

UNITED NATIONS

SECRETARIAT

ST/AI/189/Add.3/Rev.1*
1 February 1973

ADMINISTRATIVE INSTRUCTION

To: Members of the staff

Subject: REGULATIONS FOR THE CONTROL AND LIMITATION
OF DOCUMENTATIONAddendumDISTRIBUTION OF DOCUMENTS, MEETING RECORDS,
OFFICIAL RECORDS AND PUBLICATIONS

I. IDENTIFICATION OF DOCUMENTS

1. Symbols of United Nations documents are composed of capital letters combined with figures, usually Arabic numerals. When Roman numerals are used they usually indicate the number of the session of the body concerned. Each mimeographed document bears the same symbol and date in all language versions. Documents relating to two or more organs may bear two or more symbols, one for each organ.^{1/} If a document is reissued in the printed Official Records or as a sales publication, it retains its symbol. In addition to a symbol, a sales publication carries a sales number.

II. CATEGORIES OF DISTRIBUTION OF DOCUMENTS
AND MEETING RECORDS

2. For distribution purposes, documents and meeting records are classified in the following categories, each indicating the pattern and scope of distribution: (a) GENERAL; (b) LIMITED; and (c) RESTRICTED. The distribution pattern for these categories follows:

* This instruction supersedes document ST/AI/189/Add.3 of 22 June 1971.

^{1/} For details see "List of United Nations document series symbols", the current issue of which is found in document ST/LIB/SER.B/5/Rev.2.

(a) The designation GENERAL is used on basic documents and meeting records, including agendas, studies and reports previously requested, communications from Governments and adopted resolutions and other decisions of main organs. Documents in this category are given the widest distribution appropriate to the body concerned. The texts of documents issued in the GENERAL series should not be included in, or annexed to, subsequent documents, as they are easily accessible to all interested parties.

(b) The designation LIMITED is used on documents of a temporary nature such as draft resolutions and amendments thereto, draft reports and other action documents, and papers dealing with the order in which items will be discussed and other ephemeral matters. The primary distribution of documents in this category is limited to those likely to be immediately interested in the work of the body concerned. The substance of limited documents may, as appropriate and reasonable, be referred to or included in, or annexed to, the report of the body in which they were discussed. Limited documents bear the letter "L" before the serial number.

(c) The designation RESTRICTED is used on documents and meeting records whose contents require at the time of issuance that they not be made public. The distribution of these documents and records is determined by the originating office. Such documents bear the letter "R" before the serial number in the symbol.

III. PROVISIONAL TEXTS OF DOCUMENTS AND MEETING RECORDS

3. Documents the text of which is of a provisional nature are issued first in a limited run. Such documents comprise unrevised translations circulated in the course of a meeting and certain meeting records that will later be issued in corrected form. They bear the word "PROVISIONAL" above the document symbol. In bodies with limited membership provisional documents may also bear the instruction "FOR PARTICIPANTS ONLY".

IV. INFORMAL CONFERENCE ROOM AND WORKING PAPERS

4. It is the responsibility of the secretariats of organs to see to the reproduction and distribution of conference room and working papers which, because of their informal character, are not issued in the normal way as symbolized documents in one of the categories specified in section II above.

V. OFFICIAL DISTRIBUTION LISTS

5. Documents, meeting records, Official Records and publications are distributed free of charge by the Distribution Section of the Publishing Service in accordance with the general distribution policies set by the Publications Board and, where applicable, after consultation with the originating and/or responsible departments or offices, to the following:

(a) Recipients on external lists (distribution by surface mail and/or by pouch): (i) ministries, embassies and other governmental addresses; (ii) intergovernmental organizations; (iii) non-governmental organizations in consultative status; (iv) specialized agencies; (v) United Nations Office at Geneva, regional economic commissions, United Nations Economic and Social Office in Beirut, United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (Geneva), United Nations Industrial Development Organization (Vienna); (vi) information centres; (vii) depository libraries;

(b) Recipients on internal lists (distribution at Headquarters): (i) permanent missions; (ii) permanent observers; (iii) press; (iv) Secretariat; (v) meetings service and conference requirements; (vi) sales; (vii) stock.

VI. NUMBER OF COPIES

6. The number of copies of documents, meeting records, Official Records, publications and "provisional" texts that are normally distributed to recipients on the lists referred to in section V above is indicated in the attached distribution chart.

VII. DEPARTMENTAL LISTS FOR PUBLICATIONS

7. In addition to the free distribution to the official recipients described above, which is under the authority and control of the Office of Conference Services and the Office of Public Information within their respective spheres of competence, the substantive departments of the Secretariat are also permitted to maintain special distribution lists for their own publications. These lists may either be in the form of addressograph lists or in the form of ad hoc lists of recipients of specific publications.

8. According to a decision taken by the Publications Board at its 223rd meeting, departmental lists (either permanent or ad hoc) may include:

- (i) Persons or bodies who, in the view of the head of the department, have rendered specific service, worthy of recognition, in the preparation of the publication or publications to be distributed;
- (ii) Persons or organizations who, in the view of the head of the department, are of continuing and substantial assistance to the work of the department;
- (iii) Persons of eminence in the field dealt with in the publication or publications to be distributed, whose interest it is important, in the view of the head of the department, to enlist or retain.

In order to avoid possible duplication with the list of official recipients and to ensure compliance with the criteria established by the Publications Board, all departmental lists, either permanent or ad hoc, are subject to examination by the Publishing Service of the Office of Conference Services.

VIII. DAILY LIST OF DOCUMENTS DISTRIBUTED

9. The "Daily list of documents distributed at Headquarters" (ST/CS/SER.D/...) is compiled and issued by the Publishing Service, Office of Conference Services. Its function is to enable the recipients listed in paragraph 4 above to check the daily distribution, to see if it is in conformity with their requests, and to make a selection of the documents which they do not receive in full series.

10. During sessions of the General Assembly, separate daily lists are issued for the Assembly documentation and for all other documentation.

IX. AVAILABILITY OF OLD DOCUMENTS, MEETING RECORDS AND OFFICIAL RECORDS

11. Mimeographed documents are normally available for two years after the original date of issue. Official Records (verbatim and summary records, annexes and supplements) and documents issued in final form are normally available for five years, with the exception of resolutions, which are stocked on a continuing basis. It should be noted that all United Nations documents and Official Records may be consulted at the Documents Reference and Indexing Section of the Dag Hammarskjöld Library.

DISTRIBUTION CHART AT HEADQUARTERS

| RECIPIENTS | DOCUMENTS AND MEETING RECORDS | | | | OFFICIAL RECORDS | | | UNITED NATIONS PUBLICATIONS | |
|---|-------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|---|---|--|-----------------------------|--|
| | General | Limited | Restricted | Provisional ^a | Verbatim records fascicles, annex fascicles, supplements, bound summary records | Bound verbatim records, bound annex fascicles | All publications with sales number, except yearbooks | Yearbooks ^b | |
| MINISTRIES, EMBASSIES AND OTHER GOVERNMENTAL ADDRESSES | 10 ^c | 0 | 0 | 0 | 10 ^c | 0 | See noted | See noted | |
| | 5 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 5 | 0 | 1 | 1 | |
| CATEGORY I NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS | 5 | 0 | 0 | 1 upon request | 5 | 0 | 3 | 1 | |
| CATEGORY II AND ROSTER | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | |
| SPECIALIZED AGENCIES | 25 ^c | Upon request | Upon request | Upon request | 25 ^e | 1 | 30 | 5 | |
| UN OFFICE AT GENEVA, REGIONAL ECONOMIC COMMISSIONS, UNESOB, UNCTAD, UNIDO | IAWR | Reference copies only | Reference copies only | Upon request | IAWR | 5 ^f | IAWR | IAWR | |
| INFORMATION CENTRES | IAWR | 0 | 0 | Upon request | IAWR | 1 | IAWR | IAWR | |
| DEPOSITORY LIBRARIES | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | |
| PERMANENT MISSIONS | IAWR | IAWR ^g | IAWR ^h | IAWR | IAWR | 1 | 30 ^d | 5 ^d | |
| PERMANENT OBSERVERS | 5 ⁱ | See note j | 0 | Upon request | 5 | 1 | 5 | 2 | |
| PRESS | IAWR | Reference copies only | 0 | Upon request from OPI | IAWR | 1 | IAWR | Reference copy only | |
| SECRETARIAT, HEADQUARTERS | IAWR | See note k | IAWR | IAWR | IAWR | Reference copies | IAWR | IAWR | |
| MEETING SERVICE AND CONFERENCE REQUIREMENTS | IAWR | IAWR | IAWR | IAWR | IAWR | 0 | IAWR | IAWR | |
| SALES | See note l | 0 | 0 | 0 | IAWR | IAWR | IAWR | IAWR | |
| STOCK | IAWR | Minimum | Retained by departments | Minimum | IAWR | Minimum | IAWR | IAWR | |

Notes

- IAWR — In accordance with requirements
- Except in cases where distribution is explicitly limited to participants in a given meeting.
- Excluding the *Yearbook of the United Nations*.
- A maximum of 25 copies may be provided upon written request.
- The number of copies given for permanent missions represents the combined total entitlement for permanent missions, ministries and other governmental agencies.
- Additional copies up to a maximum of 25 copies of specific documents and official records may be provided on request.
- United Nations Economic and Social Office in Beirut: one copy.
- A maximum of 10 copies may be provided to the members of the body concerned.
- Does not pertain to the "Restricted" documents withheld from regular distribution by the body concerned.
- More copies may be provided upon written request.
- Observers participating in the work of the body concerned may receive up to 3 copies.
- As certified by the executive officer of each department or office.
- Only to paid subscribers for designated series.