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SUBMISSION TO THE SPECIAL COMMISSION OF THE ECONOMIC AND
SOCIAL COUNCIL ON THE IN-DEPTH STUDY OF THE UNITED
NATIONS INTERGOVERNMENTAL STRUCTURE AND FUNCTIONS IN THE
ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL FIELDS, PURSUANT TO ECONOMIC AND
SOCIAL COUNCIL DECISION 1987/112, PARAGRAPH (i)

Response to the Special Commission of ECOSOC by the
UNDP Governing Council

Addendum

II. INTERGOVERNMENTAL STRUCTURE (continued)

Committee of the Whole and its Working Group

15. [The thirty-fourth session of the Governing Council reviewed the Committee of the Whole and its Working Group and took decision 87/___ which is annexed to the present report.]
16. Some delegations affirmed that the objective of decision 83/5 of 24 June 1983 is, as indicated by its title a "Measure to mobilize increased resources for the United Nations Development Programme on an increasingly predictable, continuous and assured basis" and that in order to achieve this objective it was decided, among other measures, to create on an experimental basis the Committee of the Whole of the Governing Council of UNDP. Since these delegations mentioned that the assumed average annual growth of total voluntary contributions of at least 8 per cent on a basis of the target of \$700 million anticipated for 1986 for the purpose of forward planning as decided in decision 85/16, has not been reached, they seriously question the relevance of having to maintain the Committee of the Whole. In this connection, they pointed out that the actual increase of 6.6 per cent in the resources of the Programme were due, in large part, to the rapid decline of the dollar and not to a real increase in contributions.

17. On the basis of the above and the fact that the Committee of the Whole is not more than the Council meeting informally, the same delegations expressed the view that in order to simplify the structure of the Council, it would be preferable to discontinue the Committee of the Whole and to use in its place informal meetings of the Council with a view to carrying out the actual mandate assigned to the Committee of the Whole.
18. Other delegations found that the Committee of the Whole and later the Working Group had been an important element in restoring the confidence of their Governments in UNDP, especially given its character as a voluntary fund. They noted that UNDP had in the early eighties faced financial constraints resulting in a reduction of the IPF allocations. They affirmed that this trend has since been reversed and UNDP today is on a sound financial footing. They maintained that based on the 1987 target of \$756 million for the purpose of forward planning, actual contributions to UNDP's core programme in 1987 would surpass this considerably and were estimated at \$873 million and the overall resources of UNDP-administered programmes and funds were expected to exceed \$1 billion. They further noted that voluntary contributions to UNDP in 1987 of the estimated \$873 million represented an increase of 12 per cent over 1986, well in excess of the 8 per cent planning figure mentioned in paragraph 3 of decision 85/16.
19. These delegations also believe that the Committee of the Whole and the Working Group have contributed to strengthening the Council's role in dealing with policy and programming matters and have deepened the dialogue with the UNDP secretariat and the specialized agencies. In their views, these bodies were also crucial to the understanding of issues related to programme and project quality and offered an invaluable forum to consider major reforms undertaken by the Administrator. They have thus been essential to UNDP's credibility as co-ordinator and funder of a major share of United Nations system technical co-operation.
20. In their opinion the Working Group has effectively facilitated the work of the Committee of the Whole and has been a forum for open and in-depth discussions ensuring greater transparency of the management of UNDP's programme as well as increasing the understanding of technical and operational problems among delegations and between delegations and the secretariat. These delegations therefore were of the opinion that the two organs should be maintained and their mandates enlarged to continue and extend the advantages of in-depth consideration afforded by these two bodies to other programmes and funds under the purview of the Governing Council.
21. Some delegations considered it important to reiterate that the Working Group is not a decision-making body and should not take over functions inherent in the Council itself, and reaffirmed that the purpose of the Working Group was to assist and help accelerate the work of the Committee of the Whole, in accordance with decision 85/17. However, they expressed concern about the limited membership of the Working Group and about the difficulties faced by developing countries in being adequately represented in the Working Group.
22. The same delegations expressed regret that the secretariat had carried out work based on deliberations of the Working Group which these delegations believed should first have been considered by the Council.

23. Furthermore, they reaffirmed that the Working Group of the Committee of the Whole does not accomplish its objectives due to the fact that the discussions in this body have been of a very general and theoretical nature.

24. Some delegations also pointed out that it would be possible to have more efficient and adequate mechanisms in order to achieve, among others, the intended objectives of the Working Group. In this context they suggested that, among other alternatives, the possibility should be considered of holding periodic technical meetings at which questions concerning co-ordination, implementation and monitoring of projects and other activities of relevance to each specific region, such as regional programmes, could be discussed. Appropriate representatives of the secretariat of UNDP, executing agencies, and interested countries, donors and recipients, and Resident Representatives of UNDP, would participate in these meetings, and the results would be communicated to the Governing Council.

25. As far as these delegations are concerned, these new initiatives could make discussions more practical and concrete and could facilitate the work of the Council as well as deepen the dialogue between the secretariat of UNDP, members of the Council and specialized agencies, especially as national experts from developing countries would have a particular interest in participating in these meetings, which has generally not always been the case in the Working Group.

[The Council decision 87/___ on the Committee of the Whole and its Working Group will be annexed to this report.]

