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REPORTS OF THE JOINT INSPECTION UNIT

Activities of the United Nations family of organizations
in some Central American countries (JIU/REP/70/5)

COMMENTS OF THE SPECIALIZED AGENCIES

Addendum*

* Three addenda were issued to document E/4941, the text of which was subsequently revised. This is the first addendum to the revised text.

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I. WORLD METEOROLOGICAL ORGANIZATION

A. Comments of the Secretary-General

As regards the recommendation that authority for the renewal of Laissez-Passer of the experts should be delegated to the UNDP Resident or Regional Representatives, WMO would have no objection if the central authority of the United Nations responsible for the issue and renewal of Laissez-Passer could arrange this delegation of authority.

With regard to the recommendation that the Resident Representative be authorized to pay the salary of experts on standing orders, WMO feels that standing orders to Resident Representatives would not be practicable in view of (a) the currency policy in respect of salaries and (b) the frequent adjustments in salaries, increments and allowances. Without such an order, neither the expert nor the Resident Representative would gain anything if this recommendation were implemented since they would have to wait each month for the advice as regards the actual amount to be paid.

In connexion with the recommendation that the Resident Representatives be authorized to extend experts' contracts after basic decision to extend has been taken by headquarters, the main problem in the extension of an expert's contract is taking the basic decision after obtaining the agreement of the recipient country and the parent country of the expert and after approval of the programme. Issuance of the contract after these steps does not entail any difficulties which would delay it. It should be added that the Inspector himself, on page 7 of his report, mentions that WMO experts stated "that they typically knew where they stood at least three months in advance of their contract expiration dates and had no complaints".

As regards the recommendation that procurement of tickets be obtained by the Resident Representative directly from local travel agencies, this procedure is followed by WMO whenever possible in connexion with local travel.

~~As regards the recommendation that the Resident Representative be authorized to complete administrative action for fellowships after the nominee has been accepted by headquarters and travel arrangements finalized, the only administrative action which remains after acceptance of the nominee and arrangements for travel is to issue travel and payment instructions. This does not entail any difficulty which would delay the implementation of the fellowship. WMO in almost all cases asks the Resident Representative to arrange for the travel of the fellow.~~

The recommendation that the Resident Representative be authorized to approve field trips within the recipient country is normally followed by WMO.

In connexion with the recommendation that the Resident Representative be authorized to pay education grants and advances for these grants, since the

education grant is subject to various rules and conditions requests have to be scrutinized by the headquarters itself in the light of the Organization's Staff Rules.

As regards the recommendation that training requirements of the site of each project be reviewed to determine if they cannot be met by an institution or project supported by the United Nations in Central America and only requirements which could not be so met would be transmitted to headquarters for arrangement of training programmes elsewhere, this procedure is the one customarily followed by WMO as far as practical.

With regard to the recommendation for reorganizing the Regional Representative's Office in Central America, WMO is in full agreement as such reorganization will lead to more efficient and prompt operation of the programmes in the five countries.

B. Action taken by the Executive Committee

See document E/4957.

II. INTER-GOVERNMENTAL MARITIME CONSULTATIVE ORGANIZATION

A. Comments of the Secretary-General

IMCO is pleased to offer its comments on the following items with regard to Part III of the Report - "Organization and Management of United Nations Activities".

1. Renewal of laissez-passer

IMCO has no objection to the delegation of authority for the renewal of laissez-passers to the UNDP Resident or Regional Representative.

2. Payment of salaries - Standing orders

IMCO is very alive to the need:

- for the prompt payment of the salary of each expert in the field;
- to adopt, to this end, as simple a process as possible.

The problem is, however, somewhat complex in view of the currency policy in respect of the payment of experts' salaries and the frequent changes in these salaries, due to increased rates, step increases, post-adjustments, etc. IMCO has recently improved its internal procedure for the prompt payment of experts' salaries.

Under these circumstances, IMCO is not convinced that any substantial improvement could be made by a new procedure of payment by means of standing orders. We would, nevertheless, be prepared to adopt this procedure. However, in this case, we would wish the Resident or Regional Representative to provide us very promptly and regularly with copies of the IOVs to enable us to keep our relevant accounts permanently up to date.

3. Renewal of experts' contracts

When renewing a contract the main difficulties, and hence delays, are in obtaining the agreement of the recipient country and of the expert's own country: (a) on the programme; and (b) on the renewal of the expert's contract itself. This point has been carefully noted and every possible step will be taken in order to keep the expert informed of the decision at least two months in advance of the expiration date of his contract.

4. Fellowships

IMCO would have no objection to the Resident or Regional Representative being responsible for relevant administrative action and travel arrangements after acceptance of the nominee by headquarters.

5. Approval of travel

IMCO has already given all necessary authority to Resident or Regional Representatives to approve local travel in respect of experts.

6. Payment of education grant

It seems a little unfair to keep the expert waiting until the end of the scholastic year to be refunded his expenses for the education of his children.

IMCO would agree to authorize the Resident or Regional Representative to pay the portion of the education grant due at the end of each term on receiving justification of education expenses for the expert's children.

7. Organization of the Regional Representative's Office

IMCO is in agreement with the proposed reorganization of the Regional Representative's Office in Central America in order to enable the Regional Representative to accomplish his work with maximum efficiency.

B. Action taken by the Council

The Council of IMCO, which met from 3 to 6 November 1970, approved the comments of the Secretary-General of IMCO.

III. INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANISATION

Comments of the Director-General

1. This report, which is appended to the present paper, was prepared by Mr. Robert Macy of the Joint Inspection Unit. It offers comments of concern to all organizations of the United Nations system. The Director-General has examined the report with considerable interest. The report deals primarily with problems encountered in relation to the Office of the Regional Representative and are the concern of the United Nations Development Programme. However, certain of Inspector Macy's recommendations also affect the ILO, and the Director-General has the following comments to offer.
2. Under the heading "Responsibilities of Resident Representative's Office for Personnel Administration", item (i) Renewal of Laissez-Passers, page 6, Inspector Macy suggests that UNDP Resident or Regional Representatives be given the authority to renew laissez-passers.
3. The Director-General considers this suggestion to be well taken but would add that delegation of authority to renew laissez-passers to Resident Representatives is a matter for the United Nations. The ILO's policy on this question has been to follow the practice of the United Nations. However, under certain conditions and as an emergency measure, permission has been given to ILO Area Offices and Resident Representatives to renew the validity of laissez-passers when such action was required urgently. The Director-General would support Inspector Macy's recommendations and would be glad to co-operate with the United Nations and other agencies in designing new, improved procedures.
4. Under item (ii) Payment of Salaries, Inspector Macy urges that standing orders for the payment of experts' entitlements should be given by Executing Agencies to the local payment agents. Several large agencies are quoted in the report as having pointed out that experts' entitlements, which reflect various allowances and deductions, change very frequently and as having concluded that a computer-assisted integrated system is better than a costly decentralized manual system. In the Addendum to the Report, Mr. Macy appears to recognize that this position is justified. Under computerized payroll systems, moreover, even if only occasional payments were made on the basis of standing orders this would entail additional correspondence and other administrative work. To this it may be added that these entitlements are generally payable in several currencies, by several payment agents, that the opening and operation of accounts subject to special arrangements would complicate their work, and that safeguards would have to be introduced in order to prevent payments from being made after an expert's transfer or the end of his contract.
5. ~~These difficulties, although real, could of course be overcome if there were sufficiently strong reasons for doing so. One such reason might be that experts' salary payments were frequently received late. The report recognizes, however, that this is not generally the case; in the ILO, in fact, late payments are very exceptional, since computer-prepared instructions for the payment of salaries are always despatched from headquarters before the middle of the month which they cover. If for any reason their receipt should be delayed and an expert find himself short of funds at the end of the month, the local ILO Office or the UNDP Resident Representative could be relied upon to make a temporary advance.~~

6. As it seems clear that the existing system for the payment of experts' entitlements is both effective and efficient, and that the issuance of standing orders to payment agents would not materially improve it, the Director-General sees no advantage in following this recommendation.

7. Under item (iii) Renewal of Experts' Contracts, page 7, Inspector Macy proposes that authority for this type of action be delegated to the offices of Regional Representatives. The Director-General would point out that it is ILO policy to take action to renew appointments of experts at least five months before the expiration date of contract. In an increasing number of cases contracts are extended for the entire duration of the post as foreseen in the Plan of Operation. Offers of extension of appointment are usually subject to a number of clearances, and in some cases a conditional offer of extension (subject for example to the necessary funds becoming available or to release from national administration being obtained) is made in order to inform the expert well in advance about the ILO's intentions. The administrative procedure is under constant review so as to avoid any unnecessary delays which may occur.

8. Besides, it would be administratively impracticable to delegate authority to the UNDP Representative to administer the extension of contracts considering that a number of changes in the expert's conditions of service could result from the extension, e.g. an associate participant of the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund may become a full participant, or a short-term expert may become a fixed-term expert, which entails discontinuation of the subsistence allowance but entitlement to various benefits under the staff regulations, namely family allowance, post adjustment, assignment allowance, education grant, travel to visit dependants, home leave, membership of the staff health insurance fund and so on, to mention just some of the important changes in the conditions of service that could affect the expert. It is indeed ILO policy to try to give maximum stability to the field project staff and also to give maximum advance notice to those experts whose appointments are terminating and cannot be renewed for one reason or another. Consequently, the Director-General would not support this particular recommendation.

9. Under item (iv) Fellowships, page 8, Inspector Macy refers to the delays in the completion of papers and proposes that the Resident or Regional Representative be authorized to complete the administrative actions necessary to facilitate the departure of the fellow on his training programme. The Director-General would observe that the reference to "last-minute completion of papers" is not understood, since according to the ILO procedures all preparatory work such as medical examinations, language proficiency tests, etc., must be completed before placement negotiations start.

10. Inspector Macy's recommendation that Resident Representatives should be delegated authority to purchase tickets from local travel agents is noted. The Director-General believes that there would be no particular advantage in delegating authority to the Resident Representative for purchasing tickets locally, except in rare cases where such emergency arrangements could be made. Experience indicates that no such emergency has arisen, but if it should occur the authorized travel agency would issue tickets very speedily to fellowship holders.

11. Under item (vi) Payment of Education Grants, page 9, Inspector Macy suggests as one alternative that an advance be made to the expert to cover the education of his dependent children. The Director-General would observe that the ILO has arrangements for the payment of advances against education grants, and that under these arrangements the amounts which experts themselves have to supply at the beginning of the school year to meet-reimbursable-education costs are reduced to a minimum.

12. Under the heading "Responsibility of Resident Representative's Office for Programming", item (i) Off-the-Site-Training, page 10, Inspector Macy's proposal that the Regional Representative's Office compile and maintain an up-to-date list of training facilities is fully supported by the Director-General.

13. With regard to chapter IV "GENERAL OBSERVATIONS ON INSPECTION OF PROJECTS", (paragraph 12 (a)) the Director-General considers that an integrated approach to the formulation and programming of technical co-operation activities for this subregion on an inter-country basis is both desirable and feasible. Ideally, this should cover other inputs besides those of the United Nations system, in accordance with paragraph 9 of the Consensus on the capacity of the United Nations development system approved by the UNDP Governing Council at its tenth session (June 1970). One way to pool the different experiences needed for effective inter-country programming could be found by adopting the practice already followed at the national level in some Latin American countries, viz. holding periodical meetings of UNDP and Executing Agency personnel and representatives of the national planning and technical departments in order to review progress and make necessary adjustments to projects under implementation, and to prepare the ground for forward planning of development assistance. Such meetings would, of course, be organized according to the wishes of the Governments concerned, with the supporting services of the UNDP offices, and their timing could be arranged in accordance with local conditions.

14. As regards the supplementary observations contained in JIU/REP/70/5/Add.1, the Director-General has noted them and believes that it would be more appropriate for UNDP to comment. In particular, the Director-General has noted with interest Inspector Macy's remarks on the subject "Impact of Computers" with which he fully agrees.

15. Submitted for information and observations.

IV. UNIVERSAL POSTAL UNION

Comments by the UPU International Bureau

A. Responsibilities of Resident Representative's Office for personnel administration

i. Renewal of United Nations laissez-passer

The UPU sees no objection to laissez-passers being renewed by the UNDP Resident Representative.

ii. Payment of experts' monthly salaries

The system proposed for paying experts' salaries is that applied by the UPU International Bureau.

At the start of a mission and well before the expert's arrival at his duty station, the Bureau sends a letter to the Resident Representative giving him all the information necessary on the expert and authorizing him to pay the expert every month that portion of his salary that the expert wishes to have paid to him on the spot including, where applicable, the various allowances to which he may be entitled.

In addition, any changes affecting the expert's pay which arise as the result of a change in his status (entitlement or loss of entitlement to some allowance, step-advancement, reclassification, renewal of contract, etc) are also notified to the Resident Representative in good time. Up to now, experts recruited by the UPU have not mentioned any difficulties of the type mentioned in the report.

iii. Renewal of contracts

UPU experts are recruited exclusively from postal administrations, which are competent to accept requests for renewal of contracts.

Administratively, when an extension of contract is contemplated, the International Bureau seeks the approval of the expert and his administration of origin two or three months beforehand. As soon as this agreement is obtained, the expert and the Resident Representative are notified of the renewal by telegram and confirmatory letter. Since there is no record of any delay, the system deserves to be retained.

Moreover, in view of the links between the UPU and the administrations (the one to which the expert belongs and the one with which he is carrying out his mission) and the International Bureau's responsibility towards these administrations, it would appear necessary for Union headquarters to continue arranging contract renewals.

iv. Fellowships (preparation of travel documents)

With regard to Fellows, the International Bureau has always had the co-operation of postal administrations, which has simplified the formalities with regard to the granting of fellowships and the departure of Fellows for study countries. On the

On the whole, the method used hitherto, which consists of having travel documents prepared by a travel agency in Berne, has been satisfactory.

However, in view of the simplification methods proposed by the Inspector, the International Bureau plans to authorize, on an experimental basis and in some cases only, the UNDP Resident Representative to procure travel documents for UPU Fellows.

v. Approval of travel for experts

In principle, return travel documents are handed to experts and, where applicable, their dependants, on departure on mission. Thus, short missions (up to one year) pose no authorization problems.

When the expert is required to travel within a given region, the International Bureau provides him with a voucher (M C O) for a certain amount enabling him to obtain the travel documents required for his official trips at the appropriate time.

For any journey during a mission, headquarters must be in a position to judge in advance whether the trip is necessary. If it is judged necessary, the International Bureau immediately contacts the Resident Representative for him to settle final details. Occasionally, for reasons of economy, the International Bureau is obliged to ask experts on mission in a region to do jobs which do not strictly come within their duties. Hence, for technical reasons, it would not be suitable to delegate to the Resident Representative the power to judge the necessity of journeys during missions.

vi. Payment of education grant

~~United Nations Staff Rules have always been followed in this regard and experts have never had cause for complaint about delay in payment of grants.~~

Nevertheless, the International Bureau has no objection to delegating this responsibility to the Resident Representative, if the child for which the education grant is requested is studying at an educational establishment in the expert's country of mission.

In other cases, it would seem preferable to leave this responsibility with the organization's headquarters, which has the applicant's complete file.

B. Role of Resident Representative's Office for programming

i. Off-the-site training

The suggestion is that a bigger role should be given to the Resident Representative with regard to giving priority to training facilities in Central America itself.

The UPU is completely in agreement with this and its policy in this field has been largely based on a concern for decentralization; that is why, moreover, it encouraged the Postal Union of the Americas and Spain (PUAS) to set up a regional instructor-training centre at San José. However, this orientation presupposes:

1. The existence on the spot of training facilities of a satisfactory quality;
 2. Close collaboration between the Resident Representative and specialized agencies.
- ii. ...
 - iii. Co-ordination of projects (periodic meetings)

The proposal on holding periodic meetings with project directors and regional agency representatives to increase the Regional Representative's co-ordination work is excellent. Such meetings would certainly greatly increase the effectiveness of agency efforts in Central America.

These meetings should be expanded to enable specialized agencies without regional offices or project directors to second their main or regional expert at UNDP expense.

C. Organization of Regional Representative's Office

- i. ...
- ii. ...
- iii. ...
- iv. Communications

The UPU is in full agreement with the remark concerning the poor communications in the region; that is one of the main difficulties to be overcome in improving the standard of postal services. Unfortunately, the action of UPU experts in this respect could, in any case, be only of a limited nature.



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Addendum

COMMENTS OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL OF ICAO
AND ACTION TAKEN BY THE COUNCIL

A. Comments of the Secretary General

The report makes interesting suggestions on several questions related to the administration of the field personnel. The report's greatest value is however in its identification of certain deficiencies of the UNDP field office organization in Central America which require corrective action. It appears that the Inspector did not have the opportunity of meeting ICAO field personnel in the region, and that he was not aware of ICAO's regionally-oriented efforts to bring together the work of the five Central American countries in the field of civil aviation under the Corporación Centroamericana de Servicios de Navegación Aérea (COCESNA) and to encourage aeronautical training on a regional basis, through greater utilization of the Civil Aviation Training Centre in Mexico.

The following comments are offered in respect of some of Mr. Macy's recommendations:

1. Renewal of Laissez-Passer

This appears to be a good measure which can be implemented without great difficulty. Although the decision lies with the United Nations, ICAO wishes to express support to the Inspector's recommendation that Resident Representatives be authorized to renew Laissez-Passer.

2. Payment of salaries

Late salary payments normally result from communications delays. ICAO has therefore advanced the preparation of field payrolls and the mailing of payment instructions. As a result, very few complaints of late payment are received, and the current practice preserves the full payroll control which the organization desires to maintain. A "standing order" system would complicate control of the accuracy of salary payments because the problem of communications delays would remain, in the reverse direction. I am therefore unable to support the recommendations of the Inspector that Resident Representatives be authorized to pay the salaries of field staff on the basis of standing orders. To meet the problem of occasional late payments, the organization would agree to a system under which the Resident Representative would be given standing authorization to make an emergency advance in a stated amount for a stated period, to be recovered locally by the Resident Representative.

3. Extension of experts' contracts

The Inspector has recommended that, when a firm agreement is reached to extend an expert's contract, the UNDP Resident Representative's Office be authorized to finalize the contract renewal to avoid undue delay. However, at least in ICAO, delay does not occur at this stage (i.e. after a firm agreement is reached), but during the phase that precedes the "firm decision". It is then that a number of actions must be finalized, in consultation with the Government concerned, the

Government that provides the expert, the UNDP Resident Representative and UNDP headquarters. Furthermore, ICAO field personnel are notified, at least one month in advance, of the organization's intention to terminate or renew their contracts. If the renewal cannot be made in time, the expert is advised of the reasons and is informed of ICAO's intention to prolong his services on a month-to-month basis until the difficulty is removed. I find therefore that the Inspector's recommendation, as worded, has no practical value in minimizing delays in renewing experts' contracts.

4. Administrative actions for fellowships

The Inspector has recommended, to avoid delays in the completion of fellowship papers, that the Resident Representative be authorized to complete the actions necessary to send a fellow on his way after the Agency has accepted the nominees. has finalized his training programme and determined the date of travel. In ICAO practice delays occur during the phase of definition of the training programme. When this is defined and the date of travel is known, the only action remaining is that of issuing instructions to the fellow and a travel ticket. In effect, ICAO normally avails itself of the co-operation of the UNDP Resident Representatives and requests them to provide the travel ticket.

5. Approval of expert travel

ICAO practice here is to delegate to the ICAO Chief of Mission or Project Manager, under well-defined conditions, approval of travel authorizations for duty travel within the country of assignment; travel outside the country, whatever its nature may be, is authorized only by Headquarters. These procedures have so far not created any problems and I rather prefer to maintain them.

6. Advance payment of education grant

As in item (2) above, for reasons of better and easier financial control I do not favour delegation of authority to Resident Representatives to determine and make final education grant payments. I would however agree to a system that would permit making an advance against an education grant claim, pending presentation of required documents at a later date. The advance would eventually be recoverable by deduction from salary if the employee failed to document his claim.

7. Training requirements

ICAO has been consistently in favour of a greater utilization of the training facilities of the region where training requirements are to be met. ICAO has made and still makes considerable effort to ensure that existing regional civil aviation schools are extensively used by the countries in the same region. However, I cannot endorse the suggestion that the choice of training institutions to which fellows should be sent be left to the discretion of the Resident Representative. No doubt, as said in the report, such new responsibility would represent a broadening of the duties of the Resident Representatives and their assistants, but it would also, in my view, far exceed the competence of UNDP/RR Offices since they would be requested to deal with complex training problems covering many different specializations.

8. Meetings with Project Managers

I support the recommendation for regular meetings of the Resident Representatives with the Project Managers and the local representatives of the Agencies, but would prefer to see these meetings taking place once a month. I agree also that, after each meeting, the Project Manager (or Chief of Mission) should brief all the experts in his project (or mission) on the matters discussed and agreements reached during the meeting.

9. UNDP field organization

The recommendations which refer to the UNDP field organization in Central America are of course a matter of UNDP consideration. However, I wish to support any initiative of UNDP to improve communications between their field offices in Central America.

B. Action taken by the Council

The Council considered the report and found that it contains a number of useful recommendations and observations. It noted and agrees with the comments made by the Secretary General.



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Addendum

COMMENTS OF THE DIRECTOR GENERAL OF UPU
AND ACTION TAKEN BY THE COUNCIL

A. Comments of the Director-General

This report deals in particular with problems of administration and the responsibilities of the resident representative's office for programming.

It merits the Council's special attention because the Inspector has communicated, in an informal note, his remarks on the UPU regional project for Central America. These remarks have given rise to a commentary by the International Bureau (see below).

Other comments by the Bureau on the report proper are as follows:

Responsibilities of resident representative's office for personnel administration

Renewal of United Nations laissez-passer

The UPU sees no objection to laissez-passers being renewed by the UNDP resident representative.

Payment of experts' monthly salaries

The system proposed for payment of experts' salaries is the one employed by the International Bureau of the UPU.

At the start of mission and well in advance of the expert's arrival at his duty station, the IB sends a letter to the resident representative containing all necessary information about the expert and giving him authorization to pay the latter each month whatever proportion of his salary the expert wishes to receive on the spot, including the various allowances to which he may be entitled.

In addition, all changes in the expert's pay arising out of an alteration in his status (acquisition or loss of entitlement to an allowance, regulation step increase, regrading of post, renewal of contract etc. are likewise notified in good time to the resident representative.

The experts engaged by the UPU have not so far encountered any difficulties of the kind mentioned in the report.

Renewal of experts' contracts

UPU experts are recruited exclusively from postal administrations and the latter are competent to approve requests for renewal of contract.

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The administrative procedure where an extension of contract is envisaged is for the International Bureau to write and ask for the agreement of the expert and of his home administration two or three months in advance. As soon as such agreement has been obtained, the renewal is notified by telegram and confirmed in writing to the expert and the resident representative. As no instance of any delay has yet been reported, this system merits being retained.

Moreover, in view of the close links between the UPU and the postal administrations involved (the one the expert belongs to and the one for which he is executing his mission) and the International Bureau's responsibility towards these administrations, it would appear necessary for Union headquarters to continue to deal with contract renewal formalities.

Fellows (procurement of travel tickets)

In regard to Fellows, the International Bureau has always received the co-operation of postal administrations, which simplifies formalities connected with the awarding of fellowships and the departure of Fellows for their training abroad.

The practice adopted hitherto of procuring tickets from a travel agency in Berne is on the whole satisfactory.

However, in view of the simplification measures proposed by the Inspector, the International Bureau plans to authorize the UNDP resident representative, by way of experiment and in certain cases only, to arrange for the delivery of travel tickets to UPU Fellows.

Approval of experts' travel

Normally, return tickets are delivered to the experts and, where appropriate, to their dependants, at the time of their departure on mission. Short-term missions (up to one year) do not therefore raise any problem of authorization. If the expert is required to travel within a given region, the IB gives him a voucher (MCO) for a specified amount with which he can procure tickets for his official trips when the need arises.

It is essential for headquarters to be able to make a prior assessment of the utility of any travel to be undertaken during a mission. Where such travel is deemed necessary, the IB contacts the resident representative without delay and

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authorizes him to handle the last-minute formalities. For the sake of economy the IB is occasionally obliged to assign to experts in the field tasks which are not directly connected with their normal functions, and for technical reasons it would therefore be inappropriate to delegate to the resident representative authority to decide whether travel during a mission was justified.

Payment of education grant

The procedure laid down in the United Nations Staff Rules has always been followed and experts have never had occasion to complain about delays in the reimbursement of education costs.

None the less, the International Bureau sees no objection to the resident representative being authorized to make such reimbursement, particularly if the dependent child in respect of whom education grant is claimed is attending a school in the expert's country of assignment.

In other cases it would seem preferable for the organization's headquarters to be responsible for this function, since it holds the complete file of the expert.

Responsibility of resident representative's office for programming

Off-the-site training

It is suggested by the Inspector that the regional representative be assigned broader duties regarding training requirements to be met as a matter of priority in Central America itself. The UPU entirely agrees on this point, for its policy in the matter stems largely from a concern for decentralization. That is why it has encouraged the Postal Union of the Americas and Spain (PUAS) to organize a regional instructor-training course at San José. This approach presupposes however:

1. The availability of satisfactory training facilities in situ;
2. Close collaboration between the resident representative and the specialized agencies.

Co-ordination of projects (periodic meetings)

The proposal for holding periodic meetings with project managers and representatives of the regional offices of international organizations in order to

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strengthen the regional representative's co-ordinating activity is an excellent one. Such meetings would increase the effectiveness of the work programmes being implemented in Central America by the various international agencies.

Participation in these meetings should be expanded to enable those specialized agencies which have no regional offices or project managers to delegate their principal or regional expert to them at UNDP expense.

Communications

The UPU fully concurs with the observation about the inadequacy of communications in the region; this is one of the major obstacles to be overcome if the quality of the postal services is to be improved. Unfortunately anything the UPU experts might be able to do in this direction would be rather limited.

B. Action taken by the Council

The comments were approved by the Council.



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COMMENTS OF THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL OF UNESCO AND
ACTION TAKEN BY THE EXECUTIVE BOARD OF UNESCO

A. COMMENTS OF THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL

1. Observations are presented below for items of concern to UNESCO under the various headings, and in the order of the table of contents, of the report.

A(i) Renewal of laissez-passer

2. The Director-General agrees that Resident Representatives in all parts of the world should be authorized to renew the laissez-passer. Executing Agencies should be informed of renewals and their duration.

A(ii) Payment of salaries

3. There have been delays in the transmission of payroll instructions to the Regional Representative Office in San Salvador, who, in turn, has to mail cheques to other Central American countries where UNESCO experts are stationed. This delay results from the 12 days required for the diplomatic pouch to reach San Salvador from Paris and the additional time due to slow communications within Central America.

4. The Director-General has considered introducing a "standing order" system but rejected the idea. The UNESCO payroll is prepared centrally in Paris for all field staff, including local employees and from 1971 the payroll will be part of a computer-assisted integrated system for personnel management. A "standing order" system would require considerable costly manual work, both at Headquarters and in the Resident Representative's Office.

5. However, in order to speed payments and reduce inconvenience to experts, the following measures have been taken.

(a) The UNDP Office in San Salvador has been given a standing authorization to make salary advances based on the previous month's salary whenever payment instructions are delayed. These advances are recovered locally without reference to UNESCO headquarters. This provides the same flexibility as "standing orders" without their complexity.

(b) In addition, from June 1970, a special measure has been adopted for San Salvador. Salary payment instructions are sent by telex (via Geneva and New York) which permits the Resident Representatives to mail cheques immediately. The telex instructions are then confirmed in due course by the usual airmail instruction. The cost for a 100-word telex is \$5.

A(iii) Renewal of experts' contracts

6. The Director-General is well aware of this serious problem and has taken various internal measures but the major obstacle remains: the Secretariat cannot make commitments without UNDP's formal authorization. Probably the time has come to adopt a more liberal contract renewal procedure under which agencies could renew contracts three months before their expiry even though formal authorization from UNDP has not yet been received, provided that the Agency considers the prospects for the approval of the extension of the post to be good and, failing extension of the post, that the expert could be used in other assignments. Any costs resulting from this policy - payment of salary during a waiting period between assignments, payment of indemnities in the rare cases when no suitable post is available - should be charged to the project. UNESCO's Regular budget cannot provide sufficient funds for this purpose.
7. The experiment suggested by the inspector for UN/OTC will be interesting, but it should be realized that it alone will not resolve the problem.
8. This and other proposals for decentralization could be reviewed in light of the proposals made by the Administrator to the Governing Council for delegation of some of his responsibilities to the Resident Representatives.

A(iv) Fellowships

9. The recommendations of the inspector concerning fellowships are sound and will be put into effect by the Secretariat.

A(v) Approval of travel

10. A system similar to that proposed by the inspector has been adopted for UNESCO travel on 11 February 1966.

A(vi) Payment of education grant

11. The proposal of the inspector is not recommended for the following reasons:
- (a) It would place a heavy, complex and scattered burden on UNDP offices when the work could be processed more economically centrally, using a computer.

/...

(b) The Resident Representative cannot have all the necessary information required to apply the complex education grant rules.

(c) If there are delays after the introduction of the computerized system, then the preferable solution would be to authorize the Resident Representative to accord advances recoverable locally.

B(i) Off-the-site training

12. UNESCO's policy is to develop and expand local and regional training facilities as an alternative to study abroad. For certain specialities such as the social sciences this has not yet been possible in Central America with the limited exception of the sub-centre of CELADE (Santiago) which has been created in Costa Rica. For the time being, students in social sciences from Central America attend CENTRO (Rio de Janeiro) or FLACSO (Santiago). It would be useful if the Resident Representatives kept and distributed a schedule of training facilities in the area. The proposals of the inspector fit well with UNESCO policy.

B(ii) Co-ordination with financial institutions

13. The proposal of the inspector is endorsed. It would be useful if the Resident Representative could circulate information on financial institutions, including bilateral programmes operating in the region.

B. ACTION TAKEN BY THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

3.1 Report of the Executive Board's Special Committee (87 EX/3): Reports of the United Nations Joint Inspection Unit (85 EX/2, Parts II, III and IV, and 87 EX/2)

The Executive Board,

1. Having received and considered document 87 EX/3, concerning the preliminary examination by its Special Committee of the reports of the United Nations Joint Inspection Unit contained in documents 85 EX/2, Parts II, III and IV, and 87 EX/2;

2. Endorses the observations of the Special Committee set forth in document 87 EX/3;^{1/}

3. Feels that the usefulness of reports of the Joint Inspection Unit on development projects would be enhanced both for governments and for UNESCO if they were based upon a common methodology and presented in a broadly common form, and invites the Director-General to communicate this view to the Chairman of the Joint Inspection Unit;

4. Expresses its appreciation to the Joint Inspection Unit for the constructive recommendations contained in its reports and to the Director-General for his continued co-operation with the Joint Inspection Unit, his careful examination of the reports, his written observations thereon, and the application and follow-up of recommendations which he considers feasible and useful.

1/ The observations read as follows:

"(iv) Report on activities in Central America (87 EX/2 - Parts I and II)

"19. The Committee heard a statement from the representative of Costa Rica on this report. He stressed the advantages of well planned and co-ordinated regional projects in Central America and urged UNESCO and UNDP to support such projects.

"20. The first part of this report concerns activities and problems of the entire United Nations family of organizations in some Central American countries. It was considered to be of marginal interest to UNESCO."