



Administrative Committee on Coordination

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REPORT OF THE CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE ON PROGRAMME AND OPERATIONAL QUESTIONS ON ITS NINTH SESSION

(New York, 16-20 September 1996)

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INTRODUCTION

1. The Consultative Committee on Programme and Operational Questions (CCPOQ) held its ninth session at United Nations Headquarters from 16 to 20 September 1996. The agenda for the session is contained in annex II to the present report. The list of participants is contained in annex III.

I. MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION BY THE ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE ON COORDINATION (ACC)

A. Post-conflict rehabilitation and reconstruction

2. CCPOQ wishes to draw the attention of ACC to its detailed review of the role of the United Nations system in post-conflict recovery, based on a consultant's report and recommendations.

3. ACC may wish to take note of the consensus reached by the Committee on the following fundamental principles for United Nations system action:

- That the over-arching goal is incremental improvement in the condition of suffering human beings, bearing in mind the need for rapid, immediate and significant action in certain cases;
- That domestic commitment in terms of fiscal and non-fiscal resources holds primacy of place in crisis response, but should not be an excuse for lack of international support;
- That political negotiations must embrace economic and social considerations that build confidence at the local and national levels;
- That foundations for reconciliation include a national consensus on accounting for past actions, a functioning justice system and adequate international monitoring;
- That protection of human rights, land, property and investment derive from a legal framework and an adequate security system;
- That building capacity at the local, community and national levels will reap huge future benefits;
- That a secure environment is unlikely to be created without disarmament efforts that are linked to job creation;
- That reintegration is entirely dependent on availability of basic services and productive opportunities and attention to issues of reconciliation and resolution of conflict;
- That strategies that save lives must be harmonized with strategies that build and protect livelihoods.

4. CCPOQ considered that transformation of the agreed principles into operational action would require the urgent expansion of partnership with the Bretton Woods institutions, bilateral and multilateral donors and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and the formulation of four generic products for effective crisis response, namely:

- The political negotiating strategy, which should be based on the effect of the crisis on the suffering of human beings and include agreement on objectives for governance, participation, the rule of law and the economic and social prospects of reconciliation and recovery;
- The analysis of the in-country environment, which should present an examination of the principal characteristics of the prevailing environment from the collective perspective of in-country international partners;
- The strategic framework, which should present collective quantitative and qualitative understandings of problems and set the economic and social context for establishing priorities and making choices based on the country's potential to stand on its own, thereby creating a vision of future prospects;
- The response programme, which should bring harmony to the planning, programming, financing and implementation processes at all interventions, thereby providing a joint work programme that integrates predictable domestic fiscal, non-fiscal and other resources with catalytic external financial and other technical assistance support.

5. The Committee agreed on a work programme based on the consultant's report, which was revised to take account of the points made during the discussion of the item (ACC/1996/POQ/CRP.16/Rev.1). The working group established at the eighth session of CCPOQ, with the Department for Development Support and Management Services of the United Nations Secretariat as convenor, to develop an integrated framework and strategy and related operational guidelines, will guide the process of (a) the formulation, by a specific unit or individual, of detailed annotated outlines of the four generic products, on the basis of extensive consultations with all interested parties; (b) a review of the outlines within the United Nations system; (c) the pre-testing of the recommended approaches in selected crisis countries; and (d) a full review of progress and outputs by the working group at the end of January 1997 and preparation of a report for the tenth session of CCPOQ, in March 1997. Following review by CCPOQ and ACC, it is envisaged that a single crisis country will be selected in which to apply on an experimental basis the basic approaches aimed at improving United Nations system performance in post-conflict situations.

6. The Committee furthermore agreed to bring the CCPOQ survey of the United Nations system's capabilities in post-conflict reconstruction to the attention of the Department of Humanitarian Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat and the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) for consideration in the context of the preparation of the Secretary-General's response to Economic and Social

Council resolution 1995/56 on the strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations.

B. Subcommittee on Rural Development

7. Following a review of the report of a consultant retained by the Subcommittee on Rural Development to assess the Subcommittee's role and functioning, CCPOQ recommends to ACC the dissolution of the Subcommittee on Rural Development in favour of alternative informal coordinating mechanisms. Given the continued importance of issues related to rural development, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) have been requested to explore, in consultation with interested parties, the possibility of launching field and headquarters networking arrangements to ensure that attention will be given to important elements of the work of the Subcommittee, including the valuable work accomplished by its Panel on Monitoring and Evaluation.

C. Subcommittee on Nutrition

8. In the context of its consideration of the recommendation concerning the appointment of the Secretary of the Subcommittee on Nutrition (SCN), CCPOQ addressed a number of basic issues relating to the functioning of SCN. While underlining the importance of the Subcommittee's tasks, CCPOQ stressed that SCN as an inter-agency coordinating body had to carry out its functions as outlined in the ACC guidelines on the operation of the ACC subsidiary machinery. In that regard, it was emphasized that SCN should fully utilize the existing capacities of the participating agencies for all activities initiated by it.

D. Functioning of CCPOQ

9. CCPOQ undertook a further review of its functioning in the light of the observations formulated by ACC at its first regular session of 1996. Noting the relevance of its mandate and core agenda to intergovernmental and inter-agency policy concerns, the Committee underlined the various concrete results that had been achieved since 1993. The Committee agreed that further efforts should be made in its methods of work with a view to streamlining its regular sessions, including through specialist review of issues at the subsidiary level, but reiterated its view that the pattern of two regular sessions a year should be maintained in order to advance its work programme and to ensure appropriate interaction with ACC and intergovernmental bodies.

E. Management of field coordination

10. Recalling CCPOQ's statement at its session in September 1993 on the importance of the management of the field coordination training programme administered by the International Training Centre of the International Labour Organization (ILO) at Turin and the need to accord it high priority and continued support, and given the important role of training in the context of

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current reform priorities for revitalizing and innovating change in the work of the United Nations, CCPOQ recommends that ACC urge all member organizations to earmark specific funds, from either programme support or training budgets, for the participation of their representatives in the workshops conducted under the training programme.

F. Joint Inspection Unit

11. The Committee deliberated on the functioning of the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) and referred its comments to the parallel session of the Consultative Committee on Administrative Questions (CCAQ) for incorporation in its report to ACC.

G. Proposed agenda, dates and venue of the tenth session of the Committee

12. CCPOQ recommends to ACC that its tenth session be held at Geneva, from 3 to 7 March 1997, with the following agenda:

1. Programme coordination issues:
 - (a) CCPOQ contribution to ACC discussions on the strengthening of inter-agency coordination in situations where peacemaking or peacekeeping are to proceed in parallel with emergency relief, reconstruction and the resumption of economic and social development;
 - (b) Collaboration with NGOs and other partners in civil society;
 - (c) Revision of the ACC standard classification of programmes;
 - (d) Coordinated follow-up to recent United Nations global conferences, including field-level coordination of poverty coordination activities.
2. Operational activities for development: implementation of intergovernmental resolutions, including review of guidelines and operational concepts; harmonization and simplification; strengthening monitoring and evaluation activities; and resource trends and financing modalities.
3. Other matters:
 - (a) CCPOQ administrative issues;
 - (b) JIU reports;
 - (c) World Food Summit.

II. WORK OF CCPOQ

A. Action taken and decisions adopted

1. Reports of subcommittees

13. The Committee endorsed the recommended office bearers, as appropriate, and the dates, venues and provisional agendas of the following ACC subcommittees:

(a) Subcommittee on Demographic Estimates and Projections

Chairman: Mr. L. Naiken (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations), June 1996-June 1998

Secretary: Mr. J.-A. Grinblat (Department for Economic and Social Information and Policy Analysis of the United Nations Secretariat), June 1996-June 1998

Twentieth Session: New York, June 1998;

(b) Subcommittee on Drug Control

Fifth session: Rome, 29 September-1 October 1997;

(c) Subcommittee on Statistical Activities

Thirty-first session: Geneva, 16-18 September 1997;

(d) Subcommittee on Nutrition

Secretary: Dr. S. Rabeneck, 1996-1998.

2. Role and functioning of the resident coordinator system

14. CCPOQ, on behalf of ACC, adopted revised criteria for the selection of resident coordinators (see annex I).

3. Collaboration with NGOs

15. Following extensive consultations, the Committee saw a clear need for an inter-agency framework to address the operational and programmatic issues of United Nations system collaboration with NGOs. The Committee agreed that in the context of current efforts to streamline United Nations structures, the creation of a new mechanism within the ACC machinery was not justified. Since the United Nations Non-Governmental Liaison Service (NGLS) based at Geneva could be a possible mechanism for addressing the substantive issues raised, the Committee requested the CCPOQ Secretary, in consultation with the NGLS administrative and supervisory mechanisms, to undertake a review, for consideration by CCPOQ at its tenth session, of the administrative implications, reporting structures and programme of work of such a consultative mechanism.

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B. Summary of discussions

1. Programme coordination issues

(a) Post-conflict rehabilitation and reconstruction

16. CCPOQ deliberated on the role of the United Nations system in post-conflict recovery on the basis of a consultant's report (ACC/1996/POQ/CRP.16). While expressing broad support for the report's analysis and conclusions, members highlighted several important issues: (a) the need to bridge the gap between relief and development by ensuring that development opportunities were implemented during crisis and at the peak of humanitarian emergencies; (b) resource mobilization for reconstruction should be initiated at an early stage of the emergency and must be hinged on the strategic planning of needs; (c) the need to address the problem of a failed State, in asserting the principle of the domestic commitment in terms of fiscal and non-fiscal resources holding primacy of place in crisis response; (d) the comparative advantage of the United Nations in fostering the enabling political environment and in confidence restoration as a precondition to catalysing resource flows and the participation of development partners; in this connection, political consensus among the belligerents to plan for a common society is essential in providing the foundations for such an environment; (e) the significance of geopolitical factors and regional security issues in resolving conflict situations; (f) since the political negotiations on many conflict situations involve regional bodies/authorities, a consultative mechanism should be developed to enable regional commissions to obtain inputs from the United Nations system prior to such negotiations; (g) the difficulty of developing a generic position in political negotiations because each conflict situation is highly specific and the United Nations does not always have a lead role; (h) recognition of the key role of patron Member States in the political negotiations on conflict situations and resource mobilization; (i) the need for review of operational mechanisms and methodologies on what has and has not worked and the possibilities of replication in a different context; (j) the need for clarification of the role of the proposed oversight committee; (k) the need to arrest the trend that diverts development resources to relief assistance; and (l) the importance of building on the work of those agencies that were often the first to intervene in an emergency.

17. In clarifying the points raised, the consultant stressed that the uniqueness of each post-conflict situation implied that the proposed generic products should be seen as agreed approaches that would be used only as a guide to the emergence of particular strategies for each country. It was stressed that experience had now clearly shown that the precondition for a comprehensive recovery programme was integration of domestic resources with predictable external assistance in a way that facilitated coherent choices by national authorities and their partners. The consultant underlined the critical need for donors and the Bretton Woods institutions to be brought more centrally into the response processes in order to bring greater harmony to the planning, programming, financing and implementation of recovery actions. It was explained that the proposed "oversight committee" was a temporary mechanism that was recommended to launch and guide implementation of the recommended prescriptions for improved performance in a single crisis country.

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18. A number of proposals were put forward to further the work of the Committee. In this connection, the representative of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) drew the Committee's attention to the recommendations contained in paragraph 280 (c) of the study by Ms. Graça Machel entitled "Impact of armed conflict on children", which, *inter alia*, called on "the ACC and its subsidiary machinery to discuss ways to link child-related rehabilitation and development activities with relief and recovery and to ensure that all relevant guidelines and strategy proposals reflect the specific needs of war-affected children".

19. It was agreed that the consultant's report should be revised to take into account the points made during the discussion and serve as the basis for follow-up action by the Committee. Consensus was reached on nine fundamental principles for United Nations system action in post-conflict recovery, which would be brought to the attention of ACC (see para. 3 above). A work programme leading up to the tenth session of CCPOQ, in March 1997, was also agreed, for implementation by the working group led by the Department for Development Support and Management Services (see para. 5 above).

20. The Committee welcomed the offer of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to make available funds from its "Track-3" resources to operationalize efforts aimed at increased cooperation. Appreciation was also expressed for the offer of the Government of Austria to host a colloquium with key concerned donors to discuss, at an appropriate time, the approach to the four generic products. The Committee also noted that the initial offerings of the United Nations Staff College project would include in-country "applied training" courses and headquarters colloquiums on post-conflict reconstruction, and that the United Nations system field coordination workshops organized by the ILO International Training Centre at Turin would continue to give specific attention to teams from crisis-prone and post-conflict countries.

21. Concerning the CCPOQ Survey of the United Nations system's capabilities in post-conflict reconstruction, the following suggestions were made:

(a) production, under the leadership of task managers, of sectoral analyses of activities needed to underpin the recovery process with a view to the development of operational guidelines; (b) more detailed analysis of the survey to take into account overlaps and to establish, through a consultative process, criteria for assessing agencies' delivery capacities and comparative advantage; and (c) development of proposals for a more rational division of labour.

22. The Committee agreed, on the one hand, to refer the survey to the Department of Humanitarian Affairs for consideration in the context of the preparation of the Secretary-General's response to Economic and Social Council resolution 1995/56 on the strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations and, on the other hand, that the CCPOQ secretariat should undertake consultations with the Department and other organizations and entities on the modalities for carrying out the proposed sectoral analyses of United Nations system responses, as reflected in the survey.

(b) Collaboration with NGOs and other partners in civil society

23. In presenting the report of the CCPOQ working group on this issue, the representative of UNICEF highlighted the main conclusions, which related to:

(a) consultations between United Nations organizations on modalities of programme and operational collaboration with NGOs; (b) the range of issues to be addressed as outlined in paragraphs 15 and 16 of the report (criteria for selection, accountability, support cost practices, contractual arrangements and the like); and (c) the alternatives with respect to establishing a consultative mechanism - either under the aegis of NGLS or as a CCPOQ working group.

24. The Committee welcomed the report and recommendations and noted the timeliness of the issue. In the ensuing discussions, members referred to (a) the widespread acknowledgement of the growing importance of NGOs as policy advocates and partners in the United Nations system's operational activities; (b) the potential of NGOs and other members of civil society for implementing the results of the global conferences, particularly as a catalyst of United Nations system action at the country, regional and global levels; (c) the need for clarification of the generic categories of civil society, including the private sector; (d) the most useful legal, procedural and administrative approaches to dealing with NGOs and other members of civil society, including the private sector; (e) the need to respect the concerns of Governments in this field; and (f) the need for a framework and guidelines on the promotion of collaboration with NGOs, reflecting the difference between the international and operational levels.

25. There was general agreement that NGLS appeared to provide a possible mechanism for the proposed inter-agency consultations, but that consideration would need to be given in this regard to its resources and reporting structures. It was particularly important that CCPOQ not "subcontract" the question to NGLS but identify the issues for discussion and maintain overview. This should include some form of organic linkage with the ACC standing machinery other than the Joint United Nations Information Committee (JUNIC), such as CCPOQ and the Inter-Agency Committee on Sustainable Development (IACSD), to ensure appropriate policy guidance, monitoring and reporting on the relevant work programme. There was also a need for wider agency participation in NGLS to strengthen its consultative and operational capacity. Given the largely procedural nature of the functions of many agency NGO focal points, participation in the review of operational issues would need to be broadened to include technical cooperation and other units, possibly through parallel meetings in Geneva and New York.

26. Expressing its appreciation to UNICEF for its report, the Committee requested the CCPOQ Secretary, in collaboration with the NGLS administrative and supervisory mechanisms, to elaborate for consideration at its tenth session a report which would provide further clarification on the administrative, funding, reporting structures and future work programme of the possible consultative mechanism.

(c) Restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations in the economic, social and related fields (General Assembly resolution 50/227)

27. The representative of the United Nations briefed the Committee on the implications for the United Nations system of General Assembly resolution 50/227. A notable feature was the attempt in the resolution to address the issue of United Nations reform in an integrated manner and the importance attached by Governments to fostering unity of purpose and coherence in the work of the United Nations system. The importance of keeping Member States informed of the impact of operational activities and of the financial situation of programmes and funds was also stressed.

28. Among the issues raised in the discussions were the need to formulate an inter-agency position on how to correlate the funding needs of countries with the core resource targets and how to overcome institutional barriers in operationalizing the intensification of dialogue with the Bretton Woods institutions. On this subject, the World Bank representative noted that her organization looked forward to collaborating with the United Nations in the exploratory review called for in paragraph 86 of annex I to the resolution, with the objective of identifying areas in which communication, cooperation and coordination with the Bretton Woods institutions could be improved.

29. The United Nations representative explained that the high-level special meetings called for in paragraph 88 of annex I to the resolution did not refer to the high-level policy dialogue of the Economic and Social Council. These special meetings were intended to attract the participation of senior ministers of finance and economic affairs and would not necessarily involve the presence of executive heads of organizations. He noted that the Secretary-General would be consulting with the heads of IMF and the World Bank to explore the practical modalities for such meetings.

(d) Coordinated follow-up to recent United Nations global conferences

30. The Chairperson noted that, although the ACC task forces would only complete their work in early 1997, CCPOQ should be prepared to contribute at the appropriate time to the rationalization and implementation of their outputs. Issues such as the support which could be provided by the United Nations system to country teams in the implementation of conference results, the need for information exchanges to identify overlaps in the work of the task forces, and the proliferation of indicators for monitoring conferences, already needed consideration. The representative of the Office of United Nations System Support and Services (OUNS) of UNDP noted that the United Nations Special Coordinator for Economic and Social Development would soon convene a meeting with the chairs of the three ACC task forces, to ensure close coordination in their work. Moreover consultations were planned with 20 resident coordinators to solicit information on the support required by them. On the issue of indicators, the World Bank representative noted that the Task Force on the Enabling Environment for Economic and Social Development had decided to suspend the work of its subgroup on indicators pending the production, by a group led by the Department for Economic and Social Information and Policy Analysis of the United Nations Secretariat, of an inventory of ongoing inter-agency work on the development of indicators.

31. The representative of the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) stressed the importance of the regional dimensions of conference follow-up. To that end, the regional commissions had been asked to convene a meeting to discuss the regional monitoring of conference follow-up. In the case of the Fourth World Conference on Women, ECE had convened a meeting to prepare a matrix on the potential contribution of agencies to activities at the regional level.

32. It was observed that there was also a need for CCPOQ to deliberate on how it could contribute to the follow-up to future United Nations international conferences (e.g., the conference on migration and the World Food Summit). The representative of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) proposed that her organization lead a working group on urbanization to serve the needs of the three task forces.

33. A number of speakers noted that the contribution of CCPOQ would focus on the coordination and programme delivery perspectives. The time-bound nature of the task forces implied the need for a review by the ACC standing machinery of the follow-up action on their recommendations, with attention to be given to promoting functional linkages between them.

34. It was generally recognized that the follow-up to both the global conferences themselves and to the products of the ACC task forces would be an ongoing process requiring a variety of structural and programmatic adjustments. Whereas the intellectual analysis should continue, arrangements for rapid operationalization of the global agendas needed to be introduced. To that end, the Committee agreed to return to the issue at its tenth session on the basis of:

(a) A status report on the work of the task forces and other relevant inter-agency mechanisms;

(b) A study by the CCPOQ secretariat of the mechanisms adopted by individual agencies for the follow-up to recent United Nations conferences, with regard to both programme and operational questions;

(c) Finalization of the training programme in support of follow-up to global summits and global agendas, within the context of the United Nations Staff College project.

(e) Database project for United Nations activities in European and CIS countries

35. In introducing the item, the Secretary of CCPOQ noted that the project, submitted by the United Nations Office at Geneva, aimed at compiling United Nations system-wide activities in the countries in transition of Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) for the benefit of recipient countries and international organizations and parties with an interest in supporting the reform processes in the region. CCPOQ was invited to comment on the design, utility and viability of the initiative, as well as to explore the capacity of agencies to contribute to financing the project and to update the data on their activities.

36. In the ensuing discussions, Committee members noted the following: (a) to be useful, the scope of the project should be broadened to encompass organizations such as the Bretton Woods institutions, the European Union and other major multilateral and bilateral donors; (b) the value of centralizing data was questionable, particularly as information on United Nations programmes in specific countries was of more value in the resident coordinator's office; a related issue was the risk of duplication of the proposed activities with existing data systems on the region available, for example, in the World Bank and on the Internet; (c) the data system would not be very helpful in guiding national authorities on how to get assistance, since each agency had different procedures for different types of activities; (d) it would be difficult to judge from the data as to priority needs and whether activities were complementary or overlapping without specialized knowledge of the sector; (e) if the project was to be sustainable, it had to be designed with a target audience in mind to attract extrabudgetary funding and be self-financing; and (f) a number of agencies expressed difficulties in supporting a database limited to one region.

37. Although several organizations expressed willingness to contribute data and technology to the proposed project and recognized the value of good databases, most expressed reservations on the cost-effectiveness of the project and its inter-agency financing. The Committee accordingly recommended that the project not be referred to ACC, but be eventually remodelled and considered for external funding.

2. Operational activities for development

(a) Implementation of General Assembly resolution 50/120

38. The representative of the United Nations provided the Committee with information on the outcome of the substantive session of 1996 of the Economic and Social Council as it related to the implementation of General Assembly resolution 50/120.

39. The high-level meeting of the operational activities segment of the session was devoted to strengthening collaboration between the Bretton Woods institutions and the rest of the United Nations development system. The resulting resolution (Council resolution 1996/43) deals, *inter alia*, with the complementarity of the country strategy notes and the policy framework papers and with the follow-up to round-table meetings and consultative groups. While the Secretariat had planned for a dialogue at the session, the considerable number of substantive statements made by Council members and United Nations system representatives precluded this.

40. Concerning the implementation of Assembly resolution 50/120, the Council had focused on issues of harmonization and administrative services, common premises and monitoring and evaluation. The Secretary-General's analysis and recommendations in those areas were well received and served as the basis of Council resolution 1996/42, which calls for further action by the system on those three issues. The Committee was invited to contribute to the response to paragraph 12 of the resolution, in which the Council requested an analytical

assessment of the implications on operational activities of recent trends in core and non-core resources.

41. Concerning further implementation of the management plan on Assembly resolution 50/120, the United Nations representative recalled that for the Council's substantive session of 1997, three focus issues had been retained: capacity-building, field- and regional-level coordination, and resources. These would therefore be the areas of concentration of the Secretary-General's report, which could be reviewed on a preliminary basis at the spring session of the Committee. Moreover, in accordance with the management plan, work was proceeding on revised guidelines for the resident coordinator system, country strategy notes, the programme approach and national execution. This involved three stages:

(a) Desk review, which in the case of the country strategy note and the resident coordinator system was nearly completed;

(b) Field missions to identify and describe best practices in operational terms;

(c) Workshop with resident coordinators, national officials and United Nations system representatives to review the material collected and identify guidance elements.

42. It was anticipated that about 12 countries would be involved in this process to be initiated through six missions, of which the first three would be fielded in November and December 1996. A letter would be issued by the end of September inviting the participation of United Nations system organizations in the missions and seeking their views on the best choice of countries.

43. Work was also proceeding on the subject of capacity-building through the review of available studies, including material provided by several organizations. All organizations were invited to make available recent material on the subject of capacity-building. The subject would also be included in the field missions. With respect to the regional coordination subject, it was recalled that recommendations were submitted by the Secretary-General in 1995 calling for a regional strategy note and the greater consideration of inter-country cooperation in the preparation of national country strategy notes. It was intended to obtain the services of an experienced consultant who would work with the regional commissions and all interested organizations of the United Nations system to develop proposals for consideration by CCPOQ at its tenth session.

44. Three themes were suggested in response to the request of the representative of the United Nations for suggestions on possible themes for the high-level operational activities segment of the Council's substantive session of 1997: (a) post-conflict recovery, in view of ACC's related choice of theme for its first regular session of 1997, as well as CCPOQ's own work thereon; (b) micro-credit, in view of the international summit on that subject, to be held in Washington in February 1997; and (c) strengthened collaboration among the funds, programmes and specialized agencies in operational activities, in the

context of the reform proposals emerging from the General Assembly and governing bodies.

45. A number of speakers noted the interest of their agencies in collaborating in the field missions and it was suggested that interested agencies should be given the opportunity to participate in both the selection of countries and the terms of reference of the missions. As a point of clarification, the representative of the United Nations said that the missions were not intended for evaluation purposes but to seek information on best practices in operational activities in order to develop guidance for the field.

(b) Role and functioning of the resident coordinator system

46. In reporting on the results of the meetings of the CCPOQ Working Group on the Resident Coordinator System of 11 July and 16 September 1996, the Chairman of the Working Group noted the importance of the Group in the ongoing management process for the implementation of Assembly resolution 50/120 and other relevant decisions and in ensuring maximum interaction within the United Nations system. The Committee took note of the report of the Working Group, which reviewed the steps taken in working towards strengthening support for the resident coordinator system; improving the selection process and performance appraisal for resident coordinators; improving the format and utilization of the annual reports of the resident coordinators; extending the Joint Consultative Group on Policy (JCGP) common country assessment to the rest of the system; and the follow-up to recent United Nations conferences.

47. The Committee commended the Working Group on its work and endorsed the continuation of its mandate. It furthermore approved, on behalf of ACC, the proposed revision of the common understanding on the criteria for the selection of resident coordinators (see annex I).

48. The representative of UNDP/OUNS presented a review and analysis of the resident coordinators' 1995 annual reports, which was based on over 100 annual reports and aimed at identifying experiences and concerns related to (a) the United Nations system's contribution to the attainment of national development objectives; and (b) the strengthening of the resident coordinator system. It was agreed that a task force be convened in the near future to address the issues raised in the analysis and the modalities for the preparation of future reports.

49. The representative of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) noted that the proliferation of programming instruments was leading to the marginalization of small agencies. The representative of the United Nations replied that the interests of small agencies were reflected in the statement on the resident coordinator system but invited further suggestions on how their concerns could be remedied. Another speaker noted his organization's concerns with the cost aspects of common premises and the lack of guidelines on the new UNDP programming arrangements.

50. The Committee welcomed the review and analysis prepared by OUNS and requested that it be distributed to resident coordinators and other field representatives.

(c) Operational activities training

51. The Secretary of the Advisory Panel on Operational Activities Training presented the report of the Panel on its eleventh session, held in New York on 12 July 1996. He reported that in 1996, three field coordination workshops would be conducted for country teams from least developed countries, countries in crisis and the CIS countries, and another three were scheduled for 1997. In addition, five in-country follow-up workshops were conducted in 1996 in Guinea, Togo, Senegal, the Philippines and the Lao People's Democratic Republic, with a similar number scheduled for 1997. The Advisory Panel had noted the difficulties in obtaining the full participation of country teams in the field coordination workshops due to constraints on training budgets, and recommended that CCPOQ bring this issue to the attention of ACC. He also briefed the Committee on the results of the external evaluation carried out on the national capacity-strengthening training programme, on which the Advisory Panel was developing recommendations for CCPOQ.

52. Regarding the United Nations Staff College project, he noted that proposals had been elaborated for training in the areas of (a) peacekeeping, peacemaking and emergency management; (b) strengthening of organizational development, management capacity and organizational learning; and (c) economic and social development, including the follow-up to global conferences. A fourth programme, on development studies, was in the pipeline.

53. Noting that the principal purpose of the management of field coordination workshops was to develop system-wide integrated approaches and common action by the entire country team, CCPOQ unanimously agreed to recommend to ACC that it urge all member organizations to earmark funds for the participation of their representatives in the programme.

54. One member added that participation of headquarters staff in the programme would be facilitated by the waiving of tuition fees and that consideration should be given to greater advance planning and a shorter duration of the workshops.

55. The Committee took note with appreciation of the Advisory Panel's report. The CCPOQ Chairperson took the opportunity to announce her decision to appoint Mr. Nissim Tal as an independent member of the Panel.

(d) Financing modalities for operational activities

56. In his briefing on the activities of the Task Force, the Chairman noted that the Task Force had held an informal meeting in New York on 10 July 1996 to review the presentation of resource flows and trends for operational activities, as reflected in the Secretary-General's annual note on comprehensive statistical data. On the issue of harmonization of support costs, he noted that a questionnaire had been distributed to solicit information on current support-cost arrangements covering bilateral donors, NGOs, the private sector and the Bretton Woods institutions. The compilation of the responses is under way. The Task Force will be scheduling its next meeting before the end of 1996. The Chairman undertook to select, in consultation with members, suitable issues to

be addressed and to circulate them, together with the preliminary results of the analysis of the questionnaire.

57. In response to a query, the representative of UNDP noted that the Inter-Agency Consultative Meeting (IACM) and not the Task Force was the appropriate forum for addressing issues specific to UNDP agency-support costs.

(e) Operational Activities Reference Manual

58. The Secretary of CCPOQ presented the Committee with pilot copies of the Manual, which was highly appreciated by members. He asked that any suggestions for further insertion or changes be sent to him by the end of September. A thousand copies of the Manual would then be produced for distribution to headquarters and field offices. A letter inviting organizations to advise him on the desired number of copies would be sent in the near future. The Secretary furthermore noted that the Manual would be updated on an annual basis after prior approval by the Committee. It was also agreed that the availability of the texts in the other United Nations working languages would be explored and referred to in the Manual. A suggestion was made to create a home page for the Manual on the Internet.

3. Reports of ACC subcommittees

(a) Twenty-fourth session of the Subcommittee on Rural Development

59. In his introductory remarks, the CCPOQ Secretary noted that the Subcommittee had mandated a consultant to carry out consultations on the functioning and future of the Subcommittee. He drew attention to the consultant's recommendation calling for the dissolution of the Subcommittee and its replacement by a two-tiered informal coordination mechanism. The first was a country-level mechanism within the resident coordinator system to ensure coherence of both field activities and organizational policies. The second was the establishment of an informal thematic-based headquarters network to ensure the sharing of country experiences and the fine-tuning of organizational policies based on field experiences.

60. In their deliberations on the consultant's report, members acknowledged the disproportionate burden placed on the Subcommittee in undertaking a very broad and diffuse mandate with budgetary and other constraints on its functioning. While rural development issues were of continuing concern, many interrelated issues (e.g., sustainable livelihoods and environment) were today dealt with by other inter-agency mechanisms, such as the ACC task forces on conference follow-up and IACSD, which incorporated rural development concerns. The inclusion of non-United Nations partners including academia and other knowledge centres, should be considered in the informal headquarters networking arrangements to revitalize the system's work in this area. The field-based coordination mechanism would appropriately place the onus of coordination for rural development in the field where it belonged and would facilitate specific thematic approaches, although ways would have to be found to ensure the channelling of state-of-the-art knowledge to the field. In this connection, it

was also recognized that the country mechanisms, to be successful, would need to be appropriately funded and staffed.

61. FAO expressed its readiness to take the lead, within the resident coordinator system, in coordinating the country work on rural development, particularly in countries where it had field representation.

62. The Committee widely endorsed the recommendation calling for the dissolution of the Subcommittee. However, to ensure that important elements of the work of the Subcommittee and its Panel on Monitoring and Evaluation would continue to be pursued, it requested FAO and IFAD to jointly explore, in consultation with interested parties, cost-effective ways of launching the informal headquarters and field-based networking mechanisms proposed by the consultant. Maintenance of the Panel on Monitoring and Evaluation should also be explored in the context of the Inter-Agency Working Group on Evaluation.

(b) Nineteenth session of the Subcommittee on Demographic Estimates and Projections

63. In presenting the report, the representative of the Subcommittee recalled the accomplishments of the Subcommittee in the coordination, organization and timely dissemination of data in the demographic and social sectors, in spite of resource constraints. Improving the quality of data and using electronic means of disseminating data were major objectives of the Subcommittee in the period ahead.

64. CCPOQ took note of the Subcommittee's report on its nineteenth session (Geneva, 25-27 June 1996). It endorsed the appointment of Mr. Loganaden Naiken (FAO) and Mr. Joseph-Alfred Grinblat (Department for Economic and Social Information and Policy Analysis of the United Nations Secretariat) as Chairman and Secretary of the Subcommittee for a two-year period ending in 1998, as well as the venue, agenda and dates of its twentieth session (New York, June 1998).

(c) Fourth session of the Subcommittee on Drug Control

65. In presenting the report, the Secretary of the Subcommittee noted that considerable progress had been made in implementing the 1995 ACC decisions on system-wide cooperation and involvement in drug control matters. With regard to the System-wide Action Plan on Drug Abuse Control, the Subcommittee had decided to update the six already approved sectoral plans of action for fund-raising purposes. On the issue of NGOs, he noted that the approach taken by the Subcommittee was to consider relations with NGOs in the widest sense to incorporate organizations in civil society. In that connection, he drew attention to the recent publication by the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP) of a directory of NGOs working on drug demand reduction, which would be regularly updated on the World Wide Web.

66. The Committee took note of the report of the Subcommittee on its fourth session (Vienna, 4-6 September 1996) as well as the dates, venue and provisional agenda of its fifth session (Rome, 29 September-1 October 1997).

(d) Thirtieth session of the Subcommittee on Statistical Activities

67. The representative of the Subcommittee briefed the Committee on the main substantive areas of its work: economic statistics, 2000 World Population and Housing Census Programme, migration statistics, and the statistical implications of recent United Nations conferences. In reply to a question raised, he said that the work on the minimum national social data set had been accomplished by an expert group, comprising country participants and institutions, convened by the Statistical Commission. Use of the data had been endorsed by the three ACC task forces working on the follow-up to the global conferences. Efforts were under way to obtain funding to test the data on two or three countries in different regions.

68. The Committee took note of the report of the Subcommittee on its thirtieth session (New York, 7-9 May 1996) as well as of the dates, venue and provisional agenda of its thirty-first session (Geneva, 16-18 September 1997).

(e) Subcommittee on Nutrition

69. The Committee took note of the report of the Chairman of the Subcommittee on Nutrition (SCN) on the steps taken for the selection of a candidate for the post of Technical Secretary. The Committee recognized the urgency of the need to finalize the selection process as soon as possible in order to enable SCN to carry out its important functions as laid down in Economic and Social Council resolution 2107 (LXIII) and as further outlined in the compendium of decisions on the operation of ACC and its subsidiary machinery (ACC/1996/INF/1).

70. The members of CCPOQ, in considering the report presented by the Chairman of SCN, expressed their differences in an open manner but at the same time confirmed the need to reach a consensus. CCPOQ accordingly endorsed the recommendation of the Chairman and the majority of the members of the Subcommittee that Dr. Sonya Rabeneck be appointed SCN Technical Secretary for a two-year period as from the date of her entry on duty in 1996.

71. While welcoming the consensus finally achieved on the candidate proposed by the Chairman of SCN, the Committee noted with concern the difficulties encountered in the process.

72. The Committee recognized the willingness of its members to reach a consensus and expressed its appreciation for the efforts made by the Chairman of SCN and all the parties involved. It also expressed its confidence that the SCN secretariat would now be fully staffed.

73. The Committee stressed the importance of SCN carrying out its function as an inter-agency coordinating body reporting to CCPOQ. In that regard, the Committee awaited the completion of the Subcommittee's review of its inter-agency coordinating function.

74. The Committee recognized that SCN also provided a forum and a linkage with other partners outside the United Nations system active in the field of nutrition. In that regard, the Committee further stressed the need for SCN to remain an inter-agency coordinating body and to fully utilize the existing

capacities of the participating agencies for all activities initiated by SCN, including those funded by external resources obtained by SCN.

4. CCPOQ administrative issues

(a) Report of the Secretary

75. The Secretary briefed the Committee on the secretariat's work over the past six months. He noted that the issue of the co-location of the secretariats of the ACC bodies had not yet been resolved. In view of the greater effectiveness and potential economies to be realized from more optimal use of support staff and joint facilities in the Palais des Nations building, the Committee proposed that the chairpersons of CCAQ, CCPOQ and the Information Systems Coordination Committee (ISCC) send a joint letter to the United Nations administration requesting action on the issue.

(b) CCPOQ programme budget for 1998-1999

76. In presenting the proposals set out in document ACC/1996/POQ/CRP.29, the Secretary noted that the estimates would not be adjusted for inflation and that zero nominal growth therefore represented an economy. Following the reductions to the 1996-1997 budget already effected, the status quo was being proposed for most operational expenditures lines. A further reduction in the provision for official travel was nevertheless being proposed, in addition to the reduction of 15 per cent from 1994-1995 and to the further cuts effected to the 1996-1997 approved provision for this budget line. Reductions to the temporary assistance, equipment and communications lines would be feasible if co-location of the secretariats of ACC bodies at Geneva was achieved. Unfortunately, even those efforts would probably be insufficient to meet the budget base prepared by the Consultative Committee on Administrative Questions (Financial and Budgetary Questions) (CCAQ(FB)) as most of the CCPOQ budget related to the three staff posts.

77. The Committee considered that the budget proposals represented the minimum required for the effective functioning of the secretariat. It was recognized that the provisions for consultants and for official travel were essential to the technical quality and effective implementation of the programme of work of the Committee. The CCPOQ Chairperson was requested to finalize the budget proposal to CCAQ(FB) on the basis of those considerations and in the light of any evolution in the common premises situation.

78. The representative of the United Nations advised the Committee formally that the United Nations would be unable to agree to any increase over its current contribution. He hoped that the Bretton Woods institutions would be able to agree to contribute to the budget of the secretariat, in order to reduce the burden on the other members. The representatives of the Bretton Woods institutions informed the Committee that the matter was under active consideration and that a response would be provided in the near future.

(c) Future programme of work

79. The Committee approved the proposed agenda for its tenth session, in March 1997, as set out in paragraph 12 above.

80. Noting that ACC was being urged not only to be responsive to intergovernmental bodies but to assist in identifying and developing themes for both inter-agency and intergovernmental coordination, the Chairperson suggested that the questions of fund-raising and of the system's public image merited review in the future. The need to develop further the issue of relationships with civil society, including in the context of public sector reform, was also raised.

(d) Functioning of CCPOQ

81. Recalling the conclusions reached at its eighth session (see ACC/1996/7), the Committee addressed the further concerns and observations expressed by ACC at its first regular session of 1996. In concluding that CCPOQ was continuing to improve its effectiveness and efficiency, the Committee noted the concrete results already achieved since 1993. This had required the careful and focused selection of topics for each session, with thorough preparation through working groups, task forces and consultants. The core of the agenda responded directly to intergovernmental and inter-agency concerns, as demonstrated by the current review of post-conflict recovery action, the coordinated follow-up to global conferences and the implementation of General Assembly resolutions on operational activities.

82. It was generally recognized that CCPOQ's broad mandate required specific efforts to allow for a specialist review of substantive programme issues, including through the use of working groups and task forces. It was stressed that the thrust of the Committee's mandate was on policy coordination of cross-cutting programme and operational questions, particularly in the improvement of field delivery. This required participation at a senior policy level and broad coordination expertise. In this respect, it was appropriate that technical issues be dealt with at a subsidiary level or by individual organizations before being referred to the Committee.

83. The Committee agreed to endeavour to shorten the duration of plenary meetings through the greater use of specialist working groups and increased resort to information technology for the exchange of information. As regards "housekeeping items" on behalf of ACC or the system - for example, ACC comments on JIU reports, review of reports of ACC subcommittees, progress reports being submitted to other bodies and so forth - the Committee drew a distinction between routine matters, which could be dealt with by correspondence, and matters requiring cross-cutting and system-wide policy guidance.

84. The Committee concluded that its mandate remained fully relevant and that two regular sessions a year were required to maintain effective interaction with ACC and intergovernmental bodies. It stressed that streamlining had been achieved through linking other inter-agency consultations, such as the UNDP Inter-Agency Consultative Meeting and the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) Users Advisory Group, with CCPOQ sessions. More effort would

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be devoted to streamlining the methods of work of the Committee through greater technical preparation of issues and reduction of the number of items on the agenda, subject to external requirements and resource constraints.

85. Regarding the reference by the Organizational Committee to the further integration of the ACC secretariats and to the suggestion of "rotating leadership", the Committee agreed with the Consultative Committee on Administrative Questions (Personnel and General Administrative Questions) (CCAQ(PER)) that "the effectiveness of the secretariats would only be undermined if form did not meet the specific functional requirements of each body".

5. Other matters: Joint Inspection Unit

86. In introducing this item, the CCPOQ Secretary recalled that discussions in the Committee in the past had singled out two issues of concern concerning the functioning of JIU: (a) CCPOQ should have the opportunity to comment on the choice of subject, timing and practicality of the JIU work programme; and (b) the cost of human and financial resources committed by organizations in responding to JIU requests for information, data and comments.

87. The Committee endorsed the comments reflected in the Secretary's report (ACC/1996/POQ/CRP.30) with the following additional comments: (a) wide recognition of the high priority given by intergovernmental bodies on issues of inspection and oversight; (b) the need for JIU to use its resources in a cost-effective fashion, addressing issues of collective concern to the system in the area of inspections and audits; and (c) concern as to whether JIU was not duplicating the work carried out by other external and internal bodies.

88. Several members expressed concern about the quality and value-added nature of the JIU reports and recommendations. One member stressed the frequently perfunctory nature of JIU consultations, which did not adequately take into account agency viewpoints, resulting in superficial recommendations of little value since they did not reflect a clear appreciation of the issues. Another member expressed concern with the time lag incurred by JIU in taking up a subject, which made the resulting study of little use for a problem at hand. The overall practicality of JIU recommendations was questioned by several members.

89. There was general agreement that the work of JIU did not currently justify the level of investment by the system to its budget, to the resources required for responding to JIU studies, and to the subsequent cycle of consultations with governing bodies and reporting. Whereas the mandate of the JIU remained relevant, its structure and functioning required serious review, perhaps in the form of a self-evaluation.

90. It was agreed that the selection of topics of system-wide relevance could be greatly improved by review by inter-agency mechanisms. CCPOQ should therefore seek to be consulted on the JIU work programme related to programme and operational issues. Individual organizations should furthermore be urged to refer their suggestions beforehand to CCPOQ.

91. CCPOQ also took note of its own responsibility, on behalf of ACC, to determine the system's response to JIU recommendations and undertook to exercise that function with greater critical appraisal.

Annex I

CRITERIA FOR THE SELECTION OF RESIDENT COORDINATORS

Nominations of candidates for posts of resident coordinators/resident representatives will take account of country-specific requirements and be based on the following individual competencies:

(a) Proven team-building skills, ability to integrate individual components and strategies into the overall development process of the country and to develop effective and coherent coordination by the United Nations system as a whole;

(b) Demonstrated strong capacity for analytical and strategic thinking and for intellectual and policy leadership;

(c) Several years of experience in the management and coordination of multisectoral development assistance and emergency humanitarian relief operations, preferably at the country level and in a multilateral context;

(d) Knowledge of the functioning of the various components of the United Nations development system, at the headquarters and field operations levels, experience with the coordination of operational activities and a strong commitment to the principles of multilateralism that govern its operation, as well as to the Charter of the United Nations;

(e) Proven success in building consensus and stimulating inter-agency action, working in a management team, preferably in a leadership position, in a multicultural work setting in one or more developing countries;

(f) A record of effective work with developing country Governments and with sectoral ministries and departments in the planning, management and implementation of development programmes, in particular those of the United Nations development system, and with other multilateral donors;

(g) A sound academic background in development-related subjects, combined with practical experience in applying this knowledge in a multisectoral, operational environment. Appropriate working language and negotiating skills.

Annex II

AGENDA

1. Adoption of the agenda.
2. Programme coordination issues:
 - (a) Post-conflict rehabilitation and reconstruction;
 - (b) Collaboration with NGOs and other partners in civil society;
 - (c) Restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations in the economic, social and related fields (General Assembly resolution 50/227);
 - (d) Coordinated follow-up to recent United Nations global conferences;
 - (e) Database project for United Nations activities in European and CIS countries.
3. Operational activities for development:
 - (a) Implementation of General Assembly resolution 50/120;
 - (b) Role and functioning of the resident coordinator system;
 - (c) Operational activities training;
 - (d) Financing modalities for operational activities;
 - (e) Operational Activities Reference Manual.
4. Reports of ACC subcommittees:
 - (a) Twenty-fourth session of the Subcommittee on Rural Development;
 - (b) Nineteenth session of the Subcommittee on Demographic Estimates and Projections;
 - (c) Thirtieth session of the Subcommittee on Statistical Activities;
 - (d) Fourth session of the Subcommittee on Drug Control;
 - (e) Subcommittee on Nutrition.
5. CCPOQ administrative issues:
 - (a) Report of the CCPOQ Secretary;
 - (b) CCPOQ programme budget for 1998-1999;
 - (c) Future programme of work;
 - (d) Functioning of CCPOQ.
6. Other Matters: Joint Inspection Unit.

Annex III

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

Chairperson: M. Chinery-Hesse (ILO)

Secretary: D. Deane (United Nations Office at Geneva)

Technical Secretary: S. Toh (United Nations Office at Geneva)

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A. Haemmerli
I. Volkov
C. Hackett

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D. Stillman
M. Platzer

Department of Humanitarian Affairs

J. Rogge
A. Donini

Department of Peacekeeping Operations

M. Carey

United Nations Office for Project Services

D. Michel
F. Canuto

Economic Commission for Europe

D. Pastizzi-Ferencic

United Nations Children's Fund

A. Vaher
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E. Gutierrez
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United Nations Environment Programme

A. Amin

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United Nations International Drug Control Programme	G. Day
World Food Programme	M. Hyder
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International Trade Centre	I. Vanore-Speer
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<u>Specialized agencies and International Atomic Energy Agency</u>	
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World Health Organization	F. Littaua
World Bank	J. Grayson
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Universal Postal Union	C. Gheorghiev
International Fund for Agricultural Development	V. P. Weill-Halle
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ACC Subcommittee on Statistical Activities

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* * *

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