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NOTE BY THE SECRETARIAT ON THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY'S RECOMMENDATION
REGARDING THE REMAINING OF THE COMMISSION

NOTE BY THE SECRETARIAT ON THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY'S RECOMMENDATION
REGARDING THE RENAMING OF THE COMMISSION

In resolution 2686 (XXV) the General Assembly of the United Nations recommended that the Economic and Social Council consider, in consultation with the Secretary-General and taking into account the views of the regional economic commissions and those expressed on this subject at the twenty-fifth session of the General Assembly, the renaming of the commissions as follows: Economic and Social Commission for Europe; Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Far East; Economic and Social Commission for Latin America; and Economic and Social Commission for Africa.

In the preamble to the resolution the General Assembly took account of the following:

- a) The provisions of the Charter relating to economic and social development, particularly Chapters IX and X;
- b) The relevant resolutions of the Economic and Social Council on the terms of reference and functions of the regional economic commissions;
- c) The statements made in the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and other United Nations bodies on the need for uniformity in nomenclature of the commissions in keeping with their terms of reference and functions;
- d) The importance of the unified or integrated socio-economic approach to development which the regional economic commissions have adopted and will be called upon to put into practice particularly in the context of the International Development Strategy for the Second United Nations Development Decade.

During the discussions in the General Assembly, the sponsors of the resolution based their position on the above considerations and noted that both social and economic factors must be borne in mind in development since social development was the final objective of economic development. They pointed out that renaming the regional economic commissions would simply be a reflection of the true nature of their activities in the economic

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and social field, and stated that their current name was an anachronism in the present day when all recognized the basic importance of social development.

The representatives speaking against the resolution observed that the names of the regional economic commissions were familiar throughout the world and that the only effect of changing them would be to cause confusion and problems that would adversely affect their activities. It was common knowledge that the commissions dealt with both economic and social matters, and simply renaming them would have little if any substantive effects since economic development was inseparable from social factors.

The Executive Secretaries of the regional economic commissions at their meeting in January 1971 agreed that changing the traditional names of the commissions would not be a positive step since they represented a long history of achievement and carried a prestige that had been built up over two decades of work and fruitful contact with government authorities and academic, cultural and information circles. Moreover, changing their names would not mean a change in the structure of the commissions or in their role within the United Nations family. It was also agreed that, even if the commissions changed their names, they would have to maintain the traditional acronyms as UNICEF had done when it had changed its name to the United Nations Children's Fund.

The secretariat notes that at the tenth session of the Economic Commission for Africa, (Tunis, 8-13 February 1971) the majority of member Governments opposed renaming the Commission.

In the light of the above, the Commission may wish to discuss this proposal at its fourteenth session so that its views can be transmitted to the Economic and Social Council.