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NON - PAPER

RESTRUCTURING AND REVITALIZATION OF THE UNITED  
NATIONS IN THE ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND RELATED FIELDS

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It- Introduction

1. The pressures for the restructuring and revitalization  
of the United Nations were intensified as the whole world

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witnessed changing international situation at the end of the

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Cold War. It became evident that the United  
Nations System may not be able to cope with the  
new and more diverse issues that surface in the world  
community. The United Nations was, to a large extent,  
designed to address the global issues in the years after the  
Second World War. It will, therefore, need to be  
restructured and revitalized in order to make it more  
efficient.

2. The Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) of United  
Nations System represents the most vital aspect as far  
global economic growth and development are concerned. It  
has played significant role on these issues in the last  
forty-eight years and is expected to do so on new globally

agreed programmes such as the 18th Special Session Declaration, Declaration and Final Document of UNCTAD VIII, Cartagena Commitment of UNCTAD VIII, the New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s, and Agenda 21, to mention a few. These are issues that are critically important to Africa. It therefore follows that Africa should show a more sober sensitivity to the questions of restructuring and revitalization. While co-operating with the world community for greater efficiency in ECOSOC, it must be alert to attempts that could overtly or covertly compromise away its economic and political interests.

3. Since the intensification of this exercise, the views of some countries, regions and blocs have been made clear in several informal discussions preparatory to the full negotiation on the issue at the ECOSOC. Notably, the positions of G77, European Community (EC), Nordic countries, the United States of America, Canada, etc. have been well stated. But the position of Africa still largely remain unclarified; although this is generally subsumed under that of the G77 of which it is part of. There is need to re-define our basic interests within the G77 and in the ensuing negotiation scheduled for April 1993. The attempt of this non-paper, therefore, is to highlight the key areas of convergence of opinions in the on-going informal discussions and examine the extent to which Africa's interest has been catered for, and to provoke ideas on how best to carry out the restructuring and revitalization. Before this, however, we would have a cursory look at the nature of the envisaged restructuring and revitalization in the ECOSOC.

## II - Restructuring and Revitalization: Origin and Concepts

4. The ideas for restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations in the economic, social and related fields are based on resolutions 45/264 and 46/235 of the General

Assembly (GA). In carrying out this exercise, it is expected that full recognition would be accorded 'u: the principles on the Declaration on International Economic Cooperation, especially the rejuvenation of equitable economic growth and development in the Developing countries, as stated in 8-18/3, adopted at the 18th Special Session of the General Assembly and subsequently in other relevant resolutions. Besides, the current exercise and future restructuring would strictly be anchored on these resolutions and the established principles in the Charter of the UN which is rooted in the sovereign equality of all Member States. Given these principles and the existing structure of the In! and the Economic and Social. Council (ECOSOC), the areas of focus for restructuring and revitalization would consist of: (a) the relationship in the functions of the General Assembly, ECOSOC and their subsidiary bodies, (b) resources for operational activities- and (c) the Secretariat.

### III - Issues in Restructuring and Revitalization

5. The underlying assumption here is that improvements at both policy-making and operational levels are desirable if the operational activities of the UN is to result in meaningful development in the Member States.

Functional Relationships of the GA, ECOSOC and their subsidiaries

#### General Assembly (GA)

The General Assembly is the highest intergovernmental mechanism for the generation and evaluation of policy on issues relating to economic, social and related fields. At this level, international consensus is built on the

initiatives to be taken on critical international political, economic, social and cultural issues.

Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)

7. In the Charter of the UN, the functions and powers of ECOSOC are stipulated to, inter alia, include: the discussion of international economic and social issues and the formulation of policy recommendations to Member States and the UN; initiate studies and reports and make recommendations on international economic, social, cultural, educational, health and related matters; to promote respect for and observance of human rights and to co-ordinate the activities of the specialized agencies by means of recommendations to the GA and the member States. The functions and powers of ECOSOC have been further elaborated by other resolutions such as resolutions 45/264 and 46/235, which created the high-level, co-ordination and operational activities segments to complement the subsidiary bodies (six functional Commissions, five regional Commissions, six Standing Committees and Experts Bodies). We believe that ECOSOC should play a vital role in the field of Social Development.

High Level Segment

8. It should continue to consider one major economic and/or social policy theme. Africa should have a common position when agreeing on this theme at ECOSOC. It should also carry out a one-day policy dialogue and discussion with the Heads of Financial and Trade Institutions. In this respect, the relevant institution will be mandated to provide special report and studies on the selected theme, within their respective mandates and areas of expertise, as well as on important developments in the world economy and in international economic co-operation, in accordance with the agreements signed between them and the United Nations.

Co-ordination Segment

9. The co-ordination segment shall continue to deal with one or more themes selected at the Organizational Session as stipulated in resolution 45/264. It will take up co-ordination issues emanating from subsidiary bodies, principal organs and specialized agencies in the economic, social and related fields. Following the co-ordination segment there should be agreed conclusions containing specific recommendations to the various parts of the United Nations System for their implementation, in accordance with resolution 45/264. In accordance with the present resolution and resolution 45/264, the Secretary-General should arrange to inform the following session of the ECOSOC of steps taken by the UN System to give effect to these recommendations.

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'international develoEment coordination.

10. The work of the operational activities segment

' would.consist of

high-level meeting, including ministerial participation, to provide an opportunity for policy-makers to engage in broad consultations on international development co-operation.

The results of this segment should be in the form of decisions and resolutions.

11. Six functions have been identified for the operational activities segment, namely:

(i) Providing the UN System with cross-guidance on a system-wide basis, including objectives, priorities and strategies, in the implementation of the policies formulated by the GA in the field

- (ii)
- (iii)
- (iv)
- (v)
- (vi)

of operational activities;

Monitoring the division of labour and co-operation within the UN System in particular the Funds/Programmes, to include the conduct of field level co-ordination, and make appropriate recommendations to the GA, and to provide guidance where appropriate to the system.

Reviewing and evaluating the reports on the work of the Funds/Programmes, including the assessment of their overall impact, with a view to enhancing the operational activities of the UN on a system-wide basis.

Carry out preparatory work for the triennial policy review of operational activities by the GA.

Reviewing the operationally relevant recommendations of the subsidiary bodies of ECOSOC and other relevant bodies in the light of the policies established by the GA, in order to incorporate them, as appropriate into the (operational activities of the UN.

Providing orientation and recommendations to the relevant inter-agency co-ordination mechanisms and to support and enhance their role.

General Segment

12. The economic and social committees of the Economic and Social Council shall be subsumed into the Plenary as of 1994. Thus, the ECOSOC shall supervise the activities of

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the subsidiary' bodies of the Council by considering and taking appropriate action on their reports and recommendations in the general segment.

13. The general segment shall be so organized as to recognize the distinction between economic and social issues as reflected in the draft agenda. Consideration of the reports of the subsidiary bodies shall concentrate on the conclusions and adoption of recommendations, and shall refrain from duplicating the substantive debate already held. However, further substantive discussions on specific issues shall be undertaken at the request of one or more Member States.

14. The various segments of ECOSOC, particularly the operational activities segment, shall be organized in such a way as to ensure that there is adequate time available for proper discussion of any item on the agenda, including those currently dealt with by the economic and social committees, on the basis of the practice of ECOSOC.

15. Ministerial attendance is encouraged throughout ECOSOC sessions, particularly in the high-level and operational activities segments.

Governing Bodies of the UN Development Funds

16. It is recommended that the current governing bodies of UNDP/UNFPA and UNICEF should be transformed into Executive Boards as subsidiary bodies of ECOSOC. They shall be responsible for the supervision of the activities of each Fund/Programme in accordance with the overall policy guidance of the GA and ECOSOC. They shall also carry out their responsibilities as stated in the Charter. The need for a separate Executive Board for UNFPA shall be further considered after the International Conference on Population and Development to be held in 1994.

17. Nine specific functions are assigned to the Executive Boards, viz:

- (i)
- (ii)
- (iii)
- (iv)
- (v)
- (iv)
- (vii)
- (viii)
- (ix)

The implementation of the policies formulated by the GA and the co-ordination guidance received from ECOSOC.

To receive information from and give guidance to the Head of each Fund/Programme on the work of each organization.

Ensuring that their organizations, activities and operational strategies are consistent with the overall policy guidance set forth by the GA and ECOSOC according to their responsibilities in the Charter.

Monitoring of the performance of their Fund or Programme.

Approve programmes, including country programmes and projects with respect to the World Food Programme as appropriate.

Decide on the administrative and financial plans and budgets.

Recommend new initiatives to ECOSOC and through ECOSOC to the GA as necessary.

Encourage and examine new programme initiatives.

Submit annual reports to ECOSOC, which should include recommendations where necessary for the



improvement of field level co-ordination.

18. As far as the membership is concerned, this shall be based on equitable geographical representation. The Executive Boards of UNDP and UNICEF should have 30 members each. The distribution will be as follows: African Group 7, Asian Group 6, East European Group 3, Latin-American and the Caribbean Group 4, and Western European and other Group 10. Decision-making at the Boards shall be by consensus. Each Board will submit an annual report to ECOSOC.

19. The Executive Boards shall meet regularly during the year with periodicity, agendas and other arrangements to be decided upon by each Board at the Organizational Session. Decision-making shall continue to be according to existing rules and the practice of striving for consensus should be encouraged.

20. In order to ensure an effective and efficient interaction between the General Assembly, ECOSOC and the individual Executive Boards, each Board will submit an annual report to ECOSOC on its programmes and activities. This report will include a section which follows a common structure on the basis of specific areas designated by ECOSOC or the General Assembly.

21. The same arrangements should apply to the Committee on Food Aid Policies and Programmes (CFA) and World Food Programme and consultations between the UNO and FAO should be undertaken as soon as possible for this purpose, in view of the fact that World Food Programme is an autonomous joint organ of both. This process should lead to the adoption of parallel resolutions by the General Assembly and the FAO Conference.

#### Resources for Operational Activities

22. There is general recognition of the need to substantially increase the resources for the UN operational activities to meet their expanding demands. The existing funding through voluntary contributions should be strengthened and extended. All countries should, on individual basis, establish a minimum level of contributions to each Fund/Programme which should be taken as the floor for each country's contribution to the system until a new announcement is made. A system of negotiated multi-year pledges is also created for participation by interested countries. The modalities for this will be decided at the 48th Session. The latter would be more beneficial to Africa because it is related to operational activities. Its value will be enhanced if it is based on an acceptable minimum percentage of GNP.

#### Secretariat: The Enhanced Role and Capabilities of the United Nations Secretariat

23. The consensus is that the Secretariat, as a centre of excellence for the examination of global development trends, should provide a common basis for policy-making and programme design by the decision-making bodies (of the UN System). The aim should be to achieve sustainable development in all Member States. It is assumed imperative to study ways and means to strengthen the modalities of reporting on economic development.

24. The Secretary-General has already taken actions on the restructuring and revitalization of the Secretariat. Based on the advice of a high-level panel and several consultations, three new Departments have been established, namely: the Department for Policy Co-ordination and

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Sustainable Development (DPCSD), under Mr. Desai, the Department for Economic and Social Information and Policy Analysis (DESIPA) under Mr. Milleron, and the Department for Development Support and Management Services (DDSMS) under Mr. Ji.

25. The functions of these Departments have also been defined. For example, the DPCSD will, among other things, concentrate on policy development, the integration of social, economic and environmental dimensions of growth and adjustment, poverty, hunger and malnutrition etc. It will monitor the implementation of Agenda 21. It will provide technical services to central intergovernmental bodies. In addition, it will support the Secretary-General in UN System-wide activity co-ordination.

26. DESIPA will, inter alia, focus on the compilation, improvement and dissemination of economic and social statistics. The analysis of long-term trends, including population trends. The monitoring and assessment, from a global perspective, of economic and social policies and trends. Also, it will be concerned with the elaboration of projections and the identification of new and emerging issues requiring the attention of the international community.

27. DDSMS will concentrate essentially on executing Projects/Programmes relating to institutional development and human resources development. It will represent the focal point at the UN Headquarters for the provision of management services. It will assist in the implementation of technical co-operation.

28. There is no clear indication as to which of these units should comprehensively deal with the problems of Africa. It is however significant to underscore that we

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have a co-operation arrangement with the UNDP. Co-operation with it should be revitalized.

29. It is important that the structures of the UN should be adequately funded in order to ensure their proper functioning.

30. The development issues of the economies in transition should not be lumped together with that of the developing countries in order to avoid the loss of resources.

31. The ensuring redeployment should be carefully scrutinized so that Africa will not lose in the process.

32. Africa should strive for the creation of a unit that will directly deal with African economic problems. For example, a unit that will effectively lead to the full implementation of UN-NADAF.

Other Organizational Entities and Programmes

33. The objective here is to sharpen the focus of operational entities such as UNDP, UNFPA, UNICEF, WFP and UNDP while creating a more unified system. For this reason, as an example, the Office for Programme Services (OPS) will be relocated at the Secretariat far from UNDP to allow the latter focus more on funding and co-ordination of operational activities.

34. There will be redeployment to UNCTAD relevant aspects of the Headquarter programmes and activities on Transnational Corporations and Science and Technology. This is assumed necessary because of the increased inter-linkages between trade, investment, technology, services and their financial underpinning.

35. The belief is that regional commissions should be consolidated because of their importance in the implementation of the global programmes of the UN. They possess vital asset of proximity to the Member States which is valuable to programme and project implementation.

36. There is also a general opinion that UN country level presence should be increased. The efforts of governments should be supported. Steps should be taken to translate into reality the agreement reached at the level of the ACC on the relevance of a single, integrated UN country strategy under the direction of the UN Representative.

37. It is also agreed that there should be an international co-ordination arrangement to support the Secretary-General in order to establish co-ordinated approaches in several areas of policy and management (of economic and social activities).

38. Decentralization has been strongly recommended by the high-level panel of experts as a way of bring UN close to the Member States. In this connection, regional commissions should be strengthened to carry out information gathering and socio-economic analysis. Headquarters activities that could be effectively carried out in the regional commission should be redeployed there. For example, in the areas of natural resources, energy and water.

39. The idea of the appointment of UN Ambassadors to African countries is not acceptable. It would result in enormous cost to resources. It is more realistic to stay at the level of Resident Representatives.