

ARTICLE 58

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ARTICLE 58

TEXT OF ARTICLE 58

The Organization shall make recommendations for the coordination of the policies and activities of the specialized agencies.

INTRODUCTORY NOTE

1. The present study deals with the question of the application in practice of the authority of the principal organs of the United Nations, as provided in Article 58, to make recommendations for the coordination of both the activities and policies of those agencies which have been brought into special relationship with the United Nations.¹

2. The presentation and organization of the study represents a significant change from that of previous studies of Article 58. The purpose of this change is twofold. Firstly, it is intended to emphasize the importance now placed on the application of coordination to the programmes and activities within the United Nations system on the part of its principal organs.² Following *Supplement No. 4*, at its eighteenth session, the Committee for Programme and Coordination advocated that future *Repertory Supplements* “be recast so as to record primarily those actions, mainly of the principal organs, that bore directly on the interpretations of any provisions of the Charter.”³ Secondly, in departing from the format established in the original *Repertory* in 1955, this change is intended to provide a reflection of the coordination issues emerging from the broader range of activities and programmes the United Nations system has now assumed.

3. The general survey following this introductory material is concerned with the subject as a whole, providing a synoptic overview of the patterns in the application of Article 58. The prevailing emphasis is on trends in the approach to the coordination of policies and activities of the specialized agencies. The study initially considers overall trends in coordination with reference to action in previous periods. Subsequently the study highlights organizational and administrative trends in terms of how the approach to coordination is being defined. This is followed by similar consideration of the substantive trends in terms of where the need for coordination is being identified.

4. The analytical summary of practice deals with questions bearing on the application of Article 58 itself, providing a more specific elaboration of actions or developments within the period under review. The section is intended to illustrate the major areas of development. In this respect, actions taken with respect to both the organizational and the administrative aspects of coordination, as well as substantive ones, are presented. Further detail as to related issues such as the definition or revision of the terms of agreement between the United Nations and the specialized agencies, or recommendations for the coordination of activities by the Economic and Social Council, may be found under the study of Article 63 in the present *Supplement*.

¹For the purposes of Article 58, the term “Organization” has been taken to include the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and the Secretariat. See generally *Repertory of Practice* under this Article, especially the discussion of the Joint Committee of the Second and Third Committees, para. 57.

²This follows the stated practice of the Organization in which coordination has been considered in terms of application to areas of activity, not in and of itself. See *Supplement No. 1*, para. 7, and *Supplement No. 3*, para. 23.

³See A/33/38, para. 57. See also G A resolution 33/118, para. 3, noting this recommendation.

5. Certain other questions related to the substance of Article 58 may be dealt with in the studies of other Articles, except where mention thereof may cast light on issues arising under Article 58. Financial and budgetary arrangements with specialized agencies and the examination of their administrative budgets are considered under the study of Article 17(3); the establishment of relations between the United Nations and the specialized agencies, under Article 57; the initiation of negotiations for the creation of new specialized agencies, under Article 59; recommendations to the specialized agencies in connection with studies and reports initiated by the Economic and Social Council, under Article 62(1); the obtaining of reports from specialized agencies by the Economic and Social Council, under Article 64; relations with subsidiary bodies established by the Council, under Article 68; and arrangements for representation of the specialized agencies in the deliberations of the Council, under Article 70.

I. GENERAL SURVEY

A. Overall trends

6. During the period under review, the Organization continued to make recommendations for coordination with respect to the operation of the United Nations system itself as well as between the United Nations and the specialized agencies, and the direction of programmes and activities of the specialized agencies within their respective areas of operation. Consequently, recommendations continued to emphasize both organizational and administrative, and substantive areas of operation in the United Nations system.

7. The restructuring of the economic and social sectors of the United Nations mandated under General Assembly resolution 32/197⁴ continued to be a major impetus for recommendations with respect to coordination on the part of the Organization during the period. In this regard, it was recognized that progress on measures mandated for restructuring had in some respects been slow, implying that further action was necessary on the part of the Organization as well as the organizations of the common system.⁵ Both the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council took decisions for more specific follow-up, including periodic review⁶ and consideration as an agenda item.⁷ The Economic and Social Council acted specifically to define and enhance its own role in coordinating activities in the economic and social sectors of the United Nations system in furthering its revitalization as a consequence of restructuring.⁸ Restructuring was also cited as the impetus for action on the part of both the Assembly and the Council in making recommendations in substantive areas of activity, for example, with respect to operational activities for development⁹ or in coordination on a regional basis.¹⁰

⁴See *Supplement No. 5*, under Article 58, paras. 4-7.

⁵See, e.g., G A resolution 33/202.

⁶G A resolutions 33/202, sect. VI, para. 2, and 39/217, para. 6. See also E S C resolution 1982/50, para. 1(f).

⁷See G A resolution 34/212.

⁸See, e.g., E S C resolution 1982/50.

⁹See, for example, G A resolutions 34/213, 35/81, 36/199, 37/226 38/171 and 39/220, as well as E S C resolution 1980/66 and decisions 1983/186 and 1984/171.

¹⁰See E S C resolution 1982/63. By its resolution 37/214, the General Assembly endorsed the recommendations of the Council in respect of coordination between the specialized agencies and the Economic Commission for Africa.

8. In that context, both the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council also implemented a policy of decentralization with respect to coordination of operations and programmes at the regional and local levels during the period under review. The General Assembly accorded the regional commissions the status of executing agencies in their own right for intersectoral, local, regional, and interregional projects,¹¹ identifying the commissions as the main general social and economic development centres in their respective regions within the United Nations system.¹² At the local level, the resident coordinator, normally the resident representative of the United Nations Development Programme, was accorded responsibility for overall coordination at the country level.¹³ The Assembly and the Council further recommended that the coordination of a number of substantive activities and programmes should occur at a more localized level,¹⁴ such as in economic and technical cooperation¹⁵ or in respect to desertification, where the United Nations Sudano-Sahelian Office was identified as the principal body for coordination efforts in the region.¹⁶

9. At the same time, these broad-based efforts and the continued concern with the need for enhanced coordination in the United Nations system¹⁷ underscored an increasing identification on the part of the principal organs with their central overall coordinating role.¹⁸ One result of this emphasis was efforts on the part of the principal organs

¹¹G A resolution 33/202, sect. IV, para. 8, and sect. V, para. 3. The role of the regional commissions was reiterated by the Council, which invited the Secretary-General to actively pursue decentralization of the regional commissions, including the decentralization of activities. E S C resolution 1979/64, paras. 2 and 3, and G A resolutions 34/206 and 37/214. For further discussion, see also the present *Supplement*, under Article 63.

¹²See G A resolution 34/206.

¹³G A resolution 34/213. See also E S C resolution 1982/63.

¹⁴See, for example, E S C resolution 1979/64, para. 3, reiterating this point.

¹⁵E S C resolution 1983/66.

¹⁶G A resolutions 34/16 and 34/187.

¹⁷See *Supplement No. 5*, under Article 58, para. 54.

¹⁸This had been a feature of the mandate for restructuring approved under G A resolution 32/197. See *ibid.*, annex, sect. I, para. 1, and sect. II, para. 5(c). See also E S C resolution 1981/64, para. 1, reiterating the need to strengthen the multilateral framework of the United Nations system, in which the General Assembly has the central role.

during the period under review to define more precisely their respective roles and functions in the coordination of the United Nations system,¹⁹ or in defining comprehensive frameworks such as in the harmonization of programme planning.²⁰ It should be noted, however, that the renewed emphasis on the part of the Organization on its overall coordinating role was a cause of concern among some specialized agencies. As the Secretary-General observed, the period following General Assembly resolution 32/197 on the restructuring of the economic and social sectors "has been characterized by certain difficulties in achieving the appropriate balance between the need for greater efforts by the organizations of the system to give full and prompt effect to overall policy recommendations emanating from the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council, and the contributions of the organizations of the system to the process of policy formulation".²¹ In that regard, some specialized agencies viewed the measures undertaken by the Assembly and the Council as a means of ensuring greater effectiveness and coherence of action by the United Nations system as a whole.²² However, other organizations criticized what they saw as a number of disquieting tendencies on the part of the Assembly and the Council infringing on their autonomy and competence, such as decisions on matters plainly falling within the province of the specialized agencies, to create new specialized forums for decision-making in areas or activities already covered by the agencies and the creation of more coordinating mechanisms than the substantive activities to be coordinated.²³

B. Organizational and administrative trends

10. During the period under review, a variety of recommendations for coordination in organizational and administrative areas continued to be made in respect to the machinery of coordination itself,²⁴ programme planning,²⁵

¹⁹As in the case of the Council or the organization of the work programme of the Main Committees of the General Assembly. See the analytical summary of practice below. Attention was also directed on the role of the Secretary-General and the responsibility, under his authority, of the Director-General for Development and International Economic Cooperation.

²⁰See the discussion below under the relevant section of the analytical summary of practice.

²¹A/35/527, para. 29. The General Assembly took note of these comments in its resolution 35/203.

²²See conclusions of the Governing Body of ILO at its 212th session; cited in A/35/527, para. 31, note 3.

²³Ibid., para. 32. See also ACABQ report on administrative and budgetary coordination of the United Nations, citing the comments of the Director-General of UNESCO, A/35/481, paras. 53-55. See as well comments of FAO cited in the report to CPC, A/37/38, para. 131.

²⁴See, for example, E S C decisions 1979/66, 1979/67, 1979/68, 1980/179, 1980/185, 1981/180, 1982/160, 1983/164, 1984/182, and E S C resolutions 1982/50, 1982/63, 1983/49, 1983/50, 1984/1 and 1984/61 A and B, as well as G A resolutions 33/202, 34/206, 34/212, 34/214, 35/9, 36/200, 36/228 A, 37/67, 37/214, 38/227 B, 39/217, and G A decisions 36/445, 37/442, 37/445 and 38/429.

²⁵See, for example, E S C decisions 1980/179, 1981/180, 1981/181, 1983/160, 1984/101 and resolutions 1982/50, 1983/178, 1984/61 A, as well as G A resolutions 34/224, 35/9, 36/228 B, 37/214, 38/171, 38/227 B, 39/238 and decision 34/451.

and administrative and budgetary matters.²⁶ Efforts to reorganize the work and functioning of the Organization in the wake of the restructuring of the economic and social sectors, for example, continued to result in decisions defining the respective roles of various bodies in the machinery of coordination,²⁷ notably the Economic and Social Council²⁸ and the Second and Third Committees of the General Assembly,²⁹ as well as that of subsidiary bodies.³⁰

11. In regard to programme planning, the Organization continued to emphasize such tools as cross-organizational programme analysis as a basis for recommendations for coordination in the United Nations system.³¹ During the period under review, the application and purpose of cross-organizational programme analysis was further defined in terms of ensuring broader compatibility and complementarity in inter-agency action and the identification of gaps, overlaps and inconsistencies in coverage across the system.³² The General Assembly additionally advocated the integration of procedures for the evaluation and the application of common principles of evaluation within programme planning for organizations of the common system.³³

12. Other matters of specific concern arising during the period under review included, for example, the coordination of public information activities,³⁴ the establishment of international years and anniversaries,³⁵ and the convening of conferences.³⁶ Attention was also given to both

²⁶See, for example, E S C resolutions 1981/63, 1982/71, 1984/11, 1984/12 as well as G A resolutions 36/130, 36/232, 36/233, 37/61, 37/63, 37/126, 37/226, 37/236 A, 38/230, 38/232, 38/233, 38/235, 38/277 B, 39/241, 39/244, 39/245, and decisions 34/438, 38/451 and 38/409.

²⁷See G A resolutions 33/202, 34/214, 34/215, 35/203 and 38/227 B.

²⁸See, for example, E S C decisions 1981/204, 1983/164 and resolutions 1981/84, 1982/50 and 1983/178 as well as G A resolutions 34/214, 36/187, 37/214 and decisions 34/453, 35/439, 36/445, 37/442 and 39/436.

²⁹See, for example, E S C decisions 1983/164 and 1984/182 as well as G A resolution 39/217 and decisions 37/442 and 38/429.

³⁰See, for example, G A resolutions 34/214, 35/9, and E S C decision 1979/67 and resolution 1984/61 B. Other measures reaffirmed the role of various bodies in coordination in the United Nations system. See E S C resolution 1984/61 A, emphasizing the importance of the Committee for Programme and Coordination, and G A resolutions 38/232 respecting the role of ICSC, as well as E S C resolution 1981/512 and G A resolution 36/200, regarding the role of the United Nations Development Programme.

³¹See *Supplement No. 5*, under Article 58, para. 27.

³²See, for example, G A resolution 38/227 B, sect I. See also E S C resolution 1984/61 A, endorsing the recommendations of CPC at its twenty-fourth session. See also G A (39), Suppl. No. 38, para. 48.

³³G A resolutions 33/118, 34/164, 36/228 A and 38/171 in this regard. The principles had been formulated by the Joint Inspection Unit and presented to the General Assembly at its thirty-fourth session. See A/34/271.

³⁴G A resolutions 33/115 B, 34/182 and 38/82.

³⁵See E S C decision 1979/64 and resolution 1980/67. See also G A decisions 35/424 and 39/425.

³⁶See G A resolutions 35/10, 38/32, 39/68 C, and decision 39/419.

compatibility and coordination of information systems among organizations of the United Nations system, including the need for a central coordinating unit under the Administrative Committee on Coordination.³⁷

C. Substantive areas

13. During the period under review, the Organization reiterated the need for coordination in a number of substantive areas. Both the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council maintained an emphasis on issues of development, and the Assembly reaffirmed that development issues should have the highest priority in the coordination efforts of subsidiary bodies of the Organization.³⁸ In that regard, the Assembly continued to make recommendations for action on the part of specialized agencies in respect of economic or geographic circumstances, such as least developed countries³⁹ and island or landlocked States.⁴⁰ Further requests were also made for action in respect of sectoral and functional areas such as science and technology for development,⁴¹ the role of women,⁴² and communication issues in developing countries.⁴³

14. The continued need for coordination was also recognized in connection with a variety of other issues such as: the environment,⁴⁴ where the "catalytic and coordinating role" of the United Nations Environment Programme was reaffirmed;⁴⁵ new and renewable sources of energy;⁴⁶ desertification⁴⁷ and relief from natural and other disasters,⁴⁸ where the role of the United Nations Disaster Relief Coordinator was reaffirmed;⁴⁹ and the implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples by the specialized agencies.⁵⁰

³⁷E S C resolutions 1981/63, 1982/71, and G A resolutions 37/226, 37/237, 38/227 B and 39/242.

³⁸See G A resolution 33/202, sect. II.

³⁹G A resolutions 33/193, 34/203, 36/194 and 37/224.

⁴⁰G A resolutions 34/205 and 37/206.

⁴¹G A resolutions 34/218, 35/67, 36/141 and 37/207. See also the discussion below.

⁴²See, e.g., G A resolutions 34/204 and 36/127. See also E S C resolution 1981/26.

⁴³G A resolutions 37/94, 38/82 and 39/98.

⁴⁴See E S C resolutions 1980/49, 1981/73, 1982/58, and G A resolutions 35/74, 36/192 and 38/165.

⁴⁵See G A resolutions 35/73 and 37/218.

⁴⁶E S C resolution 1979/66 and G A resolutions 33/148, 34/188, 34/190, 35/204, 36/193, 37/250 and 39/173.

⁴⁷E S C resolutions 1982/56, 1984/64, and G A resolutions 37/218 and 39/168 A.

⁴⁸E S C resolutions 1979/59, 1981/178, 1983/47, 1984/60, and G A resolutions 36/225 and 37/144. In this connection, consideration was given to humanitarian relief as well as the need for relief arising from natural disasters. *Ibid.*

⁴⁹E S C resolutions 1979/59, 1984/60, and G A resolution 36/225.

⁵⁰See, for example, E S C resolutions 1979/50, 1980/50, 1981/54, and G A resolutions 33/41, 34/42, 35/29, 36/52, 36/68, 38/51 and 38/54. The original declaration was contained in G A resolution 1514 (XV) of 14 December 1960.

15. During the period under review, new emphasis was placed, in the context of development, on participation by the organizations of the United Nations system in the formulation, implementation and revision of the International Development Strategy for the Third United Nations Development Decade in the light of the trend of the world economy.⁵¹ A number of resolutions placed particular emphasis on regional action in relation to social and economic development for Africa.⁵² Those recommendations emphasized the need for coordination in Africa, for example, in connection with sectoral and financial assistance,⁵³ the elimination of apartheid,⁵⁴ the coordination of activities under the Economic Commission for Africa⁵⁵ and assistance to a number of individual States.⁵⁶

16. Following the adoption of the Final Document of the Tenth Special Session of the General Assembly, on disarmament,⁵⁷ in 1978, the General Assembly gave new attention to the coordination of issues of disarmament. It called for a study of the scope of participation and management of the issue in the United Nations system and invited the specialized agencies to contribute to issues of arms limitation and disarmament.⁵⁸ Additional emphasis was also placed on cooperation in activities related, for example, to the peaceful uses of outer space⁵⁹ and the dissemination of information on human rights and racial discrimination.⁶⁰

⁵¹See, for example, G A resolutions 33/193, 34/138, 35/56 and 37/202.

⁵²Additional consideration of this topic can be found in the present *Supplement*, under Article 63.

⁵³G A resolutions 35/64, 36/80, 38/199, and E S C resolution 1983/65. These recommendations were made in the context of the implementation of the Lagos Plan of Action for the Monrovia Strategy for the Economic Development of Africa adopted by the Organization for African Unity.

⁵⁴See G A resolutions 37/69 and 38/39.

⁵⁵See E S C resolution 1982/63 and G A resolution 37/214. In addition, the Council made several recommendations for action by the General Assembly with respect to the Transport and Communication Decade for Africa. See E S C resolutions 1979/61, 1981/67 and 1983/70, regarding the Industrial Development Decade for Africa.

⁵⁶At its thirty-sixth session, for example, the General Assembly requested that appropriate organizations assist a number of African States, including Benin, Botswana, Chad and Zimbabwe. See G A resolutions 36/208, 36/210, 36/222 and 36/223.

⁵⁷G A resolution S/10-2. This was the first special session devoted entirely to the subject.

⁵⁸See G A resolutions 34/87, 35/46, 37/78, 38/188, sect. J, and 39/151 E.

⁵⁹G A resolutions 34/66, 35/14, 37/90, 38/80 and 39/96.

⁶⁰See E S C resolutions 1980/30, 1984/43 and E S C decision 1982/138, as well as G A resolutions 34/28 and 39/16.

II. ANALYTICAL SUMMARY OF PRACTICE

A. The making of recommendations for coordination in the administrative and organizational machinery

1. RECOMMENDATIONS IN THE MACHINERY OF COORDINATION

17. In General Assembly resolution 32/197, the Organization had sought a comprehensive restructuring of the economic and social sectors, including a redefinition of its role in coordination in the United Nations system.⁶¹ Efforts directed towards this aim continued to have an impact on the organizational machinery of the system during the period under review. It was recognized at the outset of the period that progress on implementation of restructuring measures had in some respects been slow, implying that further action was necessary on the part of bodies of the United Nations system.⁶² Both the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council adopted decisions for more specific follow up of implementation measures including periodic review,⁶³ and consideration as an agenda item.⁶⁴ In this respect, restructuring efforts were closely identified with the need for greater exercise on the part of the Organization as a whole in the overall coordination of policies and harmonization of activities within the wider functions the United Nations system had now assumed.⁶⁵

(a) Principal organs

18. The framework for restructuring endorsed by the General Assembly at its thirty-second session had emphasized further definition of the respective roles and the rationalization of the work of the principal organs. From the outset of the period under review, both the General Assembly and the Council gave consideration to the procedure for and methodology of consideration of items, including the respective allocation of issues.

19. At its thirty-fourth session, the General Assembly undertook the rationalization of the work of its Main Committees, particularly the distribution of items between its Second and Third Committees, and the possible allocation of items to the Economic and Social Council for consideration and final decision.⁶⁶ In that connection, following the failure of the Council to reach agreement on the implementation of restructuring,⁶⁷ the General Assembly began the consideration of measures to increase the

effectiveness of the Council and its role in the United Nations system.⁶⁸ Following intersessional consultations,⁶⁹ the Council decided to accord primary importance to the subject of its revitalization,⁷⁰ placing the issue on the provisional agenda of its organizational session in 1982.⁷¹

20. Following that decision, the Secretary-General presented a series of recommendations on streamlining the procedure for the consideration of reports and recommendations within and between the principal organs of the Organization, and especially between the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council.⁷² The recommendations were endorsed by the Council in its resolution 1982/50.⁷³ In the same resolution, the Council also decided to undertake a number of measures towards implementing restructuring and enhancing its role in the coordination of activities of the United Nations system. These included a cross-sectoral review of the activities and programmes of organizations of the system to ensure compatibility and complementarity, a review of the medium-term plans of the organizations, and the formulation of recommendations to the General Assembly on relative priorities in the economic and social fields.⁷⁴ The Council also decided to focus on a limited number of selected policy issues, emphasizing its role in assisting the preparation of the work of the General Assembly and its focus on regional policy and coordination efforts.⁷⁵ The decision of the Council in the latter respect was welcomed by the General Assembly in its decision 37/442, on the recommendation of the Second and Fifth Committees,⁷⁶ with a call for consultations between the President of the General Assembly and the President of the Economic and Social Council on the further organization and rationalization of the work of the intergovernmental bodies of the common system.⁷⁷

⁶⁸The General Assembly considered a draft resolution that would have sought amendment of the Charter of the United Nations to expand the membership of the Council to include all States Members of the United Nations, recognizing the "imperative need" for the General Assembly to reduce its consideration of some issues and expressing the view that expansion of its membership would make the Council more effective in fulfilling its responsibilities under the Charter. See G A decisions 34/453 and 35/439. By its decision 36/445, the General Assembly deferred consideration of the proposal; the matter was then further deferred to its forty-second session by Assembly decision 39/436. Further consideration of this issue is given in the study of Article 61 in the present *Supplement*.

⁶⁹See E S C resolution 1981/84. See also G A decision 35/439.

⁷⁰E S C resolution 1981/84.

⁷¹E S C decision 1981/204.

⁷²E/1982/28.

⁷³The General Assembly also endorsed these recommendations. See decision 37/445.

⁷⁴E S C resolution 1982/50, para. 1(f). See also discussion of this topic in the study of Article 63 in the present *Supplement*.

⁷⁵E S C resolution 1982/50, para. 1 (a) and (b). See also, e.g., E S C resolution 1982/63 on restructuring efforts with respect to Africa.

⁷⁶A/37/680/Add.7, para. 15, and A/37/783, para. 7.

⁷⁷See G A decision 37/442, sect. I. See also discussion below.

⁶¹See discussion in *Supplement No. 5*, under Article 58.

⁶²See, e.g., G A resolution 33/202.

⁶³See G A resolution 33/202, sect. VI, para. 2, and G A resolution 39/217, para. 6. See also E S C resolution 1982/50, para. 1.

⁶⁴G A resolution 34/212.

⁶⁵See G A resolution 32/197 and *Supplement No. 5*, under Article 58, para. 54. See also, e.g., G A decision 37/442 and E S C resolutions 1981/64 and 1982/50.

⁶⁶See G A resolution 34/212. By its decision 1979/57, the Council informed the General Assembly that it was unable to reach agreement with respect to the section of the annex to resolution 32/197 concerned with redefining its duties and responsibilities in restructuring.

⁶⁷Idem.

21. Further to those decisions, the Economic and Social Council presented recommendations on the organization of the work of the Second Committee of the General Assembly and the working relationship between the Council and the Committee, highlighting the need to make debates in the Committee more meaningful.⁷⁸ With respect to the Second Committee, the Council recommended that the General Assembly consider a biennial programme of work for the Second Committee, identifying questions for consideration in alternate years with action-oriented debate, resulting in draft resolutions that concentrated on policy issues. In addition, the Council sought to define its own role in assisting the work of the Second Committee by identifying issues on which it would take final decision, those issues it would transmit to the Assembly without debate, and those on which it would prepare the substantive work and make recommendations for action to the Assembly.⁷⁹

22. By its decision 38/429, the Assembly endorsed the above recommendations of the Economic and Social Council, adopting a biennial programme of work for the Second Committee as from its fortieth session and requesting the Council to consider and make recommendations for the consideration of questions for substantive consideration by the General Assembly in alternate years.⁸⁰ At its thirty-ninth session, the General Assembly took note of the recommendations of the Council⁸¹ and decided that the Second Committee in drawing up a biennial work programme, should also adopt a biennial cycle for the consideration of reports of intergovernmental bodies, with the exception of the annual reports of the Council, the Trade Development Board and UNDP. The Assembly further decided that requests for Secretariat reports and the cycle of meetings of intergovernmental bodies should also conform to the biennial programme of work of the Committee.⁸² The General Assembly furthermore emphasized the need for coordination between the Council and the Second Committee in their consideration of issues, requesting the Council to take fully into account the approved work programme of the Second Committee in formulating its own programme of work. With regard to the rationalization of work between the Main Committees and the Economic and Social Council, the Assembly recommended that the Council concentrate its own consideration of reports of intergovernmental bodies on the coordination aspect of the work of those bodies, in conformity with the relevant provisions of the Charter.⁸³ As such, the Council's consideration was to include in-depth review and substantive

⁷⁸E S C decision 1983/164, sect. I.

⁷⁹Ibid., sect. II.

⁸⁰By its decision 1984/182, the Council made recommendations for the biennial consideration of reports by the Second Committee with some exceptions for the reports of the Council, the Trade Development Board and UNDP, with the Council taking action and submitting recommendations to the Second Committee on reports not considered directly by the General Assembly that year. Ibid., annex. The Council also requested the Secretary-General to prepare a draft biennial programme of work for the Second Committee and submit it to the General Assembly.

⁸¹See note 80 above.

⁸²G A resolution 39/217, paras. 1, 3 and 4.

⁸³Ibid., para. 6.

recommendations for action on reports not being considered by the General Assembly in a given year.⁸⁴

23. In his report to the General Assembly at its thirty-ninth session prepared pursuant to Assembly decision 37/442, the Secretary-General, citing the urgent need for measures to enable the Assembly to play a central role in the economic and social sectors, recommended a more systematic identification of priorities and the distribution of competence between the Second and Third Committees, in which the Second Committee would focus on economic policy and the Third Committee would concentrate on social policy.⁸⁵ In that context, the Secretary-General urged that the functioning of the Council should be streamlined, particularly with regard to its coordination responsibility, by strengthening intergovernmental negotiating forums such as the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development and ensuring their close interaction with the Council and the General Assembly.⁸⁶

24. Additional emphasis was placed on the administrative role of the Secretary-General in implementing the overall aims and policy of restructuring within the United Nations system during the period under review.⁸⁷ Both the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council called upon the Secretary-General, in that role, to actively implement the mandate for the decentralization of economic and social activities. The Secretary-General was therefore requested to streamline and redeploy resources to the regional commissions, which were now accorded the status of executing agencies in their own right for activities not already under the purview of a particular specialized agency,⁸⁸ and to arrange for measures for cooperation between bodies at the regional level, including operational and intercountry activities.⁸⁹

25. Emphasis was also placed on the role of the Secretary-General in formulating recommendations, examining the implementation of mandates and proposing new measures.⁹⁰ At its thirty-sixth session, the General Assembly requested that the Secretary-General prepare proposals on rules and regulations with respect to programme planning in the United Nations system.⁹¹ In the

⁸⁴Ibid. This would presumably include not only substantive issues but organizational ones as well, including the issue of restructuring itself within the United Nations system, as the matter would be considered under the approved programme of work every three years by the Second Committee. Ibid., annex I, sect. D, and note 62.

⁸⁵A/39/476, para. 24.

⁸⁶The Council and the General Assembly took note of these recommendations. See G A decision 39/437 and E S C decision 1984/178.

⁸⁷See, e.g., G A resolution 33/202, sect. IV, para. 4.

⁸⁸Ibid., sect. V. This included projects and activities at the intersectoral, subregional, regional, and interregional level. Ibid., para. 3.

⁸⁹Ibid., sect. IV. See also E S C resolution 1979/64. These recommendations were reiterated by both the General Assembly and the Council. See G A resolution 34/206 and E S C decision 1982/63.

⁹⁰See, for example, the discussion above on rationalization of work between the General Assembly and the Council.

⁹¹G A resolution 36/228. See also, for example, G A decision

regional context, following a report by the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) on the Economic Commission for Africa that recommended new approaches to regional and subregional programming and management among organizations of the common system,⁹² the Secretary-General was called upon to investigate, in consultation with specialized agencies, the scope of restructuring and new approaches to regionalization and decentralization within it.⁹³

26. A key focus of the role of the Secretary-General lay in defining the authority and responsibility under him of the position of Director-General for Development and International Economic Cooperation. As mandated under General Assembly resolution 32/197, the Director-General served, under the Secretary-General's authority as the chief administrative officer under the Charter, to ensure effective leadership on the part of the United Nations in issues of development and international economic cooperation, exercising overall coordination on a system-wide basis.⁹⁴ The responsibility of the Director-General in that regard was reaffirmed by the General Assembly in its resolution 33/202,⁹⁵ in which it called for the Director-General to be fully utilized in coordinating development programmes system-wide, specifically urging the specialized agencies in that context to offer their full and effective cooperation and assistance.⁹⁶

27. Despite some of the concerns of the specialized agencies specified by the Secretary-General in his report,⁹⁷ the General Assembly, while noting those concerns, requested that the Secretary-General ensure, in accordance with the recommendations outlined in his report, that the provisions for the role of Director-General under the annex to resolution 32/197 were fully complied with.⁹⁸ In that context, the General Assembly highlighted the role of the position of the Director-General in establishing policy-related guidelines for all activities of United Nations services and organs, "particularly from the point of view of their policy and institutional implications for the Organization as a whole".⁹⁹

28. In a report to the General Assembly at its thirty-sixth session, the JIU noted the need for further clarification and specification of the role of the Director-General in relationship to other United Nations entities in reporting and consultative arrangements, recommending the issuance of an official bulletin defining his function and authority.¹⁰⁰

34/419, requesting the Secretary-General to report with conclusions and recommendations on a unified approach to social and economic development.

⁹²A/37/119. The JIU included a recommendation to consider the possible creation of joint divisions between ECA and various specialized agencies. *Ibid.*, p. 33, recommendation 8(c). For the comments of the Secretary-General on this report, see A/37/119/Add.1.

⁹³G A resolution 37/214.

⁹⁴G A resolution 32/197, annex, sect. VIII, para. 64(a).

⁹⁵G A resolution 33/202, sect. I, para. 5. See also G A resolution 34/215, para. 2, and resolution 38/171, para. 34.

⁹⁶G A resolution 33/202, sect. IV, paras. 5(a) and 7.

⁹⁷See para. 9 above.

⁹⁸G A resolution 35/203, para. 6.

⁹⁹*Ibid.*, para. 7.

¹⁰⁰A/36/419. In his comments on the JIU report, the Secretary-

During the period under review, the responsibility of the Director-General was further identified with coordinating the implementation of programmes and planning in related substantive areas, such as with respect to the environment¹⁰¹ or new and renewable sources of energy.¹⁰²

(b) *Subsidiary bodies*

29. During the period under review, action taken with respect to the functioning of the principal organs was accompanied by efforts to restructure the role and function of their supporting machinery. This effort included recommendations with respect to redefining the roles of existing bodies involved in the coordination process as well as the introduction of new roles or bodies in the coordination machinery.

30. During the reporting period, the Administrative Committee on Coordination continued to exercise its main functions of ensuring the coordination of activities in the programming and administrative sectors of inter-agency concern. In that respect, the process of its restructuring continued.¹⁰³ The General Assembly, in its resolution 33/202, specifically requested that ACC keep its ad hoc subsidiary machinery to a minimum, requesting the Secretary-General to act to strengthen the involvement of regional commissions in ACC.¹⁰⁴ The revised structure of ACC, proposed the previous year,¹⁰⁵ was put in place with the first meetings of its two main consultative committees: the Consultative Committee on Substantive Questions (CCSQ), to deal with programme and related policy matters, and the Consultative Committee on Administrative Questions (CCAQ). Under each of these bodies, two subsidiary components prepared work in distinct areas of responsibility. Under CCAQ, work was divided between one body concerned with personnel questions (CCAQ(PER.)) and one dealing with financial and budgetary matters (CCAQ(FB)). CCSQ had one body dealing with programme and policy matters (CCSQ(PROG.)) and one on operational activities (CCSQ(OPS.)).

31. In addition, consideration was given to the functioning of subsidiary bodies of ACC in substantive areas of inter-agency coordination, notably in connection with information systems. At the thirty-fourth session of the General Assembly, the JIU presented a report on the Inter-Organization Board for Information Systems (IOB), in which it recommended measures to strengthen IOB by revising its terms of reference so that IOB would be charged, under the direction of ACC, with identifying common

General acknowledged the need for clearer specification of authority to enable the Director-General to exercise his responsibility. By its decision 37/442, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to implement the recommendations of the JIU with respect to the role of the Director-General.

¹⁰¹G A resolutions 36/192 and 36/179. See also E S C resolution 1980/49.

¹⁰²See *Nairobi Programme of Action on New and Renewable Sources of Energy* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.81.1.24), paras. 62-65. See also G A resolution 36/193.

¹⁰³See *Supplement No. 5*, under Article 58, paras. 33-39.

¹⁰⁴G A resolution 33/202, sect. II, para. 2, and sect. V, para. 4.

¹⁰⁵See *Supplement No. 5*, under Article 58, para. 39.

information needs among members of the United Nations system and would initiate measures to coordinate the development of information systems.¹⁰⁶ In that respect both CPC and the joint meeting of ACC and CPC stressed an enhanced role of IOB in actively coordinating information systems issues.¹⁰⁷

32. However, by its decision 1981/3, ACC decided to terminate the operational functions and secretariat of IOB, continuing the Board as a clearing house and forum for the exchange of experience.¹⁰⁸ CPC expressed dissatisfaction with the ACC action, recommending that ACC review its decisions and calling for ACC to submit measures to the Economic and Social Council at its next session on enhancing coordination in information systems.¹⁰⁹ The recommendation of CPC was endorsed by the Council in its resolution 1981/63, in which it called upon ACC to propose cost-effective means for ensuring the compatibility of information systems. Following a revised proposal by ACC on strengthening the coordination of information systems in the United Nations system,¹¹⁰ the Council, at its second session in 1982, urged ACC to create a small central mechanism with the functions of: reviewing and advising on the creation or substantial modifications to information systems impacting more than one organization; developing a register of development activities; and ensuring the application of information technology in a coordinated fashion.¹¹¹ In 1983, ACC established the Advisory Committee for Coordination of Information Systems (ACCIS)¹¹² as an inter-secretariat body of representatives from each member organization guided by a steering committee focusing on information tools for accessing information on the United Nations system and assisting agencies in the preliminary and design stages of inter-agency systems.¹¹³ The action by ACC was noted by the Council.¹¹⁴

33. Consideration was also given to the role and functioning of ACC itself. As a general recommendation, CPC had advocated that ACC devote greater attention to

¹⁰⁶A/34/153.

¹⁰⁷CPC expressed concern over the fact that administrative and substantive information systems were not coordinated and were often incompatible, recommending that the IOB identify the needs and formulate proposals for the coordination of both. G A (34), Suppl. No. 38, chap. IV, sect. B, chap. V, sect. J, and chap. VIII, sect. D. At the joint meeting of the ACC/CPC, there was general agreement on the need for IOB to set policies and priorities for greater uniformity in the United Nations system. See E/1979/86, chap. II.

¹⁰⁸See E/1981/37 and Corr.1, para. 20. ACC cited the conclusion of the Chairman of IOB that the value of the body was not commensurate with the effort. *Ibid.*, para. 18. See also the present *Supplement*, under Article 63, para. 12.

¹⁰⁹G A (36), Suppl. No. 38. The report of ACC following this request recommended that UNESCO assume responsibility for servicing IOB with CCSQ assuming overall responsibility.

¹¹⁰E/1982/85. This included an inter-agency advisory committee and secretariat and the use of specialized panels to examine the use of common communication systems.

¹¹¹E S C resolution 1982/71.

¹¹²E/1983/48. The question of establishment had been discussed by a joint meeting of CCSQ(PROG.) and CCSQ(OPS.).

¹¹³*Ibid.*

¹¹⁴E S C decision 1983/175. See also G A resolution 38/227 B.

substantive questions rather than to administrative and personnel matters, which were covered by expert bodies.¹¹⁵ At its twenty-third session, CPC also recommended that ACC reports should emphasize action required by United Nations organizations, not member States, with greater emphasis on programme management problems and solutions.¹¹⁶ The recommendations were endorsed by both the Economic and Social Council¹¹⁷ and the General Assembly.¹¹⁸

34. In the light of the recommendation in General Assembly resolution 32/197, particular emphasis was placed on improved communication between ACC and intergovernmental bodies.¹¹⁹ Following informal consultations between members of the Economic and Social Council and representatives of the United Nations organizations on the matter, the Council, in its decision 1980/185, recommended to the General Assembly that improvement should be sought first within existing mechanisms, notably the joint meetings of ACC and CPC. In a complementary decision, the Council requested that CPC pursue implementation of the recommendations directed towards it in the annex to resolution 32/197, emphasizing the need for closer cooperation between CPC and ACC.¹²⁰ In its resolution 34/214, the General Assembly called upon the Council to work out procedures for improving communication between ACC and other intergovernmental bodies, including CPC.

35. In that connection, the practice of holding joint meetings continued during the period under review, and was reaffirmed as a means of facilitating communication within the Organization between different bodies concerned with coordination, specifically ACC and intergovernmental bodies.¹²¹ While the joint meetings served to review activities both of an organizational nature¹²² and in substantive areas,¹²³ consideration was given to measures of improvement.

36. At its organizational session in 1983, the Economic and Social Council decided to review the functioning of joint meetings,¹²⁴ and called for recommendations. At its twenty-third session, CPC proposed several measures, including the selection of topics six months in advance, the inclusion of a subject on the agenda of CPC under cross-organization

¹¹⁵G A (35), Suppl. No. 38. See also A/37/439, in which the Secretary-General called for a clearer distinction between the discussion of substantive and managerial issues by ACC.

¹¹⁶G A (38), Suppl. No. 38.

¹¹⁷E S C decision 1983/160.

¹¹⁸G A resolution 38/227.

¹¹⁹See G A resolutions 34/214 and 35/9. See also G A resolution 32/197, annex, para. 56, regarding the initial impetus for such efforts in the context of restructuring.

¹²⁰See G A resolution 33/202, sect. III, para. 2.

¹²¹See E S C decision 1980/185. See also G A resolution 34/214.

¹²²See, for example, the discussion above regarding IOB.

¹²³See E S C resolution 1984/1, recommending consideration at the joint meeting of the implementation of the International Development Strategy for the Third United Nations Development Decade with system-wide implications and with special emphasis on Africa.

¹²⁴E S C decision 1983/173. This decision was endorsed by the General Assembly. See G A resolution 38/227 B.

programme analysis that year, and follow-up reports by ACC on measures taken to implement prior recommendations.¹²⁵ Despite some progress, CPC and ACC, in the report of the nineteenth Joint Meeting in 1984, cited continued and considerable dissatisfaction with the functioning of the joint meetings.¹²⁶ In that regard, the Council expressed the view that further progress could be made, especially in achieving real dialogue, and stressed the value of the joint meetings, namely "that the Joint Meetings should highlight the problems and difficulties faced by the specialized agencies".¹²⁷

37. Restructuring efforts also placed particular emphasis on the role of the regional commissions as "the main economic and social development centres within the United Nations system for their respective regions".¹²⁸ By its resolution 33/202, the General Assembly decided to accord the regional commissions the status of executing agencies in their own right with respect to intersectoral, subregional and interregional projects and, notably in the context of coordination within the United Nations system as a whole, those activities or projects not otherwise under the purview of specialized agencies.¹²⁹ The Assembly also called upon the Secretary-General to proceed expeditiously with the decentralization of programme planning activities to the regional commissions¹³⁰ and to rationalize and streamline administrative resources, particularly by redeployment to the regional commissions.¹³¹

38. The General Assembly also underscored the role of other bodies and programmes of the United Nations with respect to restructuring, particularly in the context of the decentralization of activities and programme planning. For example, by its resolution 34/213 the Assembly decided that the resident representative of the United Nations Development Programme should normally serve as the resident coordinator, with overall responsibility for coordination in operational activities for development within the United Nations system at the country level consistent with national objectives.¹³² In that role, the UNDP resident representative would be responsible for integrating sectoral inputs and maximizing uniformity in administrative, financial and procurement procedures for activities at the country level,¹³³ though that competence was not to affect the relationship between Governments and individual organizations of the common system or the lines of authority

¹²⁵G A (38), Suppl. No. 38. These were endorsed by the General Assembly at its thirty-eighth session. See G A resolution 38/228 B, sect. I. See also E S C resolution 1984/1.

¹²⁶E/1984/119, para. 49.

¹²⁷E S C resolution 1984/61 B.

¹²⁸G A resolution 34/206, para. 2. See also G A resolution 32/197, annex, sect. IV, para. 19.

¹²⁹Ibid., sect. V, para. 3.

¹³⁰Ibid., para. 4.

¹³¹Ibid., sect. IV, para. 8. See also G A resolution 34/206, para. 3, and E S C resolution 1979/64, reiterating this request.

¹³²See paras. 3-6 above.

¹³³Pursuant to G A resolution 32/197, this would involve a common procurement system, harmonized budget and programme cycles, a unified personnel system and common recruitment and training. The General Assembly specifically requested the Secretary-General to ensure that the resident coordinator was enabled to carry out such functions. G A resolution 34/213, para. 6.

therein.¹³⁴ The General Assembly also invited the Administrator of UNDP and the President of the World Bank to examine possibilities for cooperation between UNDP and other institutions to ensure greater utilization of facilities available in organizations of the United Nations system.¹³⁵

2. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE COORDINATION OF PROGRAMME PLANNING AND EVALUATION

39. A related issue was efforts in regard to programme planning and evaluation within the United Nations system.¹³⁶ Prior to the period under review, the Organization had given specific consideration to the issue of programme planning across the United Nations system, with recommendations on harmonization in that regard made by CPC.¹³⁷ During the current period under review, the Organization continued to consider programme planning from a system-wide perspective. At its nineteenth session, CPC carried out an in-depth study on programme planning within the Organization, laying some emphasis on tailoring planning within the Organization to the needs of system-wide joint planning.¹³⁸ In that context, CPC recommended principles and guidelines for medium-term planning, including highlighting the policy orientation of the United Nations system and a deductive planning process taking into account the needs of inter-agency coordination and deriving its orientation, strategy, goals and activities from the objectives and policy of the United Nations system.¹³⁹ Those recommendations were endorsed by the General Assembly in its resolution 34/224.

40. During the period under review, additional emphasis was placed on the development of overall system-wide approaches to programme planning. By its resolution 35/9, the General Assembly reaffirmed the need to afford the specialized agencies the opportunity to discuss problems of mutual interest at the meetings of both CPC and ACC in the context of medium-term planning, requesting in addition the personal participation of the heads of specialized agencies.¹⁴⁰ By its resolution 1982/50, the Economic and Social Council also declared its intention to enhance its role in coordination through the cross-sectoral review of

¹³⁴G A resolution 34/213, para. 6.

¹³⁵G A resolution 38/171, para. 23.

¹³⁶The issue of programme planning itself within the United Nations system had been specifically identified as an important feature of the overall restructuring mandate. See G A resolution 32/197, annex, sect. VI.

¹³⁷See G A (33), Suppl. No. 38, paras. 46 and 49. These were approved by the General Assembly in its resolution 33/118, para. 10. Previously the Assembly had made specific provision in the statute for the Joint Inspection Unit to evaluate and advise all organizations of the United Nations system on the application of evaluation techniques. G A resolution 31/192, annex, art. 5, para. 4. See also JIU report on evaluation in the United Nations system, A/33/225.

¹³⁸See G A (34), Suppl. No. 38, para. 26, and conclusions under para. 304. This had been emphasized by CPC at its previous session. See G A (33), Suppl. No. 38, paras. 2 and 3.

¹³⁹See G A (34), Suppl. No. 38, paras. 79 and 304.

¹⁴⁰G A resolution 35/9, paras. 10 and 11. See also E S C decision 1980/185, calling for consultations on improving communication between intergovernmental bodies and ACC with representatives of the specialized agencies.

activities and programmes of the organizations of the United Nations system in order to ensure that the work of United Nations programmes and agencies was compatible and mutually complementary. Furthermore, by its resolution 1982/78, the Council decided to review one or more sectors of the medium-term plans of organizations of the United Nations system.

41. The General Assembly also reiterated a set of principles to be uniformly applied in the programming of resources during the period,¹⁴¹ including: equity in distribution, the rendering of assistance only in response to the express needs of the recipient, and programming to be integrated in a process including project formulation, assessment, approval and evaluation.¹⁴² In that context, the General Assembly urged the organizations of the United Nations system to take steps to ensure the harmonization of administrative, financial, personnel planning and procurement procedures, requesting the Director-General for Development and International Economic Cooperation to report annually on action taken in that regard.¹⁴³

42. The integration of evaluation clearly featured in the system-wide approach to programme planning.¹⁴⁴ The General Assembly had specifically made provision within the Statute of the Joint Inspection Unit¹⁴⁵ for the consideration of evaluation methods within organizations of the system. In that context, JIU had reported to the General Assembly at its thirty-third session with recommendations for provisions for internal evaluation across the system, including the elaboration of a standard definition of evaluation itself.¹⁴⁶ Following the endorsement of these recommendations by the Assembly,¹⁴⁷ the JIU reported to the Assembly at its thirty-fourth session with initial guidelines defining a common framework of principles for internal evaluation.¹⁴⁸ They were in turn approved by the General Assembly, which recommended their application throughout the United Nations system.¹⁴⁹ Furthermore, by its resolution 36/228 on programme planning, the General Assembly emphasized its support for the JIU reports on the status of implementation of evaluation in organizations of the United Nations system¹⁵⁰ and recommended that the organizations concerned take steps to implement the JIU recommendations, in particular those concerning self-evaluation and the integration of evaluation in the planning and management of activities.¹⁵¹

¹⁴¹G A resolution 38/171. These principles recalled an earlier consensus adopted by the General Assembly in resolution 2688 (XXV), annex, and decision 80/30 of the Governing Council of UNDP.

¹⁴²G A resolution 38/171, para. 18.

¹⁴³Ibid., para. 28.

¹⁴⁴Ibid., para. 18.

¹⁴⁵See note 137 above.

¹⁴⁶See A/33/225, paras. 64-72. In this context, JIU also examined the current use of evaluation measures within the various specialized agencies and organizations of the system. Ibid., annexes I-XIV.

¹⁴⁷G A resolution 33/118.

¹⁴⁸See A/34/271.

¹⁴⁹G A resolution 34/164.

¹⁵⁰See A/36/181 and A/36/182.

¹⁵¹G A resolution 36/228, sect. A (I), para. 3. By its resolution

43. With respect to programme planning in the United Nations system, both the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council also made recommendations for consideration of the issue of decentralization. While initial concern following resolution 32/197 focused on substantive activities, the Council, by its resolution 1981/66, had called for an intensification of decentralization efforts, including the devolution of administrative and management responsibility along with substantive activities. By its resolution 1982/63, the Council decided to examine decentralization further, requesting the General Assembly to consider additional measures for its implementation, particularly in the context of Africa. Subsequently, the General Assembly called upon the Secretary-General to examine progress on decentralization and investigate new approaches to regional and subregional programming and management of intercountry projects of the United Nations system in conjunction with the organizations of the common system.¹⁵²

44. Further emphasis was placed on the inclusion of operational activities within systemic approaches to programme planning. The Economic and Social Council included a comprehensive review of operational activities in the United Nations system in undertaking its role in the overall coordination of activities and implementing the coordination of policy.¹⁵³ The General Assembly, by its resolution 38/171, also reaffirmed the important contribution of operational activities to development, urging the organizations of the United Nations system to attach priority to operational activities in their plans and programmes. It also pointed to the importance of technical cooperation programmes with organizations of the common system. The Assembly invited the Administrator of UNDP and the President of the World Bank to examine possibilities of cooperation between UNDP and the multilateral institutions, urging those organizations towards greater utilization of the resources of the United Nations system and the orientation of their programmes and projects towards strengthening such cooperation.¹⁵⁴

3. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE COORDINATION OF ADMINISTRATIVE AND BUDGETARY MATTERS

45. During the period under review, the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council considered a number of measures bearing on the methodology, standards and practices within the United Nations system. While such harmonization was urged in general for the organizations,¹⁵⁵ specific measures were directed towards certain areas of administration in the system.

38/171, the General Assembly recognized evaluation as an important part of programming with respect to operational activities for development in the United Nations system.

¹⁵²G A resolution 37/214, para. 3 (a) and (b). In its consideration, CPC concluded that additional analysis was needed. G A (38), Suppl. No. 38, paras. 330-333. See also G A resolution 39/238.

¹⁵³E S C resolution 1982/50. For a further examination of operational activities in the United Nations system, see the present Supplement, under Article 66(2).

¹⁵⁴G A resolution 38/171, paras. 23 and 24.

¹⁵⁵See G A resolution 38/171.

(a) *Personnel questions*

46. During the period under review, the General Assembly continued to emphasize the need for the harmonization of policies and practices with respect to personnel within the United Nations system. One aspect of this effort was reflected in the consideration given to the establishment of a single administrative tribunal. On the recommendation of its Fifth (Administrative and Budgetary) Committee,¹⁵⁶ the General Assembly requested that the Secretary-General, in conjunction with ACC, pursue the progressive harmonization and further development of the statutes, rules and practices of the Administrative Tribunal of the International Labour Organization and the United Nations Administrative Tribunal with a view to strengthening the common system towards the establishment of a single tribunal.¹⁵⁷

47. By its resolution 37/129, the General Assembly, taking note of the report of the Secretary-General on the feasibility of establishing a single administrative tribunal,¹⁵⁸ requested that the Secretary-General continue consultations towards strengthening the common system also with the aim of reducing associated administrative costs. The Assembly further requested that the Secretary-General present interim reports to the Assembly at future sessions upon the completion of the consultations.¹⁵⁹

48. On the basis of the conclusions of the Legal Adviser, the Secretary-General reported to the General Assembly at its thirty-eighth session that he was now in a position to prepare, in consultation with the Director-General of the International Labour Organization, a set of proposals regarding the instruments governing the two Tribunals and their practices. The proposals would first of all be presented for comment to all organizations subject to either or both Tribunals, as well as to the members of those bodies and the staff of the United Nations through the Staff-Management Coordination Committee, with other executive heads expected to do likewise. At the conclusion of the process, the proposed reforms would be submitted to the General Assembly at its thirty-ninth session.¹⁶⁰ At its thirty-ninth session, on the recommendation of the Fifth Committee,¹⁶¹ the Assembly decided to defer consideration of the Secretary-General's proposed reforms¹⁶² to its fortieth session, and to consider how to proceed with the matter at that session.¹⁶³

49. Another issue with respect to personnel policy was the harmonization of personnel policy within the common system of salaries, allowances and other conditions of service under the auspices of the International Civil Service

¹⁵⁶See A/34/771, para. 123.

¹⁵⁷G A decision 34/438.

¹⁵⁸A/C.5/37/23.

¹⁵⁹At the thirty-sixth session, the Secretary-General noted that consultations were incomplete and that reviewing the procedure would be inappropriate in view of the pending proceedings before the International Court of Justice. A/C.5/36/23.

¹⁶⁰See A/C.5/38/26, especially para. 4. See also G A decision 38/409.

¹⁶¹A/39/842, para. 12.

¹⁶²A/C.5/39/7 and Corr. 1.

¹⁶³G A decision 39/450.

Commission.¹⁶⁴ During the period under review, the General Assembly reiterated its recommendations to organizations to cooperate in the implementation of the decisions and recommendations of ICSC.¹⁶⁵ In that context, the General Assembly requested the Commission to conduct a fundamental and comprehensive review of the post adjustment system.¹⁶⁶ All organizations of the common system were further called upon to bring matters of salary, allowances, benefits and other conditions of employment to the attention of ICSC to ensure their uniform application throughout the common system.¹⁶⁷ At its thirty-ninth session, the General Assembly further considered the issue of harmonization with respect to the principle of equitable geographical distribution, calling upon the legislative bodies of all organizations of the United Nations system to examine implementation as soon as possible.¹⁶⁸

50. A somewhat related matter concerned coordination with respect to pensions across the United Nations system.¹⁶⁹ In that regard, the General Assembly requested that ICSC and the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Board submit proposals for correcting anomalies.¹⁷⁰ Directing its comments to ILO, the General Assembly specifically drew attention to the need for unity, cohesion and integrity in the United Nations joint staff pension system and the need to avoid action which might have an adverse effect.¹⁷¹

51. An additional area of the concern was the matter of the privileges and immunities of the international civil service. By its resolution 36/232, the General Assembly requested that the Secretary-General and the executive heads of the organizations concerned ensure that staff observe the obligations incumbent upon them under the relevant staff rules and regulations and the respective Conventions on the Privileges and Immunities of the United Nations, and of the Specialized Agencies.¹⁷² The Assembly also requested the Secretary-General to act as a focal point in promoting the

¹⁶⁴See G A resolution 38/232. At its thirty-third session, in 1978, the General Assembly had urged all of the organizations of the United Nations common system to refrain from actions which detracted from the strengthening and development of the common system, reaffirming the objective of developing a single unified international civil service through the application of common personnel standards, methods and arrangements.

¹⁶⁵See G A resolution 35/214, sect. II, para. 3, and G A resolution 38/232, sect. I, para. 1.

¹⁶⁶See G A resolution 34/165, sect. I, para. 2. G A resolution 35/214 called for intensification of efforts in this regard.

¹⁶⁷G A resolution 38/232, sect. I, para. 3. By its resolution 39/69, the General Assembly, noting implementation of the recommendations of ICSC, requested the Commission to review the practice among the organizations of the common system regarding long service steps for the Professional categories.

¹⁶⁸G A resolution 39/245, para. 8.

¹⁶⁹By its resolution 33/120, the General Assembly decided to adjust benefit payments with effect from 1979 in accordance with the recommendations of the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Board.

¹⁷⁰G A resolution 34/221. See also G A resolution 37/131, in which the Assembly requested ICSC to study a number of issues, including the age of separation and the retirement age for member organizations.

¹⁷¹G A resolution 38/233, sect. IV.

¹⁷²G A resolution 36/232, para. 2.

observation of the privileges and immunities of officials,¹⁷³ including prompt follow-up through the United Nations Security Coordinator in cases of arrest, detention and other matters relating to the security of officials of the United Nations and the specialized agencies.¹⁷⁴

52. With regard to personnel issues, further emphasis was placed on the application by the organizations of a number of policies regarding the status of women employed within the system. Following the World Conference of the United Nations Decade for Women and a report by the JIU on the status of women in the United Nations system to the General Assembly at its thirty-fifth session,¹⁷⁵ the Assembly stressed the need for implementation of a number of policy changes to end discrimination based upon sex among all organizations of the system. Specifically, the Assembly requested the Secretary-General and the executive heads of other organizations of the United Nations system to increase the proportion of women, particularly at senior levels in general, and on personnel advisory and administrative boards to meet the target set in General Assembly resolution 33/143 and resolution 24 of the World Conference of the United Nations Decade for Women.¹⁷⁶ The Assembly also requested the amendment of staff rules prohibiting the employment of spouses in the same organization or duty station, further requesting the Secretary-General and the executive heads: to extend part-time employment and flexible working hours, to ensure that staff members were not subject to sexual harassment or discrimination; and to intensify their efforts to eliminate prejudices and other factors inhibiting the improvement of the status of women in the United Nations system.¹⁷⁷ Those provisions were reaffirmed by the General Assembly in its resolution 37/235, in which it requested the Secretary-General to intensify his efforts to implement the relevant section of resolution 35/210¹⁷⁸ inviting the executive heads of organizations that had not done so to take concrete steps to guarantee

¹⁷³G A resolution 38/230.

¹⁷⁴G A resolution 39/244, para. 5. The General Assembly also called for the staff of the United Nations and the specialized agencies to comply with the obligations arising from the regulations governing staff. *Ibid.*, para. 6.

¹⁷⁵A/35/182. The report had been requested by the Assembly in its resolution 33/143.

¹⁷⁶In its resolution 33/143, the General Assembly had called for an increase in the number of women in posts subject to geographic distribution to 25 per cent over a four-year period. *Ibid.*, sect. III, para. 1. *Report of the World Conference of the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.80.IV.3 and corrigendum), chap. I, sect. B.

¹⁷⁷G A resolution 35/210, sect. V, para. 4 (a)-(e). The General Assembly further requested the Secretary-General and the executive heads to examine additional measures to attain the aims of the policy directives concerning women in the Secretariat. The Assembly also called for the Secretary-General to report through ACC on the progress made in the organizations of the United Nations system in the area of the recruitment and career development of women in the Professional categories. See also the present *Supplement*, under Article 8.

¹⁷⁸G A resolution 35/210, sect. B, para. 1. The General Assembly further emphasized that the 25 per cent target should not be viewed as a limit.

compliance.¹⁷⁹ Similarly, by its resolution 1984/11, the Economic and Social Council called upon the Commission on the Status of Women to consider strategies for the achievement of equal employment opportunities for women in the United Nations system, inviting organizations of the system, through ACC, to provide information to the Commission on measures taken to that end and the results achieved.¹⁸⁰

(b) *Administrative and budgetary questions*

53. During the period under review, the General Assembly continued to direct its attention to the overall question of administrative and budgetary practices within the United Nations system.¹⁸¹ While consideration was given to the matter in general,¹⁸² the Assembly also specifically emphasized the harmonization of administrative and budget practices in the context of operational activities for development and the restructuring of the economic and social sectors.¹⁸³ In that connection, both the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council highlighted the importance of administrative coordination in programme planning at the country level¹⁸⁴ and at the regional level in the context of Africa.¹⁸⁵

54. Following the recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ) to the General Assembly at its thirty-sixth session,¹⁸⁶ the Assembly adopted, beginning in 1982, a biennial approach to reporting whereby ACABQ would report every two years with detailed analysis, providing tabular material and, as necessary, special studies in intervening years.¹⁸⁷ In that regard, the General Assembly continued to refer the matters arising out of ACC reports and Fifth Committee debate thereon to the executive heads of the organizations of the United Nations system.¹⁸⁸

55. With respect to budgetary coordination, continued attention was devoted to the issue of the impact of inflation and currency instability on budgets of the United Nations system. Consideration of the matter was undertaken by the General Assembly at its thirty-sixth session,¹⁸⁹ where, in considering the need for additional procedures to meet the costs arising from the issue, it requested that the Secretary-General prepare a detailed study of the problem.¹⁹⁰ At the thirty-ninth session of the General Assembly, ACABQ presented several recommendations on procedures to deal

¹⁷⁹*Ibid.*, para. 6.

¹⁸⁰E S C resolution 1984/11, paras. 3 and 4.

¹⁸¹See *Supplement No. 5*, under Article 58, paras. 9-11.

¹⁸²The General Assembly had decided to consider administrative and budgetary coordination in depth as a separate agenda item in off-budget years starting in 1976. See *Supplement No. 5*, under Article 58, paras. 9-11.

¹⁸³See G A resolution 35/81, paras. 8 and 9. See also G A resolution 38/171.

¹⁸⁴G A resolution 35/81, para. 11.

¹⁸⁵G A resolution 37/214 and E S C resolution 1982/63.

¹⁸⁶A/36/641.

¹⁸⁷G A resolution 36/229, para. 5.

¹⁸⁸G A resolutions 35/114, 36/229 and 37/128.

¹⁸⁹See G A decision 35/426.

¹⁹⁰G A resolution 36/230. The General Assembly reiterated this request in its resolution 37/130 and by its resolution 39/246.

with the issue, including a process of informal consultation every two years to consider cost trends, the selection of a common exchange rate and a concise explanation of methodologies used in formulating its estimates.¹⁹¹ Nevertheless, ACABQ stated its belief that, while efforts at standardization and harmonization should be encouraged, the prime objective in preparing budgets should be to set forth estimates in a manner which was clear and understandable to the governing body concerned and responsive to its special requirements.¹⁹² The General Assembly concurred in the comments and recommendations of ACABQ and requested the Secretary-General to refer matters arising therefrom as well as from the related debate in the Fifth Committee to the executive heads of the United Nations system through ACC.¹⁹³

(c) *Other matters*

56. During the period under review, additional consideration was given to the coordination of efforts in respect of public information. In particular, the General Assembly underscored the importance of public information regarding United Nations activities as part of the overall efforts with respect to information and communication in the United Nations system.¹⁹⁴ Within those activities, the Assembly affirmed its primary role in elaborating, coordinating and harmonizing United Nations policies and activities in the field of information.¹⁹⁵ At the same time, the General Assembly stressed the need for coordination through several bodies, and recognized the central role of UNESCO in the field of information.¹⁹⁶ The General Assembly furthermore maintained the Committee on Information to examine Secretariat activities and evaluate progress and efforts in information achieved by the United Nations system.¹⁹⁷ At its thirty-eighth session, the Assembly also approved the recommendations of the Committee on Information and identified the Department of Public Information as responsible for disseminating information on economic, social and development activities throughout the United Nations system.¹⁹⁸ It also specifically recognized the respective roles of UNESCO and the Joint United Nations Information Committee (JUNIC) as the essential bodies for developing the coordination and cooperation of public information activities in the system.¹⁹⁹

57. During the period under review, consideration was given to the procedure for establishing international years

¹⁹¹A/39/592, paras. 13-15 and 17.

¹⁹²Ibid., para. 17.

¹⁹³G A resolution 39/241, paras. 2-4.

¹⁹⁴These efforts had been identified as part of the new world information and communication order. See G A resolution 33/115 B, para. 1. See also G A resolution 34/182.

¹⁹⁵G A resolution 34/182, sect. I, para. 4.

¹⁹⁶Ibid.

¹⁹⁷G A resolution 34/182, sect. 2(b). By that resolution, the General Assembly maintained the Committee to Review United Nations Public Information Policies and Activities as the Committee on Information. Ibid., para. 1.

¹⁹⁸G A resolution 38/82. See also the report of the Committee on Information to the General Assembly at its thirty-eighth session, G A (38), Suppl. No. 21.

¹⁹⁹Ibid., annex, paras. 9, 35 and 54.

and anniversaries in the United Nations system. The Secretary-General submitted a report to the Economic and Social Council on international years and anniversaries, containing guidelines on their establishment.²⁰⁰ By its decision 1979/64, the Council decided to undertake consideration of the question at its second regular session in 1980 in the light of proposals submitted during its regular session²⁰¹ inviting the Secretary-General to submit guidelines which would be revised as appropriate. The revised guidelines were submitted to the Council, indicating criteria and a procedure for their establishment.²⁰² They included the following provisions: first, that international years and anniversaries should be on a subject of widespread concern not already under consideration by a world conference, organization or programme;²⁰³ secondly, that proposals made under the auspices of organizations of the United Nations system should be brought to the attention of the Economic and Social Council prior to their proclamation for advice and for evaluation as to timing and purpose;²⁰⁴ and thirdly, that there should be effective coordination of activities of all United Nations organizations to avoid duplication and a proliferation of posts and allowing a procedure for follow-up evaluation.²⁰⁵

58. The guidelines were adopted by the Economic and Social Council, which invited legislative organs of the specialized agencies to adopt them.²⁰⁶ By its decision 35/424, the General Assembly also decided to adopt the guidelines as the criteria and procedure to be applied with regard to future proposals for international years, further recommending their adoption and application by the specialized agencies when proposals for international years were made in their respective legislative organs.

B. The making of recommendations in substantive areas

I. RECOMMENDATIONS IN THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL SECTORS

(a) *Development*

59. During the period under review, the coordination of the activities and policies of the specialized agencies with respect to development was a major concern. Further to the Second United Nations Development Decade, in relation to which the General Assembly had noted that trends in the world economy had adversely affected the situation of developing countries, the General Assembly affirmed the need for a new international development strategy emphasizing the promotion of developing countries with a set of interrelated and concerted measures.²⁰⁷

²⁰⁰E/1979/85 and Add.1, particularly paras. 75 and 78.

²⁰¹See E/1979/C.3/L.7 and Rev.1 and 2, and E/1979/C.3/L.9.

²⁰²See E/1980/64/Add.1, para. 29.

²⁰³Ibid., para. 10.

²⁰⁴Ibid., para. 12.

²⁰⁵Ibid., paras. 20 and 21.

²⁰⁶E S C resolution 1980/67, paras. 1 and 3.

²⁰⁷G A resolution 33/193, paras. 1 and 2. In that context, for example, the General Assembly urged the specialized agencies to provide support for economic cooperation among developing countries, including not only activities but also, as required, the

60. To that end, the General Assembly decided on the establishment of a new international development strategy. It requested the Secretariat as well as a number of organizations of the United Nations system to contribute to its preparation by providing input and documentation.²⁰⁸ The Assembly further called upon the Director-General for Development and International Economic Cooperation in his capacity of providing overall guidance in the United Nations system to coordinate the contributions of the relevant secretariats in the formulation of an international development strategy.²⁰⁹

(i) *International Development Strategy*

61. The International Development Strategy itself was adopted at the thirty-fifth session of the General Assembly.²¹⁰ The Strategy called for the participation of specialized agencies, noting in its preamble that organizations of the United Nations system would assist in implementation and in searching for new avenues of international cooperation for development, and identifying their role in review and appraisal of the Strategy at both the regional and the sectoral levels.²¹¹ In that context, the Strategy identified policy measures directed at international cooperation to be undertaken in a number of substantive areas²¹² to which all countries would commit and to which the operational activities of the United Nations system would contribute.²¹³ It also presented a broad strategy for the United Nations system. The central role of the General Assembly was reaffirmed within the multilateral framework of the United Nations system in strengthening international economic cooperation.²¹⁴ The various organizations, organs and bodies of the United Nations system were called upon to apply the Strategy as a policy framework in the formulation of their programmes of work and medium-term plans.²¹⁵

62. A number of decisions taken within the context of elaborating or implementing the International Development Strategy sought to identify or highlight the role of various bodies, organizations and positions, such as the overall role of the Director-General for Development and International Economic Cooperation in preparations for the International Development Strategy.²¹⁶ With regard to technical cooperation activities, the Economic and Social Council, by its resolution 1981/59, reaffirmed the central funding and coordinating role of UNDP and requested that all

necessary support services and meeting facilities. G A resolution 33/195, para. 4. See also G A resolution 34/202, para. 3.

²⁰⁸G A resolution 33/193, sect. II, para. 10.

²⁰⁹Ibid., para. 8.

²¹⁰G A resolution 35/56, para. 2. For the text of the International Development Strategy, see the annex to the resolution.

²¹¹Ibid., preamble, para. 15. See also sect. II, paras. 174-175.

²¹²See section III of the International Development Strategy.

²¹³Ibid., para. 178.

²¹⁴See E S C resolution 1981/64, paras. 1 and 2.

²¹⁵Ibid. See also G A resolution 37/202 calling upon organizations of the United Nations system to report on their implementation of the International Development Strategy to the Committee on the Review and Appraisal of the International Development Strategy for the Third United Nations Development Decade.

²¹⁶G A resolution 33/193, paras. 8 and 9.

international organizations participating in the United Nations development system strengthen mutual coordination both between the headquarters and at the field level, with a view towards enabling the resident coordinator, usually the resident representative of UNDP, to act as central coordinator at the field level.²¹⁷ In addition, with regard to the provision for review and appraisal under the International Development Strategy, the General Assembly established a Committee²¹⁸ to which the specialized agencies would report on implementation in the preparations for the in-depth review to be carried out by the Assembly.²¹⁹

(ii) *Various developing country initiatives*

63. As noted above, within the context of development activities, particular emphasis was placed on activities with respect to developing countries. This included, in particular, advocating that organizations enhance their collective capacity to respond to the needs of island developing States,²²⁰ the development of energy resources,²²¹ and activities with respect to least developed countries.²²² With regard to the latter, the General Assembly, by its resolution 34/203, decided to convene a conference on least developed countries with the object of adopting and finalizing the Substantial New Programme of Action for the 1980s, which it had earlier endorsed.²²³ The Assembly also called upon the organizations of the United Nations system to undertake implementation of the Substantial New Programme, particularly with respect to aid consultative groups.²²⁴ At the thirty-ninth session, the need for urgent attention on the issue of least developed countries was further emphasized with the General Assembly, which decided to convene an intergovernmental group to review and readjust the Substantial New Programme in 1985.²²⁵ The Assembly suggested in particular the need for improvement in organizational issues, aid programmes and the adaptation of activities to the specific needs of individual countries. Further emphasis was placed on economic and technical cooperation activities within the context of the International Development Strategy, including agreement by ACC and CPC for joint review.²²⁶

²¹⁷E S C resolution 1981/59, para. 4. The recommendation was endorsed by the General Assembly at its thirty-sixth session in its resolution 36/200, para. 2. See further E S C decision 1982/172.

²¹⁸G A resolution 37/202.

²¹⁹Ibid., para. 6.

²²⁰G A resolutions 34/205 and 37/206.

²²¹See G A resolutions 37/251, 38/151 and 39/176.

²²²G A resolutions 34/203 and 34/210.

²²³G A resolution 34/210, para. 1. See also G A resolution 36/194, para. 1. For the Substantial New Programme of Action, see UNCTAD resolution 122 (V).

²²⁴G A resolutions 36/194, para. 10, and 37/224, para. 5.

²²⁵G A resolution 39/174, paras. 1 and 6.

²²⁶G A resolution 39/216. See also E S C resolution 1983/50. In that regard, the specialized agencies were called upon to give regard to the Caracas Programme of Action in the context of economic and technical cooperation activities. For the text of the Caracas Programme of Action, see A/36/333 and Corr.1.

(iii) *Science and technology for development*

64. With respect to science and technology for development, the Vienna Programme of Action, adopted at a conference held prior to opening the thirty-fourth session of the General Assembly,²²⁷ called for cooperation at the international level in science and technology, especially on the part of organizations of the United Nations system. Specifically, the organizations were called upon to harmonize their efforts and coordinate activities so as to proceed with rapid implementation as well as to act as a tool for the systematic exchange of information in all fields pertaining to science and technology for development.²²⁸ Endorsing the Vienna Programme of Action, the General Assembly further requested that the organizations comply with those recommendations for action,²²⁹ and called upon them in particular to take steps to implement the recommendations addressed to them within the relevant parts of the Programme of Action.²³⁰ These involved the development of intersectoral programming and coordination of medium-term plans, decentralization to regional commissions, attention to technology transfer issues, provision of information centres, and research and training programmes.²³¹ With a view to furthering implementation within the United Nations system, the General Assembly established the Intergovernmental Committee on Science and Technology to formulate policy guidelines for the harmonization of policies of United Nations system organizations and to monitor their activities and progress.²³² The broad framework of the Committee²³³ was subsequently endorsed by the General Assembly, which recommended that organizations of the United Nations system support the Director-General for Development and International Economic Cooperation and the Centre for Science and Technology for Development in formulating an operational plan for implementing the Vienna Programme of Action.²³⁴

65. Additional efforts concerned arrangements for a review of coordination on the question of reverse technology transfer by various specialized agencies.²³⁵ In that context, the General Assembly called for policies as a matter of urgency to mitigate the adverse consequences of reverse technology transfer and for an inter-agency group to study the matter.²³⁶ At its thirty-sixth session, the General Assembly also decided on financing arrangements for activities connected with science and technology within the

²²⁷Report of the United Nations Conference on Science and Technology for Development, Vienna, 20-31 August 1979 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.79.I.21 and corrigenda).

²²⁸Ibid., paras. 61, 63 and 64.

²²⁹G A resolution 34/218, sect. I, paras. 1 and 4.

²³⁰G A resolution 34/218, para. 5. The resolution specifically made reference to paras. 90-99 and 104-108. See also paras. 60-64 on recommended activities.

²³¹Ibid.

²³²G A resolution 34/218, sect. II. The organizations were further called upon to participate in the work of the Committee at a high level, preferably at that of the Secretariat head. See G A resolution 37/244, sect. II.A, para. 11.

²³³A/35/184 and Add.1.

²³⁴G A resolution 35/67, paras. 2 and 3.

²³⁵See G A resolution 36/141.

²³⁶G A resolution 37/207, paras. 1 and 4.

common system, establishing a financing system and emphasizing as a guiding principle of the financing system attention to coordination of activities of United Nations system organizations.²³⁷ By its decision 1984/168, the Economic and Social Council also requested the organizations to consider ways to enhance their medium-term plans and budgets in the field of science and technology for development, giving special consideration to the guidelines of the Vienna Programme of Action and the operational plans of the Intergovernmental Committee on Science and Technology.

(b) *Natural resources and the environment*

66. During the period under review, significant consideration was given to the coordination of policies and activities with respect to natural resources and the environment. Consistent with its overall role, the Organization endorsed or advocated a number of new programmes and initiatives, which resulted in additional attention to issues of coordination within the system. This was particularly apparent in the focus on the interrelationship of the environment to other areas of concern, such as development and the International Development Strategy²³⁸ and new and renewable sources of energy.²³⁹

(i) *Decisions with respect to the environment*

67. With regard to the environment, both the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council stressed the need for Governments and organizations of the United Nations system to take environmental considerations fully into account in negotiations and conferences on subjects other than the environment.²⁴⁰ In that respect, both the Assembly and the Council highlighted the "catalytic and coordinating role" of the United Nations Environment Programme in elaborating such system-wide environmental considerations,²⁴¹ particularly through the development of a system-wide Medium Term Environment Programme in which the cooperation of organizations of United Nations system was requested.²⁴² The Assembly and the Council emphasized that such a system-wide Medium Term Environment Programme should not be seen as a document for use only by UNEP, but also as one for consideration and application by the governing bodies of organizations of the United Nations system.²⁴³ The Programme was cited as a means of ensuring better coordination in the United Nations

²³⁷G A resolution 36/183, paras. 1 and 2. See also G A resolution 35/67 B.

²³⁸See G A resolution 33/86. Repeated reference was made to the issue of action with respect to the relationship between the environment and development; see, e.g., E S C resolution 1981/73 and G A resolution 36/192.

²³⁹See G A resolutions 34/188 and 34/190.

²⁴⁰G A resolution 36/192, para. 4. See also E S C resolution 1981/73, para. 4.

²⁴¹This role was recalled in related areas of energy resources and desertification. See, for example, G A resolution 35/73, para. 10.

²⁴²G A resolution 35/74. The medium-term plan was approved by the Governing Council of the United Nations Environment Programme; see UNEP document UNEP/GC.9/7.

²⁴³E S C resolution 1981/73, para. 6, and G A resolution 36/192, para. 3.

system in the field of the environment, and organizations were urged to continue to participate in its refinement and implementation.²⁴⁴ The General Assembly, by its resolution 38/165, invited Governments in their participation in the governing bodies of specialized agencies to take the system-wide Medium Term Environment Programme fully into account in their consideration of related issues to achieve system-wide implementation,²⁴⁵ reaffirming in that context the need to strengthen the coordinating role of the United Nations.²⁴⁶

68. At its eighth session, UNEP had also decided to study the interrelationship between resources, people and development.²⁴⁷ In that regard, the Economic and Social Council recommended consideration of the UNEP decision, emphasizing that such a study should be linked with integrated system-wide inter-agency programming and planning under the Director-General for Development and International Economic Cooperation, who would assume overall responsibility for system-wide coordination.²⁴⁸ Having endorsed the proposed programme of work of UNEP and the recommendations of the Council in regard to the role of the Director-General for Development and International Economic Cooperation at its thirty-fifth session,²⁴⁹ the General Assembly called upon the Director-General to act to develop steps on implementation and use of the UNEP programme as a framework for a multidisciplinary approach within the system.²⁵⁰ To that end, a general trust was established to support activities concerning the interrelationship between resources, the environment, people and development. The trust would also act to further support measures for inter-agency consultation and programme support proposed by the Director-General, such as the establishment of a small advisory body of experts for overall policy review and future guidance.²⁵¹

69. Emphasis was also placed on specific aspects of environmental concern. These included, for example, the review, under UNEP auspices, of environmental law.²⁵² Additional consideration was also given to coordination with regard to the relationship between environmental activities and other areas of activity such as human settlements. In that connection, the General Assembly approved joint meetings between the Governing Council of UNEP and the bureaux of the Commission on Human Settlements.²⁵³

(ii) *New and renewable sources of energy*

70. As noted above, a related area of concern to environmental programmes and activities in the United

²⁴⁴E S C resolution 1982/56.

²⁴⁵Ibid., para. 6.

²⁴⁶Ibid., para. 11.

²⁴⁷UNEP/GC.8/10, sect. II, and annex II.

²⁴⁸E S C resolution 1980/49, para. 2.

²⁴⁹G A resolution 35/74.

²⁵⁰G A resolution 36/192. See also G A resolution 36/179, para. 1.

²⁵¹See A/36/571, annex 1, para. 28.

²⁵²See E S C resolution 1982/56.

²⁵³G A resolution 35/77 B. By its resolution 36/192, the General Assembly welcomed the growing cooperation between the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements and UNEP. Ibid., para. 9.

Nations system was that of new and renewable sources of energy. The General Assembly had called for a conference on the subject at its thirty-third session and the relationship of that issue to other substantive areas of concern was also emphasized. The General Assembly had requested UNEP participation in the Conference,²⁵⁴ while the Council had called upon UNEP to elaborate concrete and specific proposals on energy and the environment in preparation for the Conference.²⁵⁵ Organizations of the United Nations system were similarly requested to provide assistance in the preparations for the Conference; this assistance was requested at the national, subregional, regional, interregional and global levels.²⁵⁶ The General Assembly placed particular stress on the identification by organizations and specialized agencies of ways to furnish Member States, in particular developing ones, with technical assistance such as through technology transfer, information exchange and financial assistance, and requested the submission of a report on these actions to the Assembly at its thirty-fifth session.²⁵⁷

71. The Nairobi Programme of Action which emerged from the Conference²⁵⁸ called for a number of policy measures for concerted action that implicated a cooperative approach to new and renewable sources of energy, involving assessment, planning, research, technology transfer, information and education and training,²⁵⁹ as well as specific measures in relation to energy type.²⁶⁰ It emphasized implementation within the United Nations system of organizations under the overall coordination of the Director-General for Development and International Economic Cooperation under the Secretary-General and ACC, with resident coordinators serving as the focal point at the local level.²⁶¹ The General Assembly endorsed the Nairobi Programme of Action at its thirty-sixth session,²⁶² calling upon the specialized agencies to participate, support and cooperate in its implementation.²⁶³ To that end, all organs, organizations and bodies of the system were called upon to organize their work and rationalize their activities according to established priorities in such a way as to meet the need for implementing the Programme of Action.²⁶⁴ The General Assembly also established an Interim Committee on New and Renewable Sources of Energy to concentrate on

²⁵⁴G A resolution 34/188, para. 8.

²⁵⁵E S C resolution 1980/49, para. 3. In that context, the Governing Council of UNEP had appealed to the Preparatory Committee for the United Nations Conference on New and Renewable Sources of Energy to give sufficiently high priority to the uses of energy to tackle environmentally related problems, such as fuel wood. UNEP/GC.9/15 and Corr.1, annex 1, decision 9/7. This recommendation was supported by the Economic and Social Council in its resolution 1981/73, para. 2.

²⁵⁶G A resolution 34/190, para. 12. See also E S C resolution 1979/66, para. 1.

²⁵⁷G A resolution 34/190, para. 11. See also G A resolution 35/204, para. 11. The Council had called for this action in its resolution 1979/66, para. 6.

²⁵⁸United Nations publication, Sales No. E.81.I.24.

²⁵⁹Ibid., paras. 26-33.

²⁶⁰Ibid., paras. 34-45.

²⁶¹Ibid., paras. 62-65.

²⁶²G A resolution 36/193, sect. I, para. 2.

²⁶³Ibid., paras. 4 and 5.

²⁶⁴Ibid., sect. IV, para. 1.

recommendations for policy guidelines for different organizations of the United Nations system both in action-oriented plans and in financing.²⁶⁵ Concurring in the recommendation of the Programme of Action, the Assembly entrusted the Director-General for Development and International Economic Cooperation with overall coordination of agency contributions, noting with approval the decision of ACC for the establishment of an ad hoc working group to concentrate on inter-agency follow-up.²⁶⁶ Subsequently the General Assembly endorsed the proposals and recommendations for action-oriented plans and programmes of ACC for carrying out the Nairobi Programme of Action.²⁶⁷ In that regard, the Assembly reiterated its call for specialized agencies to cooperate on implementation during the period under review.²⁶⁸ By its resolution 38/169, the General Assembly also repeated its request that organizations of the United Nations system implement the ACC proposals on inter-agency follow-up under the ad hoc working group, reaffirming the important role of the Director-General in overall coordination in the implementation of the Nairobi Programme of Action.²⁶⁹ At its thirty-ninth session, the General Assembly expressed concern over the slow implementation and lack of consultative meetings at all levels on implementation of the Nairobi Programme of Action, calling for the Secretary-General to report on the matter to its fortieth session.²⁷⁰

(iii) Desertification

72. An additional area of focus on the part of the Organization was support for and cooperation in activities related to the problem of desertification. Following the adoption of the Plan of Action to Combat Desertification,²⁷¹ the General Assembly established a special account to fund implementation,²⁷² having been prompted to do so by the findings of ACC and UNEP²⁷³ regarding constraints in implementation of the Plan of Action, particularly in connection with the problem of insufficient financing in circumstances of increasing demand on resources.²⁷⁴ The

²⁶⁵Ibid., sect. II, para. 5. Additionally, organizations were called upon to report on activities initiated to that end. Ibid., para. 7.

²⁶⁶Ibid., sect. IV, paras. 2 and 4. The General Assembly further specified that the Ad Hoc Working Group should undertake a thorough review of current and planned activities in the United Nations system in the light of programme recommendations for adaptation and reformulation as might be necessary and to provide a basic framework for future programmes. The Ad Hoc Working Group was also authorized to establish any necessary task forces recommended by the relevant intergovernmental body. Ibid., para. 5. The General Assembly additionally requested that the Director-General for Development and International Economic Cooperation should create coordination capacity specific to the issue of new and renewable sources of energy within his office. Ibid., para. 3.

²⁶⁷G A resolution 37/250, para. 4. See also A/AC.215/5.

²⁶⁸G A resolution 37/250, sect. I, para. 6. See further G A resolution 38/169, sect. II, paras. 1 and 4.

²⁶⁹Ibid., sect. IV, para. 1.

²⁷⁰G A resolution 39/173.

²⁷¹A/CONF.74/36, chap. I.

²⁷²See G A resolutions 33/89 and 34/184.

²⁷³See A/35/411, annex, sect. IV.

²⁷⁴G A resolution 35/73.

General Assembly therefore appealed to international and multilateral financial institutions to contribute to the special fund and called upon UNEP in its coordinating and catalytic role, in cooperation with organizations of the United Nations system, to institute research and training programmes with regard to desertification.²⁷⁵ The central role of UNEP in coordinating United Nations activities in connection with desertification was further reiterated by both the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council in subsequent resolutions urging organizations of the United Nations system to augment their efforts in combating desertification.²⁷⁶

73. A specific area of concern in relation to desertification was the Sudano-Sahelian region. Organizations of the United Nations system were repeatedly requested to give special attention to the critical food situation in countries in the region.²⁷⁷ Coordination was to be achieved primarily through the United Nations Sudano-Sahelian Office (UNSO). At its thirty-third session, the General Assembly had invited the specialized agencies to cooperate with UNSO in regional efforts. UNSO was subsequently recognized as the central point and principal body for coordination efforts of United Nations agencies in the region.²⁷⁸ An inter-agency Working Group was established to ensure effective assistance and the Economic and Social Council urged all United Nations agencies, especially the World Bank, UNIDO, FAO and IFAD to increase assistance through joint undertakings with UNSO.²⁷⁹

74. At its thirty-sixth session, the General Assembly also invited the Secretary-General to pursue further consultations for joint undertakings.²⁸⁰ In that context, during the period under review, the General Assembly repeatedly placed particular emphasis on the need for special attention on the part of all specialized agencies with respect to the critical food situation in the Cape Verde Islands, Chad, Mali and Mauritania.²⁸¹

2. RECOMMENDATIONS IN POLITICAL AND OTHER SECTORS

(a) Disarmament

75. During the period under review, the General Assembly began advocating the coordination of activities on the part of specialized agencies in connection with the renewed emphasis of the United Nations on disarmament. The General Assembly had held its tenth special session, the

²⁷⁵Ibid.

²⁷⁶See G A resolutions 37/218 and 39/168 A. See also E S C resolutions 1982/56 and 1984/65.

²⁷⁷G A resolutions 38/225 and 39/206. The specialized agencies were repeatedly called upon to extend assistance to combat the effects of drought in Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, the Sudan and Uganda on the basis of recommendations of multi-agency missions. See G A resolutions 35/90, 35/91, 38/216 and 39/205.

²⁷⁸G A resolutions 34/16 and 34/187. The invitations were reaffirmed in subsequent resolutions in G A resolutions 38/225 and 39/206.

²⁷⁹E S C resolution 1980/51, para. 5.

²⁸⁰G A resolution 36/203.

²⁸¹See, e.g., G A resolutions 34/16 and 37/165.

first special session devoted to disarmament, in 1978.²⁸² Reaffirming the central role and primary responsibility of the United Nations in the field of disarmament, the General Assembly thereafter undertook the consideration of measures of institutional support on the part of the United Nations system in the disarmament process.²⁸³ At its thirty-fourth session, the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit to it a comprehensive study, assessing current institutional requirements and future estimated needs in the United Nations management of disarmament affairs and outlining possible functions, structure and institutional framework to meet those requirements for a possible subsequent decision on the matter.²⁸⁴ At the twelfth special session of the General Assembly in 1982, also devoted to disarmament,²⁸⁵ proposals were made for strengthening the machinery of the United Nations, including entrusting the United Nations Centre for Disarmament²⁸⁶ with duties in coordinating activities in the United Nations system. Convinced of the need for the United Nations to play a more active role in disarmament, the General Assembly, at its thirty-eighth session, invited the specialized agencies and other organizations to further broaden their contribution, within their area of competence, to the cause of arms limitation and disarmament, reaffirming in that context the necessity of ensuring constant coordination of activities carried out in the field of disarmament by the various entities of the United Nations.²⁸⁷ Continuing to focus its attention on the issue, the General Assembly decided to include in the provisional agenda of its thirty-ninth session an item entitled "Contributions of the specialized agencies and other organizations and programmes of the United Nations system to the cause of arms limitation and disarmament".²⁸⁸ The recommendations of the General Assembly in this area were reiterated at the thirty-ninth session.²⁸⁹

76. A particular aspect of the recommendations of the General Assembly to the specialized agencies with respect to disarmament was the dissemination of information; at its

²⁸²See G A resolution S/10-2.

²⁸³See G A resolution 34/87 E. This followed the recommendation of the Disarmament Commission that requirements of an institutional and procedural nature should be examined to facilitate the disarmament process. See G A (34), Suppl. No. 42, sect. IV, para. 19.

²⁸⁴G A resolution 34/87 E, para. 1. The report was submitted to the General Assembly at its thirty-sixth session; A/36/392. The Assembly took note of the report, requesting its further transmission to the Committee on Disarmament. G A resolution 36/97 D.

²⁸⁵See G A resolution A/S-12/32.

²⁸⁶*Ibid.*, annex V, para. 14. The General Assembly noted these proposals at its thirty-seventh session, providing further elaboration of institutional support for disarmament with respect to the functions on the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research. G A resolution 37/99 K.

²⁸⁷G A resolution 38/188 J. In that regard, the General Assembly invited the specialized agencies and organizations of the United Nations system to report on implementation of the resolution at its thirty-ninth session, recommending further that Secretary-General's meetings with the executive heads of the specialized agencies include an item on disarmament. *Ibid.*, para. 3.

²⁸⁸*Ibid.*, para. 5. The item was maintained on the provisional agenda for the forty-first session of the General Assembly. G A resolution 39/151 E.

²⁸⁹*Ibid.*

thirty-eighth session the Assembly had called upon the Secretary-General to explore the possibility of coordinating such public information activities.²⁹⁰ In the Declaration of the 1980s as the Second Disarmament Decade,²⁹¹ adopted at its thirty-fifth session²⁹² the General Assembly called upon the specialized agencies as well as governmental and non-governmental organizations to undertake programmes of information relating to the dangers of the arms race, as well as disarmament efforts. This effort was to be part of a large-scale programme to alert world opinion in keeping with the central role and primary responsibility of the United Nations.²⁹³ In connection with public information activities, UNESCO in particular was called upon to consider measures to strengthen ideas of international cooperation in the furtherance of world public opinion on disarmament.²⁹⁴

77. Other related areas of activity included recommendations, for example, with respect to the peaceful uses of outer space. In that regard, the General Assembly had affirmed the need for enhanced cooperation within the United Nations on the part of specialized agencies, recommending that the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space continue to consider the coordination of space activities within the United Nations system as a priority.²⁹⁵ The General Assembly further requested that the specialized agencies continue to provide the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space with progress reports on their work.²⁹⁶ At its thirty-seventh session, the Assembly endorsed the recommendations on international cooperation of the Second United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space,²⁹⁷ requesting all organizations of the United Nations system to cooperate on implementation.²⁹⁸ In that context, the Assembly approved the Conference recommendation for the consideration of regional approaches and emphasized that funding of activities should be approached through UNDP.²⁹⁹ Such efforts would include particular studies involving the specialized agencies on assessing remote sensing needs of countries and the feasibility of direct broadcasting.³⁰⁰

²⁹⁰G A resolution 33/71 G, para. 7.

²⁹¹G A resolution 35/46, annex.

²⁹²*Ibid.*

²⁹³*Ibid.*, annex, sect. F, para. 20. At its thirty-fourth session, the General Assembly had called upon the Secretary-General to seek the views and suggestions of both Member States and specialized agencies for the preparation of elements of the Declaration by the Disarmament Committee. See G A resolution 34/75.

²⁹⁴G A resolution 37/78 B, para. 6. The UNESCO initiative in organizing a world congress on disarmament education had been welcomed by the General Assembly at its thirty-third session. See G A resolution 33/71.

²⁹⁵G A resolution 34/66, paras. 8 and 12. See also G A resolution 35/14, paras. 8 and 12.

²⁹⁶*Ibid.*

²⁹⁷See *Report of the Second United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, Vienna, 9-21 August 1982 (Report on UNISPACE II ...)* (A/CONF.101/10 and Corr.1 and 2), para. 361.

²⁹⁸G A resolution 37/90, para. 5.

²⁹⁹*Ibid.*, paras. 11 and 12. See also *Report on UNISPACE II ...*, op. cit., note 297, para. 353.

³⁰⁰The General Assembly had endorsed the study of these issues

(b) *Humanitarian issues*

78. During the period under review, measures adopted by the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council also focused on activities within the common system towards the promotion of various human rights and humanitarian issues. At a basic level, there was emphasis on the need for coordinating action in publicizing existing human rights instruments, and the Council requested the Secretary-General to cooperate with UNESCO and ILO in drawing up a programme for the worldwide dissemination of those instruments in as many languages as possible.³⁰¹ Within the context of the Declaration on the Preparation of Societies for Life in Peace, the General Assembly reiterated its appeal for concerted action on the part of Governments and the specialized agencies, in particular UNESCO, to give tangible effect to establishing and maintaining peace, inviting organizations of the system to incorporate the active promotion of ideas on preparing societies for life in peace in their programmes, including observances of the International Year of Peace in 1986.³⁰²

79. Other measures during the period under review included recommendations for activities to combat racism,

on the recommendation of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space. G A resolution 38/80, para. 17. See also G A resolution 39/96, para. 16.

³⁰¹E S C resolution 1980/30. See also E S C decision 1982/138, endorsing the request of the Commission on Human Rights to the Secretary-General to begin the dissemination of certain basic international human rights instruments.

³⁰²G A resolutions 36/104, para. 2, and 39/157, para. 6.

such as in the context of implementation of the Programme for the Decade for Action to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination.³⁰³ Additional consideration was given to international efforts to meet humanitarian needs in emergency situations. In that connection, the Economic and Social Council gave repeated consideration of the issue during the period under review, appealing to organizations of the United Nations system as well as governmental and non-governmental organizations to provide the necessary assistance.³⁰⁴ For its part, the General Assembly reiterated its call upon specialized agencies and organizations of the United Nations system to coordinate in order to eliminate wasteful duplication of resources in both natural and other disaster situations.³⁰⁵ In that context, the Assembly reaffirmed that strengthening the Office of the United Nations Disaster Relief Coordinator provided the most efficient and economic means of coordinating relief action within the United Nations system with respect to disaster situations.³⁰⁶ The Assembly furthermore called upon those organizations of the common system involved in humanitarian assistance or disaster relief to establish emergency units or focal points, calling upon specialized agencies to coordinate with a view to eliminating wasteful duplication of resources.³⁰⁷

³⁰³See, for example, G A resolutions 34/24 and 39/16. See also E S C resolution 1984/43.

³⁰⁴See E S C decisions 1981/178, 1983/172 and 1984/175.

³⁰⁵G A resolution 37/144, para. 12. See also G A resolution 36/225.

³⁰⁶G A resolution 37/144, para. 12.

³⁰⁷Ibid.

ARTICLE 59

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