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**PROGRESS REPORT ON RATIONALIZATION OF THE WORK OF THE GOVERNING COUNCIL,
INCLUDING MEASURES TAKEN CONCERNING DOCUMENTATION**

Note by the Administrator

1. The following note contains proposals by the Administrator to streamline further documentation to be submitted to the Governing Council. These proposals are presented in an effort to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the Council's procedures and should be seen in the context of the deliberations of the General Assembly on the Report of the Group of 18. Recommendation 2(b) states that "The General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council should request their subsidiary bodies to review urgently their current agendas and schedules of meetings in order to reduce substantially their number, frequency and duration ... the move towards biennialization of conferences and meetings ... should be vigorously pursued;"^{1/} Recommendation 2(c) states that "The Committee on Conferences should ... ensure that wastage of conference-service resources is minimized through a reduction in the projections of the length and, where appropriate, the frequency of meetings of those bodies that have consistently utilized a lower level of resources than planned;"^{2/} Recommendation 3(b) states that "The agenda of the General Assembly should be rationalized by grouping or merging, to the extent possible, related items and by setting an interval of two or more years for the discussion of certain items;"^{3/} Finally, recommendation 3(f) states that "Efforts should be made to reduce the number of resolutions adopted by the General Assembly. Resolutions should request reports of the

Secretary-General only in cases where that would be indispensable for facilitating the implementation of these resolutions or the continued examination of the question."^{4/}

2. It should be noted that the Administrator's proposals were discussed during an informal meeting with members of the Governing Council on 2 December and these proposals, as now presented, reflect the comments and suggestions made during this informal meeting. The Administrator's proposals for the preparation or submission of reports are set out below.

(a) Reports which could be submitted on a biennial basis in future years;

(b) Reports which could be consolidated in 1987 and, as appropriate, in future years;

(c) Reports regarding which overlapping discussions are taking place in the Governing Council and the Working Group of the Committee of the Whole;

(d) Reports which in 1987 will respond to particular requests from the Governing Council;

(e) Reports in respect of which no changes are proposed for 1987 or future years.

(a) Reports which could be submitted on a biennial basis in future years

3. The following reports have been submitted regularly on an annual basis. It is suggested that in future these could be submitted on a biennial basis:

(i) Implementation of selected country programmes. Regular reports would be submitted biennially. During the first half of the biennium, should there be particularly important events in the implementation of particular country programmes, these will be reported to the Council in the interim years;

(ii) Reports of the special funds administered by UNDP other than those funds for which General Assembly and Governing Council decisions require annual reports e.g. the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM). In the interim years basic statistical and financial data on each of the funds will be included either in the Administrator's annual report or in an ad hoc brief report (see General Assembly resolution 36/200 para. 11);

(iii) Trust funds established by the Administrator during the prior year. A brief financial summary will be provided annually either as part of the annual review of the financial situation or as a separate document. Also, the USSR/UNDP Trust Fund for Training in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics of Specialists from Developing Countries will be reported annually, as required by the Governing Council;

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- (iv) No consensus matters, relating to amendments of the UNDP Financial Regulations;
- (v) Assistance to national liberation movements. Information would be provided in the interim year by the Regional Director in his statement;
- (vi) Assistance to the Palestinian people. With regard to items (v) and (vi), statistical and financial information will be provided in an ad hoc brief report.

4. Consideration would have to be given to the staggering of documents. One proposal would be to consider the reports on the special funds in the off-budget-year and in line with the work programme of the Second Committee and the Economic and Social Council, respectively. It is clearly understood that with respect to matters biennially reported, any delegation which may wish in the interim year to raise an issue or issues regarding such matters will be able to do so and the administration will respond as comprehensively as may be needed.

(b) Reports which could be consolidated in 1987 and, as appropriate, in future years

- 5. (i) The UNSO reports on the Plan of Action to Combat Desertification and on the Recovery and Rehabilitation Programme are, to a large extent, repetitive. It is suggested that a single paper will be appropriate;
- (ii) A number of issues relating to programme activities are traditionally reported on an annual or biennial basis. Reports for the 1987 session which would fall under this category are: use of equipment; use of personnel; government execution; and implementation of measures to improve programme and project quality. These are essentially progress reports which focus on aspects related to programme implementation in the field. It is suggested that one report be submitted in 1987, and thereafter annually; it might be entitled "The annual review of programme and project activities". This report would provide up-to-date information on selected aspects of programme activities. The subjects to be covered every year need not necessarily be the same and would deal with such matters as may be requested by the Governing Council, or which, in the judgement of the Administrator, need to be submitted to the Governing Council for review or information;

Not only would considerable savings be achieved in terms of time and page volume, but indeed the overall presentation could be enhanced since it should be possible to present a more comprehensive and cohesive report. The range of issues covered as reflected in the reports noted above has an excellent precedent in the report on the

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Annual review of the financial situation, which, in 1985, dealt with such issues as programme delivery, cash management, implementation of Council decision 85/16 regarding the fourth programming cycle, housing, support costs, flexibility arrangements and management services. The report has been used deliberately as a management report to include a wide range of subjects without producing separate reports on each subject. In years when a subject may have particular prominence, the relevant section of the report could be expanded, or, if necessary, a separate report could be written on that subject. In reviewing this proposal, consideration should be given to the comments regarding category (c) reports;

- (iii) In a similar vein, a number of thematic issues of concern to the Governing Council could be incorporated in a single report which might be entitled "Annual review of thematic programmes established by the Governing Council". With regard to the 1987 session, the reports on: human resources development; co-ordination; and implementation strategy for women in development could be subsumed as different chapters of the single report. While the grouping of these subjects might appear to be rather arbitrary, it might be appropriate for the Administrator, in a single paper, to draw the attention of the Governing Council to the different thematic priorities that have been established for UNDP, to discuss the relationship of these priorities, and, if appropriate, to point out any contradictions. A report that seeks to bring different thematic priorities together and explains their relationship to each other and to UNDP's overall country programming process, would constitute an appropriate challenge for an organization which promotes a non-sectoral approach. At the same time, it should be clarified that where such a relationship does not exist between the various segments of the report, the various items will not be linked in any artificial manner;
- (iv) A consolidated report relating to the fourth cycle Indicative Planning Figures (IPF) and other resource utilization will be prepared. This report will incorporate such matters as Special Programme Resources (SPR), the special needs of island developing countries, changes in IPF calculations and issues relating to net contributor status during the fourth cycle.
- (c) Reports regarding which overlapping discussions are taking place in the Governing Council and the Working Group of the Committee of the Whole

6. A number of issues have been the subject of overlapping discussions in the Working Group and the Governing Council. Some of these are dealt with in the proposals regarding category (b) reports above. Consideration could also be given in this regard to the subject of evaluation.

(d) Reports which in 1987 will respond to particular requests from the Governing Council

7. There are a number of reports for the 1987 session for which it would appear that the existing arrangements are appropriate:

- (i) Procurement from developing countries;
- (ii) The role of UNDP in the implementation of the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development;
- (iii) The organizational structure of the UNDP-administered system;
- (iv) Review of the Senior Industrial Development Field Advisor programme;
- (v) Short-term Advisory Services;
- (vi) Substantial New Programme of Action;
- (vii) Evaluation report (as requested by Council decision 86/28, para. 6);
- (viii) Reports of the Joint Inspector Unit

(e) Reports in respect of which no changes are proposed for 1987 or future years

8. (i) Country programmes;
- (ii) Trends and problems in country programmes;
 - (iii) Reports relating to the organization of the Governing Council;
 - (iv) Annual report of the Administrator;
 - (v) Review on the financial situation;
 - (vi) Biennial budget;
 - (vii) Audit reports.

CONCLUSION

9. Any one of the consolidated reports listed above could emphasize subjects of particular interest or concern to the Governing Council. Furthermore, should the Council so wish, a separate and more detailed report may be prepared on any one of the issues to be dealt with by the Council.

10. In conclusion, the Administrator believes that these recommendations would result in:

- (i) More focussed and better reports;
- (ii) Fewer reports and a reduction in documentation;
- (iii) An overall rationalization of reporting to the Governing Council, and a reduction in the number of meetings.

11. The Administrator seeks the guidance of the Governing Council regarding the above proposals and the possibility of their implementation with respect to the documentation to be submitted to the Governing Council at its thirty-fourth session in 1987.

Notes

1/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-first Session, Supplement No. 49 (A/41/49), p. 5.

2/ Ibid.

3/ Ibid., p. 6.

4/ Ibid.