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**RECOMMENDATIONS BY ORGANIZATIONS OF THE
UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM CONCERNING THE
DRAFT PROGRAMME AND BUDGET FOR 1998-1999 (29 C/5)**

OUTLINE

This document contains a summary of the comments of the organizations of the United Nations system on the Draft Programme and Budget for 1998-1999 (29 C/5), with observations thereon by the Director-General, and is intended to assist the General Conference in its examination of item 3.3 of the provisional agenda.

INTRODUCTORY NOTE

1. The Draft Programme and Budget indicates, as and where necessary, the co-operation planned with other organizations of the United Nations system. In response to a recommendation concerning 'prior consultations on work programmes' adopted by the Economic and Social Council in 1970 (resolution 1549 (XLIX)) and in accordance with the procedure therefor approved by the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination, the Director-General submitted in May 1997 his Draft Programme and Budget for 1998-1999 (29 C/5) to the organizations of the United Nations system for their comments.

2. By 8 October 1997, when the present document was prepared, replies had been received from the following organizations:

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)

World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO)

United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO)

United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)

United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)

It should be noted that WIPO and UNIDO did not make any observations on the substance of the document.

I. GENERAL COMMENTS

3. UNFPA, FAO and UNEP all mentioned with interest the innovative character of the Draft Programme and Budget for 1998-1999. The document was found more readable and providing a clear and succinct approach to the work programme for the biennium. UNFPA, in particular applauded the attempt to focus on 'the results to be achieved' rather than giving priority to the 'means to be developed'.

4. While recognizing that the focus of the document appropriately reflected UNESCO's role as an intellectual forum and the Organization's specific ethical vocation, UNEP commended the integrated and interdisciplinary approach adopted in the elaboration of the proposed programme.

5. The need for greater co-ordination and consultation as well as careful dovetailing of activities at the working level among the different organizations of the United Nations system was specifically referred to by both UNFPA and UNEP. As pointed out by UNFPA, implementing a co-ordinated and collaborative approach, which had been an elusive goal for the agencies in the past, has become a priority task, for both the present and the future, to which all organizations should devote their attention.

II. SPECIFIC OBSERVATIONS

6. Concerning education, UNFPA considered that two components of Major Programme I - 'Education for all throughout life', namely Programme I.1 - 'Basic education for all' and Subprogramme I.2.1 - 'Educational strategies for the twenty-first century' as well as the transdisciplinary project - 'Educating for a sustainable future (environment, population development)' were of particular interest and interrelated. UNFPA felt, however, that the linkages between these three strands of UNESCO's programme, should be made more effective and visible in the presentation of document 29 C/5.

7. The same observation applies to activities related to distance education which are reflected in at least three programmes: for UNFPA, distance education is a key issue which requires a joint effort - between UNESCO and UNFPA - rather than isolated activities that compete for resources, in order to produce better results more cost-effectively.

8. For UNESCO, activities in distance education should essentially reach out to those excluded from conventional learning opportunities. In this context, the Director-General would certainly welcome closer co-operation with UNFPA in this critical area, particularly as it relates to UNFPA's involvement with UNESCO in population education, the E-9 countries initiative and the Education for All Framework.

9. The specific mention, made at appropriate places in document 29 C/5, of FAO as a partner is welcomed by this Organization which expresses its willingness to continue the fruitful co-operation established in programmes pertaining to Major Programme II - 'The sciences in the service of development' - covering for instance: biodiversity, arid lands and desertification, renewable sources of energy, education and training, especially in rural areas, and living resources of the oceans. In this connection, the two special projects, 'Arid and Semi-Arid Land Management in Africa' (in Subprogramme II.4.3 - 'Ecological sciences and the Man and the Biosphere (MAB) Programme) and 'Women and Water Resources Supply and Use in Sub-Saharan Africa' (in Subprogramme II.4.4 - 'Hydrology and water resources development in a vulnerable environment'), are considered by FAO to be of particular relevance to its own objectives and current programmes. Consequently, this calls for close consultation at the planning and implementation stages to ensure full complementarity of action. The Director-General welcomes this proposal and will ensure that co-operation with FAO in all these areas will be pursued during the 1998-1999 biennium.

10. While noting the change in the transdisciplinary project 'Education for a sustainable future', UNEP also considers this important since it gives the project a more distinct focus. For UNEP, this initiative would now complement its efforts in the Global Environmental Citizenship Programme which constitutes UNEP's new approach in environmental education and awareness. UNEP would therefore be very interested in developing a new partnership with UNESCO in this field, as envisaged in the main lines of action of the transdisciplinary project.

11. Similarly, UNEP is also willing to collaborate with UNESCO under Programme II.4 - 'Environmental sciences and sustainable development' as there are many opportunities for co-operation in this area. Although UNEP is not mentioned in this section, it would be very interested in developing a joint programme in order to avoid possible overlapping in the work of the two organizations and to maximize the available resources through co-operation. In this connection, the Director-General would like to ensure that co-operation with UNEP in all these areas will be strengthened during the 1998-1999 biennium.

12. Finally, UNEP considers that the Information and Communication Programme (Major Programme IV of document 29 C/5) is very comprehensive and could serve as a model for other United Nations system organizations.