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CONTROL AND LIMITATION OF DOCUMENTATION
(Note by the Executive Secretary)

63-123

CONTROL AND LIMITATION OF DOCUMENTATION

Note by the Executive Secretary

1. The attached text of General Assembly resolution 1272 (XIII), which was presented to the Commission at its second session, is again being presented at this session in consideration of its continuing importance to the work of the United Nations and its subsidiary bodies.

2. Documents A/3888 and A/3921 mentioned in the above resolution are available for consultation by delegations.

3. Regulation 13.1 of the Financial Regulations of the United Nations, referred to in paragraph 4 of resolution 1272 (XIII) reads as follows:

"No council, commission or other competent body shall take a decision involving expenditure unless it has before it a report from the Secretary-General on the administrative and financial implications of the proposal."

4. The Executive Secretary continues to make all efforts to reduce the volume of documentation. Only documents specifically requested by the fourth session of the Commission have been submitted. Subject to the agreement of the Commission, the Executive Secretary intends to keep the summary records of the discussions at the fifth session of the Commission within the same limits as those of the fourth session of the Commission (E/CN.14(IV)/SR.1-25).

5. The Executive Secretary further intends in future to indicate to organizations preparing documentation for the Commission the approximate volume of material required, and will draw attention to General Assembly resolution 1272 (XIII) on the control and limitation of documentation.

6. The Executive Secretary also will not accept, as a matter of course, the burden of processing all papers or material received,

irrespective of length; but will reserve the right to summarize or condense such materials. This will be indicated by the Executive Secretary when making requests for documentation.

7. Since the Commission is a new organ of the United Nations, a comparison of the volume of documentation with previous years, or a target figure for a reduction, are not applicable.

1272 (XIII). CONTROL AND LIMITATION OF DOCUMENTATION

The General Assembly

Noting the report of the Committee on the Control and Limitation of Documentation set up under General Assembly resolution 1203 (XII) of 13 December 1957 to consult with and advise the Secretary-General on the most effective means of implementing that resolution,

Noting further the Secretary-General's report on the steps taken and on the nature and extent of the reductions achieved,

1. Commends the Secretary-General for the appreciable results achieved so far during 1958,

2. Endorses the report of the Committee on the Control and Limitation of Documentation, particularly the basic approaches enunciated in paragraph 10 and the proposals set out in paragraph 27, except those contained in sub-paragraph (c); in regard to the maintenance of verbatim and summary records, the existing practice shall continue unaltered in all respects;

3. Draws the particular attention of all organs and subsidiary bodies to the recommendations contained in paragraph 27(e) of the Committee's report, requesting those organs and bodies to include in the agenda of their next session the question of the control and limitation of their documentation;

4. Emphasizes in this connexion the importance of strict adherence to regulation 13.1 of the Financial Regulations of the United Nations and the relevant rules of procedure of the organs concerned, with the object of ensuring that no organ or subsidiary body takes decisions on any measure until it has been informed in advance of the financial and administrative considerations involved;

5. Requests the Secretary-General to ensure that no effort is spared within the Secretariat to maintain the progress achieved and to extend it in all ways possible, taking into account the guiding

principles set forth in paragraph 10 of the report of the Committee;

6. Further requests the Secretary-General, within the existing establishment, to extend the editorial control services;

7. Urges the representatives of Member States as well as all other members of Commissions, committees and similar bodies to co-operate fully with the Secretary-General in carrying out the policy laid down by the General Assembly particularly in resolutions 593 (VI) of 4 February 1952, 789 (VIII) of 9 December 1953 and 1203 (XII) of 13 December 1957;

8. Requests the Secretary-General and the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions to report on the operation of the present resolution to the General Assembly at its fifteenth session or earlier.

781st plenary meeting,
14 November 1958.