IV. STRUCTURE OF THE DRAFT PLAN AND THE DRAFT PROGRAMME AND BUDGET

34.   Although it has been defined as a conceptual framework, the Draft Medium-Term Plan has in practice been conceived as a programming framework describing in fairly precise terms the main types of activities to be undertaken. On the evidence of the debates of the General Conference, there now seems to be a very broad consensus in favour of a general policy document centred on tasks, priorities and overall strategies of action and unencumbered by any reference to the kind of activities to be undertaken or the structure of the programme to be implemented. Such a document, which would be considerably shorter and simpler than the current Plan, should specify - in the light of current and foreseeable developments in today's world - UNESCO's priority tasks and corresponding strategies having regard to the specific character of its mandate and new trends in international co-operation.

35.   Two approaches are possible as concerns the presentation and structure of the Plan: the first would reflect our fields of competence - education, science, culture and communication; the second would reflect the main problems and issues in today's world (e.g. education, training and learning, environment and development, the culture of peace). This second option would have the advantage of addressing the world's major problems in their totality and of highlighting the contribution that UNESCO could make to their solution, within the scope of its remit and having regard to the strategies appropriate to the different entities involved in international co-operation. If this second approach were to be adopted, which would be the major issues that should be chosen?

36.   Whatever the option selected, the Plan could begin with a brief account of the main problems addressed and the main results achieved under the Medium-Term Plan for 1990-1995. That would be followed by a statement of the objectives and main strategies envisaged for the period covered by the Plan, emphasis being placed on the high priority aspects of those strategies. Such a presentation would make for a slimmer Plan and would give it a more markedly forward-looking character. The problem would then arise as to the relationship between the Plan and the biennial programmes and budgets, whose purpose is to translate into action the lines of emphasis and the objectives of the Plan. But should there necessarily be a strict correspondence between these two documents?

37.   If the Plan were to describe the main lines of the strategies to be implemented while remaining sufficiently flexible to enable adjustments to be made during the six-year period, the structure of the Draft Programme and Budget for 1996-1997 would, conversely, have to be specified in as detailed a manner as possible. In relation to the present structure and in the light of past experience, the following questions would merit discussion:

❖   Should the present three-tier arrangement be maintained, involving major programme areas, programmes and sub-programmes, or should we opt for a structure based on major transdisciplinary themes?

❖   Assuming that the present structure is maintained, how many major programme areas should there be and what should their main emphases be so as to reflect as closely as possible the priority tasks of the Organization and the ways and means of implementing them? What should be the place of programme-support activities and administrative activities? So as to streamline the document, might there not be a case for integrating the present transverse themes and programmes in the major programme areas?

❖   A composite structure might also be envisaged, i.e. one based on major programme areas corresponding to our fields of competence, with the addition of two or three major transverse - by nature transdisciplinary - projects aimed at addressing complex problems requiring inputs