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DEVELOPMENT AND INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC CO-OPERATION

Restructuring of the economic and social sectors of the
United Nations system

Decentralization of economic and social activities to,
and the strengthening of, the regional commissions

Report of the Secretary-General

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INTRODUCTION

1. The relevant provisions of section IV of the annex to General Assembly resolution 32/197 of 20 December 1977, concerning structures for regional and interregional co-operation, and the provisions of section V of Assembly resolution 33/202 of 29 January 1979, in which the Secretary-General was requested to proceed expeditiously with the development and application of measures for the decentralization of certain activities to the regional commissions, provide the framework for the strengthening of the regional commissions and the decentralization to them of activities now conducted at Headquarters. In line with the provisions of these resolutions the proposals in this paper cover research and analysis as well as substantive support for and management of technical co-operation activities.

2. These matters were discussed at the meeting of the Executive Secretaries of the Regional Commissions, held at Rabat from 18 to 20 March 1979. A technical meeting convened in New York on 4 and 5 May 1979 considered the areas and types of activities which would be amenable to or require an improved pattern of distribution between Headquarters and the regional commissions. At the subsequent meeting of the Executive Secretaries, held on 10 and 11 July 1979 at Geneva, there was agreement on the need to proceed with decentralization initially and on a priority basis in certain fields of activity, namely: water, transport, public administration, rural development, social development, population and global economic surveys. However, it was noted that in certain programme areas, such as water and transport, existing legislative mandates might have to be reviewed accordingly. The Secretary-General reported to the Economic and Social Council on the progress made under agenda item 7 of its second 1979 regular session (E/1979/76).

3. Within the context of General Assembly resolution 32/197, measures have been already taken to decentralize management and technical backstopping responsibilities for operational activities to the regional commissions for those categories of projects identified in section IV, paragraph 23, of the annex to Assembly resolution 32/197. Further to the redeployment exercise in connexion with subregional and regional projects, an over-all framework for future working relationships and co-operation between Headquarters and regional commissions is presently being formulated in the Department of Technical Co-operation for Development. This is being done with particular reference to strengthening the programme and project delivery capacity of the regional commissions in the field of operational activities in a planned, orderly and concerted manner which will first serve the best interests of the recipient countries, and also preserve the cohesiveness of the global as distinct from the regional elements of development assistance in the United Nations system. Actions already taken or planned in this connexion are set out in part II below.

4. After consideration of this report the Economic and Social Council in its resolution 1979/64, inter alia, invited the Secretary-General to expedite the decentralization of activities, including the redeployment of the necessary and appropriate resources in the priority programme areas identified at the meetings of the Executive Secretaries and to report the outcome to the General Assembly at

its thirty-fourth session; welcomed the intention of the Secretary-General to submit to the Assembly at its thirty-fourth session a comprehensive statement of the administrative and financial implications of the provisions of General Assembly resolutions 32/197 and 33/202, calling for decentralization and a strengthening of the regional commissions; and invited the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination (CPC) at its twentieth session to undertake a full review of policy and programme issues relating to the distribution of tasks and responsibilities between the regional commissions and other United Nations units, programmes and organs concerned, in preparation, inter alia, for the elaboration of the next programme budget and medium-term plan, and to report thereon to the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly in 1980.

5. The proposals in the present report constitute the first phase of decentralization and strengthening with the review in CPC constituting a second phase.

PART ONE. DECENTRALIZATION OF ACTIVITIES AND RESOURCES FROM THE
DEPARTMENT OF INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS
TO THE REGIONAL COMMISSIONS

I. PROCEDURES

6. In approaching the process of decentralization, the Executive Secretaries, at their meeting in Geneva, considered it useful to draw a distinction between the question of redeployment of resources from Headquarters to the commissions and the general issue of the progressive improvement in the distribution of functions and tasks between regional and global entities. With regard to the redeployment of resources from Headquarters to the regional commissions, in line with a preliminary review of the above-mentioned programme areas and taking into consideration the most urgent needs expressed by the commissions in the technical meetings, the Secretary-General proposes as an immediate measure to redeploy from the Department of International Economic and Social Affairs five posts, one to each of the regional commissions. These transfers, which are the result of discussions between the Department and the commissions, are presented below as detailed programme proposals.

7. The Economic and Social Council, in taking note of the report of the meeting of the Executive Secretaries in paragraph 1 of resolution 1979/64, has implicitly endorsed this procedure as the initial phase of the decentralization of research activities, to be followed by the review of policy and programme issues at the twentieth session of CPC.

II. PROGRAMME PROPOSALS

- A. Regional aspects of economic surveys and related reports
1. Strengthening of the capacity of the Economic Commission for Europe to analyse the economies of Eastern Europe

8. The Economic Commission for Europe has developed capabilities for analysis of economic developments in the region, especially as they pertain to relations among countries having different economic and social systems. The Economic Survey of Europe and the Trade Bulletin (which deals primarily with East-West trade) are generally accepted as authoritative sources of information on economic and trade developments in the region.

9. In the global economic and projections work undertaken in the United Nations, it has been recognized that analysis of developments in the developed countries and the economic relations between countries with different economic and social systems must form an integral part of global studies and perspectives which are designed to further the development of the developing countries.

10. The capacity of ECE in the research area could be strengthened considerably by the addition of one professional with competence in the economies of Eastern

Europe. This professional would give added support to the existing staff engaged in analysis of these economies and their role within the region and the world. Under the general supervision of the head of the centrally planned economies team this professional would:

(a) Participate in the preparation of major research projects relating to economic trends in the centrally planned economies;

(b) Participate in the preparation of the Economic Survey of Europe, with particular reference to the industrial sector in the centrally planned economies;

(c) Act as country expert for one or two East European countries, with the duty of producing periodical country reports on general economic developments and country reports on special problems which the work of Division may require;

(d) Contribute to all research projects in which comparability between the statistical series of the East European countries and the Soviet Union are required.

2. Strengthening of work on the economic survey of the Economic Commission for Western Asia region

11. The proposed programme budget for the biennium 1980-1981 for ECWA includes a subprogramme entitled "Review and assessment of trends, and short-term economic forecasts" consisting of one programme element entitled "Economic Survey of the ECWA Region". The priority of this activity was expressed in Commission resolution 48 (IV). In previous programme budgets similar proposals could not be implemented because of budgetary constraints. The Economic Commission for Western Asia is the only regional commission within the United Nations system which has up till now not been able to institute an annual economic survey of its region.

12. The Economic Survey of the ECWA Region will be organized in two main parts. The first part will comprise the regular and annual feature devoted to the review and analysis of recent development, and the second part will be devoted to specific in-depth studies on current issues of particular interest to the countries of the region.

13. The review component of the Survey will cover developments at two levels. Given the high degree of the openness of the region's economies and the common concerns shared with other developing economies and regions, developments at the international level have important implications for the region; there will be brief studies of the international context within which developments in the region take place. The second level of the review will focus on developments at the country level and will normally constitute the backbone of this part of the Survey.

14. The resources requested in the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1980-1981 for the Economic Survey of the ECWA region amount to \$90,100. 1/ With this level of resources it will not be possible to pay adequate attention to important regional issues which are of global interest and concern. The addition of one professional to this subprogramme would permit studies to be conducted, for publication in the annual Survey and use as inputs to global studies in the Department of International Economic and Social Affairs, on such regional issues of global interest.

3. Related adjustments in the activity of the Department of International Economic and Social Affairs

15. The programme elements in the proposed programme budget of the Department for the biennium 1980-1981 directly related to the ECE and ECWA proposals are part of the development issues and policies programme. They are:

- 1.1 Nature of structural change in the world economy and the process of mutual adjustment

Output: Research publication on structural change in the world economy and alternative adjustment policies.

and

- 5.1 World economic survey

Output: Two issues of the annual World Economic Survey.

In the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1980-1981 there are 252 professional work-months requested for these two programme elements under the regular budget.

16. The Department of International Economic and Social Affairs makes use of inputs from the regional commissions for the analysis of medium-term trends, such as in programme element 1.1 above, where work on Eastern Europe is assisted by inputs from ECE, among other sources. A strengthening of ECE's capacity for analysis in this area that permitted greater reliance on it by the Office for Development Research and Policy Analysis would facilitate the work of the Office. In the case of short-term analysis, such as in programme element 5.1, the annual World Economic Survey, the extent of reliance on inputs from the regional commissions varies. As stated above in paragraph 11, ECWA has not as yet been in a position to institute an annual economic survey of the region. When it does so, particularly if strengthened in the manner proposed, it will be able to contribute inputs to the World Economic Survey and so contribute to the work of the Department.

1/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-fourth Session, Supplement No. 6 (A/34/6), sect. 14, para. 14.15, subprogramme 1.

B. Rural development

1. Strengthening of work in the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific on rural development

17. Rural poverty is most endemic in the ESCAP region (with an estimated two thirds of the world's absolute poor being concentrated in four countries of this region, namely, Bangladesh, India, Indonesia and Pakistan), so that the Commission has accorded a priority status to the integrated programme on rural development.

18. In the Asia and Pacific region, the ground work for an interagency effort in rural development was undertaken during 1976-1977, in accordance with resolution 161 (XXXII) adopted by the Commission in 1976. In consultation with countries, an interagency co-ordinated plan of action was prepared, submitted for scrutiny by an intergovernmental expert group meeting in February 1977 and subsequently endorsed by the Governments. The plan of action has identified certain key areas for provision of co-ordinated assistance from the United Nations system, under the leadership of ESCAP, in support of national endeavours for the alleviation of rural poverty.

19. Mechanisms for co-operative action have been institutionalized in order to facilitate operations on a sustained basis. At the country level Governments have nominated a key official responsible for rural development policy-making and co-ordination as the National Liaison Officer for purposes of regular contact with the interagency group at Bangkok and for consultations among the countries themselves. At the regional level, the participating United Nations agencies have constituted an interagency Committee on Integrated Rural Development with the Executive Secretary of ESCAP as the Chairman and with the regional heads or representatives of the other agencies as members. This Committee is assisted at the staff level by specialists deputed to an interagency Task Force which is expected to meet more frequently to work out details within the broad policy guidance provided by the Committee. Country-level contacts are usually made through the UNDP Resident Representative concerned. ESCAP has the responsibility to provide secretariat services to both the interagency Committee and the interagency Task Force.

20. As a result of this preparatory work, which has been undertaken through mobilizing extrabudgetary resources on an ad hoc basis, ESCAP will initiate in 1980 concrete country-specific and inter-country projects in rural development.

21. The addition of one professional post would permit ESCAP to elaborate these projects so that they can provide the main case material for the study of the interrelationships of socio-economic policies for rural and urban development 2/, to be conducted by the Department as part of its development issues and policies programme.

2/ Ibid., sect. 6, paras. 6-13, programme element 2.3.

22. The additional post for the ESCAP integrated rural development programme would be located at the Office of the Executive Secretary of ESCAP. The professional filling this post would be expected to: (a) assist the Executive Secretary in all matters relating to the development, implementation monitoring and evaluation of the interagency programme on rural development for the ESCAP region; (b) provide substantive support and service to the regional interagency Committee and the interagency Task Force on rural development; (c) liaise with member countries and with the global organizations in regard to the rural development programme in the region; (d) assist the substantive divisions of ESCAP in preparing and implementing an integrated programme for rural development with an agreed common focus and with due regard to intersectoral complementarities and linkages; and (e) perform such other functions relating to rural development as may be assigned by the Executive Secretary from time to time.

2. Related adjustments in the activity of the Department of International Economic and Social Affairs

23. The work in the Department related to the ESCAP proposal is programme element 2.3 of the development issues and policies programme:

2.3 Rural development in the context of over-all development

Output: A study of the interrelationships of socio-economic policies for rural and urban development, including localization of activities, internal migration, trade and price policies, and development of co-operatives (1981); studies as follow-up to the World Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development (1981).

There are 66 professional work-months requested for the programme element under the regular budget in the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1980-1981.

24. As indicated in paragraph 21 above, ESCAP proposes to contribute significantly to the case studies needed for the study of interrelationships and so facilitate the work of the Department for this programme element.

C. Social development

1. Strengthening of work in the Economic Commission for Latin America on social development

25. The Economic Commission for Latin America has developed capabilities for analysing social and economic aspects of development in an integrated manner. The Governments of the region have given full support to activities in the social field at the eighteenth session of the Commission. The secretariat was requested to either intensify or initiate studies in certain areas of social development that need deeper clarification. These requests from the Latin American countries are in line with recent resolutions of the Economic and Social Council and the

General Assembly 3/, in which information and basic studies on regional experiences in social change and social development policies are specifically requested, including participation of the regional commissions in the problem of full involvement of certain population groups in the development process.

26. Besides these commitments, the countries of the Commission adopted resolution 386 (XVIII) in which it asserts, inter alia, the idea that economic growth itself is not a sufficient condition to ensure full social and human development. Such development requires the introduction of institutional reforms and appropriate policies within the framework of an integral and organic conception of the development process. In addition, it is necessary to ensure the active participation in the region of the different groups of society in order to create more just societies where human beings will find better possibilities for the fullest development of their potentialities. The proposed measures must be included in the context of an integral and organic conception of the proposed development strategy. In particular ECLA proposes to reinforce its work on:

- (a) National experience in planning for social integration;
- (b) The social impact of major development measures on specific population groups;
- (c) Institutions in achieving the social integration of less advantaged groups in society;
- (d) Country experiences in mobilizing the participation of marginal and low-income groups for development purposes;
- (e) Policies concerning youth workers.

27. All this analysis and research in the social field is foreshadowed in the commitments of the Social Development Division of ECLA as set out in the medium-term plan for the period 1980-1983. 4/

28. At present, the problem areas and policy questions which ECLA is committed to confront as a result of these recent mandates are, however, likely not to be

3/ The Economic and Social Council resolution 1979/24, on social policy and income distribution; General Assembly resolution 33/193 on preparations for an international development strategy for the third United Nations development decade; General Assembly resolution 33/189 on the World Conference of the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace; General Assembly resolution 32/135, annex, General Assembly resolution 33/7, and Economic and Social Council resolution 1979/16 all three dealing with youth participation and channels of communication.

4/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-third Session, Supplement No. 6 (A/33/6/Rev.1), vol. IV, paras. 27.168-27.206.

treated as fully as is desirable owing to the severe limitation of resources in the Division of Social Development. The reinforcement proposed above could be accomplished with the addition of one professional to this Division.

2. Related adjustments in the activity of the Department of International Economic and Social Affairs

29. The above proposals of ECLA will provide enhanced inputs to programme elements 4.1, 4.2 and 4.4 of the DIESA programme on social development and humanitarian affairs. 5/ In the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1980-1981 there are 196 professional work-months requested for these three programme elements under the regular budget.

D. Population

1. Strengthening of work in the Economic Commission for Africa on population

30. A close relationship exists between various subprogrammes of the Population Division of the ECA and those of the Department of International Economic and Social Affairs. Those aspects of the ECA programme which have direct bearing on the work done in this field by the Department are in respect of the following two subprogrammes of the ECA Population Programme: 6/

1. Relevant aspects of population policies and programmes within the framework of economic and social development, and
2. Population dynamics and economic and social development.

31. The objective of subprogramme 1 is to create increased awareness among African Governments of the short-term and long-term issues relating to different aspects of population structures, movements and changes and to assist them in the formulation and implementation of effective population policies and in the integration of the population aspects in the process of planning for development, and that of subprogramme 2 is to develop, test, and apply techniques of demographic research in the context of African development and to study and evaluate factors accounting for demographic growth rates and structural changes as aids to the design of socio-economic policies and the planning for socio-economic development.

32. The strengthening of these two subprogrammes by the addition of one

5/ Ibid., Thirty-fourth Session, Supplement No. 6 (A/34/6), vol. I, sect. 6, para. 6.46.

6/ Ibid., para. 13.51.

professional to the ECA population division will ensure the fulfillment of the above objectives. If this is done the Commission will be able to make a significant contribution to the work carried out by the Department in respect of its subprogramme 4 on Population and Development and subprogramme 6 relating to Monitoring of Population Trends and Policies. ^{7/} It is expected that the emphasis of the ECA programme in the coming years will be related to the analytical study of questions relating to population and development and close collaboration between the two divisions would be desirable, especially in view of the paucity of knowledge that exists in this area where United Nations action at the present time represents only a small beginning.

2. Related adjustments in the activity of the Department of International Economic and Social Affairs

33. A strengthening of the work being done in ECA, in subprogrammes 1 and 2, on the preparation of case studies at both the macro and at the micro level, and on sectoral studies in selected African countries on the relationship of education, population growth and migrant labour and population distribution, will permit ECA to provide inputs to the Department studies on the assessment of problem areas of interrelations between population and development (programme element 4.2), demographic studies for development planning (programme element 4.4) and studies on the interrelationship of population resources and environment and development (programme element 4.5).

34. Similarly, a contribution from ECA can be envisaged in respect of the preparation of the report on monitoring of population trends and policies covered under element 6.1 of the Department's programme. In the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1980-1981 there are 137 professional work-months requested for these programme elements under the regular budget.

^{7/} Ibid., para. 6.29.

PART TWO: DECENTRALIZATION OF ACTIVITIES AND RESOURCES FROM
THE DEPARTMENT OF TECHNICAL CO-OPERATION FOR
DEVELOPMENT TO THE REGIONAL COMMISSIONS

I. INTRODUCTION

35. The Department of Technical Co-operation for Development took up the question of accelerating the implementation of the relevant sections of the General Assembly resolution 32/197 in the Executive Secretaries meetings held at Rabat in March 1979 and in Geneva in July 1979. Bilateral negotiations in this respect have been also under way with the individual regional commissions to promote their new role as executing agencies for the decentralized projects and to strengthen their research and backstopping capabilities in the areas of regional priorities.

36. In agreement with the regional commissions and the funding agencies, the Department of Technical Co-operation for Development has proceeded to decentralize regional and subregional projects in all categories of its activities (not merely intersectoral). By the end of 1979, about 90 per cent of the total number of these projects will have been decentralized, representing a value of about \$11 million, or about 14 per cent of the total current programme of the Department of Technical Co-operation for Development. Decentralization of these projects will in addition entail the automatic transfer of the 14 per cent overhead. The comparatively small number of regional and subregional projects not being decentralized remains the responsibility of the Department at the express wish of the regional commissions concerned, the funding agency, or the countries themselves.

37. To strengthen regional commission capabilities for their new role as executing agencies and as centres for development in their priority areas, the Department of Technical Co-operation for Development will decentralize resources from the regular programme for the employment of five additional regional advisers, as discussed below and will extend to them interregional advisory services in highly specialized areas, skills for which are available in the Department but not in the regional commissions, and generally will implement the modalities included in the over-all framework of relationships between the Department of Technical Co-operation for Development and the regional commissions referred to earlier.

38. The areas for which regional advisory services are being augmented were arrived at after a joint review with each regional commission of the priority sectors specified at the meeting of the Executive Secretaries in Geneva, the current role of the Department of Technical Co-operation for Development in these areas, including resources available for their implementation and the possibilities of redeployment of resources from the Department. As a result of this process, the following priority sectors have been jointly identified for the various regional commissions: water resources for the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) and the Economic Commission for Latin America (ECLA); public administration and finance for the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) and the Economic Commission for Western Asia (ECWA); and transport for the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE).

39. The explanation of the various priority sectors of the regional commissions and the manner in which redeployed resources will be used are indicated in the following paragraphs.

II. PROPOSALS OF THE REGIONAL COMMISSIONS

A. Strengthening of work on water resources in the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

40. Taking into account General Assembly resolution 32/197 and the emphasis placed therein on decentralization of activities to the regional commissions, and resolution VIII of the United Nations Water Conference which, inter alia, recommended that the regional commissions, within their respective regions, should play a central role in the promotion of intergovernmental co-operation as a follow-up to the Plan of Action on integrated water resources development and management recommended by the Conference, the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific require each an additional regular programme post to monitor and assist in the follow-up to the United Nations Water Conference.

41. This activity will require periodic visits to the countries of the region and the analysis and collation of information at commission headquarters for presentation to the relevant intergovernmental bodies of reports on the expanded activities being undertaken by Governments to implement Conference recommendations. In particular, the expert will identify gaps and actions which would help to accelerate the achievement of specific Conference objectives particularly with respect to training requirements, institutional arrangements for water resources planning and management, irrigation needs for food production, community water supply and sanitation, and flood and drought prevention. His work, moreover, will be related to the activities of the Commission for the International Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation Decade.

42. As regards improved efficiency in the use of water and the identification of institutional and legal instruments (including pricing mechanisms) which would help to meet this objective, the expert would analyse existing rigidities within the region and develop suitable guidelines for correction.

43. The expert would co-operate closely with the Department of Technical Co-operation for Development with a view to integrating the pertinent information in the areas above at the regional level into the related activities being conducted by the Department in a global context.

B. Strengthening of work on transport in the Economic Commission for Europe

44. The transport programme of ECE for the 1980-1981 biennium comprises three subprogrammes; namely, development of inland transport facilities, traffic facilitation, and transport technologies. In addition, ECE has assumed within a short space of time operational responsibility for several projects in the transport field, among which the following may be cited:

/...

(a) The Trans-European North/South Motorway project which is providing the technical basis for a high-class road link across 10 ECE countries between the Baltic Sea and Central and South-eastern Europe and extending to Western Asia. This project is presently being executed jointly with UNDP although it has been decided that ECE will become shortly the sole executing agency.

(b) A feasibility study of a subregional project (Yugoslavia and Greece) for a navigable waterway link between the Danube River and the Aegean Sea.

(c) A preliminary fact-finding survey, in co-operation with ECWA and ECA, for the development of an integrated transport infrastructure around the Mediterranean basin is now under active consideration.

45. Other projects of a regional, subregional and interregional character are likely to develop as a result of work currently under way in ECE with respect to waterway links and international road infrastructure.

46. The Transport Section of the Department of Technical Co-operation for Development had included as part of its programme of work for the 1978-1979 biennium studies relating to regional and interregional co-operation on transport development.

47. Such activities, pursuant to General Assembly resolution 32/197, are being taken over by ECE in respect of its region. It therefore has to strengthen its resources for the work planned, particularly in connexion with its subprogramme on development of inland transport facilities, to undertake the studies required and the research in support of its operational activities.

48. For this purpose, it has been agreed that resources would be provided by the Department of Technical Co-operation for Development to establish a Regional Advisor post in ECE for a Civil Engineer, to be financed by the United Nations Programme of Technical Co-operation during the 1980-1981 biennium. He will be responsible, in connexion with his advisory work, for the research activities called for, including forecasting methodology, implementation of forecasts, motorway standards and international road infrastructure development and operation. He will also be responsible for preparing ECE contributions to global projects in inland transportation as requested by the Department of Technical Co-operation for Development and for the advisory services heretofore provided by DTCD.

C. Strengthening of work on financial management in the Economic Commission for Western Asia

49. During the past two decades, member countries of the Economic Commission for Western Asia have been going through a rapid process of economic and social change. Government involvement in the regulation and management of this change during the latter part of the current decade has been particularly significant. The growing requirements of such involvement have stretched the inadequate administrative and technical capabilities of Governments in all the countries concerned. Although measures have been taken to meet these demands, in the majority of cases efforts have not made much headway. Development plans and programmes often suffer in terms of formulation and implementation.

50. The financial system, encompassing such important fields as government budgeting, accounting, auditing and taxation, continues to suffer from basic weaknesses in concepts, structures, methodology, techniques, purpose and procedures. The problem is further aggravated by inadequate administrative and institutional requisites and, more importantly, by the serious shortage of trained and experienced personnel at all levels.

51. In the light of the above, ECWA plans to strengthen its activities in the field of financial management in order to help the member States set up and strengthen their budget and financial institutions and processes to cope with the increasing demands of development. Particularly important in this connexion are the studies of financial planning, government budgeting and tax structures to develop guidelines to provide advisory services to member States and also to design training courses for their officials. In terms of General Assembly resolution 32/179 and Economic and Social Council resolution 1978/6, and also as the basis for monitoring changes and trends in public administration and finance for development in the ECWA countries, it is planned to carry out a review of changes and trends in public administration and finance for development and the role of the public sector in promoting the economic and social development of Western Asia. For these activities, it is planned to allocate resources from technical co-operation for development for the establishment of one Regional Adviser post in financial management. The undertaking of these activities by ECWA will, to some extent, make up for the decline of activities in these areas. The output of ECWA activities at the same time, will also constitute an important input for the global studies to be carried out by Headquarters as regards General Assembly resolution 32/179 and Economic and Social Council resolutions 1979/75 and 1978/6.

D. Strengthening of work on public administration and finance
in the Economic Commission for Africa

52. One of the five objectives of the African regional component of the International Development Strategy for the Third United Nations Development Decade emerging from the fifth ECA Conference of Ministers is the development of human resources to ensure their effective participation in the development process. While primary initiatives, followed by sustained efforts will, of necessity, be the main responsibility of national governments, ECA has recognized the importance of an international (regional) strategy to provide a frame of reference for and support to domestic strategy and action.

53. In the field of public administration a key ECA goal, as one element of broad international strategy, is the development of institutional, administrative and managerial capabilities, particularly among the least developed countries. This area of the Commission's work needs immediate strengthening, as Governments have stepped up their demands for workshops designed to enhance the over-all executive capability of their high-level public officers and consultancy services which have as their aim the improvement of the general management performance, profitability and accountability of public enterprises.

54. There are certain fundamental issues and problems confronting the operational effectiveness of African public services, including the very structure of African public enterprises, management practices and methods of work. A great deal of investigative research and analysis is required to identify and articulate these problems with a view to finding solutions and rendering advisory services to the

African countries, particularly the least developed countries among them. These activities, to some extent, will make up for the decline in similar activities previously undertaken by the Department of Technical Co-operation for Development. The experience generated by them will also be available as inputs to global studies on administrative changes and trends for development called for in Economic and Social Council resolutions 1978/76 and 1978/75. To enable ECA to carry out the additional work described above a provision will be made, from the regular programme of technical co-operation, for the establishment of an additional regional adviser post in public administration and finance in ECA.

III. RELATED ADJUSTMENTS IN THE ACTIVITY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF TECHNICAL CO-OPERATION FOR DEVELOPMENT

55. The redeployment of these resources will correspondingly reduce the funds available to the Department to undertake activities from Headquarters. The regional commission projects so instituted will make up for the decline in departmental activities in these areas. At the same time, the regional commissions activities will generate information to be used as inputs for global activities of the Department. In the long run, the Department expects to promote joint planning of activities within its competence with the regional commissions thus rendering the best possible services to Member States and the legislative bodies.

PART THREE. DECENTRALIZATION OF ACTIVITIES AND RESOURCES FROM
OTHER ORGANIZATIONAL UNITS

I. HUMAN SETTLEMENTS

56. The General Assembly, in its resolution 32/162 of 19 December 1977, on institutional arrangements for international co-operation in the field of human settlements, provided the policy framework for consultations and co-operation between the regional commissions and the newly established United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat). In that resolution, the Assembly called upon the Centre to supplement the resources of the regions in formulating and implementing human settlements projects when so required. It also recommended the establishment of regional committees and secretariat units within the regional commissions devoted exclusively to human settlements. It further recommended that the budgetary and personnel resources available to each regional secretariat unit should consist of those available from the regular budgetary resources and those redeployed from the aggregate posts available to the central secretariat, voluntary contributions, including those made to the United Nations Habitat and Human Settlements Foundation, as well as selected resources currently available to each region.

57. In accordance with the above provisions, consultations have been held at the working level between the Centre and the regional commissions on the work programme for 1980-1981, which identifies the activities to be carried out at the national, regional and global levels and the resources required at each of these levels, as well as on the medium-term plan. It should be noted that extrabudgetary resources were not available and that the number of posts at the disposal of headquarters in Nairobi left no margin for redeployment to the regional commissions. There therefore appeared to be no alternative but to request additional posts for the regional units in the programme budget proposals for 1980-1981. A review of the question has revealed managerial and policy considerations which are currently under study.

II. TRANSNATIONAL CORPORATIONS

58. Following the evaluation by the Committee on Programme and Co-ordination of the programme on transnational corporations and pursuant to a recommendation of the Committee that measures should be taken within the framework of existing co-operative arrangements between the Centre on Transnational Corporations and the regional commissions, to enable the joint units to carry out both the mandates of the Commission on Transnational Corporations and those of the regional commissions, revised guidelines for the functioning of these units had been agreed upon (E/1979/76, para. 45) within the Secretariat as follows:

(a) The programme of work of the joint units is to be jointly decided by the Centre and the regional commissions in the light of the medium-term plan and the programme budget;

(b) The policy on information gathering and dissemination, data verification, research standards, outside consultations, training and advisory activities established by the Commission on Transnational Corporations is to be observed by the Centre and by the joint units;

(c) To this end, outputs prepared by the joint units should normally be sent to the Centre for comments before release. The Centre will similarly send to the joint units texts referring to the member countries of the commission concerned.

(d) The head of each joint unit is designated jointly by the Executive Director of the Centre and the Executive Secretary of the regional commission concerned, and his performance will be evaluated by his superiors in the regional commission. In these evaluations, due regard shall be paid to such comments as the Executive Director of the Centre may wish to volunteer;

(e) The head of the joint unit will devote his full time to his functions, and shall, under the supervision of the Executive Secretary, make the decisions on its day-to-day operations.

III. OTHER PROGRAMMES

59. As far as programme areas covered by other United Nations units are concerned discussions have so far focussed on activities in support of economic and technical co-operation among developing countries which have been found to be particularly amenable to decentralization. In particular, UNDP is ready, in view of the importance it attaches to interregional co-operation for the promotion of technical co-operation among developing countries, to support projects which the regional commissions could develop at the interregional level in order to expedite the implementation of the Buenos Aires plan of action.

60. UNCTAD has similarly expressed its readiness to consult further with the Executive Secretaries of the regional commissions before the end of 1979 in order to explore ways and means of decentralizing activities relating to economic co-operation among developing countries to the regional commissions.

PART FOUR: FURTHER STRENGTHENING OF PRIORITY
AREAS IN THE REGIONAL COMMISSIONS

I. MANDATES FOR FURTHER STRENGTHENING OF
THE REGIONAL COMMISSIONS

61. Over the years, under mandates enacted by the General Assembly and by the Economic and Social Council as well as by the commissions themselves, the secretariats of the regional commissions have been called upon to engage in a wide spectrum of research and operational activities. The degree of their involvement has always been governed by the human and financial resources available. These resources are, in each fiscal period, invariably below what is required to carry out the approved programme of work, including technical support for projects. In these circumstances, many essential activities cannot even be started and, because of the interlocking nature of these activities, this situation has had an adverse effect on wide areas of the commissions' programmes.

62. Section IV of the annex to General Assembly resolution 32/197 sets out a number of functions that the regional commissions need to expand in order to create the structures for regional and interregional co-operation envisioned as one of the main results of the restructuring process. These expanded functions should permit the regional commissions:

(a) To become the main general economic and social development centres within the United Nations system for their respective regions;

(b) To provide inputs for, and participate in, the global policy-making processes of the competent United Nations organs;

(c) To participate actively in operational activities carried out through the United Nations system by functioning as executing agencies;

(d) To promote co-operation among developing countries.

63. The first of these functions, that of providing the main co-ordination for the activities of the United Nations system in their regions requires the commissions to exercise, over and above the administrative demands of co-ordination, team leadership in their respective regions, having due regard to the responsibilities of the specialized agencies and other United Nations bodies in specific sectoral fields. This co-ordination and leadership role has been performed in the past in an ad hoc and piecemeal manner within the administrative and financial provisions for the offices of the Executive Secretaries.

64. In the case of the second function, it is possible to distinguish the commissions' contributions to the formulation of studies and decisions at the global level from their participation in the application of global decisions once they have been taken by the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly. In general, the participation of the regional commissions in policy formulation, through both the provision of inputs to global studies and participation of

representatives of the commissions in the relevant preparatory meetings at headquarters, has been performed on an ad hoc basis. While this arrangement has permitted considerable contributions from the commissions in the past there were often occasions when this could not be ensured; it was in effect a residual aspect of the planning of many global activities. The full examination of this problem, and in particular of the distribution of tasks and responsibilities between the regional commissions and other United Nations units will be reviewed by CPC at its twentieth session, as requested in paragraph 6 of Council resolution 1979/64. To the extent possible, however, certain proposals in this paper, such as those for the reinforcement of the regional aspects of economic surveys and related reports in part two, address aspects of this problem of regional participation in the formulation of global studies and decisions.

65. In the case of regional participation in the application of global decisions once they have been taken, the process of programming and planning within the United Nations must be given special attention. In general, greater participation by the commissions will require the reinforcement of the programme planning units in the commissions and greater funds for the travel of staff in these units, particularly for meetings between regional planners and their counterparts at headquarters, and for bilateral or multilateral meetings between the programme planners of the regional commissions.

66. The third function requires measures to be taken as expeditiously as possible to permit the regional commissions to become executing agencies for intersectoral, subregional, regional and interregional projects and also those country projects which recipient countries decide to entrust to the commissions. This function involves both the backstopping of projects and their execution; it has been discussed in part two above.

67. The fourth function, promoting co-operation among developing countries, has both intraregional, including subregional, and interregional aspects and consists of both economic and technical co-operation. In the case of technical co-operation among developing countries the main responsibility is currently centred in UNDP while that for economic co-operation is centred in UNCTAD. The scope of these conceptions, however, is broader than the mandates of the two organizations. The reinforcement of the regional commissions' responsibilities and capacities for this function will be examined in CPC at its twentieth session in 1980.

68. While these issues are common to all commissions there is sufficient variation in their situations to have made it necessary to present programme and budget proposals separately for each. This is done below.

69. The recommendations of resolution 32/197 acquired added force from Economic and Social Council resolution 1978/74 which reaffirmed the need for the regional commissions to be further enabled to exercise, in consultation with Governments concerned, the functions of executing agencies of the United Nations Development Programme. General Assembly resolution 33/202 has since fulfilled that need by deciding that regional commissions should have the status of executing agencies, in their own right, in respect of certain categories of project and requested the

Secretary-General to take the necessary steps to ensure this was done. It further requested the Secretary-General to proceed expeditiously with decentralization arrangements which had begun and which were reported by the Secretary-General to the General Assembly in document A/33/410/Rev.1.

II. PROGRAMME PROPOSALS OF THE REGIONAL COMMISSIONS

A. Economic Commission for Africa

1. Co-ordination at the subregional, regional and interregional levels including the fostering of technical and economic co-operation among developing countries

70. The principal mechanism at ECA for fostering economic and technical co-operation at the subregional and regional levels in Africa, is the ECA Multinational Programming and Operational Centres (MULPOCs) which have been created in response to the express wishes of African Governments. These ECA MULPOCs have been established in compliance with resolution 311 (XIII) adopted by the thirteenth session 4th meeting of the Conference.

71. There are five ECA MULPOCs: one for the North African subregion headquartered at Tangiers, Morocco; a second, based in Niamey, Niger, covering the West African subregions; a third, headquartered in Gisenyi, Rwanda having responsibility for the Economic Community of the Great Lake States; a fourth whose constituency is the Eastern and Southern African countries and which is based in Lusaka, Zambia; and a fifth which covers the Central African countries and whose headquarters is in Yaoundé, United Republic of Cameroon.

72. Administratively, the MULPOCs come under the direct authority and responsibility of the Economic Co-operation Office which forms a part of the Cabinet Office of the Executive Secretary.

73. Functionally, the ECA MULPOCs are the multidisciplinary and multisectoral arms of the Economic Commission for Africa. They are intended as the focal points for the activities of all the specialized agencies and intergovernmental organizations and are expected to play a catalytic role in the economic development of their respective subregions.

74. The work programme of each ECA MULPOC, which reflects the priorities of the countries of the particular subregion, such as the development of agriculture, is tightly integrated with the over-all work programme of ECA. With the creation of the special subregional committees on women and development, the work on the integration of women in development is woven into the work programme of the ECA MULPOCs.

75. Success of the ECA MULPOCs depends, in large measure, on the active participation of the United Nations agencies at all stages of the ECA MULPOCs activities, from the policy-making stage onwards. Such interagency co-operation has already been initiated. The United Nations agencies have been invited to all

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inaugural meetings of the ECA MULPOCs and the Executive Secretary of ECA has also convened separate meetings with these agencies to give them an opportunity to discuss the work programme of the ECA MULPOCs with a view to advising on complementary activities in their own programmes and indicating specific ways in which each agency could collaborate with ECA and its MULPOCs and vice versa.

76. The ECA MULPOCs have a task to perform that is monumental in terms of its scope, size and importance to future African economic and social development and which can only be realistically based on multinational co-operation and economic integration. At the present time, the ECA MULPOCs have levels of manpower and other resources placed at their disposal that are inadequate to carry out their tasks. They are currently being financed, almost exclusively, by the United Nations Development Programme.

77. The ECA MULPOCs are not temporary, minimal extensions of the secretariat, at the periphery of things, but are vital parts of the machinery by which the United Nations, through ECA, means to help member States collectively to solve critical problems and create the capabilities which they need for self-reliant and self-sustaining development and economic growth.

78. In the context of resolution 32/197, the ECA secretariat needs immediate strengthening in order to place the following activities, which the commission has only been able to carry out sporadically, on a full-time basis:

(a) Secure the full and active participation of the various agencies in the identification, formulation and implementation of development programmes and projects in co-operation with the representatives of the member States concerned at the technical committee level as well as that of the Council of Ministers of the MULPOCs, involving the agencies collectively from the grass roots to the highest level;

(b) Ensure that the directors of the MULPOCs become fully acquainted with the work programmes, at the subregional level, of the various organizations in the United Nations system through constant interaction with these organizations;

(c) Associate OAU and other intergovernmental organizations operating within the African region with the development activities of ECA and other United Nations organizations;

(d) Co-ordinate ECA and OAU in association with other United Nations agencies, in co-sponsoring sectoral ministerial conferences to facilitate co-ordinated action in programme identification, formulation and implementation, thereby optimizing the use of limited resources available not only to United Nations system organizations but to African Governments and institutions. These sectoral conferences would:

- (i) Review problems on issues pertaining to their respective development sector;
- (ii) Formulate regional policies and strategies relating to the sector within their respective field of competence;

(iii) Identify areas for multinational co-operation and integration;

(iv) Formulate sectoral work programmes and priorities for consideration of the appropriate legislative or deliberative organs.

(e) Organize joint meetings among the Department of Technical Co-operation for Development, UNDP and ECA to work out arrangements for co-ordinating the formulation and implementation of development programmes and projects in the African region;

(f) Organize a technical committee to examine the work programmes of OAU and ECA in order to harmonize areas of possible co-operative action.

79. The above set of activities, which are by no means exhaustive, but which present in summary form the main co-ordination functions, involve not only a great deal of organizational and managerial effort, initially, but also a great deal of subsequent programme co-ordination, project identification and formulation.

80. The present organizational arrangements for overseeing these tasks are unsatisfactory. These tasks require the constant involvement and full-time attention of appropriate secretariat staff. Unfortunately, current staff resources, financed almost entirely by UNDP, do not permit this. It has been evident for quite some time that the tasks to be performed exceed manpower capabilities. Only imperatives can, therefore, be tackled.

81. The development strategy for Africa for the third development decade which has been approved by the Heads of State or Government of the Organization of African Unity together with a declaration of commitment on guidelines and measures for national and collective self-reliance in social and economic development for the establishment of a new international economic order gives as its first priority the attainment of self-sufficiency in food, places special emphasis on the physical integration of the region through the development of transport and communications at the national, multinational and regional levels, and accords high priority to the establishment of a sound industrial base. In this context, any additional officers recruited for the Economic Co-operation Office should have experience of a very practical kind in the fields of agriculture, industry and transport.

82. In its resolution 335 (XIV) the Conference of Ministers recommended that the Executive Secretary should, in the over-all interest of the Commission, decentralize the operational activities and resources of the Commission in line with the spirit behind the establishment of the ECA Multinational Programming and Operational Centres. The Executive Secretary will give serious consideration to locating any additional posts in the subregional offices of the ECA MULPOCs.

83. The location of such additional posts either at ECA headquarters or at subregional offices would have no material influence on the travel required to be undertaken in pursuit of the objectives to be achieved since the travel involved would be either to ECA headquarters or to subregional offices, depending on the location of the staff member's duty station, and to the regional headquarters of specialized agencies.

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2. Executing agency responsibilities

84. The commission has planned a technical co-operation programme of roughly \$40 million (including overhead income) for the years 1979 to 1981. The bulk of these resources will come from organizations of the United Nations system, in particular from UNDP and UNFPA.

85. At the present time, ECA experiences no particular difficulty in financing the costs of its managerial responsibilities in respect of the projects for which it is executing agency. If the experience of other executing agencies is any guide, however, the commission will have to turn, in time to other avenues to cover the difference between what it will cost to manage effectively its technical co-operation programme and what the commission derives in overhead income.

3. Participation in global policy-making processes

86. There is no pressing need to pursue, at this time, requests for additional staff resources either through redeployment or through new posts. The commission will reconsider its position early in 1980 after the completion of the exercise called for in Economic and Social Council resolution 1979/64 on regional co-operation and development, by which the Council invited the Committee for Programmes and Co-ordination to undertake at its twentieth session a full review of policy and programme issues relating to the distribution of tasks and responsibilities between the regional commissions and other United Nations units, programmes and organs concerned, in preparation, inter alia, for the elaboration of the next programme budget and medium-term plan.

B. Economic Commission for Europe

87. The Final Act of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe gave impetus to ECE activities in support of regional and subregional co-operation in a wide variety of economic and related fields. It established the Commission as the primary body for the implementation of the provisions of the Final Act concerning multilateral co-operation in the economic, technical and environmental fields. In implementing these provisions and meeting the new challenges emerging, the role of the Commission in exercising team leadership and ensuring the most effective co-ordination has been greatly enhanced. This leadership and co-ordination role will continue to be performed within the administrative and financial provisions of the Office of the Executive Secretary.

88. The Economic Commission for Europe has unique competence to make a strong contribution to research relevant to the role of its member countries in the global economy. The addition of one professional who is an authority on the economies of Eastern Europe, through the redeployment described in paragraphs 7 to 10 and 15 to 17 above, will strengthen considerably the existing staff engaged in analysis of these economies and their impact on the region and the world. No new financial resources are requested by ECE for its current research programmes beyond the redeployment of one post from the Department of International Economic and Social Affairs. Redeployment of this post to ECE in the area of economic research and

projections would be fully in line with General Assembly resolutions calling for more intensive regional contributions to global studies and strategies. Not only would the capabilities of the ECE secretariat be enhanced to meet the needs of the member Governments, but the wider objectives of the United Nations in the economic field, especially pertaining to the interrelationship of the developed countries and the developing countries, would thereby be furthered.

89. In conformity with the provisions of the Final Act of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe the Economic Commission for Europe had been devoting increasing attention to the problems of member countries which are developing from the economic point of view. A major study on the economic development of southern Europe is currently under way and a number of principal subsidiary bodies of ECE have introduced in their work programmes topics of special interest to these countries.

90. Assistance to them is already being provided in such areas as water, energy and transport. New possibilities, in co-operation with UNDP, exist for regional and subregional projects in support of these countries which are developing from the economic point of view, as a result of the designation of the regional commissions as executing agencies. Proposals for the backstopping and execution of these projects, as they develop, will need to be carefully reviewed, although no requirement is foreseen at present beyond the redeployment of one professional post from the Department of Technical Co-operation for Development in the area of transport.

91. In most instances, programmes and projects of interest to member countries of ECE which are developing from the economic point of view are also suitable for co-operation with countries in other regions. Examples of activities carried out by the Commission and its secretariat of interest to developing countries in other regions over a wide range of areas, including agriculture, energy, environmental problems, housing, building and planning, trade, industry, science and technology, timber, transport and water. An important feature of the Commission's contribution to the development of countries in other regions is the opportunity given to experts from member countries of the United Nations which are not members of ECE to participate in ECE meetings of interest to them.

92. Prospects for interregional projects are also particularly promising on matters of interest to Mediterranean countries and the Executive Secretary of ECE remains in close consultation with the Executive Secretaries of both ECA and ECWA on the subject. Working level contacts have already been firmly established in the field of transport, environment, water and human settlements. It is foreseen that this co-operation, at the interregional level, including holding of periodic intersecretarial meetings, will add a new dimension to the workload of the ECE secretariat.

93. The ECE has become increasingly involved also, within its mandate, in a number of important programmes and conferences called for by the General Assembly such as the United Nations Conference on Science and Technology and the World Conference on the Decade for Women.

94. The capacities of the Commission to respond adequately to these new responsibilities will make it necessary, in future, for the budgetary and financial provision made for them to be reviewed.

C. Economic Commission for Latin America

1. Programme planning and co-ordination

95. The specific roles assigned to the regional commissions by section IV of the annex to General Assembly resolution 32/197 are not entirely new. However, this resolution was prompted by the conviction that so far they have not been performed at a level of activity corresponding to the intentions and requirements of the General Assembly. This is especially true in ECLA for the mandates on team leadership and responsibility for co-ordination and co-operation at the regional level and on strengthening of interregional co-operation.

96. These functions have been so far vested in the Programme Planning and Co-ordination Office, a part of the Office of the Executive Secretary. The current staffing table at the professional and above level of the Programme Planning and Co-ordination Office is:

1	D-1
1	P-5
1	P-3
1	P-2

However the P-5 post is assigned to the Executive Secretary as special assistant, a function which occupies most of the time of the incumbent.

97. Partly because of the geographical spread of the commission secretariat the work of this Office is mainly directed towards intraregional programming, co-ordination and follow-up in implementation so that problems of co-ordination with Headquarters, other regions and the agencies' sides have not received the attention requested by the resolution.

98. A recent study by the Administration Management Service (AMS), following restructuring, also concluded that there was a need to strengthen the planning process in all its phases (programming, budgeting, monitoring and co-ordination and evaluation).

2. Operational activities

99. ECLA's role in the promotion of co-operation among developing countries in the economic field as well as by way of technical co-operation has been hampered by the shortage of funds available for such operations and the consequent relative weakness of the Division of Operations.

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100. Since the expanding role of the Commission as executing agency will increase the workload of this Division, it will not be possible to draw from its existing resources to engage activities promoting economic co-operation among developing countries. Such activities would depend on the uncertainties of voluntary funding.

101. Increased resources available to the Division of Operation would enable it to cover the following:

(a) Extended action in fund-raising to increase the flow of resources for the development of programmes financed by extrabudgetary sources either by member Governments or other donors;

(b) Intensification and promotion of technical and economic co-operation among developing countries;

(c) Active participation in the promotion and preparation of intersectoral subregional, regional and interregional projects;

(d) Close co-operation and co-ordination with the Department of Technical Co-operation for Development, UNDP, UNFPA, UNEP, UNCTAD, etc., in the area of regional projects.

102. The current staffing table proposed for 1980-1981 at the Professional level and above of the Division of Operations is the following:

1	D-1
2	P-4
1	P-3

D. Economic Commission for Western Asia

1. Ocean economics and technology

103. Conventional uses of oceans and seas such as fishing, shipping, and exploitation of minerals are expanding rapidly in all maritime nations. The technical and legal frameworks for the development of marine resources integrating the marine and coastal area ecosystems are highly significant aspects of ocean economics at the national, regional, and international levels. Most of ECWA member States are bordering small but internationally important seas: The Gulf, the Red Sea, and the Mediterranean. In view of this it is important that legal, environmental and economic safeguards be established against exploitation and, at the same time, to assist member States of ECWA to achieve maximum benefits in utilizing the resources of these seas.

104. Such activities contribute to the promotion of economic co-operation between these countries. At the same time, interregional co-operation will be enhanced with other non-ECWA countries bordering these seas.

105. The proposed activity will consist of two main parts. The first part involves missions to the region to survey existing and proposed national and regional programmes related to seas such as fishing, mining, desalination, as well as coastal area development projects, particularly industrial complexes. The social and economic impacts of these projects are to be assessed in a quantitative manner. Furthermore, since national legislation on the subject is often ill-defined, inconsistent and poorly enforced an over-all review of such legislation will be conducted. Based on the survey a regional strategy will be developed in order to enable member States to explore and exploit their territorial waters and develop their coastal areas, within their sovereign rights and in harmony with the environment.

106. The activity will be implemented during the biennium 1980-1981 and in collaboration with the Department of International Economic and Social Affairs in Ocean economics and technology and relevant agencies and organizations in the region particularly WHO, FAO, UNESCO, and UNEP.

107. The expected output will draw heavily on the work in the Department of International Economic and Social Affairs. Guidelines will be prepared similar to those prepared in the Department of International Economic and Social Affairs but tailored to regional requirements on management of the resources of the sea taking into consideration social, economic, and environmental impacts of development and outlining a regional strategy in this connexion. Legal implications of new 200-mile coastal limits will have to be spelled out. This is particularly important in the region since the Gulf and Red Sea are too narrow to accommodate such limits; if the new limits are applied overlapping will occur. A workshop on this issue will be planned for the next biennium.

2. Transport

108. Despite improvements in the transport infrastructure of ECWA member countries over the last six years, some highway and railway alignments are still inconsistent with the present pattern of boundaries or with that of population concentration and economic activity centres, resulting, on certain routes, in the use of lengthy detours. Transport services, as well as transport vehicles and fleets in many instances, are inappropriate or are far out of line with the capabilities of existing facilities and terminals. On the other hand, the introduction of modern transport technologies in the region is, in some cases, making the infrastructure facilities redundant and obsolete.

109. In the ECWA region the rural road transport systems in particular are very much under-developed (in some instances only tracks or camel trails exist) even though they are of importance to the national, political and economic unity of member countries. Rural transport and feeder roads, which provide cheap and fast transportation from farms to markets and from manufacturer to consumer, are not accorded a high priority in national development plans. However, the substantial economic potential of the region's increasing domestic agricultural output requires dependable, efficient and low cost transport.

110. Additional resources in this area would be used to reinforce work in programme elements 1.1 and 1.5 of subprogramme 1 of the ECWA transport programme: 8/

1.1 Integrated transport planning

1.5 Low-cost road construction in arid areas:

(a) Feeder roads and rural transportation;

(b) Road transportation aspects of desert development in the context of efforts to combat desertification.

111. These projects will be implemented in close co-operation and co-ordination with the concerned divisions of ECWA secretariat, and Department of Technical Co-operation for Development and the Department of International Economic and Social Affairs.

112. Both of these projects will contribute to regional integration and the promotion of economic and technical co-operation among the countries of the region.

(a) Integrated transport planning

113. A master plan for transport in the ECWA region is currently under preparation and is expected to be finalized early in 1981 after an intergovernmental expert group meeting in 1980. The exact outputs of ECWA activities under this programme element will depend on the recommendation of the intergovernmental meeting. With additional resources the following activities could be performed:

(i) Review of national transport plans for identification of suitable mechanism to promote co-ordination of land transport at the national and regional levels;

(ii) Studies on specific disciplines of integrated intermodal land transport;

(iii) Studies related to rural transport planning and development; the emphasis on improvement of rural transport equipment vehicles and road construction technology;

(iv) Studies on the improvement of railway management, planning, operation and maintenance.

(b) Low cost road construction in arid areas

114. The objective of this programme element is to promote low-cost road construction in arid areas of ECWA region through the use of appropriate construction material and equipment; and to assist the member countries in their effort to develop an adequate, efficient and low-cost rural road and rural transport systems for socio-economic rural development, through studies, advisory services and technical assistance.

8/ Ibid., vol. I, para. 14.74.

115. Road construction in arid areas of the ECWA region presents many problems from both the engineering and economical viewpoints. The geological structure and land forms in Western Asia have great impact on transport infrastructure particularly the construction of roads. Present road construction costs in the arid areas appear to be very high and this adversely affects priorities in road development in national plans.

116. With additional resources the following additional activities could be performed:

Surveys of:

- (1) Existing specifications used in road construction in arid areas;
- (ii) The availability of suitable construction materials in the adjacent areas.

Studies on:

- (i) The identification and use of appropriate construction material and equipment and formulation of geometrical design standards for construction and maintenance of low-cost roads in arid areas;
- (ii) Economic evaluation and planning of low-cost roads in arid areas.

3. Programme planning and co-ordination

117. Following a review of the organization of the secretariat of the Economic Commission for Western Asia, AMS recommended the strengthening of the Programme Planning and Co-ordination Unit in terms of its programme planning and resource allocation functions. The activities of the Unit pertaining to programme planning have during the biennium 1978-1979 increased substantially since it acts as a focal point for programme planning, resource allocation and performance evaluation. The changing nature of the Commission's programmes necessitated greater emphasis on interdivisional co-ordination requiring such management tools as task forces and focal points. Co-ordination and co-operation with other international organizations and, in particular, regional Arab organizations has become imperative and will receive greater emphasis during the next biennium. To achieve such co-operation and co-ordination a total of 15 agreements or memoranda of understanding were concluded or are under consideration with Arab regional organizations. The unit is increasingly becoming the fund-raising arm of the secretariat and an improved strategic approach to attracting contributions from member Governments and other donors is gradually being evolved. The Unit has also been called upon to co-ordinate the implementation of resolutions adopted by the Commission. In addition, it has responsibilities as a focal point for the promotion of technical and economic co-operation among developing countries, an activity which, during the biennium 1980-1981, is expected to gather greater momentum.

118. Programme planning and co-ordination and resource allocation should be strongly linked together in order to develop and implement a work programme which truly reflects regional as well as global priorities. Thus ECWA's activities in this area include the following:

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(a) Interpreting and co-ordinating the planning for implementation of resolutions emanating from the Commission and other legislative bodies of the United Nations. Within this framework, two major in-depth studies will be prepared in response to ECWA resolutions 54 (V), on regional co-ordination, and 63 (V) on the establishment of subsidiary bodies. Both studies require intensive consultations with regional organizations and member States.

(b) Reviewing and updating, in consultation with substantive divisions, the current 1980-1983 medium-term plan with a view to taking into account all decisions with programme implications during the first biennium under this medium-term plan.

(c) Preparing, in co-operation with substantive divisions, the 1982-1983 work programme and priorities of the Commission in an integrated manner so that each programme element can be evaluated in the perspective of its relative importance to the goals established by the Commission. This would include intensive co-ordination within the secretariat and with other United Nations bodies as well as the further development of task forces and focal points in selected priority areas.

(d) Intensification and further development of co-operation and co-ordination with United Nations and other international organizations as well as Arab regional organizations. This would include, during the 1980-1981 budget period, follow-up on practical forms of implementation of agreements already concluded.

(e) Resource allocation and monitoring of programme implementation. Measurable output indicators, work measurement systems and performance standards will be developed in order to ensure that the utilization of resources is in line with the accomplishment of the objectives.

(f) Fund-raising activities, which include the identification of possible donors and the formulation of projects for extrabudgetary financing within the framework of ECWA's priorities as well as the necessary practical steps for raising needed funds.

(g) In addition, the Unit will continue to act as a focal point for cross-organizational programme analysis and for the promotion of technical and economic co-operation among developing countries at the regional level. It will also continue to participate and prepare the necessary documentation for meetings on programme and co-ordination in the United Nations system.

(h) Co-operation and co-ordination with the Department of International Economic and Social Affairs in the area of programme planning will be upgraded in a manner whereby the work of the Department and ECWA will complement each other as a result of the restructuring and decentralization dialogue now under way.

119. The present staffing of the Unit is:

1 D-1

2 P-4

1 P-2

3 LL

One of the staff members at the P-4 level is primarily concerned with technical and economic co-operation among developing countries. The remaining three staff members are not sufficient to perform adequately the work of the Unit.

E. Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

1. Development issues and policies

120. The Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific has accumulated experience in exercising team leadership and responsibility for co-ordination and co-operation at the regional level, as envisaged in General Assembly resolution 32/197, annex, section IV, paragraph 19, particularly as the convenor for the Interagency Committee and Task Force on Integrated Rural Development established in 1977 in pursuance of resolution 161 (XXXII) and the Interagency Task Force on Water recently established in pursuance of the recommendations of the United Nations Water Conference and of the Commission at its thirty-fourth session. The machinery for co-ordination at present only relates to these two sectors but should be expanded to enable the Commission to exercise team leadership as the main general economic and social development centre of the region within the United Nations system. The areas requiring the most urgent attention are those relating to development issues and policies and social development. In the field of development issues and policies, in order to follow up and implement regional strategies for the 1980s, active co-operation of all the specialized agencies will have to be sought and a more organized mechanism for interagency co-ordination will have to be established to ensure a multi-disciplinary approach to developmental issues. In addition, reflecting the increased emphasis on subregional, regional and interregional co-operation in the regional strategies, particularly in the context of economic co-operation among developing countries, subprogramme 3 of this programme should be strengthened on urgent basis in pursuance of mandate in section IV, paragraph 24, of the annex to General Assembly resolution 32/197. In the field of social development, although some interagency co-operation on an informal basis has existed in this region for the social development programme, owing to scarcity of staff and other resources, periodic or regular consultation has not been possible. ESCAP has recognized significance of social aspects of development as its organizational name implies, but further strengthening in social development is necessary in order to perform its role as the main social and economic development centre of the region and to ensure appropriate attention to social aspects of development strategies.

121. The ESCAP programme on development issues and policies provides for periodic review of progress made by the member countries towards the goals outlined in the international development strategy for the 1980s and elucidates specific problems of development, particularly those emanating from world economic conditions. The programme also assesses likely future developments and problems at the regional and subregional levels and discusses alternative policies and strategies that might be adopted. It also includes studies of the scope for economic co-operation among countries without formal subregional arrangements as well as assistance to existing subregional groups.

122. ESCAP has recently formulated, through the sixth session of the Expert Group on Development and Policy and an intergovernmental unit, the regional strategies for the 1980s as the required input to the global strategy for the 1980s, which will provide the basis for all the sectoral programmes of the Commissions during the forthcoming decade. During 1980-1981, the Economic and Social Survey for Asia and the Pacific, 1979 will be published and the Survey, 1980, and the Survey, 1981, will have to be prepared with increased emphasis on economic co-operation among developing countries. Adequate mechanisms for interagency co-ordination at regional level should be established to ensure multisectoral actions for development in the forthcoming decade. Technical backstopping should also be provided to the Asia and the Pacific Development Centre, which is expected to be established in mid-1980 at Kuala Lumpur, integrating the existing Asia and the Pacific Development Institute (Bangkok); Asia and the Pacific Development Administration Centre (Kuala Lumpur); Social Welfare and Development Centre for Asia and the Pacific (Manila); and Asia and the Pacific Centre for Women and Development (Bangkok).

2. Social development and humanitarian affairs

123. ESCAP resolution 15⁴ (XXXI), New Delhi Declaration, strongly emphasized the need to enhance the active participation of the people, including women and youth, in the development process in order to ensure that development benefits will accrue directly to them, in particular to the poorer and the disadvantaged sections of the population, including rural farmers and landless labourers.

124. In pursuance of the above resolution and as a part of the priority programme of ESCAP on integrated rural development, for which the redeployment of a post from the Department of International Economic and Social Affairs is envisaged as referred to in part two, three components of the 1980-1981 programme of work in the social development field, namely, people's participation and institution-building, integration of women in the development process, and mobilization of youth for national development, require to be considerably expanded with particular attention to the needs and problems of the rural areas.

125. All these activities should be handled through a multisectoral approach with active liaison with sectoral agencies in the region.

3. Programming and co-ordination

126. The existing resources on programme co-ordination and planning are almost entirely committed to intra-secretariat programme co-ordination and interagency co-ordination at regional level, preventing satisfactory co-ordination between the Commission and United Nations Headquarters, other regional Commissions and other bodies in the United Nations system. This situation should be remedied on an urgent basis so that global exercises on programming can take place, in which a more meaningful participation by the regional Commissions is possible.