

CANADIAN MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS

Statement No. 82

December 6, 1966

Statement made on Item 79 (Co-ordination of the United Nations with the Specialized Agencies and the IAEA) by Miss B. M. Meagher, Canadian Representative on the Fifth Committee, on Dec. 6, 1966

The Canadian delegation would like to thank the Advisory Committee for its report A/6522 which, in our view, provides a comprehensive and perceptive analysis of the complexities involved in programming and administering the development activities of the United Nations system of organizations. In general, my delegation agrees with the recommendations and the particular considerations which are emphasized in the report. Of particular value, in our view, is Part II, dealing with "Inter-Organization Administrative Co-ordination," which is a valuable supplement to the related questions analyzed in the Second Report of the Ad Hoc Committee on Financial Experts. We would hope to see this Part continued and even expanded in future years in keeping with the growing emphasis in the United Nations on co-ordination and evaluation. As the Advisory Committee suggests in paragraph 7 of its report, it would be useful if this Part were issued separately in the future to allow more time for member states to study it.

The Advisory Committee's comments in Part II re-enforce our belief that the United Nations system is undergoing a considerable shift in carrying out international co-operation in the fields of economic and social development. The United Nations' first twenty years were taken up, in large part, by tasks of institution-building and ad hoc experimentation. In contrast, the important tasks now appear to be (a) to use the various institutions in a consolidated and coordinated endeavour emphasizing the multi-agency approach to major programmes and making a reality of the phrase "United Nations system of organizations"; and (b) to supervise the operation of the existing international machinery on the basis of results achieved which, necessarily, requires the continuing evaluation of projects, programmes and techniques. We would predict that the next decade will witness a new emphasis upon modification and re-organization of existing institutions rather than upon the creation of new operational **entities** and that the United Nations will be confronted with the less dramatic but more arduous job of making the United Nations system work cohesively and to maximum benefit. The immediate requirement, therefore, will be for a steadily-increasing flow of information on the results attained to date under existing efforts and for a continuing appraisal of techniques and programme priorities. Viewed in this context, the Advisory Committee's appraisal of Inter-organization Administrative Coordination is of considerable importance and merits close study.

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The Canadian delegation is in full agreement with the Advisory Committee's comment, contained in paragraph 17 in the section dealing with "The Central Machinery for Co-ordination," that the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination, as a body which should play a more positive co-ordinating role, requires an active, full-time secretariat of a truly inter-agency character. We also welcome the decision, mentioned in paragraph 15, to have the Deputy Under-Secretary for Economic and Social Affairs work full-time on inter-organization co-ordination. We hope that the expenses necessary for a full-time ACC Secretariat can be accommodated, to a considerable extent, by the reallocation of resources from the existing establishments of the various secretariats.

In commenting upon recent developments concerning the Special Committee on Co-ordination, which are summarized in paragraphs 18 to 20, we feel obliged to point out the obvious. While the new arrangements are good on paper, the effectiveness of the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination will depend entirely on the diligence of the expert government representatives who will be required to digest a massive dose of documentation if they are to discharge the comprehensive mandate of the Committee to scrutinize both the United Nations work programme and inter-agency co-ordination. In short, committees can be created and modified but only governments can make them work. We consider that it is worth while to underline this patently evident truth in view of the increased burden which has been placed upon the enlarged Committee for Programme and Co-ordination to undertake a general review of the economic and social programmes and activities of the United Nations system. Generally speaking, there is still a great deal of groping to be done on how to effect and encourage co-ordination and, in particular, on how to present meaningful information without imposing an impossible burden on secretariats and delegations.

On the question of long-term multi-agency programmes, we fully agree with the Advisory Committee's recommendation in paragraph 26 that such efforts should be followed up by concerted ACC review. Conceivably, the multi-agency technique could, in some cases, prove irrelevant or mistaken.

In the section dealing with the "Form of Budget Presentation," we welcome the willingness of the Advisory Committee to undertake a study of the uniform presentation of budgets and would simply note that the emphasis in this area should ultimately be upon a comparable rather than strictly uniform presentation. We strongly endorse the Advisory Committee's comments on budget-building in paragraph 29 and comparability of budget factors in paragraphs 37 and 38. We also agree with the Advisory Committee's comment in paragraph 43 that the specialized agencies should keep their respective scales of assessments under review in order to reduce variations to a minimum. We, therefore, intend to vote in favour of

draft resolution A/C.5/L.885 which has been introduced this morning by the representative of Brazil. With respect to the Advisory Committee's observations on "The Common System," it is our view that the legislative bodies of the various organizations in the common system should, at all times, take full account of ICSAB's detailed research into salary factors.

My delegation would like to conclude by making a few general observations on the presentational format of the Advisory Committee's report A/6522. We welcome the more detailed treatment of the agencies in Part IV and, in particular, the Chapter dealing with the ILO which stands out in contrast to the more cursory study and recommendations on the other major agencies. We also look forward to the inclusion in subsequent reports, starting in 1967, of reviews in depth of the administrative and budgetary procedures of one or two agencies each year as recommended by the Ad Hoc Committee of Financial Experts in paragraph 90 (d) of its Second Report A/6343. It is our view also that the Advisory Committee should make forceful observations, in its examination of the administrative budgets of all the agencies, on points of agency practice which raise legitimate and continuing doubts in their minds. In the non-ILO chapters of Part IV, several of these points are raised but are not supplemented by comments or recommendations. We believe that the recommendations sprinkled throughout the report should be collected and presented together in a summary or concluding section. It would also be useful to incorporate in future reports a table on the distribution of the major voluntary funds on an agency-by-agency basis. An indication of the importance of these funds is given in paragraph 10. It is only possible to assess the scope of agency resources and responsibilities by taking into account voluntary funds as well as assessed budgets.

These, Mr. Chairman, are the suggestions which my delegation would like to make to improve the format of what we regard as a very useful report.

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