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ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN

Preparation of a system-wide medium-term plan for the advancement of women for 1996-2001

Report of the Secretary-General

SUMMARY

The present report proposes a timetable for the preparation of a system-wide medium-term plan for the advancement of women, directed towards the objectives of equality, development and peace, for the period 1996-2001, in accordance with Council resolution 1988/59.

* E/1989/30

1. At its second regular session of 1988, the Economic and Social Council, in resolution 1988/59, requested the Secretary-General, in his capacity as Chairman of the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination and within existing financial resources, to initiate the formulation of a system-wide medium-term plan for the advancement of women, directed towards the objectives of equality, development and peace, for the period 1996-2001. In formulating the plan, account is to be taken of the priorities recommended by the Economic and Social Council, the provisions of the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women¹ and the views and decisions of the governing bodies of the organizations of the United Nations system, including the regional commissions, on the content of the plan, as well as experience in developing the system-wide medium-term plan for women and development for the period 1990-1995.

2. The Secretary-General was requested to report on the implementation of the resolution to the Council at its first regular session of 1989 through the Commission on the Status of Women. The present report covers progress achieved in organizing the preparation of the system-wide plan for 1996-2001. A report on the arrangements for implementing the system-wide medium-term plan for women and development for the period 1990-1995 is being submitted by the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination in document E/1989/16.

3. In accordance with Council resolution 1988/59, the views and decisions of the governing bodies of the organizations of the United Nations system, including the regional commissions, will have to be taken into account in the formulation of the system-wide plan for the advancement of women for 1996-2001. Appropriate steps have been taken by the Secretariat to draw the attention of the organizations and bodies concerned to Council resolution 1988/59.

4. In addition, due regard will have to be given to the experience gained in the development of the system-wide medium-term plan for women and development for the period 1990-1995. In particular, it should be kept in mind that the plan took several years to prepare and required a long series of inter-agency consultations from its original conceptualization through the actual implementation in various organizations' medium-term plans and other programme planning instruments. Despite the lack of a synchronized planning cycle resulting from the extension of the United Nations medium-term plan for 1984-1989 until 1991, the system-wide medium-term plan appears to have been effective in increasing awareness of the role and potential for women and development in many organizations' plans and programmes, including those with largely operational activities, as reported by the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination (see E/1989/16). This experience should serve the system well as it prepares for the broader-based plan envisioned for the 1996-2001 period.

5. Most organizations of the United Nations system that have adopted medium-term planning will begin to prepare their plan proposals for 1996-2001 in 1993, so that they may be adopted by their governing bodies in 1994. On the recommendation of the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination, endorsed by the Economic and Social Council in decision 1988/184, the General Assembly, in resolution 43/210, decided that the next United Nations medium-term plan should cover the period 1992-1997, thus placing the United Nations out of

the synchronized planning cycle developed by the United Nations system over the last 10 years. However, the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to ensure effective coordination with the specialized agencies, including those having a different planning cycle, and to review, through the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination, the question of harmonization of planning and budgeting cycles in the United Nations system.

6. The following timetable for the preparation of the system-wide plan is suggested for consideration by the Council:

(a) The proposed plan would be submitted to the Council at its second regular session of 1993 in time to provide guidance for the preparation of the individual medium-term plans of the system for the 1996-2001 cycle. It should be borne in mind that, by then, the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination and the Council will have been apprised of the results of the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination's review of the question of harmonization of planning and budgeting cycles in the United Nations system referred to in paragraph 5 above.

(b) A preliminary report outlining the proposed framework of the plan would be submitted in 1992 to the Council through the Commission on the Status of Women and the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination. The Council would have before it the views of both those bodies on the matter. The detailed plan would be elaborated on the basis of the comments of those bodies.

7. This proposed timetable would make it possible to take into account in the system-wide plan the views and inputs of the governing bodies of the other organizations of the United Nations system. The necessary steps have been taken to consult with the organizations of the United Nations system concerned on the proposed timetable for the preparation of the plan.

Notes

1/ Report of the World Conference to Review and Appraise the Achievements of the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and -July 1985 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.85.IV.10), chap. A.