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**Administrative Committee  
on Coordination**

ACC/1993/21  
12 August 1993

ENGLISH ONLY

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AD HOC INTER-AGENCY CONSULTATION ON JOINTLY FUNDED  
SECRETARIATS OF ACC STANDING COMMITTEES

(Geneva, 6 July 1993)

SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS

1. An Ad Hoc Inter-agency Consultation on Jointly funded Secretariats of ACC Standing Committees was convened in Geneva on 6 July 1993. The list of participants appears in annex I.

2. The Consultation was held pursuant to a decision adopted by ACC at its first regular session of 1993, whereby:

"The servicing of ACC standing committees having jointly funded secretariats, including the two consultative committees [on administrative questions and on programme and operational questions], shall be handled from Geneva, where these secretariats will be grouped in common premises to ensure the greatest cost-effectiveness in providing support services. Secretaries will continue to be responsible to the respective committees. Inter-agency consultations will be undertaken in order to present a proposal to the ACC, at its autumn 1993 session, regarding staffing and budgets for the jointly funded secretariats."

3. In implementation of this decision, OC, at its meeting immediately following the first regular session of ACC, requested

"the United Nations to convene an inter-agency consultation in Geneva in conjunction with the substantive session of the Economic and Social Council in July 1993, in order to formulate proposals regarding staffing and budgets for the jointly funded secretariats, for submission to OC, which would make recommendations to ACC at its second regular session of 1993 ..."

4. Discussions at the Consultation focused on issues concerning common premises and shared services, the grading of senior-level posts, and related budgetary matters, as they affected the secretariats of CCAQ, CCPOQ and ACCIS. 1/ It was recalled that an in-depth review of ACCIS was currently in progress and that a number of budgetary issues relevant to the Consultation's agenda were scheduled to be considered by CCAQ(FB) at its forthcoming session in August 1993. In the circumstances, most aspects of the agenda of the Consultation could only be addressed in a preliminary way. Moreover, it was agreed not to discuss the content of pages 3 and 4 of the background brief provided by the United Nations concerning additional resources for ACCIS.

Common facilities

5. In accordance with the ACC decision, the possibility of the jointly funded secretariats of CCAQ, CCPOQ and ACCIS sharing premises in Geneva was examined. It was generally felt that a main consideration in that respect should be the extent to which common premises could lead to the sharing of support staff and equipment and, therefore, to quantifiable savings. At the same time, account should also be taken of the potential for synergies and cooperation among the secretariats on tasks or issues of common concern, such as the ACC report on programmes and resources of the United Nations system, which was of interest to both CCAQ(FB) and CCPOQ, or issues relating to training, which were addressed by both CCPOQ and CCAQ(PER).

6. The representative of the United Nations Office at Geneva informed the Consultation that the United Nations would soon be acquiring from the Swiss authorities additional rent-free premises in Geneva. They would relieve the acute space shortage being experienced and could facilitate the consideration of options for suitable premises in a single location for the relevant inter-agency secretariats.

7. The Consultation requested the United Nations Office at Geneva, in close consultation with the Secretaries of the concerned Committees, to undertake a cost/benefit analysis of the possibilities for common premises, in the light of the considerations outlined in paragraph 5 above. The results of the review should be conveyed in the first instance to CCAQ(FB), so that the Committee might take them into account in its consideration of the relevant inter-agency budgets at its August session. It was agreed that participants in the Consultation would, at the same time, be informed, through its Chairman, of the results of the review.

Grading of posts in the jointly financed secretariats

8. It was recalled that, on several occasions in the past, concern had been expressed in the Organizational Committee at what appeared to be growing inconsistencies in the levels of various inter-agency-financed posts and at the increasing number of such posts being graded or filled at the D-2 level. While noting those concerns, the Consultation observed that most of the posts were actually filled at the D-1 level, which might be the most suitable grade for senior posts in inter-agency-financed secretariats. Thus, the post of Secretary of CCAQ (who also served as Secretary of CCAQ(PER)), although originally budgeted at the D-2 level, had for some time now been occupied at the D-1 level; the post of Secretary of CCAQ(FB) had recently been advertised at the D-1 level, with the possibility of being filled at the P-5 level; and, while the Secretary/Coordinator of CCSQ(OPS) had been serving at the D-2 level, the level of the successor post of Secretary of CCPOQ was foreseen at the D-1 level.

9. Participants at the Consultation recognized that there were differences in the nature and scope of the functions of the various inter-agency committees and that those differences might, in turn, affect the level of responsibility entrusted to their secretaries, which could only be ascertained through a full job classification exercise. At the same time, they considered that many common features also existed and felt that a certain degree of consistency was

desirable. The view was expressed that it would, in most cases, be desirable for those posts to be filled by officials who, having acquired extensive experience by serving in progressively more responsible positions in organizations of the system, would be released to serve for a few years in an inter-agency position and would then revert and complete their careers in the releasing organization.

10. In the light of those considerations, as well as the present de facto situation as outlined in paragraph 8 above, participants in the Consultation shared the view that the D-1 level was likely to be in most instances the appropriate grade at which to recruit officials with a suitable profile and the required degree of experience and expertise for the posts under consideration. It was understood that the posts concerned could also be filled in appropriate cases at the P-5 level.

11. Thus, it was not considered necessary to proceed at that stage to a full-scale classification exercise, as initially suggested by some participants, thus maintaining the status quo at least in so far as the two main consultative committees were concerned. It was understood, however, that the Organizational Committee would revert to the subject at its October session, in the light of relevant developments in the inter-agency machinery.

#### Budgetary matters

12. It was recalled that CCAQ(FB) was scheduled to review at its next session in August inter-agency budgets, including the relevant proposals put forth by CCPOQ at its June inter-sessional meeting and the ACCIS budget. It was noted that the ACCIS budget in particular required careful scrutiny, in light of the ongoing review of the Committee's mandate and functioning.

13. There was general agreement that there should not be any overall increase in inter-agency budgets or staff and that economies should be actively sought, where possible. That should not, however, preclude consideration of possible reallocations of resources among inter-agency budgets, in the light of changing priorities. It was noted that one of the committees under consideration - CCPOQ - had new terms of reference, which were not merely a continuation of those of CCSQ(OPS).

14. One organization indicated that, in the light of its declining resources, it would have to reduce its contributions to those budgets by about 30 per cent. It was noted that the reduction made it all the more necessary for every effort be made to reduce administrative expenses and achieve savings, through shared premises, equipment and staff, among other things, as discussed in paragraphs 5-7 above.

15. Support was expressed for the position that all participants in ACC's standing committees, including the Bretton Woods institutions, should, in principle, contribute to the cost of jointly financed secretariats. CCAQ(FB) was invited to address the issue and recommend ways in which it could be best pursued.

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16. It was understood that OC would continue consideration of the above issues at its next session, in the light, inter alia, of the feasibility study on common premises referred to in paragraph 7 above, the report of CCAQ(FB), and the outcome of the Task Force on ACCIS.

Notes

1/ Issues relating to the secretariat of SCN, although covered by the ACC decision, were not specifically taken up at the Consultation. It was recalled that a number of relevant recommendations were addressed to SCN by ACC/OC at their first regular session of 1993.

Annex I

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

Chairman: Patrizio Civili

UNITED NATIONS

Executive Office of the Secretary-General	J. Beagle
Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development	S. Khan J. Lee-De Laurentis
Department of Development Support and Management Services	M. Fedoroff
United Nations Office at Geneva	S. Parker
<u>United Nations Development Programme</u>	J.-J. Graisse
<u>United Nations Children's Fund</u>	M. Kamau
<u>United Nations Conference on Trade and Development</u>	P. Tsyba
<u>United Nations International Drug Control Programme</u>	J. Muller
SPECIALIZED AGENCIES AND IAEA	
<u>International Labour Organization</u>	R. Harari J. de Martino
<u>Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations</u>	K. Killingsworth
<u>United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization</u>	L. Schaudinn
<u>World Health Organization</u>	M. Bekele
<u>International Telecommunication Union</u>	J.-P. Baré
<u>World Intellectual Property Organization</u>	B. Machado
<u>United Nations Industrial Development Organization</u>	A. de Groot
<u>International Atomic Energy Agency</u>	M. S. Opelz