage of interregional and global indicative planning figures for TCDC projects.

43. The Administrator notes that this recommendation is addressed to the Governing Council. He has proposed that renewed efforts should be made to increase the use of such modalities in interregional and global projects. These efforts would include further attempts to identify developing country institutions with the capacity and competitive ability to execute projects or components of projects.

IV. UNITED NATIONS TECHNICAL CO-OPERATION IN CENTRAL AMERICA
AND THE CARIBBEAN: VOLUME II - THE CARIBBEAN (JIU/REP/85/6)

44. A report on this subject was submitted to the Economic and Social Council (E/1985/3/Add.2). The comments of the executive heads of the organizations concerned were transmitted to the Economic and Social Council in document E/1985/3/Add.3. The report contained 10 recommendations addressed to Governments, UNDP and the Department of Technical Co-operation for Development and relevant inter-agency bodies. At its second regular session of 1986, the Economic and Social Council took note of the report in its resolution 1986/61.

45. As indicated in the comments contained in document E/1985/3/Add.3, action consistent with the overall recommendations contained in the report was already being taken by UNDP. UNDP continues to be guided by the recommendations made in the JIU report.

Recommendation 1: The United Nations development system and the Governments should give more attention to the institutional building process. The proper identification of priorities, the feasibility of carrying these forward and their financial viability must be a prime concern. This effort should be visualized first with a broad definition of objectives, which would constitute a base for their short-, medium- and long-term development strategies.

46. The previous comments on this recommendation provided information on the ongoing efforts of UNDP to strengthen the institutional capability of Caribbean Governments (E/1985/3/Add.3, para. 38). This effort is continuing. Moreover, consistent with this recommendation regarding the need for a broad definition of objectives and the proper identification of priorities, during 1986 UNDP assisted the Governments of the Eastern Caribbean in the preparation of comprehensive technical co-operation programmes, which have served as a basis for the preparation of the new country programmes for the fourth cycle (1987-1991). This exercise has promoted a closer integration between technical co-operation and the broader development efforts of the Governments. This recommendation is, therefore, being fully implemented.

47. In addition to the technical co-operation programmes prepared for the Eastern Caribbean countries, UNDP has recently sought to carry this approach further in the case of Guyana, by carrying out a combined technical co-operation needs assessment and an identification of the specific management requirements in support of the economic recovery programme recently adopted by the Government. On the basis of this initiative, the Caribbean Group for Co-operation in Economic Development has requested UNDP to assist the Government in mobilizing resources required to carry out this programme and to co-ordinate external technical co-operation inputs in support of it.

Recommendation 2: UNDP, the Department of Technical Co-operation for Development and all United Nations development-related agencies should initiate basic agreements with Governments on the creation of human resources pools, with the understanding that training should be one of the highest priorities in every project where this need is identified.

48. UNDP has always provided for a training component in its projects. Moreover, there have been intensive and ongoing discussions with Governments regarding the need to institute appropriate policies to retain trained staff. Governments have made a conscious effort within the past two years but inadequate rates of remuneration for such staff, particularly in respect of the Eastern Caribbean, continue to be a problem in many cases. The Governments of the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States have recently proposed to UNDP the adoption of a pool of experts scheme to be implemented on a regional basis. This proposal, however, is premised on UNDP support for a "topping up" of salaries. The policy implications of the proposal are being examined. Furthermore, as part of the work programme of the Caribbean Group for Co-operation in Economic Development, of which UNDP is a sponsoring institution, the Organization of American States has prepared specific proposals for the increased training of personnel in the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States countries. These proposals are being reviewed by UNDP and other multilateral and bilateral agencies participating in the Group. Training continues to be a high priority in national, Caribbean multi-island and Caribbean regional projects. UNDP projects have provided training in areas such as vocational education, allied health, civil aviation, hydrology, economic planning and public administration, to name but a few. In terms of the retention of trained staff, Governments in the region are continuing their efforts to improve the level of remuneration as part of an overall programme of public sector rationalization.

Recommendation 3: UNDP and DTCD should exercise authority through a General Assembly decision making the petition for training mandatory and having Governments guarantee employment after the training period using the expertise acquired by the trainees in the implementation of particular projects.

49. Training should be one of the highest priorities in every project where this need is identified. The promotion, however, of a General Assembly decision by UNDP and the Department of Technical Co-operation for Development making the petition for training mandatory and having Governments guarantee employment after the training period remains problematical since, while many Governments, particularly those in the Eastern Caribbean, are willing to offer employment, they are not always in a position to offer remuneration at a level attractive enough to prevent the loss of trained personnel through emigration. Moreover, the ability of Caribbean Governments to retain trained staff is often limited by the constraints imposed by the need to carry out adjustment programmes which often require the reduction of the size of the public sector. Discussions are continuing between UNDP and the Governments concerned, which have attached considerable importance to the problem.

Recommendation 4: To overcome the trained manpower constraints, particularly in relation to counterparts and continuity of project/programme activities, the following should be considered:

- (a) The Transfer-of-Know-How Through Expatriate Nationals (TOKTEN) scheme as it is actually being undertaken is unlikely to have lasting effects. The Governments, individually and collectively, should place more emphasis on employing young professionals emerging from the universities and on using trained manpower from institutions developed locally and otherwise to fill the gaps.
- (b) Regional institutions such as the Caribbean Centre for Development Administration (CARICAD) supported by the Instituto Centroamericano de Administración Pública (ICAP) should be asked to assist in supplying the trained personnel required.

50. Governments have been placing more emphasis within recent years on the employment of young professionals emerging from the universities and on using trained manpower from institutions developed locally and otherwise to fill the gaps in manpower, which exist in a number of cases. The Caribbean Centre for Development Administration has in fact carried out on-the-job training of public service staff, which has proved extremely useful in upgrading the administrative and managerial capability of such staff. In recognition of the importance of this contribution, UNDP, which carried out a tripartite review of the Centre's project in May 1988, has provided additional resources to enable the Centre to continue its efforts until December 1989 to upgrade the administrative and managerial capability of public service staff.

Recommendation 5: Optimum and long-term use are primary considerations in the acquisition of equipment. The United Nations system should ensure that these considerations are properly taken into account in all purchases of equipment.

51. The recommendation regarding the need to ensure that equipment purchase is optimal and geared to long-term use is being implemented.

Recommendation 6: UNDP and the Department of Technical Co-operation for Development in conjunction with the Governments of the Caribbean countries should pursue the adoption of more projects on a regional basis, especially those which address problems common to all, such as soil erosion and conservation.

52. In keeping with this recommendation, UNDP has intensified its efforts to promote projects of a subregional nature to deal with the common problems faced by the Caribbean countries. This is particularly true of the Caribbean Community countries, where regional approaches to problem solving are facilitated by the existence of a formal economic integration treaty. Approximately 10 regional projects have been identified for financing in the Eastern Caribbean under the Caribbean Multi-Island Programme in such areas as small farm agricultural development, housing, aid co-ordination and statistical training. In addition, approximately 20 regional projects have been identified for implementation in the

wider Caribbean Community framework in such areas as training of allied health personnel, meteorology, operational hydrology, establishment of a hurricane warning system, science and technology and educational development. This recommendation is, therefore, largely being implemented.

Recommendation 7: Projects of long-term duration such as mentioned in paragraphs 75 and 102 (of JIU/REP/85/6) should be well monitored and scrutinized, especially as regards to preparation of counterparts for future take-over. This will enable the Governments to acquire national expertise to effectively take over project activities.

53. All projects of long-term duration are being closely monitored and scrutinized to ensure that adequate counterparts are provided to take over the responsibilities carried out by the project. This scrutiny is particularly intense in the newly established Project Appraisal Committee, which meets at the level of the Regional Bureau, and also in the Action Committee, which is chaired by the Administrator.

Recommendation 8: With regard to projects concerned with energy, exploration in hydrocarbons and hydroelectric plants, possibilities should be approached with extreme caution. Valid reasons and substantive considerations, as to full use of costs, debt servicing, priority in overall development schemes should be of utmost importance.

54. This recommendation has been taken into account in the planning and implementation of energy projects in the region. It should be noted however that the regional petroleum exploration project (RLA/82/026), which was in the process of implementation at the time the JIU report was written, has yielded positive results in terms of the identification of the possibilities for petroleum exploration in a number of Caribbean countries.

55. Moreover, the geothermal exploration project in Saint Lucia, which was jointly funded by the United Nations Revolving Fund for Natural Resources Exploration and the United States Agency for International Development, has led to the discovery of commercially viable sources that will be tapped for power generation in the island. Based on this result, it is proposed that similar investigations be carried out in other islands in the Eastern Caribbean, most notably Dominica, which has considerable potential in this regard.

56. In addition, the Department of Technical Co-operation for Development, in consultation with the secretariat of the Caribbean Community, has recently formulated a Caribbean regional project on geothermal energy exploration, which is about to be approved by UNDP.

Recommendation 9: As a matter of urgency, the Governing Council of UNDP should review the criteria and methods in determining indicative planning figures and, in particular, take into consideration unemployment and other socio-economic factors that are at present not duly considered.

57. During the fourth cycle (1987-1991), the UNDP Governing Council agreed to refine further the criteria for determining indicative planning figures by

increasing the number of supplementary criteria used in the allocation of resources and by increasing the weight assigned to such criteria vis-à-vis the major criteria of per capita gross national product (GNP) and population. However, the distribution of available UNDP resources is still biased in favour of the least developed countries (determined on the basis of per capita GNP). Further improvement in the formula for distributing indicative planning figures is subject to discussions by the Governing Council.

58. The issue of criteria for allocating resources will again come up for review in the context of the preparations for the fifth cycle (1992-1996). UNDP will make appropriate recommendations to ensure that the circumstances of small island developing countries are taken into account.

Recommendation 10: UNDP and the Department of Technical Co-operation for Development should institute a practice of using independent teams of experts for the evaluation of projects/programmes such as practised in other organizations in order to ensure the highest degree of objectivity.

59. UNDP has always utilized the services of independent, individual consultants as well as teams of consultants for the evaluation of projects. Usually, the choice of teams as opposed to individual consultants has been dictated by the size and complexity of the project to be evaluated. Increasingly, however, particularly in the case of Caribbean regional projects, evaluations have been carried out by teams of experts, as in the case of the project dealing with training of allied health personnel (RLA/70/054). Recently, the Action Committee, in approving a new phase of the Caribbean rural development advisory and training service project, specifically requested, as a condition of approval, that the project should be evaluated during 1989 by a team of three consultants. This recommendation is therefore being implemented.

V. FIELD REPRESENTATION OF ORGANIZATIONS OF THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM: STRUCTURE AND CO-ORDINATION

60. A report on this subject was submitted to the General Assembly at its forty-first session (A/41/424). The related comments of the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination were transmitted to the General Assembly in document A/42/290. The report contained four recommendations addressed to the General Assembly, the governing bodies of the United Nations system, the organizations themselves and relevant inter-agency bodies. At its forty-first session, the General Assembly in its decision 41/444 took note of the report and transmitted it to the relevant governing bodies of the United Nations system. Information concerning the status of implementation of the recommendations was included in a report of the Secretary-General submitted to the General Assembly at its forty-second session (A/42/256). This report provides further information on implementation in the intervening period.

Recommendation 1: The General Assembly should reaffirm its commitment to the coherent development of United Nations system activities for the benefit of Member States and to the role of the resident co-ordinator as the official best suited to promote these aims. The General Assembly should also:

- (a) In the light of the substantial aggregate expenditure for field representation and the probability that the further unco-ordinated increase in field representation may not produce benefits commensurate with the cost, seek the support of Member States and the co-operation of all partners in the United Nations system for a stay in the establishment of any new arrangements for field representation until prescribed criteria are met;
- (b) Approve the criteria proposed in paragraph 110 for steps to be taken before any new arrangements are made for the establishment of field representation;
- (c) Draw attention to UNDP's substantial investment in office premises and in staff with long experience of serving the United Nations system and urge all its partners to make use of the facilities UNDP offers rather than set up new facilities on their own. The housing of small groups of agencies in UNDP premises should be encouraged where larger concentrations of United Nations system organizations may not be possible.

61. The General Assembly addressed the issue of country level co-ordination and the role of the resident co-ordinator in resolution 41/171 of 5 December 1986, in which it invited the governing bodies of the organizations of the United Nations system to reaffirm their full support for improved coherence of action by the system at the country level and for the role of the resident co-ordinator, and strongly urged Governments and organizations of the system to provide resident co-ordinators with the requisite authority to carry out their role and responsibilities in order to promote greater coherence and co-ordination within the United Nations system, *inter alia*, through a number of specific measures. Further, the Assembly requested (a) the governing bodies of the organizations of the United Nations system to pay particular attention to the need to rationalize field representation of the organizations and, recognizing the necessity to consult with the recipient Government on such matters, to establish new field offices only if the required services could not be shared with other organizations or provided in any other way; and (b) the resident co-ordinators to assist Governments of recipient countries, upon request, in managing information from all donors on their assistance efforts and in ensuring co-ordination and improved effectiveness of such assistance.

62. The question was again addressed by the Assembly in resolution 42/196 of 11 December 1987, in which it: (a) invited the governing bodies of the organizations of the system urgently to review and rationalize their field office structure to enhance co-operation, coherence and efficiency through, *inter alia*, increased sharing of facilities and services; (b) invited the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination to review the inter-agency arrangement concerning resident co-ordinators; and (c) requested the Director-General for Development and

International Economic Co-operation to report on the progress made in the review undertaken by the member organizations of the Joint Consultative Group on Policy and UNHCR of the structure of their field offices, and invited other organizations of the system to participate in that review process.

63. As explained in the progress report submitted to the General Assembly on reform and renewal in the United Nations (A/42/234), the Secretary-General initiated an exercise designed to develop a rational pattern of United Nations field representation that is both effective and efficient. A study was conducted in 1987 under the aegis of the Joint Consultative Group on Policy to provide a system-wide assessment of field offices for organizations under the Secretary-General's authority, in order to determine concrete steps to rationalize the offices, including the use of common facilities, without diminishing the effectiveness of programme delivery. It was originally intended that UNHCR be associated with the exercise, along with UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA and WFP. However, UNHCR and the other organizations felt that, in view of its special mandate and the sensitive nature of much of its work and contacts at the field level, it would not be in the best interests of the group of organizations, in the majority of cases, for it to join common premises.

64. On the basis of their country-by-country review, the organizations of the Joint Consultative Group on Policy in July 1988 addressed a joint statement to their field representatives on the sharing of common premises and services in the United Nations system, in which they enumerated the advantages of sharing premises and facilities such as maintenance, security, meeting services, messengers, reception, travel agent and computer equipment. Essentially the statement invited the field representatives to review together the possibility of sharing common premises. They are encouraged to include in their review any other organizations of the United Nations system that are willing to be associated with the exercise. In future, each of the Group's field offices will be required to indicate to their headquarters that it has explicitly considered the possibilities of sharing premises at the time it wishes to renew an existing lease or to sign a new lease. If any organization intends to leave shared premises, the field office is requested to forward to its headquarters a written explanation. This explanation will be shared with the other Group field offices and, at headquarters level, will be circulated to the subgroup on common premises/services, which has been entrusted with monitoring the overall process.

65. At the same time, the Director-General invited the executive heads of the specialized agencies with country or subregional offices to ask their representatives to consider joining the exercise. All concerned (ILO, WHO, FAO, the International Civil Aviation Organization, the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements and the Department of Public Information) endorsed the principle of common premises and shared facilities. However, several arguments were advanced to explain the maintenance of separate offices in certain cases. These included the need to be close to or, in some cases, to integrate within sectoral ministries or departments of the Government; the availability of separate cost-free premises provided by the Government; proximity to the media, universities and the general public.

66. In the case of the information centres, the Secretary-General decided in 1987, in agreement with UNDP and the Department of Public Information, to consolidate the United Nations information centres with the office of the resident representatives/resident co-ordinators wherever this was not already the case and it could be shown that a joint arrangement would be more cost-effective while respecting programme delivery requirements.

67. The argument in favour of common premises was clearly presented in a UNDP/Department of Public Information draft entitled "Understanding for rationalizing field representation" adopted in September 1988. It is currently the subject of joint review in the 67 countries where UNDP and the Department of Public Information both have offices/centres, and should provide an opportunity to explore further prospects for sharing. The Understanding will be finalized and published following review in the field and at Headquarters of the experience gained over a one-year period.

Recommendation 2: The governing body of each organization represented in the field at regional, subregional or country level should:

- (a) Put a stay on new arrangements for the establishment of field representation to ensure that the criteria proposed in paragraph 110 and any other criteria which may be deemed advisable are met before any such arrangements come into being;
- (b) Test the cost-effectiveness and efficiency of its field representation by reviewing the following:
 - (i) Whether the cost of field representation in individual cases and in the aggregate is justified by the quantum of services delivered and the benefits accruing to the countries concerned;
 - (ii) Whether, given the need to decentralize operations to the greatest extent possible, representatives have the required authority to take necessary decisions in the field and thus relieve headquarters of decisions which make for unnecessary increases in cost and impair the effectiveness of representation on the spot;
 - (iii) Whether all representatives have the professional and managerial talents necessary for the successful conduct of their responsibilities;
 - (iv) Whether the lines of authority and of communication between regional, subregional, country offices and headquarters are clear and contribute to the speedy and economical pursuit of the agency's business;
 - (v) Whether the siting of particular offices is consistent with present-day communications and other requirements;

- (vi) The extent to which UNDP offices and services (including premises) are being used and the advisability of encouraging the use of these facilities.

Field representation which upon review does not appear viable should be terminated.

68. The General Assembly transmitted the JIU report to the governing bodies of the United Nations system, together with views expressed by Member States during the discussion of the issues, as well as the comments of the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination.

69. The General Assembly, in resolution 41/171, also requested the governing bodies of the organizations of the system to pay particular attention to the need to rationalize field representation. They were again invited, in resolution 42/196, to address this issue and to ensure that countries receive integrated and multisectoral technical advice from the system. The resident co-ordinator was assigned the task of mobilizing such advice.

70. The organizations of the United Nations system, as reflected in the comments of the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination, find recommendation 2 (a) acceptable in principle. They state, however, that the criteria contained in paragraph 110 of the JIU report for the establishment or expansion of field representation have always been utilized by their governing bodies. Recommendation 2 (b) is found generally acceptable by the Committee, on the understanding that governing bodies will continue to carry out reviews in the light of secretariat assessments. As mentioned above, the organizations of the Joint Consultative Group on Policy have already initiated specific action in this area.

71. In its review of the role and effectiveness of the resident co-ordinator system, the Consultative Committee on Substantive Questions (Operational Activities), at its first regular session for 1989, identified a series of specific measures to be taken by members individually or collectively including that of reiterating to their respective staff their policy to encourage the sharing of common premises and services unless particular requirements or material conditions impose limitations on such sharing. The measures were subsequently endorsed by the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination (decision 1989/4).

Recommendation 3: The Director-General for Development and International Economic Co-operation should set up a roster of possible candidates for posts of resident co-ordinator, including suitable candidates from the specialized agencies to gain exposure to UNDP's working methods where this is deemed necessary. Future resident co-ordinators would be chosen from the agreed roster which would be subject to periodic review.

72. In the above-mentioned review, the Consultative Committee on Substantive Questions (Operational Activities) also included in the measures enhancing the role and effectiveness of the resident co-ordinator system and, as a means of harnessing the capacities of the system as a common endeavour, that of broadening the selection process of resident co-ordinators and, to that end, further developing

the roster of potential candidates based on agreed criteria. It noted that the Director-General for Development and International Economic Co-operation and the Administrator of UNDP were currently working on this issue, in consultation with members of the Committee.

73. Subsequently, the Office of the Director-General and UNDP have agreed on the principle of broadening the roster of the names upon which UNDP could draw, in addition to co-staff, in proposing candidates for appointment as resident representatives and designation by the Secretary-General of resident co-ordinators.

Recommendation 4: The Secretary-General should make provision for a single accreditation to Governments which would cover the work of the resident co-ordinator and that of the United Nations information centre director at the same time. The Secretary-General should also give consideration to the guidelines suggested in paragraph 100 for better rationalization of the work of information centre directors vis-à-vis that of resident co-ordinators.

74. The Director-General for Development and International Economic Co-operation drew to the attention of the Under-Secretary-General of the Department of Public Information, the Administrator of UNDP and the resident co-ordinators the need for better co-ordination of activities at the country level. In addition, when the need arises, such as the observance of United Nations Day, specific co-operative arrangements have been developed. Through the work of a task force of UNDP and the Department of Public Information, assisted by the Office of the Director-General in 1988, a draft understanding for rationalizing field representation has been developed and has, since October 1988, been the subject of joint review at the country level between information centre Directors and UNDP resident representatives/resident co-ordinators. A permanent working group comprising officials of the Office of the Director-General, the Department of Public Information and UNDP has been established to monitor the review and implementation of the understanding and to examine together and to provide advice on individual cases.

75. While the understanding is still being reviewed at the country level prior to finalization and publication towards the end of 1989, many cases of possible collaboration are now being reported.

VI. ROLE OF THE OFFICE OF THE UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES IN AFRICA

76. A report on this subject was submitted to the General Assembly at its forty-first session (A/41/380). The related comments of the Secretary-General are contained in document A/41/380/Add.1. The General Assembly took note of the report and the comments thereon in its decision 41/427.

77. With the qualifications made in the comments of the Secretary-General (A/41/380/Add.1), the four recommendations contained in the report have been implemented.

Recommendation 1: Southern Africa

- (a) In view of the serious refugee situation now developing in southern Africa, the High Commissioner should dispatch a fact-finding mission to the front-line States to undertake an in-depth investigation of the situation of South African asylum seekers and study means and ways of relieving refugee pressure on those States.

78. Missions continue to be sent to the front-line States as necessary.

- (b) The High Commissioner should consider the possibility of suggesting to the Secretary-General the importance of convening a high-level meeting in the African region devoted to the unique plight of South African and Namibian refugees.

79. The International Conference on the Plight of Refugees, Returnees and Displaced Persons in Southern Africa, organized by the Organization of African Unity by means of a steering committee on which UNDF and UNHCR were represented, was held at Oslo from 22 to 24 August 1988. The results of the Conference were reported to the Assembly in 1988 (A/43/717, annex). The Oslo Declaration and Plan of Action adopted by the Conference sets forth, inter alia, basic principles on humanitarian assistance and a number of specific refugee-related issues, as well as a commitment by the participating States to undertake activities in the areas of emergency preparedness, needs assessment and delivery of assistance, recovery and development, and mobilization of resources. The Plan of Action contains also a number of measures aimed at achieving durable solutions to the situation in southern Africa.

International protection

Recommendation 2: UNHCR should give due attention to the following areas:

- (a) Co-ordination and harmonization of national refugee policies and legislations;
- (b) Further development and consolidation of international refugee law with the aim of preventing or regulating mass expulsions of so-called illegal or economic immigrants on whatever grounds;
- (c) Elimination of restrictive or selective asylum policies of several countries, including revisions to bilateral and multilateral pacts unfavourable to the effective application of protection principle in the region.

80. UNHCR continues to pay particular attention to both (a) the co-ordination and harmonization of national policies and legislations and (b) the further development and consolidation of international refugee law. This is an ongoing action.

Recommendation 3: Assistance

- (a) Expanded efforts to search and utilize resettlement opportunities in and outside the region, especially for urban refugees;
- (b) Intensified emphasis on refugee education, skills development and specialized manpower training based on an explicit strategy calculated to speed up the local integration and self-reliance of rural and urban refugees;
- (c) Expansion of small enterprise projects for refugees and promotion of co-operative ventures likely to make significant contributions to national economies;
- (d) UNHCR should conduct a thorough review of its co-ordinate mechanisms with other organizations within and outside the United Nations system with a view to further strengthening and harmonizing their support for refugee educational programmes. The Office should maintain an up-to-date central data base on these programmes.

81. Current information regarding resettlement, education, small enterprises and the co-ordination of education programmes (parts (a) to (d) of the recommendation) was provided in the comments previously submitted by the Secretary-General (A/41/380/Add.1). Part (d) of the recommendation has been implemented; parts (a) to (c) require ongoing action.

Recommendation 4: Administration

- (a) Recommendations 1-4 contained in the previous JIU report on the role of UNHCR in South-East Asia (JIU/REP/84/15) apply fully in the context of the present report, mutatis mutandis:
- (i) Organization and staffing of field offices
 - a. With due regard to differences in refugee situations in the various countries and regions, UNHCR field offices in Africa should be adequately equipped to perform the basic responsibilities and functions of UNHCR in the areas of international protection, programming and co-ordination of assistance activities, administration and financial management, and public information;
 - b. The administrative and financial management functions of the field offices should be upgraded and performed by qualified and experienced UNHCR regular staff;

- c. Financial control and management functions should be established at the field office level and performed by qualified professional staff with specific responsibility to monitor all financial operations and maintain permanent control over disbursements, banking and bidding procedures. For relatively small offices, this function could be centralized at the subregional or regional level under the direct authority of a central comptroller. The above measures should be implemented preferably through decentralization from headquarters as recommended below;

(ii) Decentralization

A new field staffing policy should afford the High Commission sufficient flexibility and leeway to decentralize experienced headquarters staff to reinforce the UNHCR field establishment in those countries and regions such as in Africa and South-East Asia and perhaps other areas where the magnitude of refugee situations and UNHCR expenditure levels warrant adequate UNHCR field presence as suggested in recommendation 1;

(iii) Regional emphasis

As a corollary to decentralization of headquarters staff to the field, the High Commissioner should give due emphasis to the strengthening of the field regional structure of UNHCR, coupled with appropriate resources and authority. New arrangements should include the pooling of some specialist functions at the regional level, such as legal services, public information, project evaluation, financial monitoring and control functions, etc. Regional representatives should have sufficient authority to articulate an integrated regional perspective of refugee problems, foster active collaboration among country offices and redeploy staff resources from one country to another to meet evolving requirements;

(iv) National officer scheme

As an additional means of strengthening the field offices, UNHCR should intensify the use of experienced, senior-level national staff, preferably seconded from Governments for specific periods, but selected and paid by UNHCR;

- (b) The particular staff situation of field offices in the front-line States should be reviewed in light of the new refugee situations in those countries;
- (c) UNHCR should institute a policy of active co-ordination and information exchange among field offices in the region, especially among field offices in subregions facing similar refugee situations. In addition, UNHCR field representatives and protection officers in the Horn, East and southern Africa should meet as regularly as time permits, and all representatives in the region should meet as needed to review, devise and implement co-ordinated strategies for the solution of refugee problems.

82. The situation regarding points (i) to (iii) is as was previously reported by the Secretary-General (A/41/380/Add.1). Regarding point (iv), there are now 31 national officer posts in Africa.

Notes

1/ Report of the International Conference on Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking, Vienna, 17-26 June 1987 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.87.I.18).

2/ E/CONF/82/15.

3/ Report of the International Conference on Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking, Vienna, 17-26 June 1987 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.87.I.18), chap. I, sect. A.

4/ Report of the United Nations Conference on Technical Co-operation among Developing Countries, Buenos Aires, 30 August-12 September 1978 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.78.II.A.1 and corrigendum), chap. I.
