

ARTICLE 58

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TEXT OF ARTICLE 58

The Organization shall make recommendations for the co-ordination of the policies and activities of the specialized agencies.

INTRODUCTORY NOTE

1. The structure of this study is the same as that of the previous Repertory studies of this Article. There was no new development during the period under review requiring treatment under several headings in the General survey, or under the two headings in the Analytical Summary of Practice. Two former subheadings in the General Survey - I A 2 C. "The Technical Assistance Board" and I A 2 d. "The Technical Assistance Committee" - have been combined in this Supplement.

I. GENERAL SURVEY

A. Organs of the United Nations concerned in the co-ordination process

1. *The General Assembly*

2. During the period under review, the General Assembly dealt with the administrative and budgetary aspects of co-ordination, 1/ considered international educational, cultural and scientific co-operation, 2/ and approved relationship agreements with two new inter-governmental organizations - the International Finance Corporation (IFC) 3/ and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), 4/

a. THE MAIN COMMITTEES

3. On the recommendation of the Fifth Committee, the General Assembly requested the Economic and Social Council to study a suggestion by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions concerning an appraisal of the over-all programmes to be undertaken by the United Nations and the specialized agencies in economic and social fields during the coming five or six years. 5/

b. THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON ADMINISTRATIVE AND BUDGETARY QUESTIONS

4. In its thirty-seventh report to the General Assembly, 6/ the Advisory Committee proposed that there should be a reappraisal of the over-all situation with regard to the programme of the United Nations and the specialized agencies, in the light of their growth and development over the preceding five years. 7/

1/ For details, see this Supplement, under Article 17 (3).

2/ G A resolutions 1043 (XI), 1164 (XII), 1260 (XIII).

3/ G A resolution 1116 (XI); for details, see this Supplement, under Article 63.

4/ G A resolution 1145 (XII); for details, see this Supplement, under Article 57.

5/ G A resolution 1094 I (XI).

6/ G A (XI), Annexes, a.i. 49, A/3489, paras. 6 and 7.

7/ See section I B 6 below, for details.

** c. SPECIAL BODIES

2. The Economic and Social Council

5. At its twenty-fourth, twenty-fifth and twenty-sixth sessions, the Council held general debates on the development and co-ordination of the economic, social and human rights programmes and activities of the United Nations and the specialized agencies as a whole; the executive heads, or their representatives, participated in these debates. 8/

a. THE CO-ORDINATION COMMITTEE OF THE COUNCIL

6. During the period under review, the Council continued to refer detailed questions of co-ordination to its Co-ordination Committee.

b. THE ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE ON CO-ORDINATION

7. In order to increase its effectiveness in contributing to the work of the Council and the governing bodies of the specialized agencies in every possible way, the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination (ACC) decided in 1958 to review its machinery and procedures. 9/ The Council, though recognizing the important role of ACC in this area, expressed the belief that further improvements in this regard were "possible and desirable", and therefore noted the decision of ACC with satisfaction. 10/

8. In the report that followed, ACC informed the Council that no basic changes in its structure or procedures seemed appropriate, and that its major function should continue to be to afford regular opportunities for personal contacts among the executive heads of the members of the United Nations family for the exchange and harmonization of views among them. It mentioned that its Preparatory Committee 11/ should be composed of high officials fully qualified to speak and act in the names of the members of ACC on matters coming within the Preparatory Committee's purview, and also defined more explicitly the tasks which it expected the Preparatory Committee to carry out. In addition, ACC informed the Council that it had asked the Preparatory Committee to review, and to make recommendations on, the entire inter-agency structure, including technical committees and working groups, related to economic and social matters, in order that those which were making essential contributions might be strengthened, and those which were no longer active or no longer dealt on a continuing basis with important issues might be eliminated. 12/

c. THE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE BOARD AND THE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE COMMITTEE

9. The Technical Assistance Board (TAB) prepared the review of the Expanded Programme of Technical Assistance which had been requested by ACC in 1956 13/ and issued it under the title "A Forward Look", together with comments by ACC, in its nineteenth report to the Council. 14/ In pursuance of a suggestion by the Technical Assistance

8/ E S C (XXIV), 980th-983rd mtgs.; E S C (XXVI), 1029th mtg., paras. 15-55; 1030th and 1031st mtgs.; 1032nd mtg., paras. 1-70; E S C (XXVIII), 1074th-1077th mtgs.

9/ E S C (XXVIII), Annexes, a.i. 3, p. 11, E/3108, annex I, para. 5.

10/ E S C resolution 694 A (XXVI).

11/ See the Repertory, vol. III, under Article 58, para. 17.

12/ E S C (XXVIII), Annexes, a.i. 4, p. 3, E/3247, paras. 3-11.

13/ E S C (XX), Annexes, a.i. 4, p. 4, E/2728, para. 10.

14/ E S C (XXVII), Annexes, a.i. 9, E/2885-E/TAC/49.

Committee (TAC), 15/ ACC reviewed and endorsed the annual reports of TAB to TAC at its spring sessions

** d. COMMISSIONS OF THE COUNCIL

** 3. *The Secretary-General*

B. Development of co-ordination processes

10. During the period under review, questions of programming and substance continued to occupy a more prominent place in co-ordination activities than constitutional, organizational or procedural problems. While giving full attention to unsolved and new questions falling in the latter category, the General Assembly and, especially, the Council devoted the greater part of their efforts in this field to co-ordinating the substantive work of the United Nations, the specialized agencies and the International Atomic Energy Agency and to focus on problems of high priority so far as possible.

1. *Provision in the agreements with the specialized agencies*

11. Under the agreement between the United Nations and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development on the relationship between the United Nations and the International Finance Corporation, 16/ "... the United Nations and its organs may appropriately make recommendations with respect to the technical aspects of programmes or projects for the development of productive private enterprise" 17/ and, following reasonable prior consultation, any formal recommendations by either organization would be considered by the appropriate organ of the other as soon as possible. 18/

** 2. *Early stages of the co-ordination process*

3. *Relations with inter-governmental organizations* 19/

12. The Council requested 20/ the Secretary-General to take appropriate steps to ensure "reciprocal exchange of information and documentation with The Hague Conference on Private International Law and the International Institute for the Unification of Private Law" and to report, whenever appropriate, on matters within this area. This request resulted from the fact that the regional commissions and the two inter-governmental organizations were engaged in activities directed towards the progressive unification of the rules of private international law in matters relating to international economic and social questions. Such unification, in the Council's view, would facilitate the continued development of international commercial exchanges. The aim of the exchange was to avoid duplication or overlapping in these activities.

15/ E S C (XX), Annexes, a.i. 7, p. 17, E/2779, para. 25; TAC invited the comments of ACC on the report "with particular reference to the interrelationship between the expanded programme and comparable activities under regular budgets".

16/ E S C resolution 635 (XXII), resumed session, annex.

17/ *Ibid.*, operative para. 1 (b).

18/ *Ibid.*, operative para. 1; ST/SG/1 (United Nations Publication, Sales No.: 51.X.1), p. 71, article IV, para. 2. See also this Supplement, under Article 63.

19/ See also this Supplement, under Article 57.

20/ E S C resolution 678 (XXVI).

** 4. *Priorities 21/*5. *Operational programmes*

13. A special report on the co-ordination of the programme of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) with the regular and expanded technical assistance programmes of the United Nations and the specialized agencies 22/ was submitted by the Secretary-General to the Council at its twenty-fourth session. In addition to bringing the information in this field up to date, the report endeavoured to evaluate the programmes in terms of progress achieved, in accordance with the Council's request in resolution 630 C (XXII).

6. *Recent trends*

14. In his introduction to the report of the Economic and Social Council covering the period 3 August 1957 to 31 July 1958, 23/ the President of the Council summarized current trends in co-ordination as follows:

"In the early years, the Council's task of co-ordinating the programmes and activities of the United Nations and the specialized agencies in the economic, social and human rights fields was largely concerned with the avoidance of duplication between the various organizations and the concentration of their efforts. With the establishment of priority programmes - within the framework of the overriding objective of the development of under-developed countries - the Council entered upon a new phase of its co-ordinating functions; and a later phase again may be discerned during which the Council examined certain fields where possibilities of concerted action existed - as in the field of community development. Although the Council is still concerned in some degree with each of these three phases, we may now discern a new prospect, namely, that of the five-year appraisals, which the Council has asked the United Nations and five of the specialized agencies to undertake and to which it attaches particular importance. The Council has expressed the hope that the consolidated report which is to be drawn up for it on the basis of these appraisals by a special committee of five individuals, 'will, for the first time, give the Governments and the peoples of the world a clear idea of what is being achieved and attempted through international action.'"

15. At its twenty-fourth session, the Council reaffirmed the following general principles as guides for future work in the field of co-ordination:

- "(i) All efforts to achieve greater effectiveness in the work of the United Nations in the economic, social and human right fields should be regarded as a continuing process and to this end programmes of work of the Council and its subsidiary bodies should continue to be reviewed at periodic intervals by the Council on the basis of reports submitted by the Secretary-General;
- "(ii) The promotion of economic and social development of under-developed countries should continue to be the overriding objective of all activities in this field as established by the Council at its fourteenth session;

21/ See this Supplement, under Article 63.

22/ E S C (XXVI), Annexes, a.i. 3, p. 43, E/3109.

23/ G A (XIII), Suppl. No. 3 (A/3848).

"(iii) The achievement of optimum results, within the limits of whatever resources may be available at any given time, can best be assured by concentration of efforts on a limited number of major areas of activity, by giving preference to those projects which promise practical results, by grouping together and interrelating, where appropriate, individual items of demonstrable urgency or importance, or by eliminating or deferring projects of relatively low priority;

"(iv) Continued attention should be paid to the closer co-ordination of the economic and social aspects of international development work, to the elimination of unrelated and isolated activities which are not of demonstrable urgency or practical value, and to the most effective co-ordination of the work of the Secretariat at Headquarters and in the regional economic commissions." 24/

16. The Council simultaneously invited 25/ the specialized agencies to consider the extent to which they could apply these principles in the co-operation and concentration of their activities.

17. During the period covered by this Supplement, co-ordination in one or two fields, in which circumstances were particularly favourable, assumed a new and intensive form. In its twentieth report 26/ to the Council, the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination (ACC) urged that programmes of "concerted action" should be decided upon only after full prior consultations among the agencies concerned. In response to Council resolution 665 A (XXIV), ACC prepared a report 27/ on the possibilities of concerted action in various fields.

18. Three criteria were established by ACC for determining whether a programme was suitable for concerted action. The programme should (a) be sufficiently complex to call for efforts from different directions; (b) be sufficiently specific to allow the combination of these efforts within a definite area; and (c) be capable of a definition which the parties concerned would agree to accept as the framework for their joint efforts. Concerted action was differentiated from the regular co-ordination of activities in the following way: the former implied action under a jointly conceived and unified plan with a broad common objective, whereas the latter implied efforts to harmonize actions undertaken by different agencies within the framework of different programmes. Certain detailed proposals were made regarding concerted action in such fields as community development (in which "a beginning of concerted action" had been achieved), water control and utilization, housing, industrialization and urbanization.

19. At its twenty-sixth session, the Council, in resolution 694 C (XXVI), requested the Secretary-General to prepare a progress report on concerted action in community development and to formulate recommendations on practical methods of initiating concerted action in other fields of activity in which this form of co-ordination might be practicable.

20. In its twenty-third report to the Council, 28/ ACC indicated that concerted action, in the strictest sense, was not applicable to many fields in which

24/ E S C resolution 664 (XXIV), annex, para. 1 (c).

25/ E S C resolution 664 A (XXIV).

26/ E S C (XXIV), Annexes, a.i. 4, E/2931, paras. 27-31.

27/ E S C (XXVI), Annexes, a.i. 3, p. 11, E/3108, annex I.

28/ E S C (XXVIII), Annexes, a.i. 4, E/3247, para. 24.

particularly close co-ordination was necessary and, in fact, existed. It suggested that the fields of housing and of water control and utilization, and perhaps urbanization, seemed the most promising for introducing this type of programme.

21. At the twenty-eighth session, members of the Council agreed that concerted action could be applied only in a few cases; it approved 29/ the principles and general lines of the long-range programme for housing and noted with satisfaction 30/ the creation of the United Nations Water Resources Development Centre, which had become the focal point for concerted action among United Nations agencies in this field. In the same resolution, it requested ACC to continue its efforts to bring about programmes of concerted action in the development of water resources.

22. In the thirty-seventh report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions to the eleventh session of the General Assembly, it was suggested that the Economic and Social Council might arrange for a comprehensive appraisal of the activities of the United Nations and the specialized agencies in the economic and social fields, either directly or through an ad hoc committee. 31/ In resolution 1094 I (XI), the General Assembly requested that the Council should study this possibility and that the specialized agencies should co-operate with the Council in considering it.

23. At its twenty-fourth session, the Council responded by expressing its belief that a general survey of the economic, social and human rights programmes of the United Nations and the specialized agencies, as well as a forecast of the scope and trends of programmes and expenditures for the coming five years, would contribute to the effectiveness of the work being done and would also be of assistance to Governments in their formulation of policy on these matters. It therefore requested 32/ the Secretary-General to make an appraisal of the scope, trend and cost of the regular United Nations programmes in these fields for the period from 1959 to 1964 and invited the specialized agencies most directly concerned - the International Labour Organisation (the ILO), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the World Health Organization (WHO) and the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) - to consider the most appropriate and practical methods of making similar appraisals of their own programmes. The Administrative Committee on Co-ordination was asked to submit a special report on the preparation of these appraisals, with particular reference to difficulties that might be encountered. The United Nations appraisal was requested for the summer of 1959, and the others - owing to time required for necessary action by their governing bodies - by the summer of 1960, at which time a consolidated report summing up the various plans was also expected to be before the Council.

24. In connexion with certain reservations and requests for clarification from the organizations which had been asked to prepare these appraisals, the Council indicated that it saw in the consolidated report a means of giving the Governments and peoples of the world a clear idea of what was being achieved and attempted through international action. It emphasized that the appraisals were not an attempt by the Council to interfere with the autonomy of the organizations concerned, nor did they require any firm policy formulation or rigid commitments in regard to specific

29/ E S C resolution 731 B (XXVIII).

30/ E S C resolution 743 A (XXVIII).

31/ G A (XI), Annexes, vol. II, a.i. 49, p. 2, A/3489, para. 7.

32/ E S C resolution 665 C (XXIV).

programmes. On the contrary, the Council urged that they should emphasize the over-all development, general direction and trend of programmes rather than individual projects and programmes. In addition, it asked that operational programmes should be covered in the appraisals, which should also give rough estimates of probable changes in budgetary requirements. 33/

25. The council appointed a committee of "five individuals, fully conversant with the programmes and activities of the United Nations in the economic, social, human rights and related fields and of the specialized agencies concerned, as well as the process of co-ordination developed among those organizations". 34/ The task of these experts - each of whom was chosen from among representatives at the session who had held the position of President of the Council or Chairman of its Co-ordination Committee - was to prepare the consolidated report showing the extent to which the programmes responded to basic needs, and the interrelation of the international activities designed to meet these needs. The Chairman of ACC was requested to make appropriate arrangements to service the committee of five and to assist the participating organizations in ensuring the greatest possible degree of comparability in their appraisals.

26. During the following year the committee of five held several meetings, in which representatives of the participating organizations discussed questions of the comparability of the appraisals and other problems. The appraisal of United Nations programmes 35/ was completed in time for the twenty-eighth session of the Council, and the agencies began the preparation of their appraisals, which were to be ready by 1 December 1959.

27. In July 1959, the Council noted with appreciation 36/ the Secretary-General's appraisal of United Nations programmes and authorized its transmission to the committee of five (its Committee on Programme Appraisals) after certain modifications had been made in the light of the Council debates. It also invited the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) to consider the possibility of submitting a statement to the committee, giving information on its programme, with an indication, where possible, of future trends in activities which might have a bearing on the relevant programmes of the participating organizations.

C. Co-ordination and co-operation in substantive fields

28. The Council continued its regular practice of reviewing - on the basis of the reports coming before it separately and the report of ACC - the co-ordination of the work of the United Nations and the specialized agencies in fields of common interest.

29. The Council devoted special attention to the co-ordination of international activities in the field of atomic energy. At its twenty-sixth session, it invited 37/ the specialized agencies concerned to bear in mind that the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) had the "leading position" in the peaceful uses of atomic energy, and IAEA to bear in mind that the agencies concerned had certain responsibilities in this area in their respective fields of competence. To implement this principle, the Council expressed the hope 38/ that inter-agency relationship agreements would be

33/ E S C resolution 694 D (XXVI) and annex.

34/ The Council also referred to this group as "its Committee on Programme Appraisals" (E S C resolution 743 (XXVIII), section III).

35/ E/3260 and Add.1 and 2 (mimeographed).

36/ E S C resolution 743 D (XXVIII).

37/ E S C resolution 694 E (XXVI), section III.

38/ E S C resolution 694 E (XXVI), section III.

concluded in the near future and reminded the agencies that "effective co-ordination requires, in addition to formal bilateral arrangements under these relationship agreements, the development of effective day-to-day working relationships within the framework of general multilateral arrangements for co-ordination in this field".

30. The Council also urged 39/ Member Governments to make special efforts to ensure national co-ordination of policies with regard to the international promotion of the peaceful uses of atomic energy. The Council invited 40/ IAEA to recommend projects that might usefully be undertaken by the Council, its regional economic commissions or other subsidiary bodies, to assist IAEA in carrying out its programmes in various regions of the world, taking into account their differing degrees of development and their varying requirements. The Council also asked 41/ ACC to consider the possibility of establishing a programme of concerted action with regard to the effects of radiation resulting from the peaceful uses of atomic energy.

31. In its twenty-third report to the Council, 42/ ACC concluded, with regard to the effects of atomic radiation, that concerted action in the strict sense of the term was not then appropriate, but that there was a need for intensified scientific and administrative co-operation in each of the disciplines involved. In pursuance of the Council's request 43/ to be kept fully informed on the co-ordination of the activities of the United Nations and the specialized agencies in the field of the peaceful uses of atomic energy, ACC reported on this question in 1956 and again in 1958. 44/

32. At its twenty-eighth session, the Council noted with satisfaction 45/ the measures taken to establish close relations between the United Nations and IAEA, as well as between IAEA and the specialized agencies. It expressed the hope that the organizations concerned would continue their endeavours to implement the arrangements for practical co-operation foreshadowed in the relationship agreements and requested ACC to give further attention to multilateral and other measures directed towards co-ordinated and concerted action among the organizations in this field and to provide reports thereon on a continuing basis.

33. Other areas in which the General Assembly or the Council made new arrangements for co-operative efforts between the United Nations and the specialized agencies included the following: (a) the "Freedom from Hunger" campaign of FAO, which the Council welcomed and with which it invited 46/ the Secretary-General and the specialized agencies to co-operate; (b) the survey of international relations and exchanges in the fields of education, science and culture, which the Council invited 47/ UNESCO to prepare in co-operation with the United Nations and the interested specialized agencies; and (c) the survey of the main trends of inquiry in the field of the natural sciences, and the dissemination and application for peaceful means of such knowledge, which the General Assembly requested 48/ the Secretary-General to prepare in co-operation with

39/ E S C resolution 694 E (XXVI), section IV.

40/ E S C resolution 694 E (XXVI), section I.

41/ E S C resolution 694 C (XXVI), section III.

42/ E S C (XXVIII), Annexes, a.i. 4, E/3247.

43/ E S C resolution 630 (XXII), annex, para. 16.

44/ E S C (XXIV), Annexes, a.i. 4, E/2951, annexes I and II; E S C (XXVIII), Annexes, a.i. 4, E/3247, annex II, respectively.

45/ E S C resolution 743 B (XXVIII).

46/ E S C resolution 741 C (XXVIII).

47/ E S C resolutions 695 (XXVI), 727 A (XXVIII).

48/ G A resolution 1260 (XIII).

IAEA, and with UNESCO and the other specialized agencies concerned with the peaceful application of science.

34. In connexion with the programme for provision by the Secretary-General of operational, executive and administrative personnel (OPEX) to Governments needing this kind of assistance, the General Assembly, at the suggestion of the Secretary-General, recommended ^{49/} that whenever requests for such assistance fell within the competence of a specialized agency, no action should be taken without prior consultation and agreement with that agency.

II. ANALYTICAL SUMMARY OF PRACTICE

** A. The role of the General Assembly and of the Economic and Social Council in respect of co-ordination

** B. The role of the Secretary-General

^{49/} G A resolution 1256 (XIII); G A (XIII), Annexes, a.i. 29, A/C.2/200, para. 7.