In accordance with paragraph 24 of General Assembly resolution 42/196 of December 1987 on operational activities for development, the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has discussed with other members of the Joint Consultative Group on Policy (JCGP) the question of the rationalization of field offices.

2. The detailed work on the implementation of this policy has been handled by a subcommittee of JCGP which consisted of representatives from UNDP, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the World Food Programme (WFP) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). As part of the review, a detailed survey was carried out of all field offices to gather information on the extent to which common services and premises were already being shared by the various organizations, and the extent to which there was further potential for such sharing. The survey showed that, although common services and premises were at present being shared in many locations, there could be much more progress in this area.

3. At that stage the review was related only to the organizations within JCGP-UNDP, UNICEF, UNFPA and WFP. It was foreseen, however, that other organizations might later join in the rationalization process at field offices, and indeed every encouragement would be given for them to do so.
As a result of the work done by the subcommittee, an agreed draft memorandum titled "Sharing common premises and services in the United Nations system" was produced. Briefly, this memorandum deals with the following points:

(a) It refers to the role of JCGP over the years and in particular its efforts in encouraging close collaboration and co-operation between the member organizations;

(b) It reiterates the long-standing policy of JCGP organizations in support of the sharing of premises at all field offices;

(c) The following action is proposed:

(i) At the next inter-agency meeting at all field offices there should be a thorough review of all possibilities for sharing both premises and common services. Organizations other than the members of JCGP should be encouraged to join in this exercise;

(ii) Whenever leases of field offices are due for renewal, explicit study must be given to the possibilities of sharing before the lease is renewed;

(iii) Any organization that wishes to leave common premises will have to submit a written explanation to headquarters before action is taken;

(iv) The provision of common services must be part of the inter-agency review with a view to identifying cost savings;

(v) The subcommittee which has been dealing with this matter will continue to meet on a regular basis to report on progress.

The memorandum referred to above is at present being circulated to the heads of the organizations represented in JCGP for their approval and signature. It will then be circulated by the heads of the organizations to all their field offices in order to give further impetus to this policy.