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PUBLICATIONS AND DOCUMENTATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS

Report of the Secretary-General

1. The Secretary-General in submitting this report wishes not only to provide details on the implementation of previous recommendations of the General Assembly for the control and limitation of documentation, but also to draw attention to the possibility of introducing certain technological innovations in the United Nations system of documentation and to stress the desirability of dealing with certain outstanding problems not within the control of the Secretariat.
2. Details concerning the implementation of General Assembly resolution 2836 (XXVI) on this subject appear in annex I to this report. Additional information on the implementation of the report of the Joint Inspection Unit on the programme of recurrent publications appears in annex II, while annex III describes the status of certain other recommendations of the Joint Inspection Unit relating to documentation.

Results achieved

3. As indicated in annex I, the Secretary-General achieved in 1972 the goals sought by the General Assembly, in particular the \$1.25 million reduction in the cost of documentation for that year and the 15 per cent reduction, compared with 1970, in the volume of documentation originating in the Secretariat, other than meetings records. This latter achievement resulted from the introduction, on the advice of the Joint Inspection Unit, which was accepted by the Secretary-General and supported by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, of a documentation quota system. At the twenty-seventh session of the General Assembly, the Secretary-General, on his initiative, raised the reduction target for 1973 to 25 per cent of the 1970 total; based on the latest available figures, it appears that the target will be met.
4. The Secretary-General intends to maintain the quota system and, despite the inevitable impact on documentation of the expanding activities of the Organization, he is prepared to attempt in 1974 to hold the volume of documentation originating in the Secretariat at a level not exceeding that of 1973, that is, 25 per cent lower than 1970.

5. This all relates, however, to documentation originating in the Secretariat, other than meetings records, in other words that documentation over which the Secretariat could be expected to exercise substantial control. This portion of the documentation, however, represents only about one quarter of the total. Further efforts to contain the volume of documentation, if they are to have any material impact, would have to be directed to other sources.

Possible technological innovations

6. Technological advances in communication (written, visual and oral) have been rapid in the past two decades.

7. A most interesting advance as regards the production of United Nations documentation has been in computer-assisted composition, editing and revision of texts. For instance, the text of a draft report could be fed into a computer system, the stored material could be corrected to reflect any changes made between the draft and final stages, and the final text could be printed out at high speed, in a choice of type faces and with justification of the right-hand margin, ready for photo-offset reproduction.

8. Cold-composition facilities exist on a limited scale in a number of United Nations offices but have been used mainly for the production of official records. The cost of procuring and operating computer-assisted equipment is high. Nevertheless, given the large number of United Nations texts which pass through several stages of drafting, there may be certain areas in which economies can be achieved by the increased use of this equipment. Moreover, the composition of urgently needed studies and reports could be greatly expedited.

9. The facsimile transmission of written texts offers a means by which texts produced at one United Nations office could be made available instantaneously at another office and then reproduced expeditiously by photo-offset.

10. Modern technology has made available procedures for the computerized storage and retrieval of information contained in documents. For example, since 1969, under its computer-assisted indexing programme, the United Nations Library has been storing in the computer information extracted from and relating to studies and reports, resolutions and meeting records issued currently. Included are the verbatim texts of the operative paragraphs of resolutions adopted by the General Assembly and the three Councils. Compendia of resolutions can be compiled by subject, when required, in a matter of minutes, by retrieving the stored information. The scope of this programme could be extended.

11. The microform presentation of material also offers advantages in the storage of past documentation and could even be considered for the original issuance of unusually bulky publications. The Library already has a microfiche programme under which it is storing in miniaturized form, on a progressive basis, certain of the earlier records of the Organization and selected portions of the current documentation. The United Nations standard specifications for microfiche provide for a 4" x 6" (105 mm. x 148 mm.) card which contains 60 frames, each

representing one page of original material. With proper indexes, the material is easily handled; it can be read on inexpensive readers or reproduced in normal size on somewhat more expensive reader-printers. In order to make the microfiche programme an effective means for the storage and distribution of documentation, the resources allocated to the programme would have to be increased considerably.

12. In general, these developments could be used to an extent which would modernize the entire system of United Nations documentation. There would initially be some increased expenditure under the United Nations budget; this would however be offset, to an extent which Members alone would be able to determine, by better and more rapid service.

13. Should Members wish to pursue this possibility, it might be necessary to commission - at some expense - expert studies. The Secretary-General, while feeling free within existing appropriations to make modest technical innovations that would promote economy and efficiency, will make no major changes that would affect the working arrangements of delegations or involve additional expenditure unless so authorized.

Continuing problems

14. Possibility of dispensing with summary records in suitable cases. The provision of summary records continues to involve a substantial workload. In 1972, 1,031 meetings at Headquarters, and 534 at Geneva were provided with summary records. At Headquarters the provision of summary records accounted for some 20 per cent of the translation capacity, apart from the some 3,000 man-days of translator/précis writers' time for drawing up the original texts; the workload at Geneva would be proportionate. Yet all meetings are recorded on tape in accordance with the arrangements approved by the General Assembly in 1968. The question remains whether the utility of summary records is always commensurate with the cost of providing them. This is particularly so when summary records are "restricted" both in provisional and final form; in such cases only the participants (usually a small number of representatives meeting in closed session) receive the records, but the workload in producing them is virtually the same as that for the records of a Main Committee of the General Assembly. The records of other bodies of limited membership appear to have lost whatever utility they possessed by the time they are given general distribution in final form, since the problems at issue are dealt with in a more usable form in the reports of the body concerned. There have been a number of major conferences for which no written meetings records were made, apparently without any serious complications; the Conference on the Human Environment is a recent example. In other cases, bodies have, apparently without any deleterious effect on their work, arranged their meetings so that written records were required for only a few of them.

15. Possible improvement in the reports of subsidiary bodies. The usual procedures for preparing reports from subsidiary bodies to their parent organs are often not conducive to economy. Here there are several points. First, it is questionable whether bodies which have summary records of their proceedings should also include further summarized accounts. Though this practice is permitted under

the conditions prescribed in paragraphs (e) and (f) of the annex to General Assembly resolution 2292 (XXII) of 8 December 1967 and paragraph 3 of resolution 2836 (XXVI) and may be useful on occasion, there is an unnecessary duplication between the accounts contained in the summary records and in the reports. Moreover, the summarized accounts in the reports have to be prepared, translated, typed, reproduced and distributed in haste, toward the end of a session, and their clearance by the body concerned often evokes purely editorial debates and sometimes tends to reopen the substantive discussion. Secondly, it would seem desirable that subsidiary organs should leave to their respective rapporteurs, or perhaps their officers as a group, the responsibility for their reports. Certainly this latter procedure would be facilitated if the coverage of reports were limited to procedural aspects and decisions and did not contain summaries of debates; it could, however, be applied also to reports containing such summaries, as in the case, for example, of some reports of the Sixth Committee to the Assembly.

16. Limitations on reports by special rapporteurs. The use of special rapporteurs to produce studies for consideration by bodies, though perhaps necessary in some cases, can give rise to documentation problems. These studies do not, as a rule, fall under the "quota system" and thus, in the absence of some indication by the body concerned of the desirable length, they elude control, except to the extent that the substantive department concerned may be able to influence the approach of the rapporteur in this respect. In some instances, the body commissioning the study asks the rapporteur to keep his report within an indicated number of pages or the length of the study is indicated in a formal statement of financial implications; it would be useful if this approach could be made a regular and binding procedure.

17. The above points would appear to call for decision by the General Assembly. For its part, the Secretariat intends to review arrangements for presenting the results of roll-call and recorded votes, always of course within the provisions of the relevant rules of procedure. Under the present arrangements, these results are presented up to four times in each language - in the draft and final meeting record and in the draft and final report. The recorded vote, made possible by the mechanical means of voting, has substantially increased the number of instances in which it is necessary to enumerate, by Member State, the results of the voting. The Secretariat also believes that, with the experience that has been gained with the use of checked interpretations, rather than translations, to establish the final versions of verbatim records from and into English, French and Spanish, this practice could be extended to include Russian. In view of the savings that would be involved, the Secretariat would intend to pursue this possibility.

18. Lastly, the Secretary-General would again emphasize, in the context of control and limitation of documentation, the importance of the role of the membership, and would again ask Members to ensure that their representatives in various bodies of the United Nations exercise restraint in making requests which give rise to documentation. One area where this might be particularly useful is when the body concerned requests reports from the Secretary-General or from other organs; before making such requests it could see that there is a reasonable

interval between the submission of reports on the same subject and could moreover schedule reports for submission at a session that will permit adequate time for their careful preparation. Another area is that in which the body concerned seeks the written views of Members and others on a subject in order to consider that subject at a subsequent session; not only might such a procedure be used less frequently, but in those cases where it is essential, Governments could assist by ensuring that their replies are concise. But apart from these particular points, a continuing awareness by Members of the substantial cost of producing documentation in a multilingual organization, and a conscious weighing of the benefits compared to the costs remain the most effective tools in the control and limitation of documentation. Representatives of Members in "administrative" organs of the United Nations do seem to approach their work in this sense; the more difficult situations arise when individual delegations speak with different voices in different halls.

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19. The Secretary-General is limiting his suggestions on the question of control and limitation of documentation to the points contained in the foregoing paragraphs. The Secretariat is, however, looking forward to co-operating with the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions and the General Assembly in the consideration of these points and any others that might be presented, and would welcome an opportunity to assist in the formulation of any further directives or instructions in this field which may commend themselves.

Annex I

IMPLEMENTATION OF GENERAL ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION 2836 (XXVI)
OF 17 DECEMBER 1971

1. Under paragraph 2 of resolution 2836 (XXVI), the Secretary-General was requested to reduce in 1972 the volume of documentation originating in the Secretariat, other than meetings records, by 15 per cent over-all, compared with the volume of such documentation in 1970 and, to that end, to take such administrative action as might be necessary, including the establishment of departmental quotas, to achieve that target. In a statement made at the 1556th meeting on 16 December 1972, the Fifth Committee was informed that the internal machinery for the documentation quota system had been set up, that it was working satisfactorily, that the 15 per cent over-all reduction in documentation other than meeting records originating in the Secretariat in 1972 compared with that in 1970 would be achieved, and that, with certain qualifications, the Secretariat would on its own initiative raise the target reduction for 1973, compared to the 1970 base, from 15 per cent to 25 per cent. At the time of the preparation of this report, it is too early to give an assurance that the Secretariat will meet the 1973 target; nevertheless the latest information is encouraging. An appendix gives further details about the operation of the quota system with the latest statistics available.
2. Paragraph 3 of the resolution states certain desiderata regarding the drafting of reports to the General Assembly from its subsidiary organs, its Main Committees, the Trade and Development Board and the Industrial Development Board. These wishes have been reflected in internal instructions and are being observed. The Economic and Social Council has, in accordance with the invitation contained in paragraph 4 of the resolution, requested its subsidiary bodies to follow these principles.
3. In paragraph 5 of the resolution, the Trade and Development Board and the Industrial Development Board were requested to adopt decisions for the control of their documentation, including the guidelines set out in section III of Economic and Social Council resolution 1623 (LI) relating to reports submitted to the Council. The Trade and Development Board, at its 336th meeting, requested the Secretary-General of UNCTAD to ensure that the reports and documents submitted to the Board were action-oriented and concise. Although no formal decision on the subject has been taken by the Industrial Development Board, the provisions of the resolution have been and are being implemented by UNIDO.
4. The Secretary-General has also drawn the attention of the Security Council to the provisions of paragraphs 6 and 7 and the Council has taken note of them. Since 1 January 1972, no simple request for participation has been issued as a Council document. Furthermore, in the one instance since that date when a committee was established by the Council, namely the Committee on Council Meetings away from Headquarters, specific provision was made by the Council for it to be supplied with summary records (see S/PV.1625).

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5. With further reference to paragraph 7, it should be noted that in response to prior resolutions of the General Assembly, and in keeping with its own concern regarding its documentation, the Economic and Social Council had already adopted a practice of specifically deciding whether a new subsidiary body established by it should be provided with summary records. In the same sense, the Trade and Development Board had decided in 1969 that summary records would be provided only for plenary meetings of the Board and plenary meetings of its main committees (including the Special Committee on Preferences); it has subsequently held to this decision. The Industrial Development Board has similarly conformed to the purposes of the resolution. The Trusteeship Council has established no new subsidiary bodies with meetings records. In all these questions regarding the provision of summary records, the interpretation given under paragraph 8 of resolution 2836 (XXVI) has been applied.

6. The request in paragraph 9 that the Main Committees should review whether annual reports referred to them could be submitted at less frequent intervals has been brought to their attention by document A/INF/136/Rev.1 of 30 June 1972. While it would be difficult to make a final assessment on the basis of the experience of a single session of the General Assembly, the results of the invitation have so far not been substantial.

7. Recommendation 10 contained in part A, section IX, of the report of the Joint Inspection Unit (A/8319 and Corr.1), to which the attention of the Economic and Social Council was drawn in paragraph 10 of resolution 2836 (XXVI) was considered by the Commission on Human Rights. As regards paragraph (a) of recommendation 10, the Commission endorsed a conclusion by its Ad Hoc Committee on Periodic Reports to the effect that it did not concur with the recommended changes. As regards paragraph (b) of recommendation 10, appropriate action has been taken.

8. Under paragraph 11 of the resolution, the Secretary-General was invited to take appropriate steps to implement recommendations 14 to 26 contained in part A, section IX, of the report of the Joint Inspection Unit, in the light of the observations of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (A/8532 and Corr.1 and 2). An account of the action taken follows:

(a) Recommendation 14 (Statistical criteria for documentation and meetings). The consultations regarding uniform statistical criteria for documentation and meetings at all United Nations offices, to which reference is made in the Secretary-General's comments, have been initiated; the degree of comparability of the documentation statistics achieved through these consultations will be reviewed in 1974. The records called for under recommendation 14 (b) have been kept for years and were made available to the Inspectors.

(b) Recommendation 15 (Timing of actions in execution of General Assembly decisions). The notification to departments and offices of their responsibilities arising from decisions of the previous session of the General Assembly was circulated on 14 January 1972 in respect of the twenty-sixth session and 31 January 1973 in respect of the twenty-seventh session. For reasons beyond the

control of the Secretariat, the latter date did not meet the 15 January target recommended by the Inspectors, but that target date is accepted by the Secretary-General and every effort will be made to observe it; in any event, the performance has improved over 1970 and 1971 when the notice was distributed in late February. A review of the letters inviting comments from Governments and others in response to decisions taken by the General Assembly at its twenty-seventh session indicates that of the 19 such letters sent, 14 were dispatched by 31 January, the date recommended by the Inspectors, 4 were sent before 10 February and on 26 February. In both 1972 and 1973, in accordance with a recommendation of the Special Committee on the Rationalization of the Procedures and Organization of the General Assembly, the distribution of the provisional list of items for the General Assembly session was made by 15 February - a date much earlier than that recommended by JIU (15 May).

(c) Recommendation 16 (Government replies to questionnaires). In the 19 letters referred to above, the date indicated for replies was in all but two cases 30 June 1973 - the date recommended by the Inspectors - or earlier; in one of the two cases a later date was specified in the relevant resolution, in the other the report involved is not to be prepared until 1974.

(d) Recommendation 17 (Exclusive responsibilities of departments and offices for the control and editing of documents). In his comments on this recommendation (A/8488, para. 4), the Secretary-General indicated that for certain categories of documents, central editing arrangements still appeared to offer advantages.

(e) Recommendation 18 (Enforcement of drafting criteria). The Secretary-General continues to enforce the drafting criteria laid down in General Assembly resolutions 1272 (XIII), 2292 (XXII), 2538 (XXIV) and 2836 (XXVI), taking into account that some of those criteria are binding rules and some permit organs flexibility. It would assist in achieving economy in documentation if the Assembly were to formulate more of the criteria as binding rules.

(f) Recommendation 19 (Form of reports of Main Committees). The Secretary-General has already commented on this matter in his earlier report (A/8488, para. 43) and has further dealt with it in paragraph 6 (b) of the present report.

(g) Recommendation 20 (Report of the Secretary-General on the Work of the Organization). The Secretary-General did not agree that the introduction to his annual report could serve the purpose of that report, an opinion of which the Advisory Committee took note. He did, however, undertake to reconsider the format of his report with a view to shortening it. This has been done. The Secretary-General's 1973 report is less than half the length of the 1972 report.

(h) Recommendation 21 (Report of the Economic and Social Council). The Economic and Social Council had already, as indicated in the Secretary-General's comments (A/8488, para. 45), given attention to its own report to the Assembly in 1971 and had made substantial changes in its form. At its latest session, the Council made further changes, which are reflected in its report to the current session of the Assembly.

(i) Recommendation 22 (Summaries of technical or complicated reports). The Secretary-General's observations on this recommendation (A/8488, para. 46) and those of the Advisory Committee (A/8532, para. 50) were before the General Assembly at its twenty-sixth session; the Secretary-General has nothing to add to his comments.

(j) Recommendation 23 (Document on policies with respect to documentation). The document on documentation policies was updated in 1972 (A/INF/136/Rev.1, of 30 June 1972) to include the relevant provisions of resolution 2836 (XXVI). As regards the cost of documentation, the Secretary-General believes that the progressive development of distribution of central common costs to various programmes under the new programme budget format will meet the objective which he believes is sought, that is, to make clear to programme organs the implications of their decisions in so far as the documentary elements are concerned.

(k) Recommendation 24 (Note to delegates on all documents). The practice of indicating the fact on all documents of which there really is a minimum supply has been maintained; the Advisory Committee shared with the Secretary-General his doubts as to the utility of putting such a notice on all documents. It should be noted, however, that, in the context of the objective of the Inspectors' recommendation, the number of copies of "Limited" documents distributed has been sharply curtailed; delegations were informed of this return to the initial concept of the "Limited" category by a note verbale dated 13 February 1973.

(l) Recommendation 25 (Distribution of Secretariat administrative documents).

(m) Recommendation 26 (Secondary distribution of press releases). These two recommendations have been implemented in the context of the Secretary-General's comments thereon (A/8488, paras. 49 and 50).

9. In paragraph 12 of resolution 2836 (XXVI), the General Assembly decided to make an over-all reduction of \$1,250,000 in the provision for documentation in the budget for the financial year 1972. This global reduction was applied to various sections of the budget to which the cost of documentation is attributable, particularly those providing for linguistic and technical staff and for contractual printing. It would require a most detailed allocation of expenditure under many sections of the budget to establish the exact reduction achieved. However, an analysis of the expenditures under sections 3 and 4 of the budget for the staff of the Department of Conference Services at Headquarters and under sections 11, 15 and 16 for contractual printing shows that the target figure of \$1,250,000 was achieved under those categories alone. The total reduction effected was of the order of \$2 million. It is difficult to say how much of this sum resulted from the implementation of resolution 2836 (XXVI) and how much from the over-all austerity measures carried out by the Secretary-General.

10. Paragraph 13 envisages certain net reductions in the cost of documentation, which have not materialized. The reductions achieved in the volume of material originating in the Secretariat, other than meetings records, have been offset by

increases in other documentation arising largely from increased activity of the Organization and by increases in unit costs.

11. Lastly, the Secretary-General has, in accordance with paragraph 15 of the resolution, made special efforts to ensure that documents for consideration by the General Assembly are distributed before the opening of the session. Though some improvement has been achieved, particularly for the twenty-eighth session, the situation is still not completely satisfactory. Continuing efforts will be made in respect of documentation whose timing is in the hands of the Secretariat. There will, however, always remain difficulties with regard to the reports of subsidiary bodies whose sessions extend into August; and obviously the reports of those bodies which hold their sessions in September or later will not be ready for the opening of the session.

Appendix

STATISTICAL INFORMATION ON THE DOCUMENTATION QUOTA SYSTEM

1. The documentation quota system was established under the provisions of General Assembly resolution 2836 (XXVI), paragraph 2, with 1970 as the base year.

2. At Headquarters, the base for the quotas was established through a detailed review of some 55,000 job cards, covering documentation other than meetings records, to determine, by source, the number of pages submitted during 1970, as distinct from produced, since control would have to be exercised at the point of submission. Two categories were defined: (i) material submitted requiring translation and the subsequent processes, and (ii) material submitted not requiring translation but only one or more of the subsequent processes. The total figure for these two categories was 184,000 pages; that figure, however, included non-quota material, estimated, on the basis of experience in 1972, when documents were identified on submission as "quota" or "non-quota", at some 80,000 pages. The results of applying the system are shown below:

A. Comparison between 1970 quota base and 1972 quota submissions

	<u>Number of pages</u>		<u>Reduction achieved</u>	
	<u>1970 base</u>	<u>1972 submissions</u>	<u>Pages</u>	<u>Percentage of 1970</u>
Headquarters	104,000	78,000	26,000	25

B. Quota submissions for partial years
 (Number of pages)

	<u>30 Sept. 1972</u>	<u>30 Sept. 1973</u>
Headquarters	58,000	56,000

These figures would indicate that the 25 per cent reduction from the 1970 base will also be achieved in 1973.

3. Offices away from Headquarters established their 1970 base figures, which were reported to Headquarters, and have submitted recurrent reports on submissions. The following information is provided from those reports:

A. Comparison between 1970 quota base and 1972 quota submissions

	<u>Number of pages</u>		<u>Reduction achieved</u>	
	<u>1970 base</u>	<u>1972 submissions</u>	<u>Pages</u>	<u>Percentage of 1970</u>
Geneva	78,700	54,900	23,800	30.2
<u>including</u> UNCTAD	16,000	9,400	6,600	41.3
ECE	35,700	21,500	14,200	39.8
UNIDO	46,900	34,700	12,200	26.0
ECA	34,300	17,500	16,800	49.0
ECAFE	36,800	26,700	10,100	27.4
ECLA	32,200	23,000	9,200	28.5

B. Quota submissions for partial years
(Number of pages)

	<u>30 Sept. 1972</u>	<u>30 Sept. 1973</u>
Geneva	39,700	41,100
<u>including</u> UNCTAD	7,300	10,900
ECE	15,000	17,900
UNIDO	26,100	32,600
	<u>30 June 1972</u>	<u>30 June 1973</u>
ECA	13,100	14,500
ECAFE	20,000	14,100
ECLA	17,000	10,600

4. It will be possible, with the experience that has been gained during the two years of the operation of the quota system, to refine the statistical arrangements and to examine the comparability of figures maintained by all offices. Care has been taken not to introduce, during the initial two years, changes that would obscure the time-to-time comparisons at any one office.

Annex II

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE REPORT OF THE JOINT INSPECTION UNIT
ON THE PROGRAMME OF RECURRENT PUBLICATIONS

1. Under the terms of General Assembly resolution 2732 (XXV) of 16 December 1970, a report of the Joint Inspection Unit on the programme of recurrent publications of the United Nations (A/8362) was submitted to the Assembly on 20 August 1971. The recommendations of the Joint Inspection Unit were summarized in paragraphs 1-12 of the report. The Assembly also had before it the observations of the Secretary-General (A/8540), which were mainly of a general nature.

2. In accordance with General Assembly resolution 2886 (XXVI) of 21 December 1971, the Secretary-General submitted to the Assembly at its twenty-seventh session a further report (A/8851) containing the observations of the intergovernmental bodies concerned on certain of the recurrent publications concerning which the Joint Inspection Unit had made recommendations, as well as a general observation of his own. Observations on a number of publications were still outstanding.

3. At the twenty-seventh session, the recommendations concerning recurrent legal publications were considered by the Sixth Committee, whose observations were transmitted to the Fifth Committee in document A/C.4/1480. On the recommendation of the Fifth Committee, the Assembly adopted resolution 3006 (XXVII) providing for a shorter form of contents for the United Nations Juridical Yearbook and made financial provision for publishing additional volumes in the United Nations Treaty Series. The Assembly decided that apart from those actions, consideration of the question should be deferred until the twenty-eighth session.

4. The following paragraphs describe actions not previously reported on which have been taken by intergovernmental bodies on specific recommendations of the Joint Inspection Unit.

5. With respect to the recommendations for reducing duplication in the collection, processing and publication of statistics, the Statistical Committee at its seventeenth session:

(a) Approved in full the views expressed by its Working Group;

(b) Advised that the adoption of recommendations 9 (a) and 9 (b), which called for a single schedule of statistics to be collected from Member States under the direction of the Inter-Organization Board, would result in a serious deterioration in the completeness, reliability, timeliness and usefulness of the economic and social statistics of the United Nations;

(c) Accepted the desirability of implementing recommendation 9 (c) regarding the concentration and basic form of regional statistical publications;

(d) Stated that it was actively engaged in achieving the elimination of any unnecessary duplication in the collection of statistics by international agencies.

6. With respect to recommendations 11 (c)-(g) and 12 (h) and (i) calling for the termination or modification of certain ECE publications, ECE by its decision C (XXVIII) decided:

(a) To request the Executive Secretary to transmit to the Secretary-General the decisions of its subsidiary bodies concerned that the Bulletin of Statistics on World Trade in Engineering Products; the ECE Annual Bulletin of Coal Statistics; the ECE annual publication of concentration indices in the coal industries; the ECE Annual Bulletin of Gas Statistics for Europe, the ECE Annual Bulletin of Electric Energy Statistics for Europe, the ECE Annual Bulletin of General Energy Statistics for Europe, the ECE Annual Bulletin of Housing and Building Statistics for Europe; the ECE Statistics of Road Traffic Accidents in Europe; the ECE Annual and Quarterly Bulletins of Steel Statistics for Europe; the ECE/FAO Timber Bulletin for Europe; and the Annual Forest Products Market Review should continue to be published; and

(b) To request the subsidiary bodies concerned and the Executive Secretary to keep the frequency and the contents of the ECE statistical bulletins under constant review, taking into account both the need for economy in United Nations publications and the purposes those bulletins serve.

7. Recommendation 12 (j) calling for the issuance of Electric Power in Asia and the Far East only every other year has been implemented.

8. With respect to recommendation 12 (l) calling for the reorganization of the contents of the Statistical Bulletin for Latin America, that publication has been replaced by the Statistical Annual for Latin America organized in accordance with the recommendation of the Joint Inspection Unit.

9. With respect to recommendation 12 (p) calling for sharp reduction and more prompt issuance of publications in the Mineral Resources Developments Series, Water Resources Series and Regional Economic Co-operation Series of ECAFE, ECAFE has expressly stated that the first two series should be continued, while stressing the need for high quality combined with brevity. The recommendation relating to the Regional Co-operation Development Series will be borne in mind.

10. With respect to recommendation 12 (q) calling for improvements in the Bulletin on Narcotics, the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, by its resolution 5 (XXV), confirmed the importance that it attached to the Bulletin and requested the Secretary-General to consider ways and means of extending the range of subjects dealt with.

11. With respect to recommendation 12 (r) calling for the replacement of the Yearbook on Human Rights, by a more suitable publication, the Economic and Social Council, in its resolution 1793 (LIV) of 18 May 1973 adopted on the recommendation of the Commission on Human Rights, decided that the Yearbook should be issued every two years and should consist mainly of concise narrative accounts by Governments of legislative and other developments.

Annex III

STATUS OF CERTAIN OTHER JOINT INSPECTION UNIT RECOMMENDATIONS
ON PUBLICATIONS AND DOCUMENTATION

1. By its resolution 2924 (XXVII) of 24 November 1972, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit annually a succinct report on those major recommendations of the Joint Inspection Unit, as set forth in reports affecting the United Nations, which have not been implemented, together with the reasons therefor. The Secretary-General's report has been distributed in document A/C.5/1507 of 20 July 1973; in paragraph 5 (a) it is noted that the relevant JIU recommendations relating to publications and documentation would be dealt with in this report.

2. Recommendations 14 to 26 contained in part A, section IX, of the JIU report on United Nations documentation and the organization of the proceedings of the General Assembly and its main bodies (A/8319 and Corr.1, 2 June 1971) were dealt with in annex I, and it remains only to comment on recommendation 4, which read: "All estimates of the cost of documentation should include the cost of drafting, editing, translation, typing, reproduction and distribution". In his comments on this recommendation, the Secretary-General described the difficulties in implementing it (A/8488, para. 2), and the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, in its comments trusted "that in his work on programme-budgeting the Secretary-General will bear in mind the desirability of identifying the cost of documentation relating to individual programmes" (A/8532, para. 40). For reasons explained in the foreword to the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1974-1975, it was not possible to give full reflexion to the Advisory Committee's view in this first presentation under the new arrangements; the Advisory Committee has noted, in its report on the proposed budget, that "the Secretary-General recognizes this deficiency and expresses his intention to correct it in future years" (A/9008, para. 21 (a)). In this same sense, reference should be made to the observations contained in paragraph 48 of document A/C.5/1507.

3. In annex II, information is given on actions taken by various organs since the last session of the General Assembly on certain JIU recommendations on the programme of recurrent publications. That information, together with the information previously submitted, and referred to in annex II, constitutes the description of the present situation in connexion with the relevant JIU report (A/8362, 20 August 1971).

4. From a previous report by the JIU on documentation (A/7576, 25 July 1969), two recommendations might still warrant comment in the context of this note.

5. In recommendation 1 of that report, it was proposed that the budget estimates of the United Nations and related organs should include, in an appropriate place and form, concise consolidated tables giving particulars of the volume and cost

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of documents and publications. The data on these two items should be separately identified. In addition, data for the two previous financial years should be provided for comparison.

6. For reasons similar to those given in paragraph 2 above, it has so far not been possible to perfect methods of distributing costs that would enable the costs of documents and publications to be separately determined. As noted in the same paragraph, the system of collecting information about the volume and cost of documentation and assignment of costs to individual programmes is, however, being improved.

7. Recommendation 23 provided inter alia that in implementing financial regulation 13.1 in the case of a request for a non-recurrent report:

(a) The secretariat of the body involved, when reporting on financial implications, should present not only additional costs but a detailed breakdown of the total costs of the document, including authors' costs;

(b) It should establish the character of the document, the possible number of pages, the type and number of copies to be printed;

(c) It should further state if the requested document could be reproduced in all working languages in time to comply with the established time-limits, such as the six weeks' rule of the Economic and Social Council.

8. Statements of financial implications submitted to organs contain appropriate information on the cost of producing documents; however, it has been found practical, in the time usually available for the submission of such statements, to estimate drafting costs only to the extent that additional staff is required. With regard to fixing the length and timing of documents, there is, as noted elsewhere, room for improvement in the practice of organs.