



Administrative Committee on Coordination

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ENGLISH ONLY

SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS OF THE ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITTEE AT ITS SECOND REGULAR SESSION (PARTS I AND II)

PART I

(New York, 2 to 4 and 6 October 1997)

INTRODUCTION

1. The Organizational Committee (OC) of the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC) met at United Nations Headquarters, New York, from 2 to 4 and on 6 October 1997. OC adopted an annotated agenda and timetable for the meeting, which is contained in annex I; the list of participants is contained in annex II. The outcome of a further meeting of OC, held after the second regular session of 1997 of ACC on 3 November 1997, is reflected in part II of the present summary of conclusions. The list of participants for that further meeting is contained in annex IV.

I. PREPARATIONS FOR THE SECOND REGULAR SESSION OF ACC

A. Relations between organizations of the United Nations system and civil society

1. In preparing for the ACC discussion on this item - the main theme on the ACC agenda - OC had before it a background paper prepared at its request by Mr. George Minet of the International Labour Organization (ILO) on the relationships between the United Nations system and civil society, as well as a preliminary note by the United Nations on the United Nations and the business community.

2. OC recalled that the association of many United Nations organizations with civil society was long-standing. It nevertheless recognized that changing times required that the pattern of that relationship should be deepened and made more productive and mutually beneficial across the system. In the same context, the Committee reaffirmed that the system's interaction with non-State actors was a key dimension of reform, not least because by widening engagement and participation, it could be an important factor in reinforcing public faith in intergovernmental institutions in the performance of their mandated tasks. OC endorsed a number of proposals contained in the background papers on ways for the United Nations system to expand the contribution of civil society to the different phases of the system's work, from policy development to programme implementation, including through more systematic exchanges of information and consultations at the inter-agency level on best practices and lessons learned. These proposals are reflected in the annotations to ACC agenda.

3. The importance of actively engaging the business community in the work of the organizations of the United Nations system was generally recognized. The Committee acknowledged that the significance of partnerships with the business community varied from organization to organization, resulting in different modalities and degrees of cooperation. Those differences should not preclude a common reflection on policy frameworks and conditions, which could further such partnerships within the system. Some of the common issues being faced by the organizations of the system in this respect, and some of the elements on which this common reflection might focus, are outlined in the annotated agenda contained in annex I.

4. OC considered that the forthcoming ACC "retreat" on the changing role of the State and its implications for the United Nations system provided an opportunity for a further discussion on the common challenges facing the system in developing partnerships with civil society, including the private sector, and

on the desirability and feasibility of establishing common clearing house mechanisms for cooperation with the business community.

5. Drawing on its discussions on this topic, OC prepared annotations for the consideration of this agenda item by ACC.

B. Coordinated follow-up to recent international conferences

6. In preparing for the ACC discussion on this topic, OC benefited from the outcome of the Consultative Committee on Programme and Operational Questions (CCPOQ) Working Group on Coordinated Follow-up to Major United Nations conferences and summits. In addition, the Committee had before it relevant conclusions and recommendations adopted at the eleventh session of CCPOQ and the tenth session of IACSD; a note on the outcome of the substantive session of 1997 of the Economic and Social Council; a background note by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on preparations for the fiftieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the five-year implementation review of the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action; and an information note prepared by the Department of Humanitarian Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat on the follow-up to the World Conference on Natural Disaster Reduction.

7. OC noted that not all elements were in place to permit a comprehensive assessment of the system's experience with the integrated follow-up to recent global conferences, including the extent to which the outcomes of these conferences had been reflected and integrated in the policies and programmes of the organizations of the system. However, a first assessment of the specific experience gained as a result of the work of the three ad hoc inter-agency task forces established by ACC to further integrated follow-up at the country level around selected themes. There was little doubt that the three task forces constituted an innovative and on the whole successful system-wide experiment in bringing the capacities of the entire United Nations system, including the Bretton Woods institutions, to bear on the crucial task of developing a coherent approach to translating the recommendations of conferences into operational guidance for country level action. The process had aroused considerable interest among Governments, which also viewed this experiment as a tool to improve the interaction between the inter-agency system and the intergovernmental machinery around issues of central policy and operational significance.

8. The task forces had produced a wide range of valuable outputs and recommendations: (a) identification of key elements of the national policy framework for pursuing conference goals; (b) recommendations for United Nations country programming; (c) streamlining arrangements for national and agency reporting; (d) proposals for the further development of statistics and indicators; (e) identification of other areas requiring attention (e.g. civil society, use of information technology) and (f) institutional arrangements for follow-up. Their methods of work - lead agency arrangements, the use of country reviews and the organization of country seminars - have on the whole proved effective.

9. OC emphasized that now that the task forces had completed their work, efforts should be concentrated on fully utilizing the outputs produced and identifying and acting on the lessons learned. The work of all three task forces had again confirmed that effective coordination must be underpinned by a sound policy framework. It had pointed clearly to the need for greater complementarity in the United Nations system's data collection, and for greater commonality in the indicators used by the system. And it had identified the gaps that still existed within the system in the development of overall methodologies for translating norms and policy approaches into operations.

10. OC shared the view that the main challenge at that stage for each organization as well as for the system as a whole, was to ensure, in cooperation with Governments, that the momentum created for the integrated and coordinated follow-up to the recent major United Nations conferences was maintained, and that countries continued to receive coherent support - through the resident coordinator system, and the strategies and inter-agency frameworks currently in place or under development - to translate the outcome of conferences into concrete national policies and programmes. Sustained attention should also be given to further integrating in that effort important dimensions, such as the eradication of poverty, human rights, gender, the special requirements of the children, the environment and information and communication technologies, as well as the outcomes of the most recent conferences - the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) and the World Food Summit. The continuing validity of sustainable development as a framework to guide further work aimed at advancing the coordinated implementation of the outcomes of recent United Nations conferences was reaffirmed.

11. OC welcomed the initiative of CCPOQ of arranging for the Chairpersons of the three task forces to come together for an overall assessment of lessons learned from the task forces' work. It also agreed to revert at the second part of the session to the advice it might wish to provide with regard to the report

to be submitted to the special session of the Economic and Social Council on the coordinated follow-up to conferences.

12. OC emphasized the importance of inter-agency collaboration in the follow-up to the World Conference on Natural Disaster Reduction and in the implementation of the Yokohama Strategy and Plan of Action, and recommended that ACC call upon organizations of the United Nations system to contribute actively to the preparatory process for the closing event of the Decade, and to give attention to the activities to be pursued beyond the year 2000.

13. OC further recommended that ACC call upon all organizations of the system to collaborate with the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) in ensuring an effective follow-up to its statement on universal access to basic communications and information services, including implementation of projects in the areas identified in the annex to the ACC statement.

14. OC also reviewed preparations at the inter-agency level for the five-year review of the implementation of the Vienna Declaration and Plan of Action and the commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

15. The Committee noted that the High Commissioner for Human Rights had organized several inter-agency consultations in preparation for these two events. Activities commemorating the fiftieth anniversary within the United Nations would be launched on 10 December 1997. The Commission on Human Rights would mark the anniversary at its fifty-fourth session, in March 1998, and the commemoration would culminate with a special meeting of the General Assembly on 10 December 1998. The Commission on Human Rights, at its fifty-fourth session, would also carry out an initial review of the implementation of the Vienna Declaration and Plan of Action, and the Economic and Social Council was expected to devote the coordinating segment of its 1998 substantive session to the coordinated follow-up and implementation of the Vienna Declaration and Plan of Action. The General Assembly, at its fifty-third session, would also carry out a comprehensive analysis of the progress achieved in the implementation of the Vienna Declaration and Plan of Action. The Secretary-General's report to the Council would be prepared in close consultation with and on the basis of contributions from the organizations of the system.

16. OC noted that a large number of United Nations agencies and programmes were planning to mark the fiftieth anniversary within the scope of their respective mandates through specific programmes, publications and activities, and that the

Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights was facilitating inter-agency cooperation in that regard.

17. In the light of the information provided in the background notes and the above discussions, OC prepared annotations for the ACC consideration of this item.

C. Other matters

1. Administrative questions

18. OC discussions under this item were based primarily on the outcome of the eighty-sixth and eighty-seventh sessions of the Consultative Committee on Administrative Questions (Personnel and General Administrative Questions) (CCAQ(PER)) held at the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in Paris from 14 to 17 April 1997 and at United Nations Headquarters in New York from 9 to 11 and on 14 July 1997.

19. OC agreed that the draft ACC statement on the "margin", dealing with the application of the Noblemaire principle in the context of the effort to restore competitiveness in the system's condition of service - prepared by CCAQ(PER) for submission to the General Assembly - should be circulated to ACC members for their clearance by correspondence.

20. General support was expressed for the proposal of convening a high-level meeting of the Consultative Committee on Administrative Questions (CCAQ) to pursue the inter-agency dialogue on management reforms, including reviewing relevant parts of the publication under preparation, at ACC's request, on the reform processes under way in the system; and to address policy issues of common concern in the administrative field cutting across the mandates of CCAQ(PER) and the Consultative Committee on Administrative Questions (Financial and Budgetary Questions (CCAQ(FB))), including relevant issues arising from the reports of the most recent sessions of the two Committees.

21. OC agreed to recommend that the ACC discussions under this item concentrate on policy issues relating to staff security in crisis situations. OC forwarded to ACC, for its consideration and adoption, a draft statement on the subject (see annex III for text). OC also included in the annotations for the ACC agenda relevant recommendations emanating from both the Ad Hoc Inter-Agency Meeting on Security Matters and CCAQ(PER), calling upon organizations' headquarters to become more proactive in promoting the cooperation and

coordination of managers in the field, and in furthering the training of those managers on security matters.

22. OC agreed that arrangements be made for a brief meeting during the ACC session with the Chairman of the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC) and representatives of the Federation of International Civil Service Associations (FICSA) and the Coordinating Committee of Independent Staff Unions and Associations (CCISUA).

23. OC members expressed the view that ACC meetings with staff representatives and the Chair of ICSC, as currently structured, were not proving conducive to an effective exchange of views, and considered that a more substantive interaction on one or two key policy issues, prepared by the high-level CCAQ, could be more productive. At the same time, the high-level CCAQ could become the continuing forum for policy dialogue with staff representatives. These proposed new arrangements would be further considered by OC in finalizing the ongoing review of the functioning of ACC and its subsidiary machinery.

2. Other issues

(a) Peace-building

24. At its last session, ACC endorsed the elements of a strategic framework for response to and recovery from crisis, and decided that the proposed framework be tested in two countries: Afghanistan and Mozambique. A representative of the Department of Political Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat briefed OC on relevant developments since the last session of ACC. OC was informed that the mission to Afghanistan was still under way, and that a final report on its outcome was not yet available. A preliminary progress report had highlighted the high degree of collaboration that was evident among the organizations involved in providing assistance in Afghanistan, including the bilateral donors and the Bretton Woods institutions. A four-and-a-half day planning workshop had been organized and attended by a large number of participants (86) drawn from the United Nations Special Mission in Afghanistan, United Nations agencies and organizations, including the Bretton Woods institutions, national and international non-governmental organizations, the International Committee of the Red Cross, bilateral donors and the Asian Development Bank. Mission members had been travelling to different parts of the country (Herat, Kandahar, Jalalabad and Peshawar) to undertake discussions and assess the situation. A special subgroup had been established to deal with gender issues, and a set of recommendations in this area were being finalized. The issue of drug control

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had been identified as a major factor to be fully integrated in the Mission's work.

25. OC was informed that it had not yet proved possible to finalize arrangements for a similar mission to Mozambique. In response to concerns expressed by members of OC regarding that delay, the representative of the Department of Political Affairs indicated that he expected the mission to be set in motion soon after the completion of the one to Afghanistan. OC members would be kept fully informed of further developments in testing the strategic framework in both countries.

26. The Secretary of OC brought to the attention of the Committee that the Inter-Agency Committee on Sustainable Development (IACSD) had also considered the issue of peace-building at its last meeting in September 1997. IACSD considered that the pursuit or restoration of sustainable development in countries in crisis situations should be an integral component of the United Nations system's country-level efforts at peace-building in crisis situations. IACSD intended to revert to the issue at its next session, on the basis of relevant information to be gathered from organizations of the system on lessons learned from the perspective of the pursuit of sustainable development, so as to draw up appropriate recommendations that could further a comprehensive approach to the system's country-level efforts in crisis situation.

27. The representative of the Department of Political Affairs also recalled that, as indicated in the Secretary-General's reform programme, the Department, in its capacity as Convener of the United Nations Executive Committee on Peace and Security, had been assigned responsibility within the United Nations as focal point for peace-building. He circulated informally a draft note on post-conflict peace-building and focal point responsibilities in the context of a common strategic framework, which was at the same time being reviewed within the Executive Committee. He invited organizations to let the Department have any comments that they might have on the draft by mid-October through the Secretary of OC, so that they might be taken into account in finalizing relevant arrangements.

(b) United Nations System-wide Special Initiative on Africa

28. An information note on the item was introduced by a representative of the secretariat of the United Nations System-Wide Special Initiative on Africa.

29. OC welcomed the progress being made in the development of benchmarks for measuring country-level progress, particularly in the clusters of education and governance. In the course of the discussion, OC members exchanged information on progress in other areas of the Initiative. In the trade area, the World Trade Organization (WTO), the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and other organizations had stepped up activities, in follow-up to the relevant recommendations adopted at the ministerial meeting held in Singapore, including the organization of seminars and workshops to improve market access of African countries and their participation in the international trading system; in the area of debt, recent data indicated that six African countries had met the threshold to qualify for the World Bank/International Monetary Fund (IMF) Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Initiative; in the areas of investment and employment promotion, activities supported by the ILO and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) were being intensified; the African Information Society Initiative had introduced a framework for expanding the benefits of information technology throughout Africa; and inter-agency collaboration was being progressively strengthened in the water cluster.

30. OC noted that in spite of steady improvements in the overall economic performance of many African countries, and significant achievements in the areas of democratization and governance, poverty was still pervasive in the continent, and that sustainability of the progress being made was, as a result, far from assured.

31. At the inter-agency level, despite progress in individual areas, there appeared to be a need for a renewed effort to restore momentum to the Initiative. A renewed effort was thus required on the part of the lead and cooperating agencies in monitoring and reporting on activities within their respective clusters; and renewed attention needed to be given to finalizing implementation strategies, and to identifying and bringing to the attention of the Steering Committee factors that are delaying or constraining timely implementation. It was generally felt that, in order to sustain the commitment of the system to the Initiative, ACC will need to continue providing leadership and policy guidance. OC, in the exercise of monitoring functions on behalf of ACC, would endeavour to contribute to that effort.

32. OC also exchanged information on recent international developments relevant to the Special Initiative, including the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)/Development Assistance Committee (DAC) meeting on the theme "Shaping the twenty-first century", and relevant elements of the Group of Seven Industrialized Countries (G-7) communiqué.

33. OC noted that the Committee for Programme and Coordination (CPC), in recognizing the Special Initiative as the implementing arm of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s (UN-NADAF), had recommended that two priorities of the UN-NADAF that were not reflected in the Special Initiative, namely, regional cooperation and integration, and economic diversification of African economies, be included. OC was informed that that recommendation of CPC would be reviewed by the Steering Committee of the Special Initiative at its next meeting.

(c) Universal access to basic communication and information services

34. The representative of ITU briefed OC on developments in pursuing the project on universal access to basic communication and information services since the adoption by ACC, at its last session, of a statement on the subject. He reported that the Executive Head of ITU had brought the text of the statement to the attention of his agency's Executive Board, noted that UNESCO and the World Health Organization (WHO) had also brought the text of the statement to their governing bodies, and expressed the hope that other executive heads that had not yet done so would do likewise. In that connection, the Chairman of OC confirmed that the statement was being brought to the attention of the United Nations General Assembly at its current fifty-second session.

35. OC was further informed that the Information Systems Coordination Committee (ISCC) had commenced implementation of relevant aspects of the project coming within its terms of reference. The Committee also noted with appreciation the interest of ITU in arranging for the project to provide the framework for pursuing the initiative, considered by OC in 1996, to establish a comprehensive information system on the assistance being provided by the United Nations system to the countries in transition in Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS).

36. The representative of ITU noted that the fiftieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration on Human Rights provided an important opportunity for interested United Nations system organizations, in collaboration with the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, to pursue the concept, highlighted in the ACC statement, of the emergence of a right to communicate, based on universal access to communication and informatics services. In the same context, he highlighted the role of communication technology in fostering the participation of civil society in the observance of the anniversary.

37. The representative of ITU also recalled that in the annex to the ACC statement, a number of areas had been identified that would be the subject of pilot projects for implementation at the country level. He noted that given the magnitude of the investments required to implement such projects, a catalytic fund would need to be established. OC members agreed to pursue in their respective organizations, as appropriate, modalities for the establishment of such a fund. It was agreed that the Committee would continue to monitor the implementation of the project, under the leadership of ITU.

II. STRUCTURE AND FUNCTIONING OF ACC AND ITS SUBSIDIARY MACHINERY

38. In considering this item, OC drew on the outcome of its informal meeting held at Geneva on 21 and 22 July 1997. Discussions focused on ways of strengthening the capacity of the inter-agency machinery as a whole and OC's own capacity to assist ACC in effectively exercising its leadership role in the system.

39. OC considered that the time appeared to be particularly propitious for a qualitative strengthening of ACC's ability to affect the overall thrust of the policies and programmes of the United Nations system, and to shape the future directions of the system's work. In particular, the Committee felt that the expansion and deepening of arrangements for cooperation between organizations or groups of organizations currently taking place as an integral part of ongoing reform processes, provided an opportunity for ACC to concentrate its attention on major issues that cut across such arrangements, focusing on:

(a) Promoting synergies among the different sectors of activity in which individual organizations or groups of organizations within the system were engaged, including the promotion of synergies between global policy development in all its dimensions and operations at the country level;

(b) Building and sustaining partnerships, networks and issue-management systems for pursuing joint initiatives and strengthening programme collaboration in support of the attainment of countries' overall development goals and priorities;

(c) Addressing key managerial challenges in sustaining an independent international civil service of the highest calibre;

(d) Pursuing the common values that were emerging from the reform processes, and that should guide the system in responding to but also helping to shape the fundamental changes that were occurring in the international environment for multilateral cooperation and development.

40. That implied a more selective agenda for ACC, not determined by the day-to-day work of the inter-agency machinery but by major developments in the international environment that the United Nations system was called upon to respond to and affect. It also implied a systematic process of communications and exchange of information within the system that would make it possible to build the ACC agenda on the main policy concerns as perceived by its member organizations, and to ensure that the growing network of bilateral and other cooperative arrangements among organizations was taken into account and not duplicated. The arrangements under consideration for strengthening and expanding the base of secretariat support for ACC and strengthening interactions among the secretariats of the various ACC subsidiary bodies should be viewed as an integral part of that effort. Other implications for the work of the ACC machinery included:

(a) A greater delegation of authority to the ACC consultative committees and greater flexibility in their methods of work, making optimum use of communication technology;

(b) A more active role for OC in assisting ACC members in the selection of suitable topics for its agenda, in preparing for ACC discussions and keeping under review the follow-up to its decisions, and in monitoring the overall functioning of the ACC machinery, and a more comprehensive coverage by OC of all sectors of activity in which the United Nations system had to collaborate, including not only the economic and social area but also relevant aspects of peace and security and human rights activities;

(c) The development and strengthening of dedicated, interactive information systems to promote continuous exchange of information and to facilitate inter-agency consultations.

41. In the same context, OC considered that high-level meetings of the whole of CCAQ should be institutionalized and should provide the forum for addressing on a regular basis the range of administrative issues that had in the past featured on the agenda of ACC, as well as management issues cutting across the mandates of CCAQ(PER) and CCAQ(FB). That would make possible a further streamlining of future ACC agendas by eliminating the standing item on administrative questions and enabling ACC to focus on selected policy issues requiring the collective

attention of the executive heads. As indicated in paragraph 23 above, the high-level CCAQ could also become the continuing forum for policy dialogue with staff representatives, without prejudice to ACC meeting with staff representatives on selected policy issues of common concern.

42. OC agreed that it would submit to ACC, at its first regular session of 1998, a final set of recommendations on the functioning of ACC and its subsidiary machinery. In so doing, it would draw on relevant aspects of the outcome of the ACC discussions at its second regular session of 1997, in particular its assessment of the effectiveness of the inter-agency arrangements put in place to promote an integrated follow-up to global conferences, as well as relevant aspects of the outcome of the ACC "retreat". Those recommendations would include an operational plan for implementation, for adoption by ACC.

III. WORK OF ACC CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEES AND OTHER INTER-AGENCY BODIES

A. Work of ACC consultative committees

43. In the exercise of its functions for the preparation of the ACC session and for monitoring the functioning of the ACC machinery, OC took note of the reports of CCAQ(FB), CCAQ(PER), IACSD, and CCPOQ. OC also noted and brought to ACC's attention the actions that subsidiary bodies had proposed to take with regard to appointments, as follows:

(a) The appointment of Mr. Dieter Goethel of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) as Chairman of CCAQ(PER) for a two-year period 1997-1999, starting from its first regular session of 1997, and the appointment of Ms. Jan Beagle of the United Nations and Ms. Haruko Hirose of UNESCO as Vice-Chairpersons for the same period;

(b) The appointment of Mr. Eckhard Hein of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) as Secretary of CCPOQ for the two-year period from 1 January 1998 to 31 December 1999;

(c) The extension of the appointment of Mr. Peter Leslie of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), as Secretary of CCAQ(FB) for a further period of two years, from 1 January 1998 to 31 December 1999.

44. With regards to the schedule of meetings of ACC subsidiary bodies, OC agreed to revert to the matter at the second part of its session in the light of ACC's decision on the dates for its own meeting in 1998.

1. Report of the eighty-seventh session of CCAQ(FB), United Nations Headquarters, New York, 25 to 29 August 1997

45. OC noted that the report of the eighty-seventh session of the CCAQ(FB) had identified a number of issues to be brought to the attention of ACC, and considered that those issues could be addressed, on behalf of ACC, by the high-level meeting of CCAQ referred to in paragraph 20 above. It requested that consultations be undertaken to select an appropriate timing for such a meeting at Geneva or in New York.

2. Report of the tenth session of IACSD, WHO Headquarters, Geneva, 17 to 19 September 1997

46. Aspects of IACSD work brought to the attention of ACC related to the coordinated follow-up to international conferences, peace-building in crisis situations, and follow-up to the 1997 special session of the General Assembly to review the implementation of Agenda 21, including preparations for the sixth session of the Commission on Sustainable Development.

3. Report of the eleventh session of CCPOQ, United Nations Headquarters, New York, 22 to 26 September 1997

47. The Secretary of CCPOQ briefed OC on the work of the eleventh session of the Committee held at United Nations Headquarters, New York, from 22 to 26 September 1997, and drew attention to those aspects of the Committee's work and recommendations requiring ACC's attention. They related to the coordinated follow-up to major United Nations international conferences and summits, relationships between the United Nations system and civil society, and the nomination of a new Secretary of CCPOQ. Those items are reflected in the annotations to the relevant items on the ACC agenda. With regard to the appointment of the Secretary of the Committee, OC, in bringing to ACC's attention the proposed appointment of Mr. Eckhard Hein of FAO as CCPOQ Secretary for a two-year period from 1 January 1998 to 31 December 1999, shared CCPOQ's appreciation for the valuable contribution of the outgoing Secretary, Mr. Derrick Deane.

48. With regard to other items on the CCPOQ agenda, the Secretary made reference to the approval by CCPOQ, on behalf of ACC, of revised ACC guidelines for the review of technical cooperation among developing countries policies and procedures, for submission to the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly. He also referred to the CCPOQ decision to invite the Secretary-General, as Chairman of ACC, to secure from executive heads their commitment to the management of field coordination training programme conducted by the United Nations Staff College; the adoption by CCPOQ, on behalf of ACC, of ACC comments on the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) report on the strengthening of field representation of the United Nations system; progress in the finalization of the revision of the ACC programme classification; and a statement adopted by the Subcommittee on Nutrition entitled "Meeting the nutrition challenge: a call to arms", which sought to focus the attention of both the United Nations system and Governments to the need to give appropriate priority to nutrition-related issues.

49. OC expressed appreciation that in line with ACC's guidance, the CCPOQ work programme was increasingly being focused on key policy issues and on the interface between programme and operational issues.

4. Report of the eighty-sixth and eighty-seventh sessions of CCAQ(PER), UNESCO, Paris, 14 to 17 April 1997, and United Nations Headquarters, New York, 9 to 14 July 1997

50. The Vice-Chairperson of CCAQ(PER) drew the attention of OC to those aspects of the Committee's work and recommendations requiring the attention of ACC. They related to the remuneration of the professional and higher categories; the reform of human resources management; and the security of staff and their families. On the first issue, OC noted that, in response to ACC's ongoing concern to ensure the competitiveness of the conditions of service of staff, and its invitation to the Secretary-General to continue to seek a favourable solution to that issue with Member States in the General Assembly, CCAQ(PER) had prepared a draft statement for submission to the General Assembly at its fifty-second session on the issue of common system remuneration. It was agreed that the statement should be circulated and cleared with ACC members by correspondence.

51. OC was further informed that CCAQ(PER), on the basis of requests made to it by ACC and in the context of major management reforms being introduced across the common system, had made an in-depth review of new approaches to human resources management, focusing on the changing role of human resources

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offices/departments and the expertise required to fulfil that role; the framework within which new approaches to human resources management or other initiatives should be based - the international civil service; core common system issues; "core" and "non-core" functions of organizations; the introduction of competency (or function-based) differentials emanating from earlier proposals to introduce special occupational rates; the introduction of more flexible leave arrangements within the framework of the Committee's work/family agenda; and the streamlining, centralizing and pooling of human resources processes. The Committee had elaborated a draft policy statement on new approaches to human resources management for the consideration of ACC, and had adopted a plan of action to advance those new approaches throughout the United Nations system.

52. OC noted that the above issues would be further reviewed by the high-level meeting of CCAQ referred to in paragraphs 20 and 45 above.

53. The attention of OC was also drawn to the continuing concern of both the Ad Hoc Inter-Agency Meeting on Security Matters and CCAQ(PER) for the effective management of security arrangements in the field in order to ensure the safety and well-being of staff and their families. As indicated in paragraph 21 above, OC endorsed the recommendation of CCAQ(PER) that ACC invite organizations' headquarters to become more proactive in ensuring the cooperation and coordination of managers in the field and promoting the training of those managers on security matters.

B. Reports of bodies reporting to OC

1. Report of the Ad Hoc Inter-Agency Meeting on Security Matters, Rome, 6-8 May 1997

54. The Secretary of the Ad Hoc Inter-Agency Meeting on Security Matters introduced the report of the last Inter-Agency Meeting (ACC/1997/10) held at the headquarters of FAO from 6 to 8 May 1997. OC endorsed, on behalf of ACC, the recommendations contained therein. They covered, on the basis of a document prepared by the Office of the United Nations Security Coordinator (UNSECOORD), inter-agency security structures and security arrangements in individual duty stations; staff members' specific responsibilities regarding security; and security guidelines in cases of hostage taking and airline hijacking. OC endorsed the recommendation of the Meeting that the UNSECOORD document be distributed to all personnel of the United Nations system. OC welcomed the progress being made in intensifying dialogue among the organizations of the

United Nations system, intergovernmental organizations and non-governmental organizations on security matters, and the growing involvement of Member States in addressing the issue.

55. OC endorsed the recommendations of the Meeting on the need for the organizations of the United Nations system to devote more adequate resources to security training.

56. OC also agreed that there was an urgent need for the organizations of the United Nations system to put in place an improved system for stress counselling for staff members called upon to serve in high-risk areas. It endorsed the recommendation that two stress counsellors be recruited on an inter-agency basis following the cost-sharing formula recommended by the Meeting.

57. OC, recognizing the need for improved planning by agencies, programmes and funds with respect to the financial implications of security measures, endorsed the Meeting's recommendation that organizations of the system consider ways of including a separate budget line in future humanitarian appeals to cover the costs of security measures.

58. OC noted the invitation from the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) to hold the next Ad Hoc Inter-Agency Meeting on Security Matters at Montreal in May 1998.

2. Report of the twenty-third session of JUNIC ILO Centre, Turin, Italy, 1 to 3 July 1997

59. The Secretary of the Joint United Nations Information Committee (JUNIC) introduced the report of the Committee on its twenty-third session (ACC/1997/11). OC welcomed the emphasis placed by JUNIC on the need to further an information and communication culture in the organizations of the United Nations system that would serve to reinforce the efforts of their information professionals to project a positive and united image of the system. In the same context, OC expressed appreciation for the efforts under way to utilize modern technology more systematically in the dissemination of unified messages. OC expressed strong support for the proposal of the World Bank to organize a training course for interested members of JUNIC in modern communications as a means for better defining joint messages and strengthening cooperation and teamwork. In the same context, OC noted that JUNIC was proposing to convene an open-ended working group to prepare system-wide guidelines for the posting of

information on the Internet. It recommended that the work already undertaken by ISCC in that area be taken into due account.

60. OC noted with appreciation the endorsement by JUNIC of the CCPOQ proposal that the Non-Governmental Organizations Liaison Service (NGLS) serve as a mechanism for convening an inter-agency consultation on modalities of operational collaboration with non-governmental organizations. It also welcomed the mission statement of NGLS, which stated the following: "NGLS promotes dynamic partnerships between the United Nations and non-governmental organizations. By providing information, advice, expertise and support services, NGLS is a part of the United Nations efforts to strengthen dialogue and win public support for economic and social development." OC endorsed the proposal of JUNIC that UNICEF, through Dr. Sadig Rasheed, its Director of Programmes, undertake the role of lead organization of NGLS for the period 1997-1999.

61. OC, recalling the decision of JUNIC in 1996 to reintroduce its information exchange bulletin, confirmed that many organizations considered the bulletin a very useful means for the exchange of information on relevant activities and programmes, and endorsed the JUNIC request that its secretariat continue to coordinate the bulletin for another year.

62. On the subject of a system-wide publication on development issues, OC again stressed the need to devise an effective means of communicating development-related stories to the mainstream media. OC noted that the report of the twenty-fourth session of JUNIC would address the issue in detail, and expressed the hope that the Committee would be able to put forward effective arrangements to those ends.

63. OC was informed that preparations were under way for the participation of the United Nations system in the international exhibition to be held at Lisbon in 1998, coinciding with the International Year of the Ocean. In that connection, OC noted that the Secretary-General had appointed Ms. Hélène Gosselin, Director of Public Information of UNESCO as the Coordinator/Commissioner-General of the United Nations Pavilion at the Lisbon Exhibition, and that Mr. Jan Ralph was serving as the Technical Director designate of the Pavilion. OC was informed that JUNIC had agreed to focus presentations at the proposed United Nations Pavilion on a limited number of themes directly related to the oceans. A JUNIC consultative group had been constituted to prepare proposals in that respect.

64. With respect to the Hannover Expo 2000: "Humankind, nature, technology", for which preparations were also under way, OC endorsed, on behalf of ACC, the designation of the Department of Public Information of the United Nations Secretariat as the lead agency for the system's participation in the Expo. JUNIC also decided to establish a consultative group composed of representatives from the United Nations, UNDP, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements, WHO and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) to advise on the United Nations approach to the participation in the event, and to proceed with the large screen film proposal as the best-case option for the United Nations pavilion subject to the availability of the required resources. OC took note of the intention of the Expo authorities to raise funds for that purpose.

65. OC noted that work was proceeding on the integration into a single document of the current ACC guidelines for participation by the United Nations system in international exhibitions, and looked forward to receiving a final, approved text, as part of the report of the twenty-fourth session of JUNIC.

66. OC endorsed, on behalf of ACC, the appointment of Mr. Richard Leclair, Director of Information of WHO, as the next Chairman of JUNIC for the period 1998-1999. The Committee also endorsed the proposal to hold the twenty-fourth session of JUNIC at IFAD headquarters in Rome during the first week of July 1998.

IV. OTHER MATTERS

1. Publication on reform processes throughout the system

67. The Chairman of OC informed members of the Committee of the state of play with regard to the preparation of a publication on reform processes throughout the United Nations system. The bulk of the publication was being drafted by the CCAQ secretariat, in cooperation with other inter-agency secretariats. While that work was quite advanced, not all inputs from organizations were yet available. Contributions for a policy introduction to the publication had been requested by the Chairman but were still being received. All efforts would nevertheless be made to finalize the publication by January 1998, in consultation with CCAQ, as well as OC members.

2. Brochure on the way the activities of the various organizations of the system are affecting the

daily lives of people

68. The Chairman of OC informed members of the Committee that a revised draft of the brochure was being prepared on the basis of the inputs received, and would be circulated shortly for review and comment with a view to its finalization before the end of 1997.

3. UNAIDS

69. A representative of the Joint and Co-sponsored United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) briefed OC on developments in the operation of UNAIDS. She noted that although there had been some successes, a number of important challenges remained to be addressed in mobilizing an effective system-wide response to the global epidemic. She informed OC that a statement had been prepared at an informal working session of the Committee of Co-sponsoring Organizations of UNAIDS for approval at the next session of that Committee on 30 October 1997. The statement would then be brought to the attention of ACC for its information. The objective of the statement was to restate the commitment of the six co-sponsoring organizations to the goal of working jointly to reduce the incidence and global spread of HIV/AIDS. For their part, ACC members might wish to extend support to the common goals of the co-sponsoring organizations since other organizations of the system, besides the six co-sponsors were also active at the global and country level on HIV/AIDS issues.

4. Future sessions of OC and ACC

70. In the light of previous ACC decisions concerning the timing of its sessions and taking into account the dates of intergovernmental and other meetings already scheduled within the system, OC agreed to propose to ACC that the next ACC session be scheduled for 15 and 16 April 1998. OC would revert to the dates of its own meetings at the second part of the current session.

PART II

(New York, 3 November 1997)

INTRODUCTION

71. The Organizational Committee of the Administrative Committee on Coordination met on 3 November 1997 at United Nations Headquarters, New York, to consider the follow-up to the decisions taken and conclusions reached by ACC at its second regular session of 1997 on 31 October 1997 (see ACC/1997/20), and to conclude the consideration of a number of issues included in the agenda of the first part of its session.

The list of participants is contained in annex IV.

72. OC was briefed on the main highlights of the ACC "retreat" held immediately following the ACC session on 31 October and 1 November 1997.

73. The Chairman informed OC members that the Secretary-General would write to executive heads commenting on the outcome of the "retreat", suggesting modalities for implementing some of the initiatives agreed upon in that context. He added that issues relating to the role and functioning of ACC and its subsidiary machinery had figured prominently in the discussions at the retreat. The orientations emerging from the discussions were very much in line with the observations that OC had included in the annotated agenda for the ACC session as a framework to guide the conclusion of the current review of the experience with the 1993 reorganization of the ACC machinery. Thus, emphasis had been placed on the need to focus the ACC agenda on major policy issues affecting the thrust of the work of the system, and to adopt a more decentralized approach to programme coordination by encouraging a strengthening of cooperative arrangements within groups of organizations, as well as more systematic consultations among executive heads particularly concerned with a given topic or field of activity, and by granting greater delegation of authority to the ACC subsidiary machinery. ACC members had also urged that priority attention be given to the development of an "Intranet" information system that would link the organizations of the system and facilitate a continuous exchange of information within the system on policy and programme developments, new initiatives, accomplishments and lessons learned. That would in turn reveal priorities around which to build an effective issue management system at the inter-agency level, and would facilitate the development of a work programme of ACC based on the main policy concerns of each organization of the system.

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74. In the same context, the Chairman requested OC members to submit to him by the middle of November 1997 a brief note highlighting the main events scheduled to take place within their respective organizations that were likely to have a major policy impact on their organizations, as well as implications for the system as a whole. Members of OC concurred with the proposal, noting that that would also serve to strengthen efforts to better coordinate and target the public information work of organizations around a limited number of agreed policy themes or major events.

75. The Chairman indicated that he would write in the coming weeks to OC members proposing arrangements for finalizing an operational plan for the future functioning of the ACC machinery, for adoption by ACC at its next session. OC members stressed the need for a precise modality to be developed for the preparation of the operational plan. Such a modality should allow adequate time for the preparation of the plan and its submission to ACC.

Staff security

76. OC reverted to this topic pursuant to the request addressed by ACC to the Committee to make arrangements to ensure that its discussions and the statement that it had adopted on staff security be given expeditious follow-up on a priority basis.

77. OC identified the following issues as requiring specific follow-up:

(a) Adequate financial provisions for security, including the establishment of separate budget lines for security;

(b) Security arrangements for local staff, including their possible relocation in crisis situations;

(c) Implementation of security training, particularly its budgetary implications;

(d) Improved arrangements for the establishment of thresholds for determining the timing of suspension and/or termination of operations at the field level;

(e) Implementation of programmes for stress management;

- (f) Improved information management to facilitate staff security operations;
- (g) Coordination of security policies with peacekeeping missions;
- (h) Improved coordination on staff security with non-governmental organizations;
- (i) Operational aspects of staff security policies - common security logistics;
- (j) Strengthening of the role of, and increased support for UNSECOORD, particularly a unified chain of command, preferably at the Headquarters level.

78. It was agreed that items (a) to (c) above and aspects of (j) above pertaining to increased support for UNSECOORD be pursued as a matter of priority at the next meeting of the high-level CCAQ to be held early in 1998, and that items (d) to (j) above would be acted on at a special session of the Ad Hoc Inter-Agency Meeting on Security to be scheduled in late February or early March 1998, in time for its report to be considered by OC at its first regular session. It was noted that item (a) would involve seeking the views of organizational budget officers, as well as - where regular budgets were concerned - guidance and/or endorsement from governing bodies.

79. It was also noted that UNSECOORD would arrange for the necessary background documentation to be prepared on the various items for submission to CCAQ and the Ad Hoc Inter-Agency Meeting on Security in close cooperation with organizational focal points for staff security.

80. The representative of IMF brought to the attention of OC the need for an examination of various means of strengthening immunities and privileges and other aspects of the safety of staff in the United Nations and specialized agencies, particularly in the context of travel on behalf of the organizations that they served. OC considered that that matter could be pursued either through a system of ad hoc inter-agency consultation or by placing the issue on the agenda of the annual meetings of legal advisers of United Nations system organizations. In that connection, IMF offered to undertake follow-up consultations on the matter, and host a special ad hoc meeting of legal advisers of United Nations system organizations on that issue at an early date in the new year.

Coordinated follow-up to recent International Conferences

81. OC reverted to this item in order to consider arrangements for the preparation of the report of the Secretary-General to be submitted to the special session of the Economic and Social Council in April 1998 on coordinated follow-up to conferences. The representative of the United Nations identified a number of the main aspects that could be included in the report: a comprehensive review by ACC of progress made at the system-wide level, including an assessment of the work of the ad hoc task forces on the subject, cross-cutting issues addressed by the functional commissions of the Council, and the work of the United Nations funds and programmes and the regional economic commissions. It was agreed that the outline of the report to be submitted to the Council would be circulated to OC members for comments. Subsequently, the section of the report reflecting the ACC review would be circulated to all OC members, and adequate time would be provided for the provision of comments and inputs, in accordance with the summary of conclusions of the ACC on its second regular session of 1997.

Peace-building

82. OC continued its consideration of this item, and received a briefing on the results of the strategic framework mission to Afghanistan undertaken over the period 19 September to 15 October 1997. The team leader of the mission outlined the main conclusions focusing on the elaboration of a single United Nations system programme in the country; the establishment of a single United Nations system office; the assignment of sectoral responsibilities to the competent United Nations agency to lead the process; and the feasibility of common funding.

83. He indicated that the mission report would be shared with the various organizations of the United Nations system with a view to formulating a final policy position. In that connection, he informed OC that an international support meeting for Afghanistan would be held in New York at United Nations Headquarters on 3 December 1997. He stressed that the organizations of the United Nations system should see the strategic framework for Afghanistan as a mechanism for providing international assistance to the people of Afghanistan. He confirmed that following the completion of the mission to Afghanistan, arrangements would be put in place for a strategic framework mission to Mozambique.

84. OC members expressed appreciation for the briefing given by the team leader of the mission. In the discussion that ensued, a number of issues were raised regarding the situation in Afghanistan and the strategic framework. In particular, concerns related to human rights - especially women's rights - were expressed, and questions were posed about the serious implications that those concerns had for the implementation of activities in Afghanistan. Clarifications were sought on the type of mechanism that would be used for follow-up actions on the recommendations of the mission, as well as the way in which assistance programmes would be carried out given the prevailing conditions in Afghanistan, and the national interlocutors with which the organizations of the United Nations system would collaborate. The view was also expressed that the mission's recommendations should be submitted to the ACC for guidance on further follow-up action, in the light of the fact that the formulation of strategic frameworks had originated with the ACC and was conceived as a United Nations system endeavour.

Report of the tenth session of IACSD

85. OC continued its consideration of the report of the tenth session of IACSD, and took up the request of the International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO) for its observers to attend IACSD meetings, which had been referred to it by IACSD. Bearing in mind the conclusions of ACC concerning improved cooperation with a variety of partners from outside the system, OC considered that the existing guidelines for the participation in ACC subsidiary bodies, as observers, of entities not part of the United Nations system remained relevant, and invited IACSD to apply them in acting on ITTO's request and any other similar requests.

Future meetings of ACC and OC

86. Noting that the original dates it had proposed for the ACC session (15 and 16 April) were not convenient for a number of organizations, OC identified 6 and 7 April 1998 as possible alternative dates. The Chairman indicated that he would consult further on the matter and write to OC members proposing suitable dates for both the ACC and the OC sessions. In the light of those dates, adjustments would need to be introduced in the dates of sessions of relevant ACC subsidiary bodies.

Annex I

ANNOTATED AGENDA

1. Adoption of the agenda
2. Preparations for the second regular session of ACC
 - (a) Relations between organizations of the United Nations system and civil society

At the first regular session of 1996, OC agreed to consider at its second regular session an agenda item on the relationship between the United Nations system and civil society, in the light of developments in the organizations of the system and ongoing work within ACC machinery. OC initiated such a discussion at its second regular session of 1996, on the basis of information provided by several members of the Committee. OC invited the representative of the ILO to consult with members of the Committee and other interested parties, and on that basis to take the lead in developing a discussion paper which could assist the Committee in initiating preparations for an ACC discussion on the subject, possibly at the second regular session of 1997. It was hoped that the paper would serve to introduce a comprehensive but also well focused delineation of the concept of civil society, which would assist OC in ensuring that the proposed ACC discussion makes a significant contribution to policy development and leads to specific policy outcomes, including an assessment by ACC of the implications for the system of present trends, and the identification of desirable future directions for the system as a whole in expanding partnerships with civil society.

At its first regular session of 1997, OC reviewed a first draft of the paper and considered that it provided a good conceptual basis for further inter-agency consideration of the topic. It requested the representative of the ILO to finalize it for consideration by OC at its second regular session of 1997.

Further discussions on the matter at an informal meeting of OC held in July 1997 confirmed the timeliness of the ACC decision to select the issue of the system's relations with civil society as the main theme for its next session. This conclusion was reinforced by the emphasis placed on civil society in the United Nations Secretary-General's 14 July 1997 report on United Nations reform, which includes a proposal for the establishment of a United Nations

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enterprise liaison service, as a system-wide facility patterned along the lines of NGLS. The hope was expressed that the ACC debate will serve to assess the situation and identify challenges for the system as a whole in forging effective partnerships with civil society, and to define mutual responsibilities and conditions for reinforcing and deepening these partnerships in the period ahead.

In addition to the revised note by the representative of the ILO, OC will have before it a note by the United Nations on links with the private sector, which should also serve to elaborate on the proposal concerning the enterprise liaison service, and a CCPOQ contribution expected to emphasize operational collaboration with different actors within civil society. Both notes will be circulated to OC members before the meeting. The report of CCPOQ at its eleventh session will also be available (see item 4 (a) below).

(b) Coordinated follow-up to recent international conferences

At the second regular session of ACC for 1995, the executive heads reiterated that monitoring the follow-up by the United Nations system to recent global conferences should remain a main concern of ACC in the period ahead. In order to contribute to a coordinated and integrated follow-up, ACC decided that in the future, it would review the implementation of the results of recent global conferences on the basis of a thematic approach, drawing on the work of its standing machinery and other relevant inter-agency mechanisms. At the same session, ACC decided to establish three ad hoc inter-agency task forces to provide integrated support to follow-up action at the country-level, around three interrelated themes:

- (a) The enabling environment for social and economic development;
- (b) Employment and sustainable livelihoods;
- (c) Basic social services for all.

At its two regular sessions of 1996, ACC kept under review progress in the work of these ad hoc task forces and other relevant developments, including related actions being taken at the national and international levels, and formulated recommendations to guide this work (ACC/1996/4, paras. 23 to 37, and ACC/1996/20, paras. 11 to 24). At its first session of 1997, ACC decided to undertake, at its second session, a comprehensive review of overall progress to date in promoting the coordinated follow-up to conferences, and to consider further arrangements to be made to pursue such work within the inter-agency machinery. It was agreed that such a review would include an assessment of

progress and requirements in relation to: (a) the effective utilization of the end products, including indicators, of the task forces; (b) regular updating and feedback on follow-up activities at the country level, focusing on the attainment of the goals established by the conferences; (c) the streamlining of reporting requirements and mechanism, building on existing reporting and information arrangements, common country assessments, and the devices of task managers and lead organizations; and (d) the experience gained and lessons learned from the use of flexible mechanisms, such as the task forces, for carrying out specific tasks under ACC.

As part of the preparations for this assessment, a working group of CCPOQ met in New York on 11 and 12 September 1997 to review the outputs of the ACC ad hoc task forces and other inter-agency bodies relating to the coordinated follow-up to global conferences and formulated a number of recommendations on:

(a) Developing a coherent policy framework for dialogue with Governments at the country level, including seeking to ensure the linkages of sectoral programmes to major United Nations conferences;

(b) Providing assistance to Governments in rationalizing national reporting around cross-cutting themes, building on the recently established United Nations system-wide Web site on national implementation of Agenda 21;

(c) Developing measures for rationalizing reporting requirements to the intergovernmental machinery;

(d) Ensuring consistency in the choice of indicators for data collection both for monitoring progress and for country-specific programming of United Nations system assistance;

(e) Utilizing more effectively modern information technologies;

(f) Involving more the various elements of civil society in the conference follow-up process;

(g) Determining the institutional arrangements for further follow-up to the work of the task forces.

Subsequently, CCPOQ, at its eleventh session, considered the report of the working group, and formulated a set of conclusions and recommendations for the consideration of ACC. The report of CCPOQ will be available to OC. Meanwhile, the report of the working group of CCPOQ, together with a note prepared by the

United Nations for the group, is being circulated to OC as background information, together with information on the outcome of the substantive session of 1997 of the Economic and Social Council. The Council called, inter alia, for the convening of a special session immediately after its organizational session for 1998, of two or three days duration, to further consider the theme of integrated and coordinated implementation and follow-up of the major United Nations conferences and summits with a view to assisting the consideration of this item at the Council's substantive session of 1998.

Attention is also drawn to the arrangements put in place to ensure an effective follow-up to the World Food Summit, in line with the relevant conclusions of ACC.

Under this item, the report of the tenth session of IACSD, held at WHO headquarters at Geneva from 17 to 19 September 1997, will also be available. At that session, IACSD, inter alia, considered the outcome of the nineteenth special session of the General Assembly on the review of the implementation of Agenda 21, and focused on inter-agency cooperation in support of the implementation of the outcome of the special session. The Committee also considered the overall issue of coordinated follow-up to recent United Nations global conferences, and stressed that the concept of sustainable development, as indicated in ACC's statement to the 1997 special session of the United Nations General Assembly, provided an overarching framework for United Nations system-wide activities in the economic, social and environment fields, and should therefore guide ongoing work aimed at achieving coordinated implementation of the outcomes of recent United Nations global conferences.

This item will also provide an opportunity to revert to the follow-up to the Vienna World Conference on Human Rights, and review the preparations for the two events scheduled in 1998, namely the five-year review of the implementation of the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action; and the fiftieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which was adopted on 10 December 1948.

At its first regular session of 1994, the Administrative Committee on Coordination took up the question of the follow-up to the Vienna World Conference on Human Rights, held in June 1993, and agreed on steps to be taken by the organizations of the system, individually and collectively, to contribute to the implementation of the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action.

In its resolution 1996/42 of 19 April 1996, the Commission on Human Rights requested the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to coordinate

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the preparations for the fiftieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and called upon United Nations organs and agencies, in the light of the purposes set forth in the Universal Declaration, to make an assessment and put forward pertinent conclusions on the state of implementation and the impact of existing international instruments.

In its resolution 1996/78 of 23 April 1996, the Commission on Human Rights recommended to the Economic and Social Council that it consider devoting the coordination segment of its substantive session of 1998 to the question of the coordinated follow-up to and implementation of Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, as part of the 1998 five-year review. The Commission also invited ACC to continue to discuss the implication of the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action for the United Nations system with the participation of the High Commission for Human Rights.

It will be recalled that OC, at its second regular session of 1996, recommended the inclusion of the above issues in the agenda of the second regular session of ACC, to be held in October 1997. A note on the subject will be available to OC.

An information note on the follow-up to the World Conference on Natural Disaster Reduction will also be made available to OC.

(c) Other matters

(i) Administrative questions

Under this item, OC may wish to address the proposal made to convene the next meeting of CCAQ on Thursday 30 October 1997 to pursue the inter-agency dialogue on reform and take up administrative issues that normally feature on the agenda of ACC.

Both CCAQ(PER) and CCAQ(FB) have held sessions since the first regular session of 1997 of ACC, and their reports include a number of issues which the two Committees are bringing to the attention of ACC. It will also be recalled that, at the last session of ACC, the issue of United Nations policies on staff security and stress was proposed for consideration by ACC.

In the past, in the context of its consideration of this agenda item, it has been the practice for ACC to hear statements from and to have an exchange of views with the Chairman of ICSC and representatives of FICSA and CCISUA.

(ii) Other issues

Under this item, OC may wish to undertake a review of the follow-up to ACC decisions at its recent sessions and prepare, on that basis, a note for ACC's attention. The issues involved include:

(a) Peace-building: a note on the follow-up to the relevant decisions adopted by ACC at its first regular session of 1997 will be made available to OC. It should be noted that IACSD, at the request of ACC, also considered at its tenth session the links between peace-building in crisis situations and sustainable development. In this context, IACSD recognized that the pursuit or restoration of sustainable development in countries in crisis situations was an integral component of the United Nations system's overall efforts at peace-building for the prevention and resolution of conflicts in such countries, and agreed to undertake further consideration of the issue at its next session based on information to be gathered by UNDP;

(b) United Nations System-wide Special Initiative on Africa: ACC, at its last session, undertook an assessment of the state of implementation of the United Nations System-wide Special Initiative on Africa. The Committee expressed satisfaction with respect to the progress made, and decided to maintain the item on its agenda for the immediate future in order to continue to monitor progress accomplished, provide policy, advice and leadership on corrective measures that might be needed, and promote further substantive progress in relation to those components of the Special Initiative for which implementation strategies had not yet been completed or fully developed. A note will be made available to OC before the session;

(c) Universal access to basic communication and information services: OC will consider the actions taken or planned to be taken by ACC members to undertake follow-up action to the ACC statement on the inter-agency project on universal access to basic communications and information services.

3. Structure and functioning of ACC and its subsidiary machinery

(a) Structure and functioning of ACC and its subsidiary machinery

At the second regular session of ACC of 1995, OC was requested to review the programmes of work and scheduling of meetings of inter-agency bodies within the ACC machinery, and to make recommendations for their streamlining. The Committee was further invited to strengthen its capacity to monitor and report on the follow-up to ACC decisions within the ACC machinery as well as within the

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individual organizations making up the system. It was subsequently concluded that these tasks would best be pursued as part of an overall review of the experience with the 1993 reorganization of the ACC machinery, provided for in the decisions adopted by ACC at that time.

At its two regular sessions of 1996, ACC had before it a number of proposals submitted by OC on steps to further reinforce ACC's own functioning and streamline the working methods and meeting requirements of its subsidiary bodies. In the light of these proposals, ACC adopted a number of measures to enhance its own effectiveness and methods of work, and agreed on a number of considerations to guide the further review of the functioning of its subsidiary machinery.

At its first regular session of 1997, OC considered, within the context of the strengthening and reform of the United Nations system, a number of additional proposals concerning the role and functioning of ACC and/or staff support for the Committee with a view to completing the review at its second regular session of 1997. During the informal meeting of OC in July, members focused, *inter alia*, on the impact of ongoing reform processes on the role and functioning of the ACC machinery. The Committee considered that the reform processes were resulting in a considerable expansion and deepening of arrangements for inter-agency cooperation at different levels, leading to a growing network of agreements and memoranda of understandings or informal cooperative arrangements between or among organizations that reflect diverse and changing requirements for cooperation at the policy, institutional and operational levels. The implications discussed at the informal meeting of OC include:

(a) A much more selective agenda for ACC, determined by major developments in the international environment which the United Nations system is called upon to respond and affect;

(b) A greater delegation of authority to the ACC consultative committees;

(c) A more active role for OC in assisting ACC members in the selection of suitable topics for its agenda, in preparing for ACC's discussion and monitoring the follow-up to its decisions, and overall in monitoring the functioning of the ACC machinery;

(d) A more systematic process of communications and exchange of information within the system.

In the light of the above, OC will need to consider what further recommendations it wishes to address to ACC for its action, and for completing the review at the second regular session of ACC.

4. Work of ACC consultative committees and other inter-agency bodies

(a) Work of ACC consultative committees

Report of the eighty-seventh session of CCAQ(FB) (ACC/1997/14), United Nations Headquarters, New York, 25 to 29 August;

Report of the tenth session of IACSD (ACC/1997/12), WHO headquarters, Geneva, 17 to 19 September 1997;

Report of the eleventh session of CCPOQ (ACC/1997/15), United Nations Headquarters, New York, 22 to 26 September 1997;

Report of the eighty-sixth and eighty-seventh sessions of CCAQ(PER), UNESCO headquarters, Paris, 14 to 17 April 1997, and United Nations Headquarters, New York, 9 to 14 July 1997 (ACC/1997/6 and ACC/1997/13).

(b) Reports of bodies reporting to OC

Report of the ad hoc inter-agency meeting on security matters (ACC/1997/10), Rome, 6-8 May 1997;

Report of twenty-third session of JUNIC (ACC/1997/11), ILO Centre, Turin, 1 to 3 July 1997.

5. Other matters

(a) Publication on reform processes throughout the system

(b) Brochure on the way the activities of the various organizations of the system are affecting the daily lives of people

OC will be informed of the state of preparation of these two publications.

(c) Joint and Co-sponsored United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS

The Economic and Social Council, by its resolution 1996/47 adopted at its substantive session of 1996, inter alia, invited the Secretary-General to play

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an active advocacy role with regard to the serious threat posed by the spread of HIV/AIDS in order to raise global awareness.

The Joint and Co-sponsored United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) was set up in January 1996 as a co-sponsored programme to expand the response to the epidemic and to provide coordinated support of the United Nations system to HIV/AIDS activities at the country level. At that time, the six co-sponsoring organizations (UNDP, UNICEF, UNESCO, UNFPA, WHO and the World Bank) signed a joint letter addressed to their respective country representatives, informing them of the establishment of UNAIDS and requesting their cooperation for its activities.

Experiences in the past year and a half have shown that there have been successes as well as challenges. It is now intended that the six co-sponsors recommit themselves to the goal of jointly working to reduce the incidence and global spread of HIV and AIDS. Such a statement will be prepared and approved through the Committee of Co-sponsoring Organizations of UNAIDS at its session on 30 October 1997, which will be exceptionally attended by the United Nations Secretary-General. This statement will be made available to OC and presented to the ACC for information at its meeting on 31 October 1997. However, since organizations of the United Nations, besides the six co-sponsoring bodies, are active at the country level on HIV/AIDS issues, ACC members may also wish to endorse the common goals of the co-sponsoring organizations.

(d) Future sessions of OC and ACC

The Organizational Committee will need to make recommendations on the ACC work programme and decide on its own programme in time for the first regular session of ACC in 1998.

Annex II

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

(Part I, New York, 2 to 4 and 6 October 1997)

Chairman: P. CIVILI (United Nations)

Secretary: C. HACKETT (United Nations)

United Nations entities and programmes

United Nations Secretariat

Department of Economic and Social Affairs	S. Khan
A. Haemmerli	
Department of Management	J. Beagle
United Nations Conference on Trade and Development	J. Burley
United Nations Environment Programme	A. Z. Amin
United Nations Children's Fund	A. Vaher J. Nelson
United Nations Development Programme	N. Chandavakar E. Wilkens M. Takihana
United Nations Population Fund	
M. Simonen	
Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees	P. Kourula
United Nations International Drug Control Programme	G. Day
World Food Programme	V. Sequeira

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United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East	W. Lee
<u>Specialized agencies, IAEA and WTO</u>	
International Labour Organization	G. Minet
Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations	W. Mann
United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization	L. Schaudinn
International Civil Aviation Organization	G. Griffiths
World Health Organization	Y. Kawaguchi Maaza Bekele
World Bank	E. Tripp
International Monetary Fund	J. B. Zulu
International Telecommunication Union	K. Boussaïd
World Meteorological Organization S. Chacowry	D. D. Nanjira
International Maritime Organization	F. Labastida
International Fund for Agricultural Development	U. Abhyankar
United Nations Industrial Development Organization	G. Papuli
* * *	
International Atomic Energy Agency	T. Brown
* * *	
World Trade Organization	A. Frank

* * *

Consultative Committee on Programme
and Operational Questions

D. Deane

* * *

Joint and Co-sponsored United Nations
R. Chahil-Graf
Programme on HIV/AIDS

Annex III

ACC STATEMENT ON STAFF SECURITY

1. The organizations of the United Nations system are now working closer to the front lines of conflict or even inside conflict zones, as well as in volatile and politically complex situations. This is reflected in the casualties that the United Nations system has suffered in the last year.

2. Under these circumstances, there is an urgent need for the United Nations system and the international community to consider at what point an area or a situation has become so dangerous that United Nations system staff must be withdrawn.

3. The Ad Hoc Inter-Agency Security Meeting held in Rome on 6 and 8 May 1997 discussed and made recommendations on a wide range of issues relating to the security and safety of staff (see ACC/1997/10). ACC fully supports the recommendations of the Meeting, and wishes to highlight a number of issues which are of immediate concern to the safety and security of staff in crisis situation and which need to be jointly addressed by the United Nations system under the auspices of the Office of the United Nations Security Coordinator, as follows:

(a) Security of national staff: in conflict areas in which United Nations system staff are called upon to operate, it is frequently the national staff that bear the brunt of any resentment or hostility towards the United Nations. Accordingly, the national staff, citizens of the country, are frequently the first victims of retaliation; this is even more true if an evacuation of international staff is being considered, or has occurred;

(b) Urgent action is required to ensure that all appropriate measures are taken to assist these staff;

(c) Coordination with peacekeeping and other field missions: frequently United Nations system staff find themselves working alongside United Nations military and other field missions. The United Nations system needs to enhance formal mechanisms whereby all the agencies, programmes and funds can cooperate to pursue their respective objectives and mandates in coordination with each other;

(d) Training: the training package currently in use in the system has been successfully field tested over the past several years. It is under

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continuous review. This training package needs to be disseminated with all possible speed, in particular to managers in the field, and the necessary funds for this need to be made readily available;

(e) Stress: as a result of the functions entrusted to them, United Nations staff are subjected to increasing levels of stress. The United Nations system needs a comprehensive programme of stress relief, including training, counselling and debriefing. It is imperative that the associated administrative and financial resources be made available to implement this programme;

(f) Recognizing that the implementation of security measures will entail additional resources, ACC members will continue to give priority attention to the financing of all necessary measures to enhance staff security;

(g) ACC welcomes recent statements made by legislative bodies, including the presidential statement of 21 May 1997 of the Security Council, especially as these referred to:

(i) The planned establishment of an international criminal court, in which the Council reminds all States and others concerned of the need to bring to justice those who violate international humanitarian law;

(ii) The Convention on the Safety of the United Nations and Associated Personnel, in which the Council calls upon all parties concerned to ensure the safety and security of these personnel, as well as personnel of humanitarian organizations.

4. ACC intends to follow with keen interest the implementation of the statements mentioned in paragraph 3 (g) above.

Annex IV

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

(Part II, New York, 3 November 1997)

Chairman: Patrizio CIVILI (United Nations)

Secretary: C. HACKETT (United Nations)

United Nations entities and programmes

United Nations Secretariat

Department of Economic and Social Affairs

S. Khan

Department of Management

Jan Beagle

United Nations Conference on Trade and Development

M. Plehn-Majia

United Nations Environment Programme

A. Z. Amin

United Nations Children's Fund

A. Vaheer

United Nations Development Programme

N. Chandavakar

E. Wilkens

M. Takihana

United Nations Population Fund

M. Simonen

Office of the United Nations High

N. K. Mbaidjol

Commissioner for Refugees

P. Kourula

United Nations International Drug Control

S. Bryant

Programme

World Food Programme

V. Sequeira

Specialized agencies, IAEA and WTO

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International Labour Organization	F. Lisk
Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations	W. Mann
United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization	L. Schaudinn
International Civil Aviation Organization	G. Griffiths
World Health Organization	Y. Kawaguchi Maaza Bekele
World Bank	E. Tripp
International Monetary Fund	J. B. Zulu H. Shugarman
Universal Postal Union	G. Kalicki
International Telecommunication Union	K. Boussaïd
World Meteorological Organization	S. Chacowry D. D. Nanjira
International Maritime Organization	F. Labastida
International Fund for Agricultural Development	U. Abhyankar
United Nations Industrial Development Organization	E. Aguilar
* * *	
International Atomic Energy Agency	M. Andemicael
