

UNITED NATIONS

SECRETARIAT

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To: Members of the staff

From: The Under-Secretary-General for Conference Services and Special  
Assignments

Subject: REGULATIONS FOR THE CONTROL AND LIMITATION OF DOCUMENTATION

AddendumMAXIMUM LENGTH OF DOCUMENTS SUBMITTED IN THE NAME  
OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL OR OF THE SECRETARIAT

The General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council have established the general principle that reports and studies submitted to them and their subsidiary bodies should be action-oriented and concise; both bodies have further decided that reports submitted to them and to their subsidiary bodies should not exceed 32 single-spaced pages in length. 1/ 2/ They have also decided that, when a document is prepared on the basis of Governments' replies to a questionnaire or of submissions by the agencies and programmes of the United Nations system, such replies and submissions should not be reproduced in extenso in the body of the document or in an annex to it. Should the body concerned wish to see the texts of such replies and submissions, the Secretariat should make them available in the original languages and in an appropriate form.

1/ Without prejudice to the provision made in paragraph 10 of General Assembly resolution 32/151, as reaffirmed by paragraph 9 of its resolution 34/141, paragraph 9 of its resolution 35/163 and paragraph 6 of its resolution 36/114.

2/ 32 single-spaced pages are equivalent to 44 one-and-one-half-spaced pages or 60 double-spaced pages.

2. In a further effort to keep documentation within manageable proportions, the Secretary-General has directed that henceforth documents originating in the Secretariat for submission to United Nations organs and bodies shall not, except as provided below, exceed 24 single-spaced pages in length. 3/

3. If, in particular cases of complexity of subject or abundance of detail, heads of departments and offices consider that reports and studies cannot be adequately prepared within the limit of 24 pages, they should at the forecast stage give notice to the Under-Secretary-General for Conference Services and Special Assignments in the form of a memorandum indicating the decision calling for the report or study, the proposed method of treatment, the reasons why it is considered that the report or study should exceed 24 pages in length and the estimated length required.

4. If the Under-Secretary-General for Conference Services and Special Assignments accepts that exceptional circumstances exist, the report or study may be prepared up to the agreed limit on length. In case of disagreement, the matter shall be submitted to the Secretary-General for decision.

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3/ 24 single-spaced pages are equivalent to 33 one-and-one-half-spaced pages or 45 double-spaced pages.