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REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF ECOSOC RESOLUTION 1264(XLIII)  
AND OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE AD HOC COMMITTEE OF EXPERTS  
TO EXAMINE THE FINANCES OF THE UNITED NATIONS AND THE SPECIALIZED AGENCIES

At its forty-third session, the Economic and Social Council by its resolution 1264(XLIII) requested the Secretary-General to transmit the report of the Ad hoc Committee (A/6343), together with General Assembly resolution 2150(XXI) to all subsidiary bodies of the Council for consideration and appropriate action. In operative paragraph (b), the regional economic commissions were requested to include a separate item in the agenda of their sessions to review:

- (i) Their method of work and calendar of conferences with a view to reducing the total meeting time;
- (ii) The documentation now being prepared and any new proposals for documents with a view to reducing the number of requests and the volume of documentation; and
- (iii) The terms of reference of their own subsidiary bodies with a view to rationalizing the system of subsidiary bodies.

In anticipation of this resolution, the secretariat had made the following commitments:

1. In respect of conferences and meetings, the Commission undertook action to reduce the number in relation to available financial and staff resources by:

(a) At its seventh session in 1965, the Commission by resolution 130(VII) decided to meet once in two years instead of annually (E/4004). Thus, the eighth session was held in February 1967;

(b) Again, at the eighth session the Commission adopted resolution 175(VIII) on Working Parties and ECA Meeting Schedules (see document E/4354, pages 163-164). It will be noted that the resolution authorizes the Executive Secretary to adopt a more flexible scheduling of meetings so as to attain the objectives of Council resolution 1264(XLIII);

(c) Pursuant to Commission resolution 175(VIII), the Executive Secretary introduced certain internal measures imposing stricter scrutiny of the work programme and proposals for the inclusion of conferences and meetings on the official calendar of meetings. He established two Committees of the secretariat, viz:

- (i) The Policy Committee, comprising the Directors of Divisions, under his personal chairmanship; and
- (ii) The Programme Committee, also comprising certain Directors of Divisions, under the chairmanship of the Deputy Executive Secretary.

The latter Committee periodically reviews the work programme and the schedule of meetings, and makes recommendations to the Policy Committee. Both Committees, in deciding upon the meetings to include in the current year's activity, are guided by the following order of priority:

- (i) Training courses;
- (ii) Seminars with a training component;

- (iii) Technical meetings of experts;
  - (iv) Meetings for inter-governmental negotiations. (Meetings in this category are convened when preparatory work indicates that they are likely to achieve clear results).
- (d) In order to reduce the cost of meetings, a further internal measure is taken (i) to hold as many meetings as possible, consistent with the demands of sub-regional activity, at the Commission's headquarters in Addis Ababa; and, (ii) to schedule in succession meetings which require the recruitment of external interpreters and translators, so that the same team could be used to service two or more meetings without incurring additional travel expenses. Thus, of the 28 meetings held in 1968, fourteen were held at the Commission's headquarters (Annual Report, 1 March 1968 - 2 February 1969).
- (e) The Conference of African Planners and the Conference of African Statisticians, which are subsidiary bodies of the Commission, meet only once in two years. The meetings of Working Parties set up under Commission resolution 128(VII) are now governed by Commission resolution 175(VIII) and are convened only as required. Thus so far only one Working Party has been convened.
2. The measures adopted in order to reduce the total volume of documentation reproduced by the Commission in both languages (English and French) included:
- (i) Summary records are made only of the plenary meetings of the biennial sessions, but not of the two Committees which are usually elected - which again contributes to the reduction of documentation;

- (ii) In addition, the Executive Secretary issued guidelines to the Directors of Divisions at a special meeting of the Heads (Directors) of Divisions held in January 1967 to limit the volume of mimeographed documentation in accordance with the type of meeting for which they are prepared; and
- (iii) Publications of the Commission are limited to the Economic Bulletin for Africa, the Survey of Economic Conditions in Africa, the Agricultural Economics Bulletin for Africa, and periodical publications in the series of Statistics, the Social Welfare Services in Africa, and Natural Resources.

3. Through the Programme Committee, the secretariat is currently engaged on the preparation of a two-year Programme of Work and Priorities for 1969-1970 with projections to 1973 for presentation to the Ninth Session of the Commission in February 1969. Since 1967 a Programme Co-ordination Unit has also been set up within the Cabinet Office of the Executive Secretary to effect a better co-ordination of the work programme within the Commission, on the one hand, and with the specialized agencies and other organs of the United Nations, on the other.

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