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JOINT INSPECTION UNIT

PERSONNEL QUESTIONS

Personnel policy options



The Secretary-General has the honour to transmit to the members of the General Assembly the report of the Joint Inspection Unit entitled "Personnel policy options" (JIU/REP/81/11).

* A/36/150.

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PERSONNEL POLICY OPTIONS

Report on the career concept, career development and types
of appointment requested of the Joint Inspection Unit by
General Assembly resolution 35/210

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INTRODUCTION

The difficulties currently encountered in dealing with career questions, types of appointment and the definition of occupational groups demonstrate that it is not simply a matter of solving technical problems but rather that a clarification of all personnel questions, involving political choices, has become essential.

1. The mandate given to the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU), together with the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC), by the General Assembly in its resolution 35/210 was "to study further the subjects of the concepts of career, types of appointment, career development and related questions and to report separately thereon to the General Assembly at its thirty-sixth session".

2. Because of the short time available for preparing the two reports, it has not been possible to study in sufficient detail the difficult problems presented by the mandate in order to reach final conclusions. 1/ The representatives of a number of organizations asked whether these reports should be considered as concerning the United Nations alone or the United Nations system as a whole. The policy problems requiring study clearly concern all the organizations. ICSC could hardly comment on the career concept or on types of appointment for a single organization, and JIU experienced the same difficulty. This being so, it would have been desirable to hold formal consultations leading to a statement of position by the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination, which would have required far more time than was available. Although preliminary working documents were circulated by JIU in April and May, the Consultative Committee on Administrative Questions was unable to make formal comments on them. The ICSC draft report, prepared by the ICSC secretariat, was transmitted to the Inspectors a few days before the meeting, on 16 July 1981, at which the Commission considered it. 1 bis/

3. In addition to the above procedural difficulties, there were substantive problems. As work proceeded, it became apparent that far more time would be required to scrutinize problems concerning the career concept, the definition and application of occupational groups, the relationship to recruitment and promotion problems, the question of linked grades, and so on. The way in which these problems arise and their interrelationships are viewed differently by the representatives of ICSC and those of JIU, respectively, 2/ while the views expressed on this subject by the representatives of the organizations were also extremely diverse; although agreement could probably have been reached on some questions, which are indicated in this report, a more searching study of other questions continues to be necessary.

1/ Annex I describes how the co-operation between ICSC and JIU was organized.

1 bis/ As stated in annex I, the ICSC preliminary documents were transmitted to the Inspectors in May 1981.

2/ Annex II sets forth the main recommendations made by ICSC and JIU in their previous reports on personnel questions.

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4. In those circumstances, it was agreed at the meeting attended on 17 July by the two Inspectors who wrote this report and the members of ICSC that the two reports requested by resolution 35/210 would make no recommendations but would merely inform the General Assembly of the respective views on the subjects under study and seek from it directives to point the way for subsequent studies.

5. Moreover, the Inspectors believe that an exercise in information and reflection of this type is all the more necessary because the issues involved are not simply technical ones. What is required is a study of the approach to the personnel system as a whole in the organizations of the United Nations family. Career questions or types of appointment cannot be separated from the context of personnel questions as a whole. We should here like to cite some relevant comments by the authors of an important UNITAR study prepared in 1978, whose purpose was in fact to assist ICSC:-

"... career development policies cannot be considered in isolation. Effective career development depends, inter alia, upon effective manpower planning, programming and budgeting, recruitment and staff training. Reforms in the career development area should ideally then proceed in tandem with a variety of personnel and other reforms". 3/

6. The definition of an over-all conception of the international civil service depends in the first instance on a political decision. The problems involved are far too weighty and the principles far too important for a decision to be taken on them before the General Assembly has had an opportunity to survey the problems in their entirety and to express its opinion in full knowledge of the facts.

7. Consequently, the present report, while endeavouring to propose answers on the specific points mentioned in resolution 35/210, will seek, above all, to set forth options relating to the conception of the international civil service. It will try:

To provide a global picture of the current situation and the absence of any coherent system underlying it;

To explain subsequently the various possible systems on which the General Assembly could base its choices.

3/ Document ICSC/R.112, para. 22; the principal author of this study is Mr. Norman A. Graham.

PART I

THE PRESENT SITUATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL CIVIL SERVICE: THE
ABSENCE OF A COHERENT SYSTEM

8. The present situation of the international civil service is characterized by:

(a) An ideological and political debate on the conception itself of the international civil service, which has been going on since the United Nations was founded and has not yet resulted in a veritable agreement;

(b) The absence of a coherent system for staff management and recruitment, which is having grave repercussions on the morale of the staff and the effectiveness of the secretariats;

(c) Constant and repeated efforts at reforms which to date have yielded only modest results.

A. The ideological and political debate

The ideological and political debate on the conception of the international civil service has not yet resulted in a veritable agreement.

9. This debate began when the United Nations was founded and, with ups and downs, has continued ever since. It is true that Articles 97, 100 and 101 of the Charter clearly establish the basis of

an international civil service whose members are responsible to the Organization alone and who must be recruited in such a way as to secure the highest standards of efficiency, competence and integrity. ^{4/} However, a number of phenomena and practices demonstrate that the interpretation of these Articles is giving way to divergent views and attitudes as regards the conditions in which the objectivity

^{4/} Similar or comparable articles exist in the constitutions of most of the organizations. The decisions concerned put an end to an earlier debate on the merits of two conflicting approaches to the international civil service; these were aired at the time of the creation of the League of Nations and were revived when the United Nations was established. See in this connexion the citation of a text by Sir Eric Drummond, First Secretary-General of the League of Nations, in The International Civil Service, Changing Role and Concepts, published by UNITAR in 1980, p. 5. The conflicting approaches envisaged, on the one hand, a secretariat consisting of national delegations of the Members of the League, the functions of Secretary-General being limited to the co-ordination of the services provided by those national delegations in the Secretariat, and, on the other, an international civil service in which men and women of different nationalities would work together in preparing and presenting to Member States an objective and common basis of discussion.

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and impartiality of the international civil service can be guaranteed. In other words, the debate, in which agreement has been reached on principles, continues with respect to the approach and methods.

10. One has only to look at the exactness with which the Member States established the method of calculating "desirable ranges" for the United Nations to see the considerable importance attached by each country to its "representation" in the Secretariat. This concern is by no means incompatible with observance of the Staff Regulations, which state that "in the performance of their duties members of the Secretariat shall neither seek nor accept instructions from any Government or from any other authority external to the Organization" (regulation 1.3 of the United Nations Staff Regulations) and that "they pledge themselves to discharge their functions and to regulate their conduct with the interests of the United Nations only in view" (regulation 1.1). All the same, the participation of its nationals in the secretariats is an important political concern of each Government. Moreover, the forms assumed by competition in this area are such that the Secretary-General himself, in his report on the work of the Organization for 1978, saw fit to write:

"... I must say that I am increasingly concerned at the mounting pressures from all sides to secure jobs, especially at senior levels in the Secretariat ... At lower levels ... the intergovernmental competition for posts is tending to become a severe impediment to the balanced and effective development of the Secretariat" (A/33/1, XI).

11. The debate on the types of contracts which should be used for international civil servants - a debate which has been in progress since the inception of the Organization - also shows that some Governments tend to associate the objectivity and impartiality of the international civil service with the granting of permanent contracts, whereas others claim that appointments for a limited term yield results that are at least equal in this respect. This question will be discussed in greater detail in paragraphs 50 to 60 below but is mentioned here as it is an important element of the ideological and political debate.

12. It must be added that these different views regarding the independence of the international civil service from all pressures or instructions issuing from an authority external to the Organization cannot be defined very easily, since a number of Governments, representing every hue of the ideological and political spectrum, demand controls to authorize the appointment of their nationals to the secretariats (clearance system) and a few countries have considered it not incompatible with their concept of the international civil service to grant additional remuneration to their nationals.

13. In short, it seems evident that the acceptance of the above-mentioned Article of the Charter does not prevent Member States from considering the secretariats of the international organizations, and the United Nations Secretariat in particular, as an area where traditional diplomacy is pursued "by other means". In any event, the ideological and political debate on the concept of international civil service has still not been clarified sufficiently for the definite political

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will to construct a coherent personnel system to emerge. This debate has been complicated recently, moreover, by the serious divergencies, dealt with in this report, between those who advocate an organization of the Secretariat based on occupational groups and those who think that such organization should be effected on the basis of job classification alone. 5/

Fortunately, there are signs that a negotiation is now in sight.

14. Amidst this confusion, however, some more positive signs are discernible. The progress made in certain areas during

the past decade suggests that, thanks to considerable information and negotiation efforts, a harmonization of views is not out of the question. The progress referred to concerns in particular the agreement that secretariats should be composed of both career staff and staff recruited for limited periods. This agreement was expressed in a recent report of the International Civil Service Commission, 6/ which states that "all members agreed that a core career staff was required in the international civil service and that this core would vary in size from one organization to another depending upon each organization's specific needs", the Commission considering it essential that the proportion of permanent and other staff should be determined "on an organization-by-organization basis". For its part, the General Assembly in resolution 35/210 recalled resolution 1436 (XIV) "in which it recommended, inter alia, that the Secretary-General's endeavours to increase the number of the Secretariat staff appointed on fixed-term contracts should be continued and encouraged". Other resolutions, however, (2736 (XXV) and 2241 (XXI) in particular) recognized the importance of permanent contracts for the stability and efficiency of the Secretariat.

15. Furthermore, as regards the United Nations, the General Assembly has adopted several resolutions (for example, resolutions 33/143 and 35/210) which define recruitment methods in precise terms (creation of the competitive examination for movement from the General Service to the Professional category, generalization of competitive examinations for recruitment at junior grades (P-1, P-2), system of job descriptions for recruitment at levels above P-3) which signify the desire to take the first step towards a coherent system. Lastly, the agreement by consensus at the thirty-fifth session of the Assembly on the method for calculating desirable ranges unquestionably had the merit of clearing the political climate surrounding personnel questions and of showing that a harmonization of views on an extremely delicate subject was possible.

5/ This altogether crucial debate, on which the very quality of the Secretariat depends, confronts an obstacle in the ideology which has enveloped the new job classification techniques: according to one school of thought, these as yet ill-defined and techniques, whose precision is extremely debatable, have an absolute value. Yet, they are used in the public authorities of only a few countries and should not be accepted without question, even at the level of techniques.

6/ Report to the General Assembly at its thirty-fourth session, A/34/30, paras. 201-207.

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B. Absence of a coherent system of personnel management and staff recruitment

16. It is therefore not unreasonable to suppose that the process of clarification can be continued and that views can be harmonized further by negotiation dealing, in the first instance, with the proportion of permanent and fixed-term staff, especially at the United Nations. (For the other organizations, moreover, the General Assembly might establish guidelines and desirable criteria.) But the negotiations should also cover a more precise over-all approach to the international civil service. A political agreement in this area is necessary. 7/

This negotiation is all the more necessary because the present absence of a coherent personnel system is having grave consequences.

It is difficult to conceive, in any case, how the present lack of coherent personnel management and staff recruitment systems can be endured much longer, in view of the lamentable effects on both the morale of the staff and the efficiency of the Secretariat.

17. The current situation with respect to the personnel management methods of the international civil service has been described on numerous occasions in the reports submitted by JIU and ICSC (see annex II). However, in most of the instances an incomplete account was presented, in the context of proposals for the reform of merely one component of the system. In this report, our aim is to provide a comprehensive description. The judgement to be made on the over-all situation is hardly favourable. In brief, there are, with a few exceptions, neither sound recruitment methods, nor equitable performance appraisal and promotion systems, nor a career development system, nor rational criteria for the use of existing types of contract, nor even recognized definitions of the various staff categories. The inconveniences of being without a coherent system have an impact on all the organizations, but, as one would expect, in varying degrees.

Recruitment

18. Recruitment methods with respect to the junior grades are beginning to improve at the United Nations, thanks to the adoption of competitive examinations. However, progress in this area has occurred at the United Nations, to the exclusion of virtually all the other organizations, and there is still a long way to go before competitive selection becomes established practice, with well-defined methods. Moreover, recruitments at the junior level represent only about a third of total recruitments each year at the United Nations. At other levels of the United Nations Secretariat (P-3 and above), and at almost all levels of the secretariats of the other organizations, the recruitment methods present no guarantee of objectivity.

7/ We would again quote the authors of the UNITAR study on career development (ICSC/R.112), who said on this subject: "The second caveat is that a variety of political factors affect the operation of any personnel system. Coherent and rational career development policies can be designed, but they will have little impact if the political will to ensure their implementation is lacking."

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19. Generally speaking, recruitment tends to be restricted to candidates who make themselves known at the headquarters of the organizations. The few recruitment missions sent to individual countries account for only a very few candidates. There is little real competition and no systematic search for the best possible candidates of every nationality is made. On the contrary, in most cases, posts are sought for candidates known in advance - a system which leads to political and personal pressure at all levels. There are no objective methods for resisting such pressure.

20. The quality of the candidates is normally appraised on the basis of university degrees whose worth is often difficult to assess and on interviews which follow no definite pattern, with very few candidates being interviewed for each vacant post. Generally speaking, recruitments are for specific posts, no account being taken of career prospects, although most of the candidates recruited for a post are expected to make a career. Accordingly, no tests are used to check the most important qualities expected of an international civil servant, and particularly (for example at the United Nations) his ability to write and analyse, his real knowledge of the working languages, his motivation and his grasp of the objectives of the Organization.

Performance appraisal and promotion systems

21. There are at present no performance appraisal methods whose objectivity is recognized. ICSC is currently endeavouring to improve the situation, but everyone agrees that it is an extremely difficult problem. The short-comings of present methods are not offset by the collective judgement of the appointment and promotion committees at the time the promotions are proposed. The current structure of these committees is such that their members may not know all the officials concerning whom they have to take decisions, although by sheer accident personal relations may exert a favourable or unfavourable influence on such decisions.

22. Furthermore, officials have no guarantee of a normal career, as no rule exists on this subject. Finally, no promotion is possible unless there is a post available. This being so, at the United Nations, for example, an official whose promotion has been proposed may wait for a very long time before it materializes (which leads in many cases to the use of administrative subterfuges, such as the reclassification of an existing post or the creation of a new post).

Absence of career development systems

23. No organization has begun to implement the recommendations made by JIU 10 years ago in its 1971 report and the more recent recommendations of ICSC on the organization of a staff consultation system on development of their careers, even though those recommendations were convergent. To date, no specific procedure for planning and facilitating the rotation of staff (between units or between duty stations) has been instituted and, with a few exceptions, there are no adequate systems for training staff during their careers. In short, career planning has still to be organized from scratch.

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Absence of an accepted definition of staff categories

24. One of the oddest features of present management methods is that, although such terms as international Professional, national Professional, General Service staff, consultants, are in every-day use, no exact definition of these terms has ever been proposed or discussed, far less accepted. 8/ It is nevertheless to be noted that:

The meaning generally given to these terms depends either on the level of qualifications required to carry out the functions in question (a level usually defined by internal circulars, often couched in vague terms) or to the duration or conditions of performance of the functions;

~~Attempts have been made to clarify the concept of "Professional work" (see ICSC report in document A/35/30, paras. 259-262, where ICSC examines, on the basis of proposals by CCAQ, methods for distinguishing between Professional and General Service level work. See also paras. 299-310 and documents ICSC/R.210 and ICSC/R.212 on local or national Professionals).~~

25. But some very serious ambiguities remain. In particular, the definition of "Professional work" proposed in the above-mentioned report can apply in some cases to work performed by General Service staff members 9/ and the criteria proposed to distinguish between international and local Professionals are neither satisfactory 10/ nor readily applicable. A relevant question is whether it is

8/ In the Staff Regulations of the United Nations, use of these terms is confined to annex I (to which there is a reference in regulation 3.1 and in rules 103.1-103.4), where a distinction is made between Field Service personnel, staff members in the General Service category, manual workers and locally recruited mission personnel, but no definition of these categories is provided anywhere.

9/ A narrative description of Professional level work is proposed in paragraph 261 of the report cited; however, a foot-note states that: "The definition does not (and cannot) describe all aspects of all Professional work. Parts of this definition may also apply to some work within the General Service category. In applying the definitions for the purpose of distinguishing between Professional and General Service work it is recognized that judgement must be applied in assessing whether or not the work involved in a given job conforms to the over-all definition rather than to one selective aspect of it. It should always be borne in mind that it is not the level of education or training possessed by the incumbent that is relevant, but rather the level of theoretical knowledge required to carry out the work."

10/ The "limits and conditions" of the recruitment and use of national Professionals as suggested by CCAQ and approved by ICSC (see A/35/30, para. 303) can be summarized as follows: national Professionals are recruited to perform functions corresponding to Professional level work which require special knowledge and experience of the national situations; the use of such Professionals is justified in the context of the development efforts of a country; they are recruited locally and cannot be recruited at a duty station outside their own country; their compensation is based on the same principles as remuneration for other staff recruited locally by United Nations bodies. The Inspectors find it surprising that these criteria are applicable only in developing countries.

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possible to define a personnel system (recruitment, career, etc.) without knowing exactly which type of staff is under discussion. It seems obvious that this omission must be remedied as soon as possible.

Absence of a methodology for the award of the various types of contract

26. The absence of a methodology for the award of the various types of contract is characterized by the following phenomena:

(a) The number and the diversity of the types of contract are considerable and tend to create confusion. Document ICSC/R.288, prepared by the ICSC secretariat, lists 14 different types of appointment used by the organizations;

(b) Even if the only distinction made is that between permanent contracts and fixed-term contracts (by reclassifying in these two groups all existing types of appointment), the result is not a neat dividing-line between career staff and fixed-term staff. The main reason for this is that to a very great extent fixed-term contracts are renewed for periods equivalent to a career in an organization (see annex III);

(c) The differing practices of the organizations as regards the respective proportions of permanent contracts and short-term contracts are without real significance or justification in these circumstances. It is not because of technical reasons corresponding to real needs that the organizations follow such a variety of practices (see annex IV);

(d) Finally, criteria for granting the various types of contract either lack objectivity or are inexistent. At the United Nations, for example, account is taken of the "requirements of the Secretariat", the type of post, the qualifications and characteristics of candidates at the time of recruitment and, perhaps most important, nationality (in the case of the initial contract). Moreover, permanent contracts are not normally awarded to persons who have been seconded or persons over 50 years of age. Apart from the last-mentioned limitations relating to a candidate's personal characteristics, it can be stated that the operation of the criteria used leaves room for arbitrariness. In these circumstances, the methods employed do not, as would be desirable, reconcile the career guarantees which every staff member may legitimately claim with the need to create a climate of inducement to work. Rules that make it possible to meet these requirements more satisfactorily are therefore necessary.

27. Finally, the lack of consistency in the methods used is tantamount to the absence of a personnel system. The role played by arbitrary factors, chance and political and other influence leads to:

The demoralization of the staff, and

The calling into question of their efficiency and calibre.

Here, we would recall that in 1971 one of the authors of the present report wrote in his report on personnel problems in the United Nations (Professional category

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and above): "General dissatisfaction, and real problems which are not properly solved but grow worse from year to year: these seem to me to be the two essential features of the present situation with regard to personnel questions in the United Nations". Ten years later, alas, this comment is still apt.

C. Inadequacy of the results of current reforms

Recommendations for reforms have not produced adequate results.

28. While some improvements in methods have undoubtedly occurred during the past 10 years, inter alia, in the area of recruitment to junior posts at the United Nations, they are nevertheless

very modest and their implementation is proving difficult. The main proposals for correction and reform made by JIU and ICSC are summarized in annex II. The reader can thus see for himself the sluggishness with which the main recommendations approved by the General Assembly have been implemented. Resistance to change is considerable in this area.

D. The need for an over-all view

The approach whereby problems have been tackled in "instalments" has doubtless been the only one possible till now but it presents too many dangers to be employed much longer; it does not enable the General Assembly and the legislative bodies of the organizations to have an over-all picture of the personnel system which is being developed.

29. The magnitude of the problems posed no doubt explains, moreover, the caution with which the bodies responsible for promoting reforms have tackled the problem. Neither ICSC nor JIU have hitherto considered the possibility of submitting to the General Assembly a comprehensive report covering the entire range of personnel problems, or even one which would give a succinct overview of them. It is essential to deal with these problems in "instalments" if one wishes to make a proper and thorough examination

of each of them. That is why JIU, for example, began its work on personnel matters in 1971 with a study that was as comprehensive as possible but was limited to one organization (the United Nations) and one category of personnel (Professional category and above). After securing the General Assembly's endorsement of the majority of its recommendations, it undertook the regular and patient monitoring of their implementation (First, Second and Third reports on the implementation of the personnel policy reforms approved by the General Assembly in 1974). Other subsequent studies of JIU on personnel problems dealt with the General Services at Geneva, the strike by staff at the Geneva Office and recruitment problems in general throughout the system. Having many other studies to make, JIU does not have the resources to be able to allot more time in its work programme to personnel problems.

30. ICSC, for its part, has drawn up a work programme spread over a number of years in order to deal with questions concerning articles 13 and 14 of its statute. As required under its statute, it has tackled problems concerning the

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United Nations family as a whole. The work programme of ICSC in annex XVI to document A/35/30 shows that it regards as completed its work on: career and non-career staff; career development; and the interrelationship of career development and job classification, including the identification of career paths. There remain for it to consider performance appraisal (thirteenth session), some training questions, interorganization exchange programmes, the relationship of training to career development (thirteenth session) and the entire spectrum of questions concerning human resource planning, promotions and recruitment (for which the scheduled time of discussion has not been announced).

31. It was probably difficult to proceed otherwise, for the reasons given above. The approaches adopted by JIU and ICSC clearly result from their diagnoses of the existing situation and the assumptions they derived therefrom concerning the types of questions which deserve priority treatment and should therefore be studied first. The diagnosis by JIU was described in its 1971 report and since then priority has been accorded incontestably to questions concerning recruitment methods, which were considered as having the most important bearing on the quality and future of the Secretariat. The ICSC diagnosis differed markedly, since ICSC postponed until a later stage the development of a recruitment policy (despite the co-operation on this matter extended to it by JIU since 1977). It considered the issues relating to job classification to be more important, and subsequently it dealt with career development from the standpoint of staff relations and the organizations, but without regard to promotion problems. It explained in various reports how it perceived the logic of that step.

32. But whatever the worth of the diagnoses thus established and the justifications to be made for the order in which steps were taken to study problems and seek possible solutions, the fact remains that the adoption of piecemeal reforms in "instalments" by the General Assembly and the executive bodies of the various organizations, without their being in a position to realize all the consequences, often implicit, of the decisions they take, presents some extremely serious dangers. Thus, the adoption of the job classification and grading standards leads by degrees to a certain type of staff career structure, then to certain promotion and recruitment methods and finally to some basic decisions on the types of staff who will make up the secretariats in the future - all before the Member States have been provided with an overview of the system gradually established in this way. A house is not built layer by layer unless the client has first received a set of plans and designs which enable him to visualize the house when it is built. A similar solution for constructing a personnel system must therefore be found.

It is necessary to attempt forthwith a comprehensive presentation of all the problems and to make choices that will lead to the identification of the desired type of personnel system.

33. The only solution that seems capable of averting the dangers just indicated, an illustration of which - tantamount to a warning signal - is provided by the divergent views on some problems that have arisen between ICSC and JIU, is to decide to attempt forthwith a comprehensive presentation of the problems accompanied

by a list of the choices to be made in order to identify a coherent personnel system for the international organizations. Such an exercise doubtless has

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limitations in the sense that it would not be possible to identify immediately in detail all the types of solutions desirable in all areas. On the other hand, the attempt has become feasible now that the studies accumulated over the past 10 years have considerably enlarged awareness and understanding of the problems in question and their interrelationships. The aim of part II of the report, therefore, is to draw up a list of the technical choices which would be required in order to define the main features of a viable system that is acceptable to all. After examining it, the General Assembly will be in a better position to determine whether it approves of the general pattern and the time-frame of the work programme which are indispensable if the desired system is to be worked out in detail.

PART II

THE OPTIONS PRESENTED BY VARIOUS SYSTEMS OF INTERNATIONAL
CIVIL SERVICE

A. Personnel systems in a few international organizations

The personnel systems of international organizations outside the common system show more coherence and logic than the United Nations personnel systems: the career or non-career choices offered by the former are more clear-cut.

34. In order to try to explain clearly the points on which choices must be made in order to be able to define a personnel system, we have conducted a rapid survey of the systems existing in international organizations outside the United Nations family or, if within the family, outside the common system. 11/

A summary account of the main characteristics of these systems is given in annex V. As can be seen, the European international organizations and the World Bank have what are essentially career systems, whereas the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance has adopted a system based on secondments of national officials.

35. On the whole, the European organizations and the World Bank show important similarities. The differences relate merely to the restrictions on recruitment at all grade levels (95 per cent of base recruitment of young professionals at EEC, a majority of recruitments at starting grades or in the initial stages of the working life at the World Bank, recruitment at all levels at OECD and the Council of Europe), methods of access to the Professional category for staff members in other categories (access via competitive examinations at EEC, access via competitive examinations for external recruitment at the Council of Europe, access without a competitive examination at OECD), whether a more or less precise job classification system exists (no system at EEC, a rudimentary system at the Council of Europe, a more complex system at OECD and the World Bank). On the other hand, all these organizations have a very high proportion of permanent contracts, ranging from 60 per cent at OECD to 95 per cent on average for the World Bank and the European Communities (one of the EEC organs, the Council of Ministers, has as many as 99.2 per cent). They apply, either systematically for almost all their staff members (95 per cent at EEC) or for a large proportion of their recruitment, competitive entry procedures at the junior level of the Professional category and fairly frequently for other categories, too (translators, General Services or equivalent). In general, they have career and promotion systems which guarantee

11/ The organizations surveyed here kindly agreed to reply to our questions and to send us the documents required for an understanding of their personnel systems. Because of the limited time available for the preparation of this report, a thorough study of these problems was not possible. However, in two cases, OECD in Paris and EEC in Brussels, one of the Inspectors conducted a survey on the spot.

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that most of the staff members recruited at the junior level will have a "normal" career path, with, say, three or four promotions. They demand high-level qualifications for entry into the occupational groups that form the backbone of each organization (economists, jurists, political affairs specialists, etc.). ^{12/} They all make extensive use of the system of linked grades, and this facilitates promotions from one level to the next, especially in the initial stages of an official's career.

36. The personnel system of CMEA, concerning which, unfortunately, we were able to obtain only scanty information, is radically different owing to the principle of intergovernmental composition on which it is based: officials are seconded from their national administrations for a term of four years, which can normally be renewed once. They are recruited on the basis of recommendations by member States; the candidates proposed are interviewed by the Secretary or the Deputy Secretary of the Council, who verifies their qualifications and their knowledge of the working language (Russian).

37. It is thus apparent that each of the career systems and the secondment systems of these international organizations has a coherence of its own. Some derive their strength from the traditions inherent in the core of staff members recruited at the starting grades, generally by competitive examination, and who devote their entire working life to the organization; others depend on the experience acquired by national officials who are already experienced and who work for the organization for limited periods. Since the personnel system of the organizations of the United Nations family must depend on a balance between career staff members and personnel recruited for limited periods, it should derive its coherence and strength from the combined advantages of the two systems; an awkward mixture of rules drawn from both systems would probably lead to incoherence. It therefore seems to us that the main choices that have to be made in order to establish a coherent personnel system concern:

1. The career concept itself and, as a corollary, the differences of status that should apply to career personnel and non-career personnel;
2. The ratio to be established between these two staff categories and the types of contract to be used for each of them;
3. The definition of the occupational groups and their relationship to career paths and recruitment methods.

Choices and further studies are called for on a number of other questions: in particular, promotion procedures and opportunities (including the question of grade linking), procedures for monitoring grade structure in the light of programmes, career development and the definition of the main occupational categories.

^{12/} A special feature of the EEC organizations is that they have an intermediate category between the Professional and General Service categories for such functions as: administrative or technical assistant (bookkeepers, programmers, etc.).

B. First choice: the career concept and its implications

The definition of the career concept for international civil servants is the first and most important choice to be made in defining a personnel system. The definition proposed here includes in particular:

- the idea of job security;
- the idea of equitable promotion opportunities and an average rate of advancement;
- the idea of participation in defining the development of the working life;

and on the other hand:

- the application of recruitment methods which enable the necessary qualifications to be verified;
- the use of occupational groups as a standard career path.

38. The career concept is generally defined as the development of a person's professional activities in the course of his working life, such development generally being understood as progressive, that is, implying a growth in the importance, value or interest of his activities and in the remuneration for such activities. The rate of development may vary considerably according to the talents of the individual, his luck or lack of luck, the types of activity performed, and so forth. A career is conceivable within a single occupation or even within a single economic entity (public authority or enterprise), or it may be built up by moving from one occupation to another, from one enterprise or authority to another, and so forth. The career concept, which corresponds to a person's psychological need, is reflected at the enterprise level or at the national or international civil service level in regulatory and

organizational systems designed to reconcile individual ambitions (in terms of work or grade) with the interests of the organization.

39. These systems, which generally regulate the length of contract, promotions, performance evaluation methods, postings, secondments, etc., are based on widely varying principles and methods. In the case of major public authorities or major enterprises, it is possible to distinguish:

Full career systems based on recruitment at starting grades of young people with certain types of theoretical qualifications who are offered contracts for the duration of their working life with a guarantee of promotion; and

Mixed career systems in which recruitments at all grade levels are combined with a fairly high turnover of staff (between the organization and the outside).

40. However, wherever an official spends a substantial number of years with an organization (for example, more than 10 years, regardless of his age at entry), the term "career" means:

- (a) Job security (right to benefits in the event of termination);

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- (b) A system that enables the vast majority of staff to advance at a known average pace and to reach a minimum grade and remuneration level by the end of their careers;
- (c) Methods ensuring a degree of equity in the assessment of occupational skills;
- (d) Normally, in-service training opportunities and, possibly, opportunities for changes of post or rotation;
- (e) In some cases, which are becoming increasingly frequent, the right of staff to participate in determining how their careers will be shaped; and
- (f) Entitlement to a retirement pension.

41. In return for these advantages, the career concept implies that the recruitment methods applied to career staff should guarantee that such staff do indeed possess all the qualities required to make a career. This means that they must be designed to verify, generally by means of tests or written or oral examinations, that the candidates possess on the whole the qualifications required in order to serve the organization efficiently in all the posts they are likely to occupy as they acquire experience. Consequently, such methods must necessarily be more specific and more sophisticated than those applied to staff recruited for a single post and a limited period.

42. This means that, as a general rule, the career concept is inseparable from the concept of a profession. The knowledge, qualifications and qualities demanded at the beginning of a career must be clearly defined in the light of all the posts making up the standard career path proposed to the individual - in other words, the occupational group to which he will belong. In most cases, the qualifications demanded for the exercise of a recognized profession, especially in the modern world, are "polyvalent". Knowledge of a narrow speciality is not enough. Finally, the rules applying to these officials should specify the performance requirements to which a guarantee of continued employment is subject and how verification (possibly periodic) will be effected.

In the case of international civil servants, the career concept implies a clear distinction between career staff and non-career staff (particularly as regards types of contract and methods of recruitment).

43. This approach to the career concept signifies that, in the case of international civil servants, a clear-cut distinction must be made between career staff and non-career staff. For all existing staff categories (international Professionals, project personnel, national Professionals, General Service staff, etc. ...):

Differences in the status of such staff must be clearly defined with regard to, inter alia, types of contract and recruitment conditions;

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The proportions of these two types of staff must be clearly established in the case of each category.

44. Career staff should enjoy the advantages listed in paragraph 40 above and should be subject to the conditions described in paragraph 41; this implies that:

After a probationary period of a duration to be determined, they should receive a permanent contract;

They should be informed at the time of their appointment - since they are career staff - of existing promotion and career opportunities (average rate of advancement, minimum grades normally reached at the end of a career, etc.);

Indeed, all measures should be taken to make it possible to grant such advantages to this type of staff: by maintaining coherent pyramids of grades for each occupational group, by limiting the number of outside recruitments at levels other than the initial grades so as not to jeopardize advancement opportunities, and so forth;

Steps should be taken to guarantee a reasonable degree of equity in the assessment of professional qualities, training opportunities, participation in career development and entitlement to a retirement pension;

On the other hand, the qualifications of such staff should have been verified in the light of the type of career offered to them by objective and precise methods (competitive examinations, written and oral tests, etc.);

The occupational groups for which they are recruited and within which they are to make a career should be clearly defined; and

The conditions on which they may transfer from one occupational group to another should be clearly established: the levels of additional qualifications required and the in-service training requirements that will make such transfer possible should be indicated.

45. On the other hand, as regards staff who are not expected to make a career, that is to say who are recruited for a fixed term only and in most cases for a single post:

Throughout their service in the organization, they should, of course, be subject to the same promotion procedures as staff with permanent appointments and should enjoy the same professional benefits: inter alia, training opportunities and entitlement to a pension when service extends over a given length of time;

On the other hand, they should be recruited on contracts which cannot be renewed once a certain period has elapsed or contracts which can be renewed only after a certain length of absence or period of leave away from the organization;

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The conditions of their recruitment should be defined far more flexibly and should refer solely to their academic qualifications and evidence of professional experience. 13/

C. Second choice: determination of the proportion of career staff and non-career staff

The second choice indispensable for the juxtaposition of a veritable career system and a system in which staff are employed for fixed terms concerns the establishment of the proportion of these two categories of staff. The determination of this proportion must be the result of a political negotiation.

46. A technical method for determining permanent functions and non-permanent functions was proposed in a document prepared by the secretariat of the International Civil Service Commission (ICSC/R.288). This document states that such functions could be distinguished by classifying occupational groups in two categories according to whether the functions were normally "continuing" or "non-continuing". Thus, administrative

specialists, librarians, jurists, translators and interpreters would belong to the first category, while economists, statisticians, artists, architects, social scientists, and so forth, would belong to the second.

47. Moreover, and perhaps most important of all (see ICSC/R.190, paras. 6-11), account should be taken of the type of functions in order to determine their continuing character. For example, in all the occupational groups, all functions of supervision, control and inspection of technical co-operation project staff, policy formulation functions, regulatory functions, administrative and financial support functions, and so forth, should be considered as continuing. The document recognizes that this method could provide only a broad indication of the proportion of continuing to non-continuing functions or jobs. The authors of the present report think that the method would help to determine general patterns and orders of magnitude but that no technical method could provide an exact determination of continuing functions as opposed to those that are non-continuing, still less an exact determination of the proportion of career staff to fixed-term staff. 14/

13/ These conditions should not, of course, preclude the possibility that junior staff members recruited by competitive examination may opt for the status of fixed-term staff, especially when they wish to benefit from the alternating secondment system referred to in para. 54 below.

14/ In the report on the application of the principle of equitable geographical distribution to United Nations personnel (JIU/REP/81/10), Inspectors Bryntsev, Sawe and Sibahi have recommended (recommendation No. 3) that in the future the majority of staff members in posts subject to geographical distribution should have fixed-term appointments. The authors of the present report are not expressing any opinion on the relative proportions of the two types of appointment; a determination on this subject is for Member States alone to make.

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48. In fact, it is not possible to determine by a purely technical method the desirable relative proportions of career staff and fixed-term staff. The considerations to be taken into account pertain essentially to the degree of continuity that it is deemed desirable to maintain, either in purely administrative services or in the implementation of the major programmes in the substantive departments, and to the balance which it would be appropriate to establish (and which can vary from occupational group to occupational group) between staff with long-standing experience of the organization and staff who can bring from the outside new vision, experience or approaches. Such assessments can be very subjective and very variable according to the culture or political or personal preferences of those making them.

49. The decision on the proportion should therefore be a primarily political decision, not only because the technical methods available are too imprecise, but also because it is obviously quite feasible and even in some cases desirable to have continuing functions performed by fixed-term staff or a fortiori by staff recruited on alternating secondment contracts. Negotiations between Member States are therefore necessary to take a decision of this kind: as far as the United Nations is concerned, such negotiations could be assisted by a report of the Secretary-General indicating what ranges of proportions he envisages for the main occupational groups in the Secretariat.

50. Document ICSC/R.288 states that the determination of the proportion of career staff to non-career staff should be made on an organization-by-organization basis. The Inspectors have no objection to this suggestion but believe that:

The principles and methods to be applied for the determination of the relative proportions should be the same for all organizations and that accordingly they should be approved first by the General Assembly;

As far as policy guidance regarding the choices to be made is concerned, the General Assembly should also be able to make recommendations to all the organizations.

The types of contract should be reviewed: an upper limit should be set on fixed-term contracts and arrangements for alternating secondments should be established.

51. If the aim is to make a real distinction between career staff and non-career staff on the basis of the type of contract, which is not the case at present (see para. 26 above), it is essential to take steps to ensure that fixed-term contracts can no longer

continue to be granted beyond a certain time period. ^{15/} It would therefore seem logical to request the General Assembly to establish a limit of this kind. Such an approach should clarify the present situation; however, the procedures and conditions for granting permanent contracts must be specified. The following system might be contemplated.

^{15/} On this point, the conclusions of document ICSC/R.288 are similar to the conclusions in this report.

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52. For career staff, the only contracts used would be permanent ones. However, these would be granted only after a probationary period on a fixed-term contract. In other words, all new staff members would first of all be offered a fixed-term appointment; the length of the probationary period would vary according to the method of recruitment and the assessment of the person's performance. Thus, the standard practice would be to offer staff members recruited by competitive examination a two-year fixed-term appointment, after which (except where performance is poor) they would be awarded permanent contracts. In the case of staff members who had been recruited on the basis of academic and professional qualifications for a specific post and who wished to become career staff members, the conditions for converting their fixed-term appointments into permanent appointments would comprise:

A probationary period of up to five years in length;

The requirement that they must pass written and oral tests to show that they possess the necessary qualities for pursuing a career in a given occupation.

53. As regards non-career staff members, the fixed-term contracts offered to them, which could be of variable length, from one year to a maximum of four years, could not be renewed beyond a given period. Document ICSC/R.288 proposes that this period should be five years, which seems reasonable. However, in determining such a period account should be taken of two considerations:

The contracts of staff members seconded by their national civil services should be allowed to exceed five years, if necessary (in this case, it might be considered that a period of 8 to 10 years would be more reasonable);

The fact that permanent contracts cannot be awarded to persons recruited after the age of 50 should be made compatible with this restriction: a person who is recruited when he is 50 should be able to hold a fixed-term appointment until the age of retirement, that is to say for 10 years.

54. Finally, it should be agreed that, as a general rule, staff members who leave an organization at the end of the maximum period allowed for a fixed-term appointment should not be debarred for ever from returning to the organization. Another period should be set, for example, three years, after which the person concerned could present himself as a candidate for a new post if he so desires. A measure of this kind would, moreover, allow arrangements to be worked out that might interest a number of countries, especially in so far as the secondment of their officials for a fixed term of service in the organization is concerned. JIU proposed an arrangement of this kind in its 1971 report on personnel problems in the United Nations (JIU/REP/71/7, recommendation No. 13, and chap. VII, paras. 430 and 431), where it suggested that a system of "alternating secondments" should be devised in order to enable staff members to suspend their service with the United Nations for periods of up to five years in order to resume employment in their national civil service, such suspension to be

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permitted only after five consecutive years' service with the United Nations. 16/ Other arrangements are possible, such as treating the time spent outside the organization as special leave without pay. 17/ A special study should be made of the system to be applied to project personnel; they are generally awarded fixed-term contracts (which are and should remain renewable without limitations). Project personnel might also receive permanent appointments on a more systematic basis than is the case at present and on specific conditions yet to be determined.

For the award of permanent appointments, the criteria relating to personal characteristics should take into account recruitment conditions, qualifications, age and secondment.

55. The problem of the criteria to be applied in awarding a certain type of contract for a specific job should be fairly easy to solve if the proposals in the preceding paragraphs are approved. In fact, specific criteria are needed only for the

award of permanent appointments. Such criteria might be the following:

- (a) On the one hand, no permanent appointment should be granted once the maximum number resulting from the proportion set by the General Assembly of career staff to non-career staff has been reached;
- (b) On the other hand, the criteria relating to personal characteristics should cover, in so far as permanent appointments are concerned:
 - (i) the conditions specified in paragraph 51 above, that is to say, the candidate must take either a competitive examination or written and oral tests and serve a probationary period of from two to five years;
 - (ii) age requirements: the rule whereby no permanent appointment can be awarded when a person is over 50 years of age would be maintained;
 - (iii) the requirement that the person concerned should not belong to another career system: no permanent appointment should be granted to staff seconded from a national civil service or university, etc.

16/ "Secondment agreements" could be negotiated by the heads of the organizations with interested Governments so as to identify more precisely how such alternating secondment operations might be organized (in particular, list of national services concerned, number of officials and pace of operations). Agreements of this kind might also be contemplated with some universities or major research institutes.

17/ Cf. para. 37 and recommendation No. 4 of document JIU/REP/81/10 on the application of the principle of equitable geographical distribution to the United Nations Secretariat.

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D. Third choice: definition of occupational groups

The third important choice relates to the definition of occupational groups and their relationship to career paths and recruitment methods. This choice concerns the level of qualifications and professionalism which are desired in the secretariats. In this respect, the need to distinguish between staff with multiple skills as well as high-level qualifications in a specific field and specialized staff is an essential consideration.

56. The concept of a profession or occupation is a simple one which in many fields is accepted and understood without any difficulty. Everyone recognizes that in order to be a doctor, architect, professor of mathematics, lawyer, chemical engineer or veterinary surgeon, a person must have acquired, often after long and arduous studies, specific academic qualifications - normally broad, i.e. in many different disciplines - and obtained recognition of those studies in the form of a degree or success in a competitive

examination. These basic requirements do not mean, of course, that in order to be proficient it is not useful to have practical experience, which can only be acquired by exercising the profession for a certain period. At a different level, the same is true of manual skills, whether we are speaking of a carpenter, a gardener or a skilled technician in a given area: in such cases, the level of general background culture and the breadth of occupational knowledge are more limited and normally an apprenticeship replaces part of the theoretical education or training.

57. The situation with respect to administrative activities has until now been more obscure, or at least so it seems, for two reasons:

(a) The first is that administration, especially at the highest levels, depends at least as much on talent, natural intelligence, organizational ability and even common sense as on specialized technical knowledge. However what is true of a few outstanding personalities or even a few organizational "geniuses" cannot serve as a basis for recruitment and training methods to be applied to the thousands of persons who will make up the administrative staffs. The idea that administration is an art, although partly true, must not be allowed to become an excuse for laxity and mediocrity;

(b) The second is that staff in the Professional category must in the vast majority of cases have broad knowledge in a variety of areas, even when performing duties that appear highly specialized. In the majority of national or international civil services, Professional status is generally accorded to two categories of staff:

- (i) Those with broad knowledge ("polyvalent") but possessing a high-level qualification in a specific discipline, and
- (ii) Those who are specialized and perform a few limited duties.

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58. Polyvalent staff in the Professional category must have a high level of basic knowledge in a number of areas and usually have more specific and advanced knowledge in one discipline. Thus one finds:

In non-technical ministries, departments or services, staff with a combination of degrees in law, economics, the social sciences, public administration and finance, history of the political sciences, and so forth, sometimes with a higher level of competence in one of the disciplines listed (they may or may not have taken competitive examinations consisting of papers in most of the disciplines mentioned and cultural background tests designed to verify the drafting and reasoning abilities of the candidates);

In technical ministries, departments or services (industries, public works, telecommunications, etc.), staff with advanced knowledge of a combination of subjects in a specific technical discipline (for example, chemical engineers, pharmacists, doctors, civil engineers, telecommunications engineers, etc.) and broad knowledge in administration, economics and finance, together with the same drafting and reasoning abilities as are found in the preceding categories.

59. Officials possessing polyvalent knowledge at an advanced level form the backbone of both national and international civil services. It should be added that from the beginning until the middle of their careers they normally work in the division for which their main specialization fits them, even though, in order to acquire experience, they may be assigned for limited periods to other divisions or departments; once they have become heads of section or service, it is often considered that their polyvalent knowledge together with their administrative experience qualifies them to change divisions and to occupy managerial posts in almost any sector of the administration.

60. Specialized officials, who are also members of the Professional category, belong in general to two groups:

The group of administrative specialists: accountants, auditors, computer experts, translators and interpreters, specialists in given areas: evaluation, job classification, etc. Rightly or wrongly, such specialists are not normally required to have the same level of general culture or broad education as polyvalent officials. Accordingly, their career prospects are generally limited to the context of their specialities (except, of course, in cases where they have acquired on their own additional knowledge of the type and level possessed by the polyvalent officials) and the grade levels which they can reach by the end of their career are normally not very high;

The group of technical or scientific specialists: the administrative services required for special or technical assignments the services of specialists working in the area of their specialities - industrial physicians, architects, engineers specialized in a given technical area - or in research or field project teams, experts of every kind practising their speciality: economists or jurists, statisticians or veterinary surgeons, and so forth. The entire spectrum of professional occupations may thus be utilized inasmuch as these officials in general practise or teach their own occupations and perform few, if any, administrative tasks.

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61. In short, an "occupation" in administrative activities corresponds to various types of job and varying levels and combinations of qualifications depending on whether the predominant elements are a broad education and an administrative job or, on the contrary, a given speciality and a technical job.

The term "occupational groups" is understood differently by JIU and ICSC. For JIU, the definition of occupational groups in the organizations must depend essentially on the basic qualifications required at entry: the groups thus defined represent standard career paths. The conditions for transfer from one group to another must be precisely established.

62. The establishment of a list of occupational groups for the United Nations (and the other organizations) has been recommended on numerous occasions by the Joint Inspection Unit. The General Assembly requested in a number of resolutions that occupational groups should be established. For its part, ICSC used the term "occupational groups" in its third annual report (A/32/30, para. 219). It recognized the urgent need for a common classification of occupational groups which could be

applied throughout the common system as a necessary prerequisite to the development of improved systems in other areas, such as personnel statistics. The main aim, it seems, was to classify in the same categories the jobs of staff in all the organizations; such a classification was presented as a useful basis for subsequent career development, manpower planning, recruitment and training; one of the key ideas of the exercise seemed to be to encourage interagency co-operation in all these areas.

63. These studies resulted in a "global schema of occupational groupings", which appeared in document ICSC/R.134 of 2 June 1978, and in a series of definitions of each of the occupations so identified in document ICSC/R.187 of 29 July 1979. The exercise covered all staff employed by the international organizations: members of the Professional and General Service categories and experts. It led to a classification comprising four levels:

The "occupational group" (e.g. scientific, technical, professional, administrative and related occupations);

The "family" (e.g. architects, engineers (and related technicians));

The "field of work" (e.g. civil engineers);

The "occupation" or "speciality" (e.g. sanitary engineers);

however, no definition of these four concepts was provided, and there was no explanation of the use they might be put to in personnel administration.

64. This being so, the term "occupational groups" as used by ICSC has quite a different meaning from that given to it by JIU. For ICSC, it appears to be a statistical method using a list of posts or occupations and regrouping those

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occupations at different levels regardless of whether the occupations themselves or the various levels of regrouping have any connexion with the qualifications required for those occupations or levels or with the career paths that may result from them.

65. JIU, on the other hand, has proposed a definition of the term "occupational group" which is as follows:

"An occupational group is a series of occupations which are sufficiently similar, in particular with regard to basic academic and professional qualifications, for possibilities of transfer or promotion between the posts making up the group to exist for holders of the posts concerned."

66. This definition means that:

The groups themselves can be defined on the basis of the qualifications required to belong to them;

The definition of the types and levels of qualifications must precede the definition of the group and not the other way around (just as, for example, the qualifications required to be a medical doctor or an architect define belonging to those professions);

The qualifications required must in most cases be broad so that the staff admitted to an occupational group can serve during their careers in all the posts of the group and at all levels, as they acquire experience. Thus, for example, an administrative generalist must have sufficiently varied qualifications to serve as a budget officer, a personnel officer, a recruitment officer or an administrator in Conference Services. An information officer must have sufficiently varied qualifications to perform the functions of a writer, a radio or television specialist, a press liaison officer or the head of an information centre. It is the extent to which polyvalence is required at entry which governs the inclusion of occupations in a given group.

67. A number of specialities can also be identified by the types of knowledge required at entry: thus, for example, accountants, auditors or computer specialists are not normally required to possess very advanced knowledge in several disciplines. On the other hand, their knowledge of the speciality must be at a high level: each of the specialities must therefore constitute in itself a more limited occupational group in terms of the variety of possible functions and, hence, career development opportunities.

68. Finally, since the qualifications define the types of posts which may be filled, the concept of "occupational groups" must in fact be equivalent to that of "standard career path". The question whether it is possible for a staff member to leave this path and to enter another occupational group must receive a very specific reply: that is to say, the conditions for transfer between occupational groups must be subject to rules. Such rules must, of course, take into account the fact that it is easier to move from a highly technical group to

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a less technical group than vice versa. For example, one can readily imagine that an economist, jurist or information specialist would be able to transfer from his group to the group of administration specialists without being obliged to acquire considerable further knowledge. In such a case, in order for the transfer from one group to another to be feasible, it would be sufficient for the rules to provide for an in-service training system (with training conducted inside or outside the organization), possibly consisting of training schemes designed to acquaint members of the aforementioned groups with programming and budgeting methods, personnel problems and administrative matters in general.

69. However, far more rigorous conditions (for example, the acquisition of specific university diplomas) must be laid down before one could contemplate the transfer of a translator, an interpreter, a computer specialist or an accountant, for example, to the same group of administrative specialists or a technical group, such as that composed of jurists. In preparing rules of this kind, the general aim should be to avoid a situation in which a post might be filled by a staff member who lacked basic qualifications at an appropriate level for entry into the occupational group to which the post belongs. Whereas some of the necessary qualifications can be acquired through in-service training, others depend on an appropriate university background.

70. The rules should give particular attention to posts at the level of Director or head of section. Clearly, some high-level posts can be occupied only by persons who are well versed in a given speciality (economic services should be headed by economists, legal services by jurists, etc.), while others can certainly be filled by persons with a really sound general culture, a knowledge of the organization and the mastery of a different speciality. This is true of the majority of purely administrative services.

71. The occupational group method, if interpreted in this way, can provide a basis both for improving recruitment methods and career development and for guaranteeing greater professionalism in the Secretariat. Clearly, therefore, the choice between this method and the method whereby recruitment and career development is organized on the basis of each individual post is crucial to the determination of the type of Secretariat that is desired.

E. Other matters requiring choices and further studies

Once the three fundamental choices outlined above have been made, a number of decisions will be required on certain problems.

72. If the three fundamental choices just described could be made by the General Assembly and the legislative bodies in all the organizations, the main features of a coherent personnel system would be determined. The general pace

at which such a system could be constructed and the over-all plan for it would be known. It would then be necessary, of course, to indicate solutions for the problems outlined in the following paragraphs.

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Career development: establishment of career plans, training and rotation

The recommendations of ICSC and JIU on career development are similar. However, they await implementation.

73. As regards career development, JIU and ICSC have made a number of recommendations, the main points of which are summarized in annex II. On the question of career development and

staff participation in the establishment of their "career plans", the above-mentioned recommendations of ICSC and JIU are remarkably similar. Regardless of the terminology employed - assignment planning and individual standard career plans for JIU, career development programme for ICSC - the content of the recommendations, aimed at organizing an integrated career plan system through exchanges of information between staff and the organization, is virtually the same except for a few details of implementation.

74. However, although the recommendations of JIU are more than 10 years old and those of ICSC were made about two years ago, there seems to have been no significant attempt to implement these recommendations, either at the United Nations or in the specialized agencies. The General Assembly may wish the secretariats of the organizations to explain why this is so.

75. As regards the development of training activities, JIU and ICSC also hold essentially the same views. The type of in-service training required has still to be defined far more precisely and the training system must be integrated into career planning. This will require some further study but should not present major difficulties (see annex II, para. 15). The same appears to be true of rotation, concerning which the Assembly has already expressed an opinion in its resolution 33/143, but which has still to be integrated into career planning.

Performance appraisal methods

Performance appraisal methods are currently under study by ICSC. An "occupational group" approach could, in the opinion of JIU, help to solve the difficult problems involved.

76. Efforts by ICSC to devise a better performance appraisal system (see para. 21 above) are still under way. Annex II, paragraph 11, summarizes the main proposals made in this respect. These endeavours, which concern an extremely difficult area, deserve

encouragement, and the Inspectors would be particularly interested in examining the method of classifying staff members in four quartiles which ICSC advocates. The only additional remark to be made on the system under study is that operation of the system could be improved considerably if account is taken of a recommendation made by JIU in 1971 concerning the replacement of the Appointment and Promotion Committee at the United Nations by Training and Career Planning Committees, which would be established at the level of each major occupational group. -Such a measure would mean that staff were judged by a group of persons who would know them individually and would be more familiar with their occupational problems. This is of crucial importance, particularly in the larger organizations.

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Procedures for assuring promotion opportunities

Promotion methods in a satisfactory career system should include:

Setting limits for external recruitment at the levels above the junior grade, including management levels;

Use of linked grades;

The broadest possible recruitment to posts at the junior grade.

77. While the career concept, as we have stated in paragraphs 38 to 45 above, implies that normal promotion opportunities should be provided both for staff members recruited for career purposes once they have been offered a permanent contract and for staff members recruited on fixed-term contracts who spend sufficient time working for the organization, it is desirable that steps should be taken to ensure that such opportunities are

effective. This means that all recruitment of candidates from outside the Organization should be regulated at all grade levels by procedures.^{18/} It is true that the current United Nations practice of first of all seeking candidates for any new vacancy within the Organization is unquestionably advantageous to serving staff members. However, procedures of the kind suggested could have a negative impact on both equitable geographical distribution and the recruitment of more highly qualified staff. It therefore seems to us preferable to regulate practice in this area by setting percentage ceilings on the number of officials at each grade level who will be recruited outside the Organization each year. Such a ceiling is already fixed at 70 per cent for P-1/P-2 posts (since 30 per cent of these posts are reserved for promotion by competitive examination from the General Service category); the percentage should decrease considerably at the P-3 grade and above so as to maintain internal promotion possibilities at a reasonable level.

78. Once this type of regulation has been established, the use of grade linking (which is widespread in most national civil services, especially diplomatic services, and in several of the international organizations described in annex V) should, in our opinion, be encouraged (annex VI reproduces an excerpt from Working Paper No. 1 on grade linking, which was sent by the Inspectors to the members of ICSC and to the personnel directors of the organizations in May 1981).

79. The fixing of percentages to limit the number of outside recruitments should be extended wherever possible to the D-1 and D-2 levels. It will be recalled that a recommendation was formulated in report JIU/REP/71/7 advocating that a proportion of D-1 and D-2 posts at the United Nations should be reserved for members of the Secretariat with some seniority in the international civil

^{18/} On this point, the authors of the present report do not endorse the interpretation given to Art. 101, para. 3, of the Charter and the provisions of the Staff Rules by the Inspectors who prepared report JIU/REP/81/10 on equitable geographical distribution in recommendation No. 5, since the latter imply that, contrary to current United Nations practice, candidates for vacancies should consistently and systematically be selected on a competitive basis from among both internal and external candidates.

service: a high proportion for D-1 posts (70 per cent was proposed) and a slightly lower proportion for D-2 posts (for example, 60 per cent). The actual setting of percentages for all grade levels could be examined in subsequent studies.

80. It is essential to take action with respect to the current trend towards a reduction in the number of P-1/P-2 posts. There are now very few P-1 posts, while the number of P-2 posts is also showing signs of dwindling to a dangerously low level. When new posts are created, there is a distinct preference for posts at the P-3 level and above, even though the justifications presented are not always convincing. The pretext advanced is that experienced officials who are immediately operational are required. Moreover, this facilitates promotions in a rigid post classification system. Measures should be taken to reverse this dangerous trend, which undermines rational career development and goes against the financial interests of the organizations. A system for monitoring the grade structure, as described in paragraphs 81, 82 and 83 below, would be a useful tool in this respect.

Definition of staff categories

A precise definition of staff categories based on the levels of qualification required and the regulations applicable to them has become indispensable.

81. In order to deal with the problem of defining the proportion of career staff and non-career staff and of establishing detailed regulations applicable to them, it is necessary to prepare as soon as possible an accepted definition of staff categories: international Professionals, project

personnel, national Professionals, General Service staff, and so forth (see para. 24 above). Identifying and explaining alternative acceptable definitions would warrant a special report. We will not therefore put forward in this report a definition for approval by the General Assembly but will merely observe that:

The studies required before a decision can be taken in this area should be conducted as soon as possible, for the reasons just given;

The criteria to be used in making a distinction between these categories should be:

- (a) The nature of the qualifications required,
- (b) The conditions on which these qualifications would be tested or appraised,
- (c) The staff regulations applying to these categories and, in particular, their obligations as regards assignment and rotation.

82. For example, we believe that the only rational basis for distinguishing between a Professional and a General Service staff member, or between a national Professional and an international Professional, must be:

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The nature of the qualifications required with respect to occupational skills and linguistic knowledge for entering the category concerned;

Obligations as regards assignment and rotation.

In order to prepare detailed definitions, the exact qualifications and types of obligations required of the individual categories would have to be determined.

Definition of grade structure based on programmes

To offset the present short-comings of job classification methods, a system for monitoring grade structure based on programmes should be established.

83. A last question for which a solution should be found in the near future concerns the definition of grade structure based on programmes. The present job classification methods do not provide an answer to this important

question. The verification of classifications on a post-by-post basis does not provide an opportunity for reviewing the grade structure of a service as a whole. The present classification methods, in effect, merely "photograph" the existing situation, which is the result of definitions of structures and hierarchies made historically by chiefs of service who have succeeded each other at the head of an administrative unit. These methods lead simply to changes in some details, without any re-examination of whether all the job descriptions of a service genuinely correspond to the best possible structure for performing a given task or attaining the goals set.

84. ICSC has begun to consider this matter. Document ICSC/R.288 studies the relationship of the programming and budgetary process to job classification and concludes, inter alia, that "planning units" should be established to propose corrective actions for problems of organization structure and job design. The Inspectors agree that this function of reviewing and criticizing the organizational structure of the main administrative units should be undertaken on a systematic basis. ^{19/} The procedures whereby norms could be defined and real monitoring of the proposals of chiefs of service established have yet to be examined in greater detail. At the United Nations, for example, it might be possible for this task to be undertaken by a group of experienced staff members, selected by the Secretary-General and receiving technical support from the Administrative Management Service and the planning and programming service.

F. Summary of choices before the General Assembly

85. The following table contains the main options regarding which we believe that the General Assembly should be able to take a decision or issue directives for studies both to the United Nations Secretariat and to ICSC and JIU.

^{19/} Recommendation No. 13 of the JIU report on the setting of priorities and the identification of obsolete activities in the United Nations (see paras. 83-85 of document A/36/171 of 10 April 1981) deals with this very question.

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<u>List of questions leading to options</u> (References to the appropriate paragraphs of this report are given in brackets)	<u>Options</u>	
I. <u>First main choice</u> <u>The career concept and the resulting differences in the regulations to be applied to career staff and non-career staff</u> <u>Does the career concept include?</u> 1. - The idea of job security, - That of equitable promotion opportunities and an average rate of advancement, - That of participation in determining how the professional life will develop, and, on the other hand: Application of recruitment methods designed to verify the necessary qualifications, - The use of occupational groups as standard career paths. (para. 38) 2. Should a distinction be made between career staff and non-career staff with respect to types of contract and recruitment methods? (paras. 43, 44, 45)	This definition	A definition concerning only career development methods and not promotion and recruitment conditions
	Distinction necessary	Distinction not necessary
II. <u>Second main choice</u> <u>Determining the respective proportions of the two categories of staff and the types of contract to be used for each</u> 3. Should the determination of the respective proportions of these two categories of staff be negotiated among member States, with assistance from Secretariat studies? (paras. 46 et seq) Or should the decision on this subject be left to the heads of the secretariats? — — — — —	Political decision following negotiations among member States	Technical decision to be made by the heads of the secretariats

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List of questions leading to options	Options	
<p>4. Should the General Assembly establish principles for the classification of these two categories for the United Nations system as a whole, leaving the governing bodies of the individual organizations to decide on the proportions? (para. 49)</p> <p>5. Should an upper limit be imposed on the period for which fixed-term contracts may be used? (And how long would this period be?) (paras. 53 and 54)</p> <p>6. Should measures be taken with respect to alternating secondments or rotation contracts? (para. 54)</p> <p>7. Should the criteria for the award of permanent contracts according to proportions determined take into account:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Recruitment conditions and levels of qualifications - Age (under 50 years) - The fact that a person does not belong to a career system (national civil service or university, etc.) 	<p>Decisions of the General Assembly on principles</p> <p>Upper limit desired</p> <p>New measures</p> <p>Acceptance of these criteria</p>	<p>Principles and methods to be left to the governing body of each organization</p> <p>The present system should be retained</p> <p>The present system should be retained</p> <p>Other possible criteria</p>
<p>III. <u>Third main choice</u></p> <p><u>Definition of occupational groups and their relationship to career paths and recruitment methods</u></p> <p>8. Should the definition of occupational groups be concerned mainly with the basic qualifications required for entry into such groups? (paras. 65-71)</p> <p>9. Should occupational groups serve as standard career paths, it being understood that the requirements for movement from one group to another will be governed by detailed rules? (paras. 65-71)</p>	<p>Occupational groups concerned with basic qualifications</p> <p>Occupational groups used as standard career paths</p>	<p>Occupational groups unconnected with recruitment requirements</p> <p>Occupational groups unconnected with the career system</p>

List of questions leading to options	Options	
<p>IV. <u>Other problems to be considered</u></p> <p><u>Performance appraisal systems:</u></p> <p>10. In order to be more equitable, should such systems operate in the framework of occupational groups? (para. 76)</p> <p><u>Organization of promotion opportunities within the career</u></p> <p>11. In order to provide a reasonable career framework for Professional staff, is it essential:</p> <p>(a) To develop junior-level recruitment to the maximum degree compatible with the needs of the organization? (para. 80)</p> <p>(b) To set percentage limits on external recruitment at levels above the junior grade? (paras. 77 and 79)</p> <p>(c) To use grade linking? (para. 78 and annex VI)</p> <p><u>Grade structure and definition of posts based on programmes:</u></p> <p>12. In order to offset the shortcomings of present job classification methods, is it desirable to establish a system of rules and monitoring of their application for the purpose of defining the grade structure required for the implementation of a given programme? (paras. 83 and 84)</p>	<p>Performance appraisal systems in the framework of occupational groups</p> <p>Development of junior-level recruitment</p> <p>Setting of percentages that limit external recruitment at some grade levels</p> <p>Grade linking, especially at the start of the career</p> <p>Definition of the grade structure subject to rules and monitoring</p>	<p>Present system or system proposed by ICSC outside the framework of occupational groups</p> <p>Present system: leading to a reduction in the number of junior posts</p> <p>Present system, i.e. external recruitment at all grade levels, with or without preference being given to serving staff members</p> <p>No grade linking</p> <p>Present system: job classification "photographs" the existing structure, merely changing details of it</p>

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<u>List of questions leading to options</u>	<u>Options</u>	
<u>Definition of main staff categories:</u> 13. Is it or is it not urgent to have precise definitions of the various categories? (para. 81) 14. Should they be based mainly on levels of qualifications required and the regulations applicable to the <u>categories</u> ? (para. 82)	Urgent Proposed criteria	Not urgent Other criteria

CONCLUSION

86. For the reasons explained at the beginning, this report does not conclude with a list of recommendations, as is the practice of the Joint Inspection Unit. Its main purpose is to provide the General Assembly with information. However, the work which has yet to be done in order to be able to take decisions concerning the definition of a true personnel system for the organizations and the United Nations family would be considerably facilitated if the General Assembly, on the basis of the information available to it, would provide precise directives and guidelines on the main features of the personnel system which it would like to see developed.

87. The main points on which directives would be particularly timely if they could be issued forthwith concerned:

(a) Acceptance or rejection of the idea that negotiation among Member States on the determination of the proportion of career staff to fixed-term staff is possible and desirable and, if appropriate, the method to be used for such negotiation;

(b) Acceptance or rejection of the idea that an over-all view of personnel problems is indispensable if the General Assembly is to be able to make choices; if this idea is acceptable, the establishment of directives and a time-table for the submission of studies by the secretariats of the United Nations and the agencies and by ICSC and by JIU on the subject;

(c) Any guidance that can be given forthwith concerning the three main choices whose elements have been described in this report (career concept, proportion of career staff to fixed-term staff and types of contract, relationship between occupational groups, career paths and recruitment methods), together with guidance on any other points referred to in the preceding table concerning which the General Assembly considers that it is sufficiently well informed to express an opinion forthwith.

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ANNEX I

Co-operation between the Joint Inspection Unit and the
International Civil Service Commission in the drafting
of the two reports requested by the General Assembly in
resolution 35/210

1. Meeting of an Inspector and ICSC on 10 March 1981

One of the Inspectors attended the meeting held in New York on 10 March 1981 and introduced an analysis of the issues which he felt required study. He stressed, in particular, that:

The similar views held by ICSC and JIU on many points and the potential complementary role of the two bodies with respect to collection of basic data and implementation of recommendations should be developed;

For that purpose, it was necessary to clear up any misunderstandings which might have arisen on certain points, in particular with respect to:

- the precise definition of the various categories of staff (internationally-recruited professionals, locally-recruited professionals, General Service staff, etc.),
- the concept of occupational groups,
- the question of grade linking,
- the criteria to be adopted in defining various types of appointment,
- the application of the principle of grading jobs rather than people;

Finally, more generally speaking, it was necessary to provide the General Assembly with the over-all view of personnel problems which it was currently lacking.

Following an exchange of views on the agenda of items to be considered, agreement was reached on a list of points to be covered in the two reports.

2. Co-operation in drafting the two reports

During the period March-May 1981, it was possible to hold several working meetings attended by the two representatives of the Commission's secretariat responsible for drafting the ICSC report and by one of the Inspectors. Exchanges of views took place, in particular on those points which appeared to cause difficulties.

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3. JIU and ICSC working papers

JIU: Three working papers were drafted by one of the Inspectors and sent to every member of ICSC individually, as well as to personnel directors of the organizations of the common system:

- (1) Working paper No. 1 of 7 April 1981 on "Grade linking",
- (2) Working paper No. 2 of 29 May 1981 on "Career development and occupational groups",
- (3) Working paper No. 3 of 23 June 1981 on "Types of appointment".

Comments on those papers have been received from personnel directors of several organizations. No comments have been received from members of the Commission.

ICSC: For their part, the representatives of the ICSC secretariat sent the Inspectors passages from the Commission's draft report in May 1981.

4. Meeting of the two Inspectors who drafted the JIU report and ICSC on 16 and 17 July 1981

The two Inspectors attended two formal meetings of the Commission, one on the afternoon of 16 July and the other on the morning of 17 July. There was a discussion on the various chapters of the draft prepared by the Commission's secretariat; participants included a representative of the Commission's secretariat, representatives of CCAQ and of numerous organizations, a representative of FICSA, and the two Inspectors. They had before them document ICSC/R.288 (draft report prepared by the Commission's secretariat) and a conference room paper (ICSC/14/CRP.5) which contained the three above-mentioned JIU working papers (in all the official languages of the Commission).

Finally, a closed meeting of members of the Commission and the two Inspectors was held on the afternoon of 17 July. As there was not enough time to discuss matters of substance, it was merely decided that the two reports should not contain any final recommendation to the General Assembly this year, and that next year efforts would be made to find the necessary time for a substantive discussion between the Inspectors and all members of ICSC.

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ANNEX II

Major recommendations of the Joint Inspection Unit and the International Civil Service Commission on personnel policies (*)

Subject	JIU recommendations	ICSC recommendations	General Assembly resolutions	Action taken at the United Nations
I. <u>STRUCTURE OF THE SECRETARIAT</u> 1. Definition of main categories of staff	- No recommendation to date - Problem raised on various occasions, <u>inter alia</u> , under proposals for the G to P competitive examination	- ICSC report A/35/30 (1980): (a) paragraphs 259 to 262: (Methodology for determining Professional-level work). Use of a narrative description of Professional work. It is pointed out, however, that "Parts of this definition may also apply to some work within the General Service category" and that it is "the level of theoretical knowledge required to carry out the work" which is "relevant". (b) paragraphs 299 to 310 (Local or national professionals): the Commission decided to permit the organizations concerned to continue to employ local or national professionals under the conditions proposed by CCAC and to keep the arrangement under review.	No decision on this subject	No agreed definition
2. Occupation groups and determination of corresponding levels of qualification	- 1971: JIU report JIU/REP/71/7 (A/8454) recommendation No. 1 (Definition and proposal for a preliminary list of vocational groups for the United Nations) - 1977: JIU report JIU/REP/77/4 recommendation No. 1 (Occupational groups in the General Service) - 1978: JIU report JIU/REP/78/4 (A/33228) recommendation No. 1 (Establishment of regulations concerning occupational groups and a comprehensive list of such groups for the Secretariat as a whole) - 1980: JIU report JIU REP/80/9 (A/35418) recommendation No. 2 (Written examinations by occupational group for recruitment by competitive examination)		- 1976: General Assembly resolution 33/143, sect. I, 1 (f), requests the Secretary General: "to establish definition of occupational groups together with criteria for new definition of such groups" and to draw up "a list of occupational groups for General Service and Professional categories along with standards for entry, promotion and rotation of staff should be drawn up;" and (sect. IV, 1): "... to establish entrance-level qualifications and maximum levels of grades for various occupations of the General Service category at Geneva on the basis of the levels of equivalent grades for the same occupations in New York and to finalize the classification of posts in the General Service category at Geneva before 30 April 1979."	The United Nations used occupational groups as the basis for the specialized papers for the G to P competitive examination and for the purpose of classifying the posts offered to candidates The United Nations is also in the process of preparing a series of "occupational descriptions" along the same lines.

(*) This annex describes the major recommendations made by JIU and ICSC between 1971 and the end of 1980. For lack of time, the authors of the report were unable to check the information concerning ICSC with its secretariat; they therefore apologize in advance for any omissions in that respect. The authors naturally accept sole responsibility for the statements contained in this annex.

Subject	JIU recommendations	ICSC recommendations	General Assembly resolutions	Action taken at the United Nations
<p>I. <u>STRUCTURE OF THE SECRETARIAT</u> (cont'd)</p> <p>2. Occupational groups and determination of corresponding levels of qualification (cont'd)</p>		<p>The occupational group concept used by ICSC is different from that used by JIU: it is defined differently.</p> <p>Cf. report A/32/30 (1976) para. 219 and annex XI (classification of occupational groups: global schema) document ICSC/R.134 (June 1978) document ICSC/R.187 (July 1979)</p> <p>The Commission identifies 4 levels of categorization:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the occupational group - the "family" - the field of work - the occupation of speciality, but without specifying the relationship which may exist between these levels, levels of qualification and career paths. 	<p>- 1980: resolution 35/210, annex, paragraph 2.</p> <p>"2. Distinction shall be made between:</p> <p>(a) Occupations for which it is reasonable to expect several vacancies each year;</p> <p>(b) Those for which recruitment will be open only at widely spaced intervals.</p> <p>3. For posts falling under category 2 (a), job descriptions shall be complemented by an "occupational description", which will outline the main functions, the minimum level of qualifications and the desirable supplementary qualifications."</p> <p>- 1979: resolution 34/165. The General Assembly expresses its satisfaction with the action taken by the Commission under articles 13 and 14 of its statute.</p> <p>- 1980: resolution 35/214. The General Assembly notes the progress made by the Commission under the authority given to it under articles 13 and 14 of its statute.</p>	<p>The United Nations provided ICSC with its comments on the number of levels and on the lack of comparability within the various occupational levels established by the Commission. An attempt at statistical classification of occupations using the Commission's method was undertaken.</p>
<p>3. Job classification</p>	<p>Having preferred to focus its attention on the establishment of occupational groups, JIU has never made any recommendations on the introduction of job classification systems. On the other hand, since the system has now been introduced, it has requested the acceleration and completion of the on going classification exercises:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - comprehensive job classification programme for Professional staff (for 1977) - comprehensive job classification programme for the General Service category (for 1978) (cf. JIU report JIU/REP/76/8 (A/31/264) paras. 33 A and B) 	<p>The Commission has repeatedly dealt with job classification: cf. the following paragraphs of its annual reports:</p> <p>218-220 (A/32/30);</p> <p>309-314 and annex III (A/33/30);</p> <p>189-260 (A/34/30);</p> <p>234-258, 263-264 and annexes XII, XIII, XIV (A/35/30).</p> <p>In accordance with the provisions of articles 13 and 14 of its statute, this work culminated in the promulgation and testing of the common system job classification Master Standard (Tier I). The Commission is still working on the preparation of grade-level standards (Tier II).</p>	<p>- Resolution 31/193 B</p> <p>- Resolution 35/214: The General Assembly:</p> <p>"2. Notes the decision of the Secretary-General to implement the Master Standard of job classification, beginning on 1 January 1981;</p> <p>3. Invites the Commission, the Secretary-General and the heads of the Organizations which have accepted the Commission's statute to co-operate fully in the implementation of the common standards of job classification established by the Commission, ensuring appropriate consideration of the individual situation and requirements of each organization and the most economic use of resources;"</p>	<p>The United Nations has introduced a job classification system for Professionals. The classification exercise for jobs in the General Service category is not quite complete. However, the classification system used is different from the one advocated by ICSC. The Office of Personnel Services has indicated that the implementation of the Master Standard adopted by ICSC will not be without difficulties and will take time.</p>

Subject	JIU recommendations	ICSC recommendations	General Assembly resolutions	Action taken at the United Nations
<p>II <u>RECRUITMENT</u></p> <p>4 Movement from the General Service category to the Professional category</p>	<p>The introduction of a competitive examination for movement from GS to P, recommended by JIU since 1971, was approved in principle by the General Assembly in 1974 (decision of 18 December 1974), the details are laid down in 1973 (res 33/143)</p> <p>(Cf JIU recommendations JIU/REP/71/7 (A/26/54) rec 14 JIU/REP/76/8 (A/C.5/32/57) para 23 JIU/REP/78/4 (A/33/228) rec 2 JIU/REP/80/9 (A/35/418) rec 1</p>	<p>The Commission does not appear to have adopted a position on this matter</p>	<p>Resolution 33/143, I, 1 (c) The General Assembly states that Movement of staff from the General Service category to the Professional category should be limited to the P 1 and P 2 levels and be permitted up to 30 per cent of the total posts available for appointment at those levels and such recruitment should be conducted exclusively through competitive methods of selection from General Service staff with at least five years experience and post secondary educational qualifications</p> <p>Resolution 35/210, annex III, 10 (a)</p>	<p>Despite the difficulties arising from the transition from the old to the new system, the competitive examination for movement from GS to P has now become firmly entrenched (1st examination late 1979 early 1980, 2nd examination in 1981, annual examinations planned in subsequent years within the limit of 30 per cent of vacant P 1/P 2 posts)</p>
<p>5 Introduction of a junior competitive examination for the recruitment of young Professionals</p>	<p>The introduction of a competitive examination for the recruitment of young Professionals has been repeatedly recommended by JIU since 1977</p> <p>(Cf JIU recommendations JIU RDP 71/7 (A/26/54) rec 3 JIU NOTE/77/1 rec 4 and rec 5 JIU REP 78/4 (A/33/228) rec 5 JIU/REP 80/9 (A/35/418) rec 2)</p> <p>The General Assembly has also given its views on this matter on several occasions (see third column)</p>	<p>The Commission has not yet taken an official position on this matter. At its sixth and seventh sessions, it gave preliminary consideration to recruitment problems and "noted with interest" the JIU proposals in JIU/NOTE/77/1 on competitive examinations. However, the Commission considered (A/33/30, para 327) that "in order to improve recruitment and career development, the nature, types, levels and duration of jobs existing within the organizations had first to be determined. The Commission therefore intends to deal with the question of recruitment at a later stage in accordance with its work programme (cf A/35/30, para 289 and annex XVI, which specifies that evaluation procedures including the use of competitive examinations will be discussed at some unspecified date on the basis of a CCAK paper)</p>	<p>Resolution 33/143, I, 1 (h) states that Competitive methods of recruitment should be used, in consultation with the Governments concerned, or organized on a national, subnational or regional basis, for selection of staff at the P 1 and P 2 levels with a view to making the geographical distribution of posts in the Secretariat more equitable</p> <p>Resolution 35/210, annex, III, para 10 At the P 1 and P 2 levels, recruitment shall be made as far as possible through competitive examinations</p> <p>A transitional plan ending 31 December 1980 shall be established for recruitment progressively the method of competitive examination, with due regard paid to the principle of equitable geographical distribution</p> <p>These competitive examinations will be revised on a national basis, in consultation with the Governments concerned. They shall contain measures to protect the confidentiality and objectivity of the methods of selection and to ensure that the methods of testing take into account the cultural and linguistic diversity of the membership of the United Nations. They shall be geared to candidates with at least a first level university degree. The examinations should be based on written tests in one of the official languages of the United Nations, including a general test, specialized examination, occupational groups and personal interviews. They may be organized simultaneously in groups of countries, but a given number of vacancies should be defined and offered to each country in advance, taking into account the geographical representation of each member State. A reserve list shall be established from which all P 1 and P 2 posts will be filled.</p>	<p>Competitive recruitment examinations have been held successfully in five countries since 1974. The holding of competitive examinations on a regular basis was launched with the adoption of resolution 35/210 in 1980. In 1981, competitive examinations were held in two countries, and will soon be held in the others. It seems that this procedure is at last coming into general use</p>

Subject	JIU recommendations	ICSC recommendations	General Assembly resolutions	Action taken at the United Nations
II. <u>RECRUITMENT</u> (cont'd) 6. Recruitment roster	<p>On various occasions, JIU has recommended the compilation and better use of the recruitment roster.</p> <p>(Cf. JIU/REP/71/7 (A/8454) rec. 4 JIU/REP/76/8 (A/C.5/32/57) paras. 17 and 18 JIU/NOTE/77/1 rec. 6 JIU/REP/77/4 rec. 5 JIU/REP/78/4 (A/33/228) rec. 3 JIU/REP/80/9 (A/35/418) rec. 4)</p>	<p>The Commission does not appear to have taken an official position on the rosters.</p>	<p>By its decision of 18 December 1974 the General Assembly endorsed the principle of the roster and has reverted to the matter on several occasions.</p> <p>- Resolution 32/17 B, para. 3</p> <p>- Resolution 33/143 I, 1 (c) states that: "Composition of the roster of candidates should be improved, in order to make it more geographically representative and make it better reflect the recruitment needs of the Secretariat among various occupational groups as well as to increase the number of women on the roster, and, prior to filling a vacancy, a thorough search should be made of the roster for suitable candidates"</p> <p>- Resolution 35/210, annex IV</p>	<p>Although the roster is in existence, technical improvements are still required if it is really to be used effectively. The work in progress on the definition of "occupations" is a step in the right direction. A roster of internal candidates is also being compiled</p>
7. Recruitments planning	<p>JIU recommendations:</p> <p>1971 - JIU/REP/71/7 (A/8454) rec. 2 (Institution of a long-term recruitment plan)</p> <p>1977 - JIU/NOTE/77/7 rec. 3 (Simplified method for forecasting recruitment needs and suggestion to ICSC to publish an annual forecast of recruitment needs)</p> <p>1980 - JIU/REP/80/9 (A/35/418) rec. 4 (Systematization of the use of rosters)</p>	<p>The Commission considered this question at its seventh session (A/33/30, para. 318) expressing the need for "a comprehensive, forward-looking human resources management system which would make possible, among other things the advance planning of recruitment actions." Under its work programme (A/33/30, annex XVI), the Commission intends to take up the question again at a later stage.</p>	<p>- By its decision of 18 December 1974, the General Assembly implicitly adopted recommendation No. 2 of JIU report JIU/REP/71/7.</p> <p>- Section II of the annex to resolution 35/210 (1980) states that:</p> <p>"8. In order to facilitate the search for and the appointment of qualified candidates, particularly from unrepresented and under-represented countries and from among women, an annual work plan of recruitment shall be established. The plan shall indicate:</p> <p>(a) General data on the estimated number of recruitments by grade and broad occupational groups;</p> <p>(b) The targets to be reached during the year as to the number of candidates to be recruited from unrepresented and under-represented countries and among women, in accordance with the targets established by the relevant General Assembly resolutions;</p> <p>(c) The various means by which recruitment will be undertaken, such as competitive examinations, publicity or recruitment missions.</p> <p>9. The Secretary-General will report to the General Assembly each year on the implementation of the plan."</p>	<p>A long-term recruitment plan was drawn up in 1970 for the period 1972-1977; however, the plan was too sophisticated and did not respond to actual needs. Simpler tools were subsequently designed (based on retirement forecasts and recruitment statistics of previous years). Pursuant to the provisions of resolution 35/210, an annual work plan of recruitment is in preparation.</p>

Subject	JIU recommendations	ICSC recommendations	General Assembly resolutions	Action taken at the United Nations
10. Career concept	<p>No definition has been proposed in previous reports, but there are many recommendations which contribute to the development of this concept</p> <p>- The relevant recommendations are quoted in the paragraphs of this table dealing with occupational groups, types of contract, the proportion of career staff and staff on fixed-term appointments, performance appraisal, promotions and guaranteed advancement, linked grades, rotation, training and career planning.</p>	The same applies to ICSC.	Resolution 35/210 of 1980 is the first to refer to the "career concept": it requests ICSC and JIU to study it further.	See hereunder for the various career components: performance appraisal, training, promotion, etc.
11. Performance appraisal	JIU report JIU/REP/TI/7 (A/8454) Recommendation No. 8. New model periodic reports, two-level classification, points system.	<p>ICSC reports to the General Assembly at its thirty-fourth session (A/34/30, para. 228) and thirty-fifth session (A/35/30, paras. 266-281):</p> <p>- peer appraisal should be discouraged but second-level supervisors should be involved in the appraisal process;</p> <p>- definition of objectives of appraisal (work-related, career development communication, administrative)</p> <p>These conclusions are provisional</p> <p>- Working paper ICSC/R 216 of 16 June 1980 proposes, <i>inter alia</i>:</p> <p>- a method based on identifying objectives in advance,</p> <p>- a system requiring evaluations to conform to a bell-shaped curve by the use of a forced distribution or by having fixed percentages or ranges of percentages which govern the use of each evaluation level or by some other similar means. (In the model performance appraisal forms, this suggestion has been adopted in the form of categorization of staff members in one of 4 quartiles.)</p>	No resolution on performance appraisal techniques.	A new performance appraisal system was introduced at the United Nations in February 1977. The system provides for dialogue between the staff members and his/her immediate Supervisor
12. Promotions and guaranteed advancement opportunities	<p>In 1971, JIU recommended that the Secretary-General should specify the minimum, maximum and average period for a staff member in a particular vocational group to spend at each grade level. Concept of "average rate of advancement" (JIU report JIU/REP/TI/7 (A/8454) rec No. 1, para. d)</p> <p>It also recommended replacing the Appointment and Promotion Committee with Training and Career Planning Committees, each specializing in a particular vocational group (recommendation No. 12)</p> <p>Recommendation No. 16 of the same report recommended the establishment of a clear relationship between level of qualifications and grade and the identification of 4 "levels of qualification" (basic university, first-stage professional experience, great professional experience, and management) and a numerical restructuring of grades (On the promotion of General Service staff to the Professional category, see para. 4 of this table)</p>	Promotion policy will be considered by the Commission at a future session.	Decision of 18 June 1974 endorsing JIU recommendations	No action appears to have been taken on this matter.

Subject	JIU recommendations	ICSC recommendations	General Assembly resolutions	Action taken at the United Nations
13. Linked grades	In 1980, JIU suggested that the Secretary-General should be requested to carry out a study on the possibility of extending methods of recruitment by competitive examination to a number of P-3 posts and, in particular, to examine the possibility of instituting a P-2/P-3 post category, and to report on the subject to the General Assembly in 1981 (cf. JIU report JIU/REP/80/9 (A/35/418) rec. No. 3).	ICSC has not so far taken an official position on the subject of grade linking. However, in various documents, the ICSC secretariat has maintained that such linking was incompatible with the positions already adopted on job classification.	No mention of linked grades.	The Secretary-General has agreed to study the possibility of introducing a P-2/P-3 post category.
14. Rotation	In 1978, JIU proposed that in the Professional category a link should be established between rotation between duty stations and promotion possibilities (cf. JIU report JIU/REP/78/4 (A/33/228) rec. No. 4).	ICSC has stated that career development programmes facilitate staff mobility both between organizations and within organizations between different duty stations by planning assignments well enough in advance to avoid some of the obstacles which arise when staff are required to move at short notice (cf. report A/34/30, para. 214 (c)).	In resolution 33/143 (1978) the General Assembly stated that: "Professional staff of the United Nations should be encouraged to work at more than one duty station and satisfactory performance during such tours of duty should be considered an additional positive factor in evaluating them for promotion."	The United Nations has begun to take this recommendation into account, but rotation is not yet an integral part of career plans.
15. Training	In 1971, JIU proposed: - Adoption of a comprehensive training programme; - Establishment of training and career planning committees; - Establishment of a prerecruitment training programme for the benefit of the least privileged national civil services and in the interest of the United Nations to train competent specialists in public administration, economics and the various specialized professional fields of activity of United Nations Professionals. (cf. JIU report JIU/REP/71/7 (A/26/54) recommendations Nos. 10, 12 and 6.)	ICSC devoted two paragraphs of its report A/35/30 to "management training programmes". It "endorsed the principle that management training programmes be developed within the organizations of the common system" and suggested a number of principles on which they should be based. It mentioned (para. 217 of report A/34/30) training courses as one component of a career development programme.	No reference to training matters.	An effort has been made with the establishment of a staff development programme, but the current training programme differs significantly from the one recommended by JIU, while the integration of the training system with a career development system has still to be achieved.
16. Career planning	In 1971, JIU recommended the institution of an assignment planning system with individual standard career plans offered by the Organization to each Professional staff member and comprising mutual (i.e. contractual) commitments for a period of 6 years and non-contractual indications for a longer period, together with the establishment of a career planning unit (cf. JIU report JIU/REP/71/7 (A/26/54) rec. No. 9).	In its report to the General Assembly in 1979 (A/34/30, para. 217), the Commission worked out the "components of a career development programme" in 7 steps: - Identification/reassessment of career needs and abilities - Information exchange - career counselling - Development of tentative career plans - Integration of career plans - Implementation of career plans - Review and evaluation of implemented action - Information exchange - assessment of career action taken - A preliminary document (ICSC/R.216 of 16 June 1980) suggests model printed forms which can be used both for performance appraisal and establishment of career plans.	Decision of 18 December 1974 endorsing JIU recommendations.	1978: Secretary-General's bulletin ST/SGB/166 advocates the establishment of career development committees. One such committee - in the Department of Public Information - has been set up and has submitted an initial report. However, no career planning machinery is operating as yet.

ANNEX III

Length of service of staff members in the Professional category
holding fixed-term contracts

	Less than 5 years	5 to 10 years	10 to 15 years	15 to 20 years	20 to 25 years	More than 25 years
United Nations	78.5%	16.0%	4.4%	0.6%	0.3%	0.2%
UNDP	79.4	10.9	5.6	1.6	0.6	1.3
UNHCR	94.0	3.0	3.0	0	0	0
UNICEF	89.1	9.3	0.8	0	0.8	0
UNRWA	87.5	12.5	0	0	0	0
ILO	73.9	19.6	4.4	0.7	0.7	0.7
FAO	76.1	21.1	2.1	0.5	0.2	0
UNESCO	54.9	27.5	14.7	1.9	0.5	0.5
WHO	43.3	27.2	13.7	9.1	3.5	3.2
ICAO	81.0	9.5	3.9	1.1	1.1	3.4
UPU	100.0	0	0	0	0	0
ITU	62.5	27.5	10.0	0	0	0
WMO	65.5	24.6	4.9	0	4.9	0
IMCO	54.3	40.0	5.7	0	0	0
IAEA	63.4	20.4	11.1	5.1	0	0
GATT	85.1	6.4	4.3	2.1	0	2.1

Source: Table on page 87 of the UNITAR study referred to in the foot-note to paragraph 9 of this report. Data compiled by ICSC (probably for 1975).

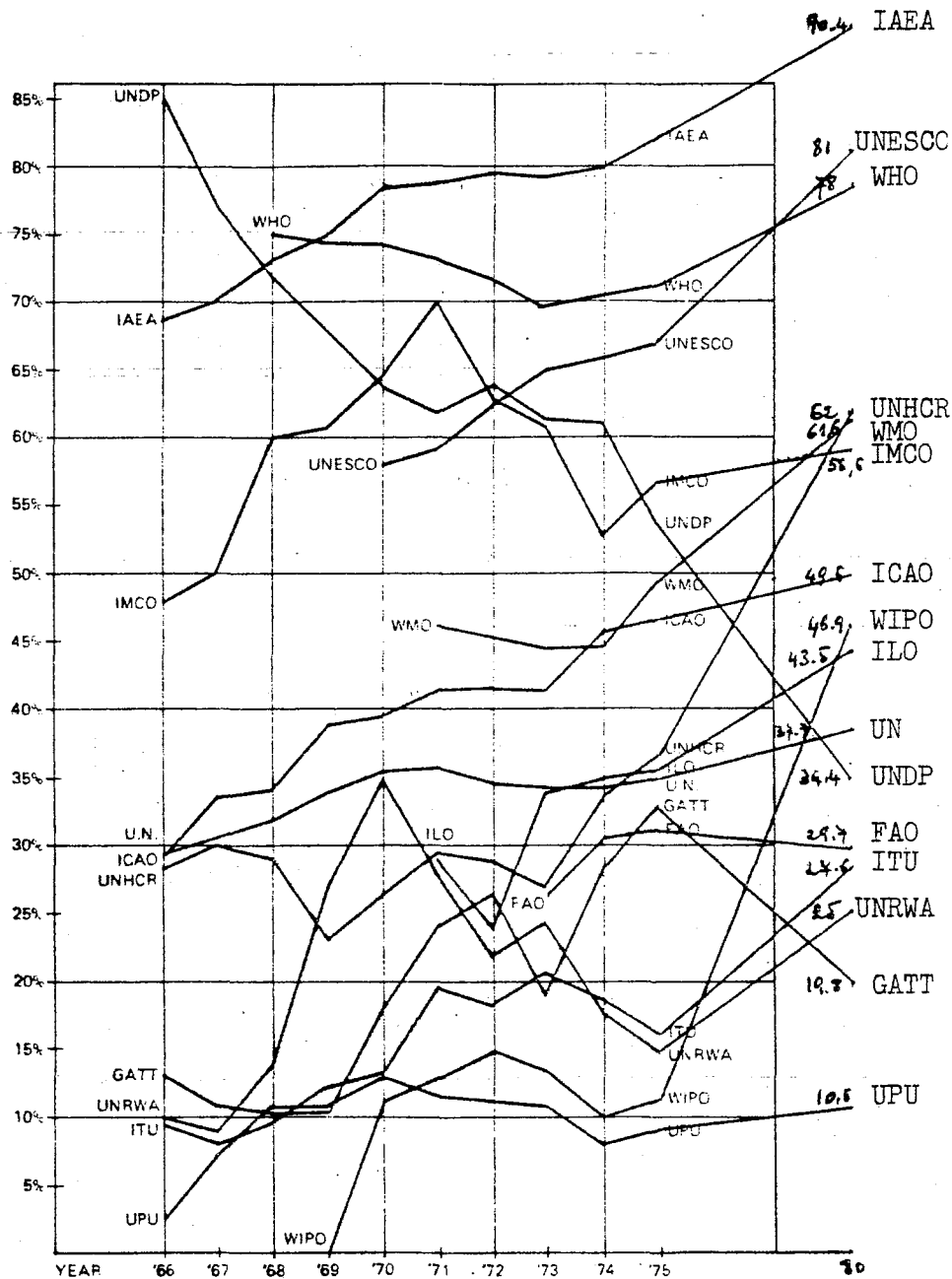
This table clearly shows that a considerable number of staff members succeed in making a career in their respective organizations by means of a succession of fixed-term contracts. It can be seen that in four organizations (IAEA, ITU, WHO and UNESCO) it is entirely possible to follow a career for periods exceeding 15 years by means of fixed-term contracts. The IAEA figures are particularly striking, with fixed-term contracts for more than 80 per cent of the total number of Professional posts in 1975 (see annex IV). This means that a large number of IAEA staff members can look forward to a career extending over 10 or 15 years on the basis of fixed-term contracts.

The table unfortunately fails to show what happens to holders of fixed-term contracts when such contracts are no longer renewed, and what proportion of them have their contracts converted to career contracts.

ANNEX IV

Percentage movement of fixed-term appointments
1966-1980*

(Staff members in the Professional category)



* This table has been drawn up on the basis of the table on page 83 of the study entitled "The International Civil Service; Changing Role and Concepts", published by UNITAR in 1980. The data have been updated for 1980 on the basis of the annual CCAQ statistics (ACC/1981/PER/14, table 4, p. 12).

ANNEX V

Basic features of the personnel systems of a few international organizations

Characteristics	EEC	OECD	Council of Europe	World Bank	Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA)	United Nations
Number of staff members	17,900 (including 6,400 Professionals) Commission: 9,192 (3,700 F) Parliament: 2,927 (904 F) Council: 2,074 (657 F)	1,717 (including 649 Professionals)	824 (including 558 Professionals)	About 6,000 (including 2,500 Professionals)	?	12,694* (including 3,814 Professionals) * Excluding project personnel
Categories of staff	A - Administrators L - Translators, Interpreters B - Administrative Assistants C - Clerks, Secretaries D - Manual Workers	A - Administrators L - Translators, Interpreters B - Administrative Assistants, Clerks, Secretaries C - Technical Services, Manual Workers	A L B C	One single category consisting of 18 levels (A-Q). Levels J-Q correspond to professional functions.	Two categories: Professional, General Service	P - Professional G - General Service
Geographical quotas	Only for senior grades A1 and A2 (Director-General and Director).	No rigid quotas.	Quotas exist, but are applied rigidly only for "political" posts (A6, A7, Deputy Secretary-General).	No quotas but recruitment is on as wide a geographical basis as possible.	Very rigid quotas exist.	Quotas exist.
Types of appointment	A very high percentage of permanent appointments (between 85 and 95% according to organization). Before permanent appointment, probationary period of 9 months for A staff, 6 months for other staff. Very few secondments.	More than 60% permanent contracts. A permanent contract is normally granted after 2-5 years on fixed-term contracts. Few secondments (about 5%).	After probationary period of 2 years for A and L staff and 1 year for B and C staff, staff members are normally appointed on a permanent basis. A few fixed term appointments for budgetary reasons. A few secondments.	In 95 cases out of 100, staff members offered permanent appointments after a 1-year probationary period. Fixed-term contracts are given usually at the request of the person concerned (e.g. in the case of secondments).	All staff members are appointed for fixed 4-year terms (usually renewable once).	68 3/4% permanent contracts 37.7% fixed-term contracts (Professionals)
Recruitment methods (Professionals)	Competitive examinations (written + oral) for base recruitment (for 95% of staff). 5% of staff are specialists recruited on ad hoc basis. Political appointments possible at senior levels.	Competitive recruitment examinations for junior staff in planning stage. External and internal candidates to be examined simultaneously.	Regular holding of competitive recruitment examinations (written + oral) for "junior" posts (A2/A3), as well as for L and B staff. Competitive recruitment at all levels for external and internal candidates, using written tests or interviews as appropriate.	Regular (twice a year) competitive selection procedures (series of interviews) for recruitment of young Professionals (Young Professionals Program). Recruitment possible at all levels (but in principle not of persons over 50 years of age). Priority given to internal candidates.	Staff appointed upon nomination by member State, subject to number of posts and grades allotted to each State.	Competitive recruitment examinations for language staff. Competitive recruitment examinations for junior Professionals becoming more widespread. Recruitment at all levels. Priority given to internal candidates.
Occupational groups	Professionals are recruited on the basis of separate competitive examinations for each field of activity of the Communities (translators, interpreters, economists, administrators, generalists etc.).			Some 20 "functional streams" identified (e.g. economist, financial analyst, computer expert, debt specialist etc.). Grade linking levels can vary somewhat from stream to stream.		
Access to Professional category by staff in other categories	Annual competitive examination for movement from category B to category A for up to 10% of vacant A7 and A6 posts.	Movement possible without competitive examination.	Category B staff may under certain conditions sit for external recruitment competitive examinations for category A.			Annual competitive examination for promotion from G to P for up to 30% of vacant P-1/P-2 posts.
Linked grades	Two groups of linked grades: A7/A6 (Administrator) and A5/A4 (Principal Administrator). Staff member must change jobs in order to move from first to second group of linked grades.	Grades A2 and A3 are linked. Since it is possible to be appointed at grade A1 (although there are no A1 posts), a staff member can be promoted twice at the start of his or her career without changing jobs.	All A2 and A3 grades are linked.	70% of Professional posts involve three-level grade linking. Staff change jobs when they move to "manager" posts (structural promotion).		None.
Job classification	None.	Exists.	Exists (rudimentary).	Exists.		Exists.

ANNEX VI

Grade linking

(Excerpt from "Working paper No. 1", dated 7 May 1981, submitted by the Joint Inspection Unit to the members of the International Civil Service Commission)

(...)

A. Grade linking and its role in career development

5. Grade linking means defining jobs spanning two grades so that the staff members concerned can be promoted after a certain number of years from one grade to another (for example, jobs defined as P-2/P-3 or P-3/P-4, etc.). The same functions can thus be performed by a staff member who has acquired accumulated experience on the job. The purpose of the institution is thus to enable some staff members to remain in the same job, for example, 8 to 10 years, with possibilities for promotion while performing the same functions.

6. Grade linking enables a job classification system based on the principle of "rank in the job" to be made compatible with rational career development in an organization. A job classification system applying relatively precise methods of calculation such as that recommended by ICSC through its "Master Standard" might make career development very difficult, if applied too rigidly. The Commission itself recognized the existence of this difficulty in its report to the thirty-fourth session (A/34/30) when it explained that "job classification can lead in particular instances to results which may impede career development" (para. 225) and that "the determination of career paths among jobs ... does not imply any guaranteed movement of individuals along those paths" (para. 222).

7. Career development in a too rigidly applied job classification system might resemble the well-known game of musical chairs, where the players must rush to any empty seat in order not to be losers. Such a system owes more to chance than to organization, since it is not possible to foresee which posts will become vacant, and it might, moreover, lead to too frequent job changes, making it impossible for an administrative unit to retain for a reasonable period the services of a staff member who has acquired valuable experience on the job.

8. Career development should, unquestionably, in some cases encourage the rotation of staff members between different administrative units but this rotation must be organized according to the requirements of the departments and the training requirements of staff members and not to an automatic impetus applying indiscriminately to all types of functions and all posts. The rotation plans must vary according to the types of occupations. There are occupations where it is vital to be able to retain the same staff members in the same jobs for 10 years, for example, and where it is therefore desirable to be able to grant them promotion without their being obliged to change jobs.

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9. I have no intention of giving here a complete list of cases of this kind, but a few examples may be given. They concern, essentially, functions in which the specific experience acquired in a department may be utilized in the same job for periods exceeding the average term for promotion from one grade to another. This happens chiefly in grades to which young persons with good theoretical knowledge, a suitable academic background and even some professional experience, but not specific professional experience of the functions which they have to perform, are recruited. It is clearly desirable, when after one or two years they normally reach their full performance capacity in these functions, having acquired knowledge and experience of the problems of the branch in question in the framework of an international organization, to be able to continue to use them for several more years in the same job and to be able to promote them at the time when they deserve it, without waiting for a hypothetical vacancy in the same department at the next highest grade. The specific professional experience of the officers responsible for wood problems in the Economic Commission for Europe or of the officers responsible for problems relating to invisibles or maritime navigation in UNCTAD can hardly be acquired outside the departments which deal with those questions. It is a complex whole which includes, inter alia, a knowledge of the approaches of international organizations to those problems, various details of national policies in the field under consideration and studies by various delegations on those problems. The majority of P-3 (or P-4) posts in most of the substantive departments require specific professional experience of this kind, whether the incumbents are Research Officers, Economic Affairs Officers, Social Affairs Officers, Political Affairs Officers or Industrial Development Officers. In purely administrative occupations, it is equally true that the functions of Budget Officers, Recruitment Officers or Personnel Officers require experience of the same kind if they are to be performed with real efficiency.

10. Special requirements of a similar nature may also exist in the case of higher grades wherever it seems desirable to retain a staff member in the same job for periods in excess of the normal waiting-period for promotion to a higher grade. P-3/P-4 or P-4/P-5 posts might thus in certain cases, but less frequently than in the case of posts at the beginning of a career, solve the problems raised by this type of situation.

11. To sum up, generally speaking, the concept of linked grades seems justified by the need to provide in career paths for the possibility of retaining some staff members in the same functions and in the same posts for periods exceeding the average term for promotion from one grade to another.

B. Compatibility of grade linking with positions already adopted by ICSC

12. ICSC's adoption of a position in favour of job classification on the basis of the rank-in-the-job principle is by no means incompatible with the grade linking method. It is up to the heads of service concerned, who are competent in the methods to be used to execute their work programmes, and not for the classifiers, to draw up job descriptions which correspond to what they judge to be their personnel needs. Every head of service who considers that he needs, in certain cases, to retain staff members in the same functions for periods exceeding

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the average for transition from one grade to another can thus draw up job descriptions requiring a minimum of theoretical knowledge and a specific level of professional experience increasing progressively with the experience required in the job itself. It does not seem to me that the principles of job classification contain an element that is absolutely opposed to this degree of flexibility.

13. More generally, it would be sufficient to stipulate that a job defined and classified according to the Commission's Master Standards as P-3 could be filled at P-2 "for recruitment requirements". This method would thus be the generalization of a practice which is already very widespread and is regarded as quite normal and acceptable, namely, appointment and payment of a P-2 level staff member against a P-3 post or a P-3 level staff member against a P-4 post, etc.

14. To sum up, the system of grade linking, far from being incompatible with the rank-in-the-job principle, seems, on the contrary, to provide the degree of flexibility indispensable for making the interest of the organizations compatible with the normal career development of the staff, and, in fact, it introduces into the classification system the advantages of the rank-in-person method without having the drawbacks of that method.

C. Grade linking and financial management

15. Grade linking makes it possible, if certain conditions are respected, to improve the financial management of the organizations. In the present system of job classification, the necessity of finding a vacancy at the next highest level before a promotion that has been approved in principle by the appointment and promotion committees of the various organizations can take effect leads, in numerous cases, heads of departments to propose post reclassifications on the most diverse pretexts or the creation of new posts at senior levels in order to make the promotion of their staff possible. Such phenomena occur so frequently that they result in a permanent inflationary effect on the grade pyramid of the organizations.

16. These phenomena are often due to legitimate considerations. The system of job classification does not enable the incumbent of a post to be promoted easily at the time when he should normally receive a promotion, particularly in the sometimes narrow framework of posts available in a particular administrative unit. It is thus normal for a head of department, who wishes to retain a staff member who is useful or even indispensable to the proper execution of a programme, to seek a way out of this blocked situation. It is, however, regrettable that the only possible solutions should be reclassification of a post on an ad hoc imaginary pretext or the creation of a new post.

17. The system of post linking, on the contrary, offers a solution to this kind of situation and could thus make it possible to reduce the inflationary effect on the grade pyramid. However, one basic condition must be respected: the linked posts must always be filled at the lower of the two grades.

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18. However, this condition is easy to fulfil. It is sufficient to establish a rule that, when the incumbent of one of the P-2/P-3, P-3/P-4 or other linked posts leaves that post for any reason (transfer, retirement, death, etc.), he can be replaced only by a staff member entering at the level of the starting grade, i.e. P-2 in the case of a P-2/P-3 post, P-3 in the case of a P-3/P-4 post, etc., the only permissible exception being that of the transfer to the post concerned of a staff member already at the higher grade. It is an essential condition for ensuring the proper functioning of the machinery (whatever may be the drawbacks for departments in the unlikely cases of simultaneous departures of too many incumbents of posts of this kind in the same administrative unit).

19. In the event that, following convergent recommendations on the subject by ICSC and JIU, the organizations adopt or develop the system of linked grades, it should be understood that these posts can only be developed by linking a lower grade to the post grade currently existing in the organizations. This would mean, for example, that if an organization decided to create new P-2/P-3 grades, this could only be done by transforming existing P-3 grades (not P-2 grades) and so on (P-3/P-4 in the case of the transformation of P-4 grades, etc.) for all the grades under consideration. These decisions would, moreover, lead to savings in the immediate future, since all the new incumbents of these posts would be recruited at the next lowest grade.

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ANNEX VII

Types of appointment

(Excerpt from "Working paper No. 3", dated 8 June 1981, submitted by the Joint Inspection Unit to the members of the International Civil Service Commission)

(...)

The (...) concept of fixed-term contracts (...) covers a range of administrative realities, and is not devoid of ambiguity. The same term is applied to "genuine" fixed-term contracts (where the person concerned knows at the time of signature that his contract will not be renewed) and "spurious" fixed-term contracts (where the person concerned may consider it more or less certain that his contract will be regularly renewed).

(...)

At the legal level, only slight differences now exist between the two situations with respect to the system of indemnities (cf. United Nations Staff Rules 109.3 and 109.4, and Staff Regulations, annex III). On the other hand, the psychological situation of the staff member differs depending on whether he is assured of a permanent contract (when no real penalty can be imposed on him if he fails to perform his duties satisfactorily) or whether he is in danger of finding his career at an end on the expiry of his current contract.

Moreover, the criteria at present in use for the granting of permanent or fixed-term contracts are not subject to very precise rules and take little account of the quality of work, competence or devotion to duty of the staff members concerned.

In the United Nations, for example, account is taken of the 'needs of the Secretariat', the type of post, the qualifications and characteristics of candidates at the time of recruitment and, perhaps most important, nationality (in the case of the initial contract). In addition, permanent contracts are, in principle, not granted to persons who have been seconded or to persons over 50 years of age.

Apart from the latter limitations relating to the personal characteristics of the staff member, the operation of the criteria used actually leave some room for discretion.

In these circumstances, the methods used do not - as would be desirable - succeed in reconciling the career guarantees that any staff member may legitimately claim with the need to create a climate of inducement to work. A definition of rules that would help to meet these needs more effectively is therefore required.

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The Joint Inspection Unit shares the view of the International Civil Service Commission that, in principle, it is possible to agree on the fact that the staff of the international organizations in the United Nations system should include a certain proportion of career staff, the remainder being recruited on the basis of fixed-term contracts for limited periods. It is, on the other hand, more difficult:

- to define the criteria on the basis of which the proportions between the two categories of staff should be established; and, above all,

- to define for these two categories, but particularly for career staff, the type of staff to be covered by them.

(...)

From the legal point of view, the main differences between the permanent contracts and the contracts of limited duration (renewable) at present in use are as follows:

- The holder of a permanent contract may not be dismissed without the payment of an indemnity which, in the United Nations (Staff Regulations, regulation 9.3 (b), and annex III), amounts to a number of months of salary approximately equal to the number of years of service (with a ceiling of 12 months' salary for 15 or more years of service);

- The holder of a fixed-term contract has no entitlement to any indemnity if his contract is not renewed at the end of the prescribed period. He is obviously entitled to an indemnity if his contract is terminated in the course of its performance. In the case of holders of this type of contract having less than five years' service, this indemnity is calculated on the basis of one week's salary per month of uncompleted service. After five years' service, the method of calculation is very similar to that for the termination indemnity for holders of permanent contracts.

This clearly shows that there is no real difference between permanent contracts and fixed-term contracts once the latter have been renewed beyond a period of five years.

(..)

The advantages and disadvantages of the various types of contract are also viewed differently depending on the general idea of what the international civil service should be. The divergent ideological positions in this respect, particularly as between the socialist countries and the Western countries, are well known. This does not mean that the positions on the subject would be irreconcilable if they were to become the subject of negotiation among Member States concerning the desirable ratios between the various types of contract.

The technical points to be taken into consideration in such negotiations would appear to be:

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(a) Arguments in favour of a substantial proportion of contracts of genuinely limited duration:

- The need to recruit, for limited periods, staff members with detailed knowledge of the most modern techniques in certain fields, or specialists whose services cannot be used again for other programmes;
- The need for changes in programmes, involving the termination of staff
- Respect for geographical distribution quotas (reducing the proportion of staff members from over-represented countries).

(b) Arguments in favour of a certain proportion of secondment contracts which are more or less the same as the technical arguments in favour of contracts of genuinely limited duration, with the additional argument as to the advantage of being able to train in the various national authorities, or in institutions or universities, staff members with a good knowledge of the United Nations system, thus facilitating relations between national civil services and the international organizations:

(c) Arguments in favour of a substantial proportion of permanent contracts:

- Career guarantees and guarantees for the rational development of the careers of the staff members.
- Competence, particularly with respect to knowledge of the United Nations and its system on the part of staff members in the various professional groups forming the backbone of the Secretariat.

The other arguments generally used - that permanent contracts are the only guarantees of the independence of the international civil service or, on the other hand, that contracts of limited duration are the only contracts comprising any inducement to work on the part of international civil servants - are ones which are open to a political interpretation and on whose validity this note takes no position; in this note an attempt has been made merely to show the relative nature of these arguments within the over-all technical context.

(...)

The determination of desirable proportions between the various types of contract cannot be effected arbitrarily: it must be based on a sound technical analysis of actual needs, but in the final analysis it will be the result of political negotiation reflecting the will of Member States. In other words, no purely technical machinery can establish a strict definition of the desirable proportions and the scope for negotiation is fairly broad. The important considerations in this area would appear to be the following.

The technical determination of the desirable proportions should be effected for each occupational group or in any event for each main type of occupational

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group. The arguments in favour of a career staff differ, for example, depending on whether the group concerns translators, administrative generalists, statisticians, librarians or legal officers.

In the case of each of these groups, attention should be paid to the arguments of their members and of the responsible heads of department or division in each organization in favour of career staff or seconded staff for the purposes of the best possible operation of the services concerned. It could, however, be visualized that, in the case of statisticians, for example, it should be possible to make fairly broad use of secondment contracts with the national statistical offices or services, perhaps more easily than in the case of translators. With respect to administrative generalists, the proportions between the four categories of contract could also probably make much more allowance than at present for secondment contracts if secondment agreements were concluded with a number of national authorities and, in particular, their various ministries (ministries of finance, civil service ministries, public institutes of administrative studies, financial control bodies, auditing bodies, etc.).

In order to reach decisions for the establishment of proportions, technical studies leading to proposals for each occupational group should be requested from the secretariat of each organization. In the light of such proposals, negotiation leading to final decisions could be undertaken among Member States.