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GENERAL

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ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR LATIN AMERICA

REPORTS OF MEETINGS OF THE COMMISSION
AND ITS SUBSIDIARY BODIES

Note by the secretariat

The secretariat wishes to inform the Economic Commission for Latin America and to its subsidiary bodies that the Economic and Social Council at its 1810th meeting on 6 January 1972 decided to draw the attention of all its subsidiary bodies, to the principles concerning the preparation of reports of subsidiary bodies of the Economic and Social Council set forth in paragraph 3 of General Assembly resolution 2836 (XXVI) entitled "Publications and documentation of the United Nations", and to the analogous guidelines laid down in the Council resolution 1623 (LI), section III, and to request them to ensure observance of these principles and guidelines in reports submitted to the Council in the future.

The relevant sections of the General Assembly and the Council resolutions are annexed to the present note.

Annex

I. The principles set forth in paragraph 3 of General Assembly resolution 2836 (XXVI) are as follows:

"(i) The reports should be action-oriented and concise and should contain precise information confined to a description of the work done by the organ concerned, to the conclusions it has reached, to its decisions and to the recommendations made to the General Assembly;

(ii) Introductions containing background information should, as far as possible, be confined to matters of substance rather than procedure and should contain only what it is essential to bring to the notice of the General Assembly;

(iii) The account of the deliberations should be concise and should be supplemented, as necessary, by cross-references to the summary records;

(iv) Texts available in easily accessible documents should not be incorporated in or annexed to the report;

(v) Texts which are not easily accessible should not be annexed when their substance can reasonably be incorporated in the main body of the report;

(vi) Participants should not be listed by name, unless they are serving in their individual capacity;

(vii) Where appropriate, reports should include a summary of the proposals, conclusions and recommendations contained therein.

II. The guidelines laid down in Economic and Social Council resolution 1623 (LI), section III are as follows:

"8. Requests the Secretary-General to take urgent steps to reform the nature, scope and form of documentation submitted to the Council to ensure that Governments can review reports adequately and also that the Council is able to concentrate on issues requiring intergovernmental consideration, that reports submitted to the Council

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are action-oriented and concise (normally not more than thirty-two pages), and present clear and precise recommendations drawing attention to issues that should be taken into account by the Council and possible alternative courses of action proposed for the Council and their implications, and to ensure also that, in the case of meetings of experts convened by the Secretary-General, only a concise report by the Secretary-General setting out the relevant recommendations for action by the Council is submitted;

"9. Requests the Secretary-General to ensure that these guidelines are observed in reports submitted to the Council and its functional commissions and subsidiary bodies, beginning in 1972;

"10. Decides that the reports of its functional commissions and subsidiary bodies should contain, in addition to a résumé of the discussions, a concise summary of recommendations and a statement of issues requiring action by the Council, and that all resolutions adopted by its functional commissions and subsidiary bodies should normally be in the form of drafts for approval by the Council;

"11. Decides that the Council's report to the General Assembly should be reorganized to provide the Assembly with an effective basis for discussion, and that it should consist of a clear statement of the issues on which Assembly action is required and a summary of the Council's discussions and a record of its decisions, including details of votes;

"12. Reaffirms the importance of the strict observance of rule 14, paragraph 4, of the rules and procedures of the Council and decides that the calendar of conferences should be drawn up in such a way as to permit the observance of this rule;

"13. Invites the specialized agencies and the International Atomic Energy Agency to continue to provide analytical reports, bearing in mind the recommendations in Council resolution 1548 (XLIX) of 30 July 1970."