

While commercial lending to developing countries has expanded considerably in recent years, it is often not available to developing countries under conditions that meet their development priorities. The multilateral machinery for loans to developing countries therefore remains of enormous importance to the development process. In 1975 the loan commitments of the international lending institutions totalled \$8.3 billion, which is approximately seven times the development assistance that flowed through the UN and the Specialized Agencies.

f) Need for better co-ordination

The "proliferation" of new UN agencies in recent years and the rapid growth in spending have led to problems of co-ordinating development efforts and establishing priorities both within the UN itself and at the national level. The developed countries, which underwrite 80-85 per cent of the expenses of the various UN agencies, have begun to question the continued expansion of agency spending in excess of world economic growth, as well as the value of certain UN activities and policies. Partly in response to this concern, efforts are under way to revitalize the work of the ECOSOC, which is responsible for co-ordinating the programs of some 167 subsidiary bodies, including the Specialized Agencies. Canada supports the view that ECOSOC should be more active in the establishment of global policies and priorities to which the various agencies could then correlate their activities.

The developed and developing countries have different objectives in this respect. The developed countries are anxious to increase co-ordination within the UN system, so as to make it more efficient in the carrying out of its traditional functions. For the developing world, however, the primary intention has been to ensure a greater responsiveness of the system to their perceived needs, as spelled out in the concept of the new international economic order, and a greater flow of resources through the UN for development activities. Whether structural change will accomplish either of these objectives is uncertain. There is a risk of changing those parts of the system that already function efficiently. Moreover, many of the shortcomings in the system result as much from a lack of political will to make it succeed as from structural deficiencies themselves.

Nevertheless, improvements in organization and methods of operation can undoubtedly be made. In addition to strengthening the central role of the ECOSOC by, for example, more frequent meetings and a more structured agenda, the General Assembly might reform its procedures to give more focus to issues of economic and social development. Secretariat units and intergovernmental bodies that administer development-assistance programs might be merged, although some, such as UNICEF or the World Food Program, would not fit readily into a single structure. Such a change would allow a more efficient planning and disbursement of resources and enhance the capacity of the UN system to implement technical assistance. There might follow a single pledging conference, and the creation of mechanisms for a system-wide evaluation, procurement and country programming.