

The Secretariat consumes about 65 per cent of the UN's total budget, while it looks after more than 2000 separate programs. The staff administers peacekeeping operations, organizes international conferences, surveys world economic and social trends, prepares studies on such subjects as human rights, disarmament and development, interprets speeches, translates documents, and supplies the world's media with information about the United Nations.

Currently, the Secretariat generates about one billion pages of reports, memos, letters, documents and news releases a year. The salaries of Secretariat employees are tax free. The head of this group of international civil servants is the Secretary-General.

The Economic and Social Council

This body meets once a year. The meetings alternate between New York and Geneva. The Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) oversees the work of the specialized agencies. World trade, development, industrialization, natural resources, human rights, the status of women, population, social welfare, science and technology, and the prevention of crime are just a few of the issues on ECOSOC's plate.

It has 54 member states. Each is elected for a three-year term, so each year 18 members are rotated. Each member has one vote, and a simple majority is all that is needed to make a decision. The Economic and Social Council is discussed further in chapter nine.

*"If the UN didn't exist
we'd have to invent it."*

Former Canadian Ambassador to the
UN Stephen Lewis

*S*ecretaries-General:

1992-
Boutros Boutros-Ghali, Egypt
1981-1991
Javier Perez de Cuellar, Peru
1971-1981
Kurt Waldheim, Austria
1961-1971
U Thant, Burma
1953-1961
Dag Hammarskjöld, Sweden
1946-1953
Trygve Lie, Norway

*"The United Nations exists to
reflect the diversity of the world as it
is and to try to bring order, reason,
and the motivation of common
interest into that diversity. If it
reflected only one side or the other
of the world's problems, it would no
longer be able to perform its true
function."*

Former Secretary-General U Thant