



Report on recurrent publications of the United Nations

by

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**Geneva
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Table of Contents

	<u>Paragraphs</u>	<u>Pages</u>
SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS		
INTRODUCTION	1-11	1
Definition of Recurrent Publications	2-5	1
Approach	6	2
General Comments	7-11	3
CHAPTER I - GENERAL OBSERVATIONS	12-43	5
Delays in Publication	16-20	6
Quality of Recurrent Publications	21-24	7
Control of Expenditures	25-34	9
Sales Policy	35-39	12
Responsibility of UN to Scholars	40-41	13
Reports of Meetings and Seminars	42-43	14
CHAPTER II - USER SURVEY	44-57	15
Most Useful Recurrent Publications	49-51	16
Least Useful Recurrent Publications	52-56	17
CHAPTER III - OFFICE OF LEGAL AFFAIRS	58-90	20
CHAPTER IV - DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS (Including Regional Economic Commissions)	91-183	30
Tax Agreement Series	92-97	30
Statistical Publications	98-142	32
Economic and Social Affairs Publications	143-172	42
Other Publications	173-183	48
CHAPTER V - DIVISION OF HUMAN RIGHTS	184-192	51
CHAPTER VI - OFFICE OF PUBLIC INFORMATION	193-198	53
CHAPTER VII - UNITED NATIONS OFFICE AT GENEVA	199-203	55
CHAPTER VIII - UNIDO	204-220	56
CHAPTER IX - UNCTAD	221-228	61
ANNEX A - UNITED NATIONS RECURRENT PUBLICATIONS		63
ANNEX B - FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF RECOMMENDATIONS		67

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The General Assembly should clarify further who has the authority to approve recurrent publications and to what extent such approval is binding on budgetary actions of the General Assembly (paragraph 5).
2. Every recurrent publication approved by the Publications Board should be processed and distributed before the end of the next time period. For example, a yearbook for the period 1970 should be distributed before the end of 1971 (paragraph 19).
3. The following approach to improvement of the control and quality of publications should be tested:
 - (a) a procedure should be established whereby prior to the beginning of each fiscal year, those responsible for recurrent publications in each organizational unit of the UN (ESA, UNIDO, etc.) would be required to draft a work plan for each publication spelling out its authority, highlights of the text to be prepared plus probable conclusions and recommendations (if any), proposed method of reproduction, maximum number of pages, specific time-table, etc. Each such work plan would be approved in advance by the senior official designated for such purposes by the head of each organizational unit. There could be no deviation from the approved work plan without the signed approval of this senior official. Each person along the line in the editorial and printing sections, etc. would use this approved plan as a firm guide in processing the publication;
 - (b) before signing any of the proposed work plans, the designated senior official would have them collectively reviewed from the standpoint of ensuring that their implementation would not exceed the capacity of his organizational unit for such purposes, and that the costs involved were within the approved budget. He would represent his organizational unit in defending its publications programme before the Working Committee of the Publications Board;
 - (c) the regional economic commissions and the offices of UNDP Resident Representatives would play an expanded role in helping Member States to increase the completeness and accuracy of information about their countries which is used in recurrent publications (paragraph 23).

4. Steps should be taken now to introduce a more modern system of internal cost accounting for internal reproduction activities; and to bring more of the costs of internal reproduction together in one place in the Budget in anticipation of a more positive control of internal reproduction of publications in the near future through programme budgeting (paragraphs 26-29).
5. Further expansion of internal reproduction facilities in New York, Geneva or Vienna should not be undertaken until comparative cost studies of internal reproduction versus external printing have been completed as a basis for decisions on this matter (paragraph 34).
6. With respect to publications primarily of interest to scholars, it is recommended that the Publications Board require Departments to adopt the following guidelines:
 - (a) if a publication is regularly issued so late that it has only limited historical value, and its contents are available, even though in less convenient form, in UN Official Records and elsewhere, the publication should be discontinued;
 - (b) if a publication is of an academic type comparable to those found in professional journals, and is not based largely on unique first-hand information resulting from UN field projects and experience, the publication should be dropped (paragraph 41).
7. Publications which cover the proceedings of meetings and seminars should include only summaries of speeches and papers (paragraph 43).
8. Once a year each addressee on the official list for receiving recurrent publications should receive a notice for each such publication indicating that if he wishes to continue to receive this publication, he should complete an attached form. Depository libraries would not receive such notices because they would receive all UN recurrent publications (paragraph 54).
9. The General Assembly should consider the adoption of the following programme to reduce duplication in the collection, processing and publication of statistics:
 - (a) duplication of storage and processing by the UN family should be avoided through agreement on a single schedule of statistics to be collected from Member States; and through delegation of responsibility

to the Inter-Organization Board (IOB) for assigning data submitted according to this schedule, to "data banks" of the ICC being moved to Geneva, and also to the "data banks" of other parts of the UN family as considered appropriate;

- (b) IOB would be held responsible for conferring with members of the ACC, and with the Publications Board when data are requested for a publication which will seriously duplicate data already published elsewhere;
- (c) duplication between ESA and the regional commissions (other than ECE) should be reduced through an agreement that the Commissions would concentrate on (i) assembling commodity data on intra-regional trade by countries for purposes of action programmes designed to expand such trade, and (ii) assembling all available statistics on developing countries (except detailed commodity trade data) in one volume for each country in the region (paragraphs 101-106).

10. UNIDO's publications programme should be brought more nearly into balance with its capacity to control this programme, to be achieved in part through a reduction in its fund for consultants (paragraphs 218-220).

11. The following recurrent publications should be terminated:

- (a) United Nations Legislative Series (paragraphs 86-90);
- (b) Statistical Appendix of Economic Bulletin for Europe (paragraphs 116-117);
- (c) ECE statistical bulletins for coal, gas, and electrical energy - to be replaced by an Annual Bulletin of General Energy Statistics for Europe (paragraphs 118-119);
- (d) Indices of Concentration in the Coal Industry (paragraphs 120-121);
- (e) Transport of Dangerous Goods (paragraphs 122-123);
- (f) Statistics on Road Accidents in Europe (paragraphs 124-126);
- (g) Bulletin of Statistics on World Trade in Engineering Products (paragraphs 127-128);
- (h) Transport and Communication Bulletin (paragraphs 166-168);
- ✓(i) Annual Report of the International Map of the World (paragraphs 174-179);
- ✓(j) World Cartography (paragraphs 178-180).

12. The following recurrent publications should be significantly changed or merged with other publications:

- (a) United Nations Juridical Yearbook. It is recommended that the Sixth Committee of the General Assembly invite the Office of the Secretary-General to propose revisions in General Assembly resolution 1814 (XVII) in order to free its hands to limit the contents of this Yearbook to information not readily available elsewhere and thus sharply curtail its size. Also, the publication should be issued only every other year, renewed efforts should be made to find someone to prepare an index, and a fresh look should be taken at its sales policy (paragraphs 59-70);
- (b) Reports of International Arbitral Awards. Its distribution should be tailored to a highly specialized group, it should be available in one language only, and reproduced by a cheaper method (paragraphs 71-74);
- (c) Treaty Series and Cumulative Index. Steps should be taken now to lay out a programme for improving the Cumulative Index in anticipation of the completion of the Undex system of the UN Library and its extension into 1973 for it is not under UN auspices; and the possibilities should be thoroughly explored of (i) obtaining more uniform treaty and agreements submissions from which microfiches can be made without retyping and editing; and (ii) obtaining hard copy from the microfiches using a reader/printer or its equivalent (paragraphs 75-81);
- (d) Multilateral Treaties in Respect of which the Secretary-General Performs Depositary Functions. This publication should be issued only once every two years (paragraphs 82-85);
- ✓(e) International Tax Agreements Series. Overall responsibility should be transferred to the Office of Legal Affairs, but operational responsibility for processing this Series should remain with ESA as at present. This Series would become a sub-group of the Treaty Series, but it would retain its separate physical identity in recognition of its specialized group of users. The Cumulative Index of the Treaty Series would include a cross reference to the Index of the International Tax Agreements Series. When a tax agreement included in the latter Series was registered, it would be

noted in the Cumulative Index of the Treaty Series. Future regular volumes of the Treaty Series would exclude international tax agreements. The Index in Volume IX of the Tax Agreements Series should be put on a cumulative basis, and its items should be identified by Supplement Number. The world-wide country index in Volume VIII should be thoroughly reviewed. It has a four-year time-lag (paragraphs 92-97);

- (f) Monthly Bulletin of Statistics. This publication should be put on a quarterly basis in the future, the six years of historical data should be included only in one quarterly issue each year, and understandings should be sought with FAO to include key statistical data in the field of agriculture (paragraph 110);
- (g) Statistical Yearbook. It is proposed that this Yearbook either be issued only once every three years or that it be terminated and the issue of the Quarterly Bulletin of Statistics proposed above which includes the historical data take its place. If the latter alternative is chosen, certain data should be added to this Quarterly Bulletin that is now in the Statistical Yearbook but not in the present Monthly Bulletin (paragraphs 111-112);
- (h) Annual Bulletin of Housing and Building Statistics for Europe. This publication should become the Statistical Appendix of a revived publication issued every three years and entitled European Housing Trends and Policies (it was terminated about a decade ago) (paragraphs 129-132);
- (i) Quarterly Bulletin of Steel Statistics for Europe. This publication should either be put on an annual basis, or the annual historical data should be restricted to one quarterly issue a year (paragraphs 133-134);
- (j) Electric Power in Asia and the Far East. It should be issued only every other year (paragraph 136);
- (k) Foreign Trade Statistics for Asia and the Far East. This publication should be terminated, and replaced with a publication better designed to meet the needs of developing countries along the lines proposed in Recommendation 9 (c) above (paragraphs 137-139);

- (l) Statistical Bulletin for Latin America. The contents of this Bulletin should be reorganized by countries, as is the Statistical Yearbook for Asia and the Far East (paragraphs 140-142);
- (m) Annual economic surveys of ESA and regional economic commissions. These annual surveys should be restricted to a condensed summary of "how the various countries are doing". Consideration should be given to presenting such summaries as an integrated annual review for ECOSOC with inputs from the four regional commissions and ESA (paragraphs 144-147);
- (n) Journal of Development Planning. This Journal should either be terminated or be reoriented towards practical first-hand case studies and experiences of UN experts in the field, not articles consisting largely of mathematical analyses for which key statistics are not available in developing countries (paragraphs 148-152);
- (o) Newsletters. ESA should establish a clear policy regarding Newsletters (paragraphs 153-155);
- (p) Mineral Resources Development Series, Water Resources Series, and Regional Economic Co-operation Series, of ECAFE. Those publications in these Series which are reports on Conferences, Working Groups and Seminars, should be sharply reduced in size through limiting the texts to carefully prepared summaries of key ideas and information included in papers and addresses; they should be issued within a year after the meeting was held (paragraphs 160-161);
- (q) Bulletin on Narcotics. This Bulletin should receive more attention and support, and cover a range of topics more nearly comparable to those included in the initial volumes two decades ago (paragraphs 161-183);
- (r) Yearbook of Human Rights. This publication should be terminated, and replaced by a document more useful to the developing countries for purposes of guidance in strengthening their own laws and judicial decisions in the human rights field (paragraphs 185-192);
- (s) Yearbook of the United Nations. This Yearbook should in effect be merged with annual official reports of UN organs to provide a single publication for the General Assembly and others (paragraphs 193-198);

- (t) Proposed new monthly publication of UNIDO. Sympathetic consideration should be given to this imaginative proposal of UNIDO, which might eventually take the place of three other UNIDO publications (paragraphs 211-215);
- (u) UNCTAD recurrent publications. These publications should be reviewed from the standpoint of more emphasis on assistance and guidance with respect to country-level trade matters (paragraphs 225-228).

INTRODUCTION

1. This report has been prepared in response to paragraph 4 of resolution 2732 (XXV) adopted by the General Assembly on 16 December 1970, which:

"invites the Joint Inspection Unit, with reference to paragraphs 17, 18 and 19 of its report on documentation (see A/7576 and Corr.1) and further to paragraph 15 of General Assembly resolution 2609 (XXIV), to examine and report on the programme of recurrent publications of the United Nations with a view to drawing attention to those which have lost their usefulness or have become redundant or whose value may not measure up to the cost involved in continuing them, and to submit its findings and recommendations to the Assembly at its twenty-sixth session along with the report referred to by the Secretary-General in his report on the pattern of conferences dated 22 September 1970, (A/C.5/1300)".

Definition of recurrent publications

2. The first problem encountered in responding to this request was the identification of those documents which were to be included in "the programme of recurrent publications". Only those recurrent publications that may be printed externally are listed individually in the UN budget, and changes occur each year. However, the Publications Board reviews annually all recurrent publications, both those which are printed externally under contract and those reproduced internally, and those agreed to with officials of the Publications Board for the purpose of this study are listed in Annex A.

3. It should be noted that the list of recurrent publications in Annex A includes only those which the Publications Board has determined to be properly authorized. Also, the quotation on page 1 above from the General Assembly resolution clearly restricts the requested study to an examination of the substantive merits of the programme of recurrent publications, and does not include a review of the authority for these documents.

4. The judgment of the Publications Board that all of the listed publications have been properly authorized is not questioned in this report, except in one or two isolated cases, but each authorization has been reviewed to determine the original rationale for the publication. Such background information was helpful in determining if documents had "lost their usefulness" (quotation from above resolution).

5. The question of authority for recurrent publications has arisen in connexion with the circulation of this report in draft form for comment before its submission in final form to the Secretary-General. The Secretariat of one of the regional commissions wanted to have the draft reviewed by its Commission because changes or termination were recommended for several publications originally approved by this Commission. In other words, the question is being raised indirectly as to whether the General Assembly should feel free to act on recommendations for changes in those recurrent publications which it did not authorize, without prior review by the authorizing bodies (such as ECOSOC and regional commissions). Is it correct to assume that although an ECOSOC resolution, for example, "authorized" a publication in the first instance, the really binding authorization occurred only when the General Assembly approved the UN Budget which included the titles of the recurrent publications? However, if this is the correct interpretation, what about the recurrent publications approved by the Publications Board for internal reproduction whose titles are not shown in the UN Budget? It is suggested that a first step in bringing expenditures for recurrent publications under firmer control is a more precise understanding as to who has the authority to approve the preparation, revision, or termination of a publication. It is recommended that the General Assembly address itself further to this question.

Approach

6. An attempt was made to evaluate each recurrent publication in three ways:

(a) General Observations. In reviewing individual publications certain weaknesses appeared to be common to many and in some cases all of them. These weaknesses pointed to a lack of enforcement of certain rather obvious requirements for a well managed recurrent publications programme. An attempt was made to identify fairly precisely these weaknesses and to suggest corrective action for consideration.

(b) User Survey. A list of recurrent publications was sent to (i) about 1,400 addressees on the UN official list who receive by mail at least some of these publications free, (ii) about 75 subscribers. Included was a request to each addressee to evaluate each publication according to whether it was considered "very useful", "useful", or "not useful". Over one-third of the addressees responded to this request, the results of which are presented later in this report. An analysis was also made of the volume of sales of recurrent publications as another indication of user interest.

(c) Individual analysis. Samples of each publication were reviewed from the standpoint of duplication, delays in publication, technical considerations, unnecessary length, etc. Informed officials were interviewed in Geneva, Vienna (UNIDO), and New York, particularly those with responsibility for recurrent publications.

General comments

7. The request by the General Assembly for a study of recurrent publications by the Joint Inspection Unit is almost identical to the study requested of the Secretary-General within the past three years. This previous study resulted in virtually no significant action by the General Assembly. If this present study has any special merit, it is perhaps that it is somewhat more frank, and includes more specific information and suggestions as a basis for action.

8. In most organizational units visited, senior officials freely discussed opportunities for generally strengthening the recurrent publications programme. However, serious discussion regarding the termination of a particular publication was another matter. Many of the recurrent publications are somewhat unique in that one or more persons spend most or all of their time on each of them, and their jobs depend upon a continuation of these publications.

9. There are other significant reasons for the lack of strict control over the expenditure and administration of this "programme". If a publication is classified as a "recurrent publication", the Publications Board does not require a new justification each year, and the Office of the Controller is more easily persuaded to approve those same items that were approved in the previous year's budget. In addition, the ACBQ never seems to point a finger at a specific recurrent publication. If someone along the line does raise a serious question, the customary solution is to print the manuscript internally, which many persons unconsciously regard as almost "free" except for the cost of paper. And so the money for recurrent publications keeps flowing, and there is no real pressure to tighten up.

10. Although this report is concerned with recurrent publications, several of the recommendations in Chapter I apply equally to those publications called "studies and reports". At least two senior officials volunteered the view that studies and reports were much more in need of an inspection than recurrent publications.

11. The findings and conclusions presented in this report were discussed informally with various key officials during its preparation, and a draft was circulated for comment in July before the report was finalized. However, because of the ECOSOC meetings and vacations the comments on the draft were less complete than hoped for. Presumably the deficiency will be corrected through comments sent direct to the Secretary-General on the final report.

Chapter I. General Observations

12. Over half of the money now spent on recurrent publications is for publications which are designed to present certain data requested by the Secretary-General, from all over the world, and for which the United Nations family is more and more becoming the sole source. Outstanding examples are the Treaty Series and the Commodity Trade Statistics.
13. How far should the United Nations family go in assuming a "monopoly" for the collection of basic information about countries and making it available through recurrent publications? Are Member States, other international organizations, and private organizations willing to curtail the use of their customary channels of information - diplomatic missions, correspondence, etc. - and rely more and more on the United Nations both for collection and processing?
14. It is this Inspector's view that the United Nations should become the accepted source for a wide range of basic data on the Member States; and also for other information not so geographically oriented such as various kinds of environmental data that no one is collecting on a world-wide basis today. From a cost/benefit point of view, it makes sense to have these data collected and processed by a central body rather than individually by 130 countries. From another point of view, Member States should prefer to supply one standardized set of information rather than be burdened with many unco-ordinated requests. It seems clear that the Member States support the steps taken so far by the United Nations towards becoming the sole source for certain kinds of country information, as reflected for example in various General Assembly and ECOSOC resolutions authorizing recurrent publications, and in the approval of the establishment of ICC in Geneva with the enlarged "central data banks".
15. However, it is a big and expensive responsibility for the United Nations to seek international agreements on standards and methodology in connexion with collecting information, to establish computer centres for storage and processing of information, and to distribute the information on a timely basis in a form needed by users at reasonable cost. If the United Nations is to become the sole source of a wide range of basic information on countries, what further steps are necessary to inspire full confidence in others that they can rely on the United Nations for such information? Suggestions are presented below.

Delays in publication

16. If primary reliance is to be placed on the United Nations for collecting and processing a broad range of country information, it follows that the publications containing such information must be processed and distributed within a reasonable time. Although a few recurrent publications are distributed shortly after the end of the period covered in the text, in most cases there is a serious delay in their issuance which may sharply reduce their value except for historical purposes. It is a common experience today to look for a certain United Nations Yearbook for example on the library shelves and note that the latest volume is for 1967 or 1968. When you ask for the most recent volume, you are told that the one you are looking at is the latest one that has been published.

17. It is rather easy to compile an impressive list of reasons why recurrent publications are not processed and published more promptly. It is the strong belief of this Inspector, however, after a close look at the environment within which these publications are produced, that most of the reasons for delay would be avoided if a strong sense of urgency could be injected into the picture. If such a sense of urgency is not created, it is my belief that very little is going to be done about the well-known reasons for delay.

18. How can such a sense of urgency be created? For example, documents for the General Assembly or ECOSOC must be prepared in time for certain meetings. There is no comparable pressure, however, to prepare and distribute most recurrent publications by a certain date.

19. I recommend the following approach to create this sense of urgency, for consideration by the General Assembly:

Every recurrent publication approved by the Publications Board must be processed and distributed on or before the end of the next time period. In other words a yearbook for the period 1970 must be distributed before the end of 1971; a quarterly statistical report must be distributed before the end of the following three months; and so on. If it was found to be simply impracticable to compile, process and distribute a given Yearbook for example within 12 months, then it would be necessary -- to get a new authorization from the General Assembly to issue it every two years or even every three years before such a change could be approved by the Publications Board. The General Assembly might approve such a change, or decide that such a delay would largely destroy its usefulness and terminate the publication.

20. The net effect of the above proposal over time should be a substantial saving of money as well as a more timely issuance of recurrent publications. However, if such a proposal were used as an excuse to ask for more money to hire more people, then the net effect would be to perpetuate the present inefficiencies at greater cost. The opportunities for tightening up the system are there. Everyone involved knows it. Many examples will be cited in discussing specific publications in the rest of this report. What is needed is a lever such as the above proposal to induce change, plus tight budgetary control.

Quality of Recurrent Publications

21. Every organizational unit of the United Nations is concerned that it does not have an effective procedure for substantive review of recurrent publications and studies and reports at some stage before they are issued. Review committees seem to be just places where division chiefs agree that "you scratch my back and I'll scratch yours", nobody being willing to stand up and be really frank about someone else's proposed publication. In addition, all of the organizational units of the United Nations are (in this Inspector's opinion) trying to carry out larger publication programmes than they have the capacity to control, with the result that many manuscripts are not only not reviewed by the relevant committees (if any) but are not even reviewed by senior officials in the responsible divisions.

22. One official neatly summed up the situation for many publications by saying that "If I want to spend \$ 50 on a trip from New York to Washington, I have to have my request reviewed and signed by at least six top officials. However, in many cases a P.3 or P.4 employee can make all the decisions involved in spending many thousands of dollars on a publication without any review by higher authority". I thought at the time that this was a serious exaggeration, but after reviewing many recurrent publications I am convinced that it is often literally true. It is also true that many competent senior officials are very frustrated as to what to do about it.

23. After discussing the matter at length with a number of senior officials, I am not sure what the ultimate answer is, but offer two suggestions:

- (a) within each organizational unit (Office of Legal Affairs, ESA, UNIDO, etc.) there should be established a procedure whereby prior to the beginning of each fiscal year, those responsible for recurrent publications would be

required to draft a work programme for each publication spelling out the authority for the publication, highlights of the text to be prepared plus probable conclusions and recommendations (if any), proposed method of reproduction, maximum number of pages, specific time-table, etc. Each such work programme must be approved in advance of any implementation by the senior official designated by the head of the organizational unit for such purposes. There could be no deviation from this approved work plan without the signed approval of this senior official. Each person along the line in the Editorial Section, the Printing Section, etc., would use this approved plan as a firm guide in processing the publication. Before signing any of these proposed work plans, the designated senior official would have them collectively reviewed to ensure that their implementation would not exceed the capacity of the organization for such purposes, and that the costs involved were within the approved budget. Also, this official would represent his organizational unit in defending its publications before the Working Committee of the Publications Board;

(b) the regional commissions and the offices of UNDP Resident Representatives would play an expanded role in helping Member States to increase the completeness and accuracy of information about their countries, not only for purposes of their own development programmes, but also for meeting requests for information to be used in recurrent publications. At the present time the practice varies as to whether the Secretariat simply accepts what is received, or whether supplementary efforts are made to obtain replies from a larger percentage of the Member States, and to review the information received for accuracy. It seems clear that if the United Nations is going to become the primary source for a wide range of country data, it should assume responsibility for co-operating with Member States to improve the quality of such data.

24. The importance of this second suggestion can be illustrated by two examples. Several years ago a check indicated that the Treaty Series included only about 20 per cent of the outstanding international tax agreements. Through supplemental efforts, nearly complete coverage was obtained for the International Tax Agreements Series..

As another example, periodic reports received from Member States on human rights under ECOSOC resolution 1074 C (XXXIX) only cover a little more than fifty countries. Particularly through the use of official gazettes of Member States, information for the Yearbook of Human Rights was obtained on about ninety countries (and cleared with them before publication).

Control of Expenditures

25. The control of expenditures for recurrent publications leaves something to be desired. Two examples are presented as follows:

(a) Budgetary control of funds

26. No one knows what recurrent publications cost. Section 11 of the United Nations budget includes an estimate of the total funds required for all external printing contracts, and for paper and supplies for the total internal reproduction programme. This estimate is arrived at by subtracting from the estimated external costs of the gross printing programme a "deduction for internal reproduction" said to represent the estimated part of this printing programme (in terms of external costs) to be reproduced internally, and then adding to the balance the rest of paper and supplies for the entire internal reproduction programme. It is noted that a substantial part of the internal reproduction programme is excluded from both the "gross printing figure" and the "deduction for internal reproduction", but the "cost of paper and supplies" covers the total internal reproduction programme. Also, the rest of the internal reproduction costs, including direct and supervisory costs, maintenance and depreciation of machinery and equipment, utilities, rent, etc., are scattered (or buried) in various parts of the United Nations budget document. There is no separate or subsidiary cost accounting system for internal reproduction activities in New York or Geneva. The situation appears to call for a consolidated presentation of internal reproduction costs.

27. A study of the trend of external printing costs shown each year in Chapter II of Section 11 of the United Nations budget for recurring publications is highly misleading because of the continuing shift of these publications from external contracting to internal reproduction facilities, and recruitment of personnel and procurement of machinery to expand internal reproduction capacity, only part of whose costs are shown in Chapter VIII (paper and supplies). Actually the total cost of printing recurrent publications (external and internal) has been rising much faster than is indicated by the United Nations Budget.

28. The trend of printing costs indicated in the United Nations Budget is not only misleading, but is "only the top of the iceberg". Although costs vary widely by publication, if the total printing costs of a given recurrent publication are about \$ 10,000, the total cost for translation and revision, typing, printing and distribution will probably average close to \$ 40,000. If the costs of authorship and supervision are included, the total may be in the neighbourhood of \$ 100,000. For example, the Office of Legal Affairs estimates that the total cost of the Treaty Series during the next three years, if its backlog of unpublished volumes is to be reduced to normal levels during that period, will probably exceed \$ 1,000,000 annually. And this publication has supervisory but no "authorship" costs. The only figure found in the 1970 United Nations Budget estimates for the Treaty Series is a total of \$ 111,300 for external printing.

29. Adequate control of funds for recurrent publications will probably have to await the introduction of some form of programme budgeting. Further steps could be taken now, however, to bring more of the costs together in one place, and to introduce a system of internal cost accounting.

(b) Internal reproduction versus external printing

30. The ACABQ has been pressing the United Nations Secretariat each year to maximize the percentage of recurrent publications which are reproduced internally. The ACABQ adopted this policy in the 1950s based on a single study of comparative costs of printing one publication internally and externally. A review of this study indicated that the results were rather inconclusive because not all of the internal costs were included in the analysis. The ACABQ has been pressing this policy ever since without further checks. Its policy may be the right one, but data are not readily available to prove it at this time.

31. I spent considerable time attempting to determine if it were cheaper to print documents internally or externally, but the data simply were not available to arrive at any realistic conclusions. External printing costs in the New York area seem to be comparatively high because of high labour costs. Efforts to find new sources of external printing elsewhere are reported to have been worthwhile (for example, the Monthly Bulletin of Statistics). External printing costs in the Geneva area are comparatively low, and some informed persons thought they were cheaper than internal reproduction costs. In Vienna, IAEA, which does much of the printing for UNIDO,

has the services of a cost accountant, and thinks that it can handle UNIDO's needs more cheaply than an external printing concern.

32. When you attempt to compare internal and external printing costs, a lot depends on how you calculate them. For example, suppose an external printer bid \$ 200 a page for a publication. If you estimate internal reproduction costs on a "job lot basis", i.e., based on direct labour costs per day and other direct costs, you might arrive at a total of only \$ 150 a page. On the other hand, if you recognize that direct labour for example is not busy exactly eight hours every day - such work cannot be scheduled so precisely - that workers do have sick leave and time off, there are occasional power failures, etc. - and you base the cost per page not on a "job lot" under ideal conditions but on actual total labour and other costs and actual total output for a year, then internal costs may be found to be higher than the external bid of \$ 200 for the same method of processing.

33. The effect of this policy (maximizing internal reproduction) has been to create an impression, which prevails very widely, that if a publication is printed internally you "save money", because you do not have to pay outside contractors; the money stays within the United Nations. As a result, if a manuscript is considered of questionable value, a decision is sometimes made to "go ahead if you can get it reproduced internally, since we have already spent so much on getting it written and typed". Questionable publications tend to be published internally, where they are not visible in the United Nations Budget as presently constructed.

34. It is suggested that the correct line of reasoning in seeking a solution to this problem is as follows:

(1) it is essential that New York and Geneva have sufficient internal reproduction capacity to handle the "peak load" for official documents when the General Assembly and ECOSOC are in session. If there is an unanticipated need for a document the day after tomorrow, there is no time to send out requests for bids to Chicago and Paris; you must have the capacity internally to meet such emergencies;

(11) New York and Geneva already have the internal capacity to meet peak loads for official documents, and thus have excess capacity during slack periods to reproduce part of the recurrent publications, studies and

reports. Since the capacity for peak loads is already "in place", it makes sense to make maximum use of such excess capacity for publications during the "off season" (as is now being done) before making use of outside contract printing. However, such excess capacity should not be used as a justification for publishing manuscripts of such dubious merit that they would not be approved for external printing;

(iii) the overall question of internal versus external costs only arises in terms of whether internal capacity should be expanded above present levels to meet a higher percentage of total future printing requirements including all publications, or whether requirements in the future above present internal reproduction capacity should be met through external contracts. New York, Geneva and Vienna are concerned today with future planning for internal reproduction facilities and need guidance on this question.

(iv) further expansion of internal reproduction facilities should not be considered until comparative cost studies have been made (which include total internal reproduction costs) as the basis for a decision on this matter. As noted above, fragmentary data suggest that the results may vary substantially between New York, Geneva, and Vienna. Also, in reaching a decision, it should be recognized that if internal and external costs are about the same, preference should be given to internal reproduction facilities because experience shows that external printers are less reliable in meeting deadlines and are less flexible in handling last minute changes in the texts.

Sales Policy

35. There are differences of view within the United Nations Secretariat as to whether United Nations publications should be sold primarily for information or for profit. At this time the sales policy is oriented toward information. The issue is mentioned in this report because a shift of policy to sales for profit could result in substantial increases in revenue and some reductions in cost.

36. It should be noted that a shift of policy to sales for profit need not affect the present free mailing of publications to Governments, information centres, depository libraries and exchanges, and to the Secretariat and specialized agencies.

37. We are talking about around 250 recurrent and other publications offered for sale. I am told that if a really tough "sales for profit only" policy were adopted, not more than 20 or 25 publications would be considered to have enough sales potential to be really worth pushing. The other publications would be taken off the sales list.

38. I am also advised that if sales for profit were the objective, the prices of some publications in greatest demand would be raised; the titles and covers of a number of publications would be improved to increase their sales appeal; the sales of some of the publications would probably be sub-contracted to commercial enterprises, the present very expensive policy of translating some publications into languages for which the demand is negligible would be stopped; and so on.

39. No recommendations are made on this issue because it raises certain fundamental questions going beyond the scope of this report.

Responsibility of United Nations to Scholars

40. Several of the recurrent publications appear to be useful only to scholars in universities or research institutes. This situation may occur for one of several reasons. The publication may have required several years for processing and distribution and have historical value only. Or the publication may be written in highly technical language that would be understood by only a few specialists in the subject. Or information readily available elsewhere may be "re-packaged" in convenient form for certain specialists.

41. It is suggested that the Publications Board adopt the following guidelines in approving a publication of interest primarily to scholars:

- (a) if a publication is issued so late that it only has limited historical value, and the contents of the document are available, even though in less convenient form, in United Nations Official Records and elsewhere, then the publication should be discontinued;
- (b) if a publication is of an academic type comparable to those found in professional journals, and is not based on unique first hand information resulting from United Nations field projects, the publications should be dropped. In other words, the United Nations should not be in the business of carrying out research very similar to or duplicating that being performed equally well or better by universities and research institutes.

Reports of Meetings and Seminars

42. Some of the recurrent publications, and studies and reports included in Chapters II and III of Section 11 and Sections 15 and 16 of the Budget are reports on meetings which may be held periodically. It is not clear whether such reports should be classified as "recurrent publications". In any event, the question frequently arises as to whether only summaries, or the full text of speeches and papers presented at a meeting should be published.

43. It is strongly recommended that publications which cover the proceedings of meetings and seminars should include only summaries of speeches and papers. Such summaries should be printed and distributed within a year after the meeting took place.

Chapter II. User Survey

44. The most obvious, practical way to find out if a recurrent publication is being used is to ask the person or organization who receives it. Those recipients are unfortunately scattered to the four corners of the earth. Interviews with the experts who prepare the UN recurrent publications clearly revealed that in most cases they had only a vague idea as to whether the copies mailed free to all parts of the world were actually used. Furthermore, these experts were unable to draw any precise conclusions on the merits of their publications based on sales data because such information is fragmentary, and has never been computerized to permit careful analysis. In addition,

substantial part of such data represents standing orders for all UN publications (about 140 orders) and standing orders for specific types of publications. Such information would not provide a clue as to the usefulness of an individual publication. Perhaps the most practical, positive way to determine if a publication is useful would be to include a form in each copy which had to be filled out by the addressee and sent in to Headquarters in order to remain on the free mailing list for that publication. Such a test could not have been carried out by an Inspector for obvious reasons, but is recommended for future use as outlined further in this Chapter. A feasible alternative approach was to conduct the User Survey described in the rest of this Chapter.

45. The UN free official mailing list for publications includes about 1,400 addressees. These include Member Governments, UN information offices, secretariat and specialized agencies, non-governmental organizations, and depository libraries and exchanges. A

list of 84 recurrent publications was sent to each of these addressees, with a request that they evaluate each of those which they receive from the standpoint of whether they were "very useful", "useful", or "not useful". About 500 replies were received, representing a very good cross-section of the addressees. About 60 Member States, representing developed and developing countries, replied.

46. Included with many of the replies were interesting and thoughtful letters commenting on various aspects of the recurrent publications programme and volunteering ideas for improvement. It is planned to submit a separate report on the User Survey to the UN Secretariat including many more details than would be justified in this report.

47. The non-governmental organizations (NGO's) are supposed to receive free only those mimeographed documents issued for the particular meetings and conferences to which they are accredited. Such documents should not include any recurrent publications.

However, for historical and other reasons, a number of these organizations are receiving

one or more recurrent publications free, so they were included in the User Survey. Unfortunately, instead of evaluating only those recurrent publications received, according to instructions for the Survey, most NGO's attempted to evaluate all publications on the list based on whether the titles sounded interesting. Because of the specialized interests of nearly all NGO's, the result was that most publications were evaluated as "not useful", without identification of those actually received. Thus it was necessary to exclude the replies from non-governmental organizations in the following analyses. Careful note was made, however, of a number of useful comments and observations which accompanied the replies of non-governmental organizations.

48. Of course, particular emphasis was placed on replies by Member States. However, the replies by the other categories of addressees (except non-governmental organizations) were also very useful and significant in seeking a balanced judgment on the value of the various publications. Although the replies of most depository libraries were carefully prepared and useful, a few of them noted that they were to receive free copies of all the recurrent publications and have them available on their shelves regardless of whether they were worth reading or not. Therefore, they reasoned that all UN publications were very useful and they checked every recurrent publication as "very useful" in their replies. Obviously, such replies were of no value for the purposes of this report.

Most Useful Recurrent Publications

49. A statistical analysis of the replies on the 84 recurrent publications included in the User Survey, revealed a strong consensus among all of the categories of addressees on the official list as to which were the most useful. Over half of the replies in every category checked the following recurrent publications as "very useful". The first five listed below had a particularly high ranking:

1. Report on the World Social Situation
2. Statistical Yearbook
3. Demographic Yearbook
4. Economic bulletin for Latin America
5. Economic survey of Latin America

50. The following additional, very useful publications are listed in the order in which they appeared on the sheet listing the 84 publications submitted for evaluation:

6. Treaty Series
7. World Economic Survey
8. Monthly Bulletin of Statistics
9. Yearbook of International Trade Statistics
10. Yearbook of National Accounts Statistics
11. Commodity Trade Statistics
12. Economic Survey of Europe
13. Economic Bulletin for Europe
14. Economic Survey of Asia and the Far East
15. Economic Bulletin for Asia and the Far East
16. Statistical Yearbook for Asia and the Far East
17. Survey of Economic Conditions in Africa
18. Economic Bulletin for Africa
19. Commodity Survey
20. Review of International Trade and Development
21. Handbook of International Trade and Development Statistics

51. It should not be assumed that just because a recurrent publication was included in the above listing that there are no important opportunities for its improvement. The primary significance of the above list is that it identifies the areas where there is an important need for a recurrent publication. From another point of view, there may be specialized UN recurrent publications which are very useful and necessary for a rather restricted number of potential users but which are not on the above list.

Least Useful Recurrent Publications

52. Although the User Survey did not provide as positive an identification of the "not useful" publications as it did of the "very useful", there was a comparatively strong lack of interest by all categories of users for the first eight recurrent publications listed below. The other 13 publications on the list also received comparatively low marks by most users, but for some of these publications there was a specialized but limited group of users who found them very useful. This list is as follows:

1. Indices of Concentration in the Coal Industry
2. Quarterly Bulletin of Coal Statistics
3. Statistics of Road Traffic Accidents in Europe
4. Transport of Dangerous Goods
5. Annual Report of the International Map of the World

6. World Cartography
7. Half-Yearly Bulletin of Electric Energy Statistics
8. Timber Bulletin for Europe
9. International Review of Criminal Policy
10. Quarterly Bulletin of Steel Statistics for Europe
11. Bulletin of Statistics on World Trade in Engineering Products
12. Reports of International Arbitral Awards
13. Bulletin on Narcotics
14. Annual Bulletin of Coal Statistics for Europe
15. Annual Bulletin of Gas Statistics for Europe
16. Annual Review of Forest Products Markets
17. Transport and Communications Bulletin for Asia and the Far East
18. Electric Power in Asia and the Far East
19. Annual Bulletin of Electric Energy Statistics
20. Annual Bulletin of General Energy Statistics for Europe
21. Statistical Indications of Short-term Economic Changes in ECE Countries

53. It should be emphasized that most of those replying to this User Survey indicated comparatively little interest in the above publications. Furthermore, a study of the replies in depth strongly suggested that most of those replying were quite generous in their evaluations. Even a very limited use of a publication might be evaluated as "useful". Also, the one-third who took the time to submit replies to this Survey may have been more interested in these publications than the two-thirds who did not respond.

54. In addition to the 21 publications listed above with the lowest rankings, there were approximately 20 to 25 additional recurrent publications for which many users indicated comparatively little enthusiasm. This situation indicates very clearly that the United Nations is giving away free a large number of copies of recurrent publications to addressees on the official list that have no use for them. This finding suggests the following major recommendation:

Once a year each addressee on the official list receiving a specified recurrent publication should receive a notice indicating that if he wishes to continue to receive this publication he should complete an attached form. Depository libraries would not receive such notices because they would receive all UN recurrent publications.

55. This recommendation is based on the experience of national governments attempting to keep their distribution list for publications up-to-date and limited to those actually wanting the publication. It is not enough to send a notice saying that "you will continue to receive this publication unless you signify to the contrary". Experience shows that unless the addressee is sufficiently interested in staying on the list for a publication to make the effort to fill out a form and mail it, many copies of publications will continue to end up unused on the shelf or in the waste paper basket.

56. It is important that this review of the distribution list be under the control of some appropriate central authority which will positively stop distribution to those addressees on the official list who do not fill out the form. While discussing the above technique with a UN official, the latter advised this Inspector that he knew of one isolated instance where the above technique was used for a given publication, but so few addressees indicated they wanted to continue to receive it that the results of the experiment were ignored and distribution was continued to the full list of addressees as before.

57. In the rest of this report, attention is focused on an analysis in some depth of the individual publications. In this analysis, further use is made of detailed information resulting from the User Survey as well as of several other important factors.

Chapter III. Office of Legal Affairs

58. The Office of Legal Affairs is responsible for six recurrent publications: the Treaty Series, the Cumulative Index to the Treaty Series, the Status of Multilateral Conventions, the Reports of International Arbitral Awards, the United Nations Legislative Series, and the United Nations Juridical Yearbook. Of these publications the most questionable is probably the Juridical Yearbook.

United Nations Juridical Yearbook

59. This recurrent publication presents a resumé of developments of a legal nature within the United Nations family during a specified calendar year. For example, it presents new regulations and agreements of Member States concerning privileges and immunities of members of the UN family at official meetings in these States, or UN experts assigned to field programmes. It presents resolutions of the General Assembly and legislative bodies of the specialized agencies which have important legal aspects. It includes new treaties concerning international law concluded under the auspices of the UN family that are open for ratification (and later published in the Treaty Series when put into force). It summarizes decisions of administrative tribunals, and the Secretariat on legal matters. Finally, it presents a legal documents index and bibliography.

60. It should be noted that the contents of this Yearbook were planned by representatives of Governments in the Sixth Committee of the General Assembly rather than by the Secretariat, which for ten years, took a negative view of suggestions for such a publication. There are indications that this Yearbook is not considered as of top priority among the various activities of the Office of Legal Affairs.

61. The User Survey revealed a substantial interest in this Yearbook, particularly by Member Governments and Depository Libraries, but there were complaints about the delays in its publication and the lack of an index. Sample data on delays in issuing this Yearbook are as follows:

UN Juridical Yearbook for 1965 (French)	Issued summer 1968
" " " " 1966 (English)	" late summer 1968
" " " " 1967 (French)	" summer 1970
" " " " 1967 (Spanish)	" summer 1970

62. It seems clear that this Yearbook is not a means of keeping abreast of happenings of a legal nature in the United Nations, but is primarily of value for historical research only.

63. The complaints of users that the Yearbook should have an index are certainly valid. It seems obvious that a document such as this which is designed for reference purposes should have a good index. However, readers of the Juridical Yearbook are dependent on the table of contents only, even though the General Assembly resolution 1814 (XVII) authorizing the Yearbook provides for the inclusion of a "comprehensive index to decisions, recommendations, discussions and reports of a legal character by the United Nations and the specialized agencies". Some officials I talked to questioned whether the original objective of the General Assembly was practical, and pointed to the difficulties experienced in trying to recruit a qualified legal index expert. An unsuccessful attempt had been made to persuade the UN library to assume this task.

64. After taking a close look at this Yearbook I have considerable sympathy with the doubts of the Office of Legal Affairs about its publication. The 1968 edition for example covers a fantastic number of topics ranging all the way from a decision of the Administrative Tribunal of the United Nations on an appeal of a staff member, to the application of the penal law of Romania to diplomatic representatives, and to a listing of three periodicals published by FAO.

65. Chapter II includes 13 agreements under the Convention of Privileges and Immunities relating to meetings in 1968. For example, the first agreement is between the UN and Iran regarding a meeting in May 1968 on Human Rights, to the effect that the provisions of the Convention on that subject will apply to this meeting. Why reproduce this agreement in a Yearbook issued two years after the meeting was held? Who would have any continuing interest in these 13 agreements which applied only to specific meetings in 1968? Similar agreements with reference to UNESCO are included in Chapter II.

66. Chapter III includes a number of resolutions of the General Assembly which are "of a legal character". It seems reasonable to assume that those interested in these resolutions obtained copies during the General Assembly session. Is it worth-while to reproduce these resolutions, which are so readily available in libraries, a year and a half later in a Yearbook?

67. The treaties included in Chapter IV duplicate those shown in the Treaty Series, but are usually published a little sooner in the Yearbook.

68. In Chapters V to VIII are presented a series of decisions on a chronological basis by the Administrative Tribunal of the United Nations, by the Office of Legal Affairs, by international tribunals, and by national tribunals. If such presentations are to be useful for reference purposes, it would seem that they should be related to a cumulative index of such decisions covering a period of years and organized both chronologically, and alphabetically by subject matter.

69. In Chapter IX the index of legal documents of the United Nations covers 20 pages but does not identify the legal questions involved, and covers so many subjects that the reader is left with the impression that almost everything the United Nations does is "of legal interest". It is difficult to visualize who would use this index in preference to the regular UN Documents index.

70. In view of the interest disclosed by the User Survey in a Juridical Yearbook by many Member States and depository libraries, it is recommended that the Sixth Committee of the General Assembly invite the Secretary-General to propose revisions in General Assembly resolution 1814 (XVII) in order to free the hands of the Secretariat to limit the contents of this Yearbook to information not readily available elsewhere and thus sharply curtail the number of pages. It is proposed further that the publication be issued only every other year, and that more strenuous efforts be made to find someone to prepare an index. Finally it is recommended that a fresh look be taken at the sales policy for this Yearbook. For example, the 1966 Yearbook was published in 1968. Over two years later in 1971 only 425 copies of the 800 English copies set aside for sales had been sold. Comparable figures of the French edition were eight out of 50; and for the Spanish edition, 11 out of 50.

Reports of International Arbitral Awards

71. The Registry of the International Court of Justice initiated a series of reports on international arbitral awards arising from disputes between countries submitted to arbitration in accordance with provisions of a treaty or international agreement to which they were a party. The Registry published the first three volumes and succeeding volumes were prepared by the Office of Legal Affairs. A total of about 16 volumes have now been published. This recurrent publication is called Reports of International Arbitral Awards.

72. The User Survey indicated comparatively little interest in this publication. The justification for it is that an arbitral award is of permanent interest as evidence of customary international law, and its publication makes such evidence more readily

available. On the other hand, it is noted that the latest volume XVI contains records of awards from 1960 to 1966, but the volume was not published and received in the UN library until January 1970. This suggests that there is really no great pressure to issue this publication soon after the information is available, or that those persons who are really concerned about these awards have found more timely sources elsewhere.

73. Although the second session of the International Law Commission recommended continuation of these Reports, there has never been any specific approval of this publication by Member States. However, its scope and content do appear to be consistent with Article 13 (1) (a) of the Charter.

74. It is concluded that the justification for Reports of International Arbitral Awards is weak, and that a large proportion of the copies on the free distribution list have never been used. If this publication is to be continued, it is recommended that its distribution should be tailored to a highly specialized group, it should be made available in one language only, and reproduced by one of the cheapest methods (such as typed as "fair copy" and offset printed without cloth cover).

Treaty Series

75. The Treaty Series includes all treaties submitted by Member States, the specialized agencies, and ex officio by the United Nations Secretariat for registration; and international agreements submitted for filing and recording. Regulations for such registration are provided by the General Assembly (resolution 97 (I) as amended by resolutions 364B (IV) and 482 (V)). Treaties and agreements are not published in the Treaty Series until after they have gone into force. States and multilateral organizations are required to register any subsequent changes in the legal status of these treaties and agreements with the Secretariat for certification and publication in later volumes of the Treaty Series. Over 200 treaties were published under Article 18 of the League of Nations Covenant, and about 650 volumes have now been published under Article 102 of the UN Charter, with a current unpublished backlog approaching 100 volumes. A Cumulative Index of the Treaty Series is published every year or two, and a monthly list of treaties and agreements received for registration or recording is issued under the title of Statement of Treaties and International Agreements. The Treaty Series is the most expensive of all UN recurrent publications, and its total cost, including necessary staff costs, over the next two or three years will be over \$1,000,000 annually if the current heavy backlog is to be reduced to more normal levels.

76. The User Survey disclosed a strong interest in the Treaty Series by all categories of addressees in the Official List, but especially by the Member Governments and depository libraries. Sales of this publication are small, but this is probably explained not only by its cost, but also by the very large amount of shelf space required for the Series and by the fact that it is available for reference purposes in libraries.

77. Although the present Treaty Series is obviously serving a useful purpose, it is proposed that there are important opportunities to expand its usefulness at less cost. Let us consider first the delay in its issuance.

78. A study was made of a representative sample of multilateral treaties which were published in the Treaty Series in 1967 and 1969. A summary of results are as follows:

<u>Period</u>	<u>Average time</u>
Date of adoption of treaty of convention to date of entering into force	3 years 8 months
Date of entering into force to date of registration with Secretary-General	0
Date of registration to date of publication in Treaty Series	2 years 2 months
Date of publication to date of issuance of Cumulative Index in English	2 years 7 months

79. The total average time-lag between the signing of a multilateral treaty or convention and the distribution of the Cumulative Index including that treaty was about 8 years, with a range from $5\frac{1}{2}$ years to nearly 15 years. One year should be added to these totals for the Index in French. Data were not available to determine if the average time of three years and eight months before entry into force was also typical for treaties between States.

80. In considering what steps should be taken to shorten this time-lag, the following information and observations are considered relevant:

(a) the Treaty Series has become so large that its Cumulative Index now includes nine separate volumes issued or being processed. All of them may have to be consulted to find the references to a single treaty or international agreement;

(b) the modernization programme now under way for the UN Documents Index issued by the UN Library in New York may open the door to a far better indexing of material in the Treaty Series. The comments which follow are intended to be suggestive only, but also to point the way to a study in depth of this whole matter;

(c) the UN Library is preparing a new computer-assisted index called "Undex", to be completed by the end of 1972, which will cover all UN documents and publications now covered by the manually-prepared Documents Index of the Library. When completed it is understood that a cumulative chronological and alphabetical index could be produced through a print-out from the computer covering treaties and agreements, that would be comprehensive and in one volume, not a series of cumulative indexes each covering a separate series of volumes as at present. However, the present Undex programme will cover only treaties and agreements concluded under the auspices of some organizational unit in the UN. There are tentative plans, however, to extend the Undex programme in 1973 to include the treaties and agreements included in the Treaty Series that are not concluded under the auspices of the UN. If this step is taken, then the door may be open to have a print-out from the computer providing the basis for an index covering all of the documents in the Treaty Series on a comprehensive, up-to-date basis;

(d) more specifically, the way I understand it might work is as follows:

(i) as received in UN Headquarters, each treaty and agreement submitted for registration would be assigned a symbol, and the necessary data for a chronological and alphabetical index would be fed into the computer. Once a month a print-out of the treaties and international agreements received for registration during the previous month, would be obtained and would become the basis for preparing the monthly publication Statement of Treaties and International Agreements, rather than accumulating the data by hand as at present,

(ii) historical data on treaties and agreements would be fed into the computer under the extended Undex Programme, including the volume number of the Treaty Series in which each is published. Then a cumulative index could be issued on the basis of the computer print-out which would list chronologically and alphabetically all treaties and agreements that had been registered, plus the volume number of the Treaty Series for those which had been published. This index would be comprehensive and up-to-date with respect to date of registration. As additional volumes were published, volume numbers would be fed into the computer for those treaties and agreements in each volume;

(iii) if desired, data on treaties and conventions prepared under the auspices of the UN could be fed into the computer at the time of signature, rather than at the time of registration, thus further drastically shortening the time-lag in the cumulative

index. At any given time the number of such multilateral treaties that have been signed but not yet put into force does not total more than about 20, so this additional step would involve very little extra effort and expense;

(c) in addition to the possibilities for improving or replacing the Cumulative Index publication during the next two years, there appear to be opportunities for improvements in the Treaty Series itself, as follows:

(1) the complete Treaty Series including volumes published by the League of Nations will soon total some 1,000 bulky volumes. This Series has now been microfiched by the UN Library, thus reducing the enormous space required by the hundreds of volumes to two drawers. It seems highly probable that within a decade or two all or nearly all distribution around the world will be in the form of microfiches or something similar. In the meantime, however, during the transition period a large part of the distribution will have to be in the form of hard copy to those who do not have the necessary equipment for using microfiches;

(11) it is understood that equipment is now available with which microfilms could be made direct from copies of treaties and agreements as received by the Secretary-General for registration, from which microfiches could be made. Using these microfiches a hard copy could be produced from reader/printers in sufficient numbers to meet the current demands for the Treaty Series. (Technological change is so rapid in this field at the moment that a better system may be in sight by the time this report is issued.) A practical difficulty with this proposal is that treaties and agreements are submitted to the Secretary-General in all shapes and sizes with every possible mode of production. However, the Secretariat has never tried to obtain submissions based on a prescribed format and with restrictions on acceptable kinds of production. It is difficult to believe that Member States as well as various parts of the UN family who are interested in saving money would not co-operate by accepting such standards for future submissions. 81. In summary, it is recommended (i) that steps be taken now to lay out a programme for improving the Cumulative Index in anticipation of the completion of the Undex system and its extension into 1973 for items not under UN auspices; and (ii) that the possibilities be thoroughly explored of obtaining more uniform treaty and agreements submissions from which microfiches can be made without retyping and editing. Potential savings through these two steps total many thousands of dollars.

Multilateral Treaties

82. Treaties and agreements have what lawyers call "final clauses", which are concerned with such matters as signatures, ratifications, accessions and reservations of individual parties. The Office of Legal Affairs is responsible for an annual publication called Multilateral Treaties in respect of which the Secretary-General Performs Depositary Functions, which presents an up-to-date listing of signatures, ratifications, accessions, etc., for all multilateral treaties received. This publication is concerned with many of the same treaties published in the Treaty Series, and duplicates part of the changes published in that Series, but presents such data in a more convenient form on a more timely basis. It has a loose leaf Annex covering the "final clauses" of all of the Multilateral Treaties included in this publication.

83. More specifically, when a State signs, ratifies, accedes or succeeds to a multilateral treaty to which the Secretary-General acts as a depositary, all concerned Governments are advised thereof by circular note. All such information is brought up to date once a year in the publication Multilateral Treaties, and is published in the Treaty Series for those treaties that have entered into force.

84. The User Survey indicates that Multilateral Treaties is one of the more useful publications, particularly for Member Governments. The major question is why this document must be issued annually, particularly when the most important users - the Member Governments - are advised promptly of each change in a circular note. Relevant considerations appear to be as follows:

(a) the major original purpose of this publication when it was started in 1927 was to provide the Council of the League with information required in connexion with discussions on how to bring agreements and conventions into force more quickly. If that were still the primary purpose, then the 168 treaties listed in the latest volume of Multilateral Treaties would be restricted to only the 19 not yet entered into force;

(b) an analysis of the latest volume indicates that no changes were necessary on almost exactly three-quarters of its pages. Of the pages on which changes did occur, at least one-fourth involved a change in only one or two words. Only two or three pages were entirely new;

(c) by far the most important users - the Member Governments - receive separate and prompt notices of individual changes;

(d) the Treaty Series itself provides data on these changes for all of the Treaties entered into force, which for the latest issue of the Multilateral Treaties would include all but 19 out of 168. Of this 19, about half are treaties that have been "dormant" for many years and it appears highly doubtful if they will ever come into force. Thus the Treaty Series provides the story on over 90 per cent of the treaties covered by the Multilateral Treaties that may have changes as well as others not included in this latter publication. Those changes shown in Multilateral Treaties but not recorded in the Treaty Series at any one time will be shown there later when the Treaties come into force;

(e) because there are so few changes in the publication Multilateral Treaties from year to year, it does not cost so much to reproduce it annually.

85. It is recommended that this publication be issued only once every two years.

United Nations Legislative Series

86. The International Law Commission was established shortly after the UN Charter went into effect, to implement Article 13 (1) (a). A principal task of this Commission is the codification of particular topics in the field of international law, selected with the approval of the General Assembly. Its activities are spelled out in its Yearbooks.

87. After a plan of work has been adopted for a given topic to be codified the Secretariat (Office of Legal Affairs) sends to Governments a "detailed request to furnish the texts of laws, decrees, judicial decisions, treaties, diplomatic correspondence and other documents relevant to the topic being studied and which the Commission deems necessary" (Statute of the International Law Commission (Article 19)) Xerox copies of the information received from States are usually made available to Special Rapporteurs of the International Law Commission. In addition, the Office of Legal Affairs publishes this information in a recurrent publication called United Nations Legislative Series.

88. As far as I can determine, this publication has never been properly authorized. Article 19 only provides that the Secretary-General's Office will collect certain information from States and turn it over to the Commission for the latter's use. Nothing was said about the Secretariat publishing such material, mailing it free to many addressees around the world, and offering the document for sale. In fact, a typical volume in the Legislative Series includes in the first part the information received from the Member States on the topic; and in the second part those treaties

and international agreements relevant to the topic, some of which may not yet be in force. A second volume may be issued at a later date updating the material in the first volume.

89. Based on the User Study, the Legislative Series is not one of the most useful publications; it seems to have attracted about average interest. It is suggested that the justification for continuing the publication is very weak for the following reasons:

(a) how can the United Nations justify publishing the raw materials collected by the Secretariat for study by a Commission? If all advisory groups and Commissions had the raw material for their studies published as recurrent publications, the expense would be enormous;

(b) it should be up to the International Law Commission to determine what should be done with information received from States. This Commission should review such information, determine what is relevant to its studies, and what should be said about it in reports to the Sixth Committee, its Yearbooks, or at relevant Conventions. It does not seem to make sense to send a whole mass of undigested information received from States to Member States, UN Information Offices, depository libraries, etc. A principal reason we have organizations like the International Law Commission is to have experts in the field sort out a lot of raw information and bring it into focus with a given study;

(c) the Statute of the Commission envisages the publication of the material received from governments as part of the Commission's report.

90. It is recommended that if any of the kinds of information now included in the Legislative Series is to be published in the future, it be included as a part of reports of the International Law Commission.

Chapter IV. Department of Economic and Social Affairs
(including regional economic commissions)

91. The Department of Economic and Social Affairs issues a large number of recurrent publications, which will be grouped as follows for purposes of analysis:

- A. Tax Agreements
- B. Statistical Publications
- C. Economic and Social Affairs Publications
- D. Other Publications

A. Tax Agreements

92. The International Tax Agreements Series was started in the League of Nations in 1928 and has been continued since that time. There is no comparable series published on a world-wide basis. It now covers over 1,000 treaties. Since 1958 it has been issued in loose leaf form. In addition to the official distribution, total sales of each supplement to the Series are between 350 and 400, nearly all in English.

93. The original purpose of these treaties was to prevent double taxation, and assist in the collection of taxes and the exchange of information. (ECOSOC resolution 67(2) (j) (v) of 24 July 1947). The primary purpose of publishing these Series today is to provide a reference document for negotiators of such treaties from developing countries.

94. The User Survey disclosed a restricted interest in this publication. In its present form it is not a very effective source of information to negotiators from developing countries. However, a group was established to develop "model agreements" for Member States, using this Series for reference purposes, which should be very useful to developing countries. These agreements have important financial implications for these countries.

95. In terms of opportunities for improvement, the key question raised by this Series appears to be the justification for its duplication with the Treaty Series. Pertinent facts are as follows:

(a) the Treaty Series includes all international tax agreements which are submitted to the Secretary-General for registration. It is alleged, however, that such agreements may not include more than 20 per cent of all such tax agreements in existence;

(b) the International Tax Agreements Series include the texts of at least most of such agreements in existence, and its index includes the names and dates of a number of additional agreements for which the texts have not been received.

furthermore, these tax agreements are received in Headquarters after they are signed, not at a later date after they are in force, and are registered in the Treaty Series. Thus with reference to tax agreements, the International Tax Agreements Series is much more complete, and more up-to-date than the Treaty Series;

(c) the International Tax Agreements Series has a more complete indexing system than the Treaty Series;

(d) it is alleged that any document in the Treaty Series is checked with extreme care to insure that it is completely free of errors in all languages in which it is issued, but that a similar degree of care is not exercised in reproducing the International Tax Agreements Series;

(e) as disclosed in the User Survey, the users of international tax agreements are a rather specialized group.

96. It is proposed that the question of duplication raised above should be resolved as follows:

(a) transfer overall responsibility for the International Tax Agreements Series from the Department of Economic and Social Affairs to the Office of Legal Affairs, the rationale being that this Series is part of the Treaty Series. However, in order to make use of the know-how on international tax agreements in ESA, the Office of Legal Affairs would delegate operational responsibility for processing this Tax Agreements Series to ESA as at present;

(b) take the necessary steps to make this Series a sub-group of the Treaty Series, but retain its separate physical identity in recognition of its specialized group of users. The Cumulative Index of the Treaty Series would include a cross reference to the index of the International Tax Agreements Series. When a tax agreement included in the latter Series was registered, it would be so noted in the Cumulative Index of the Treaty Series. Future regular volumes of the Treaty Series would exclude international tax agreements.

97. It is also suggested that there are opportunities for improving the indexes of the International Tax Agreements Series, as follows:

(a) the index in Volume IX should be put on a cumulative basis. Such a change could be made in only a few hours, and would greatly increase the usefulness of this index;

(b) the items in the index to Volume IX are not identified by Supplement Number, a situation that needlessly complicates the problem of ordering copies. The explanation that it is desirable to force a potential customer to purchase the whole Series is not acceptable;

(c) the world-wide country index in Volume VIII is very impressive, but has a minimum four-year time-lag. The rationale for this index should be reviewed.

B. Statistical Publications

98. The User Survey discloses a strong demand for the statistical publications issued by ESA. It is also noted that these publications are subject to close scrutiny from time to time by an outside group of professional statisticians, who have helped to introduce improved standards and methodology. They are so designed that a single document is presented in both French and English. With the exception of the Yearbook of International Trade Statistics, which has an average time-lag of about 21 months, they are issued with reasonable promptness. From a broader point of view, however, these and other UN statistical publications raise certain fundamental questions.

99. During the past 10 years the groundwork has been laid for an efficient, co-ordinated statistical programme for the UN family. With the assistance of outside experts, more and more developing countries have introduced programmes for collecting the basic statistics required to manage their countries. A general consensus has been approached on what information should be collected. Agreement has been reached on important international statistical standards. Central "data banks" are being established in computer centres. The IOB and ICC are being established in Geneva. The whole situation looks very promising until it is examined from the standpoint of co-ordination, or duplication of effort.

100. Today there is duplication in the collection, the processing, and the publication of statistics. This duplication exists between ESA at Headquarters and the regional economic commissions, between ESA as a whole and the rest of the UN family, and between ESA and other international organizations - particularly OECD - and also between statistical bodies of developed countries and international organizations seeking information from developing countries. The facts are well known to those involved in such publications. Occasionally, there are formal or informal meetings to discuss the situation, but no one is willing to give up his publication, and nothing happens.

Reduction of Duplication

101. It is proposed that the General Assembly consider the adoption of the following programme to reduce duplication in the collection, processing and publication of statistics:

(a) Collection

102. Agreement would be reached on a uniform schedule of statistics to be collected from the various countries of the world by the United Nations. All of the statistics required by the various parts of the UN family would be included in this one schedule. The adoption of this single, comprehensive schedule would sharply reduce the burden on developing countries to provide duplicate information, and would provide a solid starting point in rationalizing statistical activities of the UN.

103. Copies of data submitted in accordance with this comprehensive schedule would be sent to the regional economic commissions, and regional offices of specialized agencies, for review of the accuracy of the statistical data and the initiation of joint discussions with governments, where appropriate, before the next country submission. Through seminars and other means these regional offices have been making an important contribution towards improving the quality of statistics in developing countries for many years. It is essential that they continue to assist the Governments in their areas to improve the quality of statistics submitted according to the proposed schedule.

(b) Storage and Processing

104. The Inter-Organization Board (IOB) would have the responsibility for assigning data submitted by countries to "data banks" of the ICC being moved to Geneva, and also to the "data banks" in other parts of the UN family as considered appropriate. In this way duplication of storage and processing of data collected from countries by the UN family could be avoided.

(c) Publication

105. In the future, the IOB will be in a good position to confer with the Publications Board, and the members of the AC¹, as appropriate, when data are requested for a publication which will seriously duplicate data already published elsewhere. Guidelines should be established for resolving such situations.

106. Duplication of statistical data that now exists between ESA and regional economic commissions would be reduced through agreements that these commissions (except ECE) would concentrate on the following statistics:

- (a) commodity data on intra-regional trade assembled by countries, for the purpose of action programmes designed to expand such trade; and
- (b) all statistical data now available for countries (except detailed commodity trade data) assembled in one volume for each country in the region.

107. The above programme would help overcome the present lack of statistics in suitable form for encouraging trade between developing countries in the regions, and would help avoid the present need to assemble data from a number of sources for a given country in connexion with "country programming" now adopted by the UNDP. ECE is not included in this proposal because the statistics discussed above are already available for that area.

108. It is emphasized that the Publications Board is not in a good position to review statistical publications "substantively", and that the establishment of an ad hoc committee to look for duplication will probably be doomed to failure before it starts. Unless more comprehensive steps are taken along the lines proposed above - steps that are feasible today but not five or even three years ago - it is highly questionable whether duplication of statistical publications can be reduced significantly.

Individual Analyses

109. In addition to the fundamental proposal presented above, specific comments on some of the individual statistical publications are as follows:

(a) Monthly Bulletin of Statistics

110. According to the User Survey this publication is widely used, but there appear to be opportunities for reducing its cost, as follows:

(i) Frequency of publication. Almost all of the latest statistics in the volume for March, for example, are for the previous December or earlier. It is proposed that this publication be put on a quarterly basis in the future, the same as the Population and Vital Statistics Reports. Those users who want the latest sensitive figures as soon as possible will find the comparatively new statistical publications of the regional economic commissions presenting key statistics on short term economic changes a more timely source for the latest statistical data than the Monthly Bulletin. See for example Statistical Indications of Short-Term Economic Changes in ECE Countries.

(ii) Annual data. There are shown each month, for almost all of the statistical series in the Monthly Bulletin, annual data for the previous six years plus as much monthly data as is available for the past year or longer. Thus a large part of the data are historical information repeated each month without change. It is proposed that three of the quarterly issues each year be restricted to more current information, but that the issue for the fourth quarter include historical data running back several years.

(iii) Scope. This Bulletin contains a very good presentation of important economic statistics except in the field of agriculture. Would it be possible through collaboration between FAO and ESA to produce a single quarterly bulletin that covers all of the important economic statistics? (It is recognized that many agricultural statistics are available only on an annual basis.)

(b) Statistical Yearbook

111. According to the User Survey, this publication is used more widely than any other UN statistical publication. However, a review of its pages suggests opportunities to save money. Many of its pages present the same annual data as in the present Monthly Bulletin, but extend further into the past. Also, the Monthly Bulletin presents annual and monthly data on demographic, national accounts, and international trade statistics; the Statistical Yearbook presents annual data on these same statistics; and the Demographic Yearbook, Yearbook of National Accounts Statistics, and the Yearbook of International Trade Statistics present far more detailed data in these fields. Thus the Statistical Yearbook does not present recent monthly data, or detailed data.

112. It is proposed that this duplication be avoided as follows:

(i) assuming that the Monthly Bulletin was changed to a Quarterly Bulletin as recommended above, the Bulletin for the fourth quarter would include historical data extending back six years as in the present Monthly Bulletin, and would also include data on certain topics now included in the Statistical Yearbook but not in the Monthly Bulletin. This Bulletin for the fourth quarter would then replace the present Statistical Yearbook. Those users looking for more detail or a longer historical series would find it in the specialized Yearbooks or in back issues of the Statistical Yearbook;

(ii) if it is concluded that the Statistical Yearbook provides such a convenient source of historical data in one publication that it should not be discontinued altogether, then it certainly should not be issued more frequently than once every three years if an expanded Bulletin for each fourth quarter were issued as proposed above.

(c) Other ESA Statistical Yearbooks

113. Questions can certainly be raised regarding the tremendous amount of detail included in the Demographic Yearbook, Yearbook of National Accounts Statistics, Yearbook of International Trade Statistics, Commodity Trade Statistics, and the

World Trade Annual. On the other hand, if the UN is moving slowly into the position of being the sole source of such data except for publications by the countries themselves, it thereby becomes responsible for making a complete set of data available even if part of it is used very little. Furthermore, all of these publications were found to be very useful by the User Survey.

Regional Commissions

114. There is a lot of unnecessary duplication between statistical publications of the regional economic commissions and ESA Headquarters. There are also certain specialized publications of doubtful value. Details on this are presented later in this report. It is proposed that the commissions concentrate on assembling all statistical data for a given country in one volume, whereas today it has to be extracted from a number of publications; that it assemble data showing commodity flows between countries in its region; and that some of the specialized publications be terminated. More detailed suggestions are presented below:

ECE

115. Most of the countries in the area covered by ECE are "developed" and already have adequate and comprehensive country statistical publications. Furthermore, ECE is not publishing large statistical publications duplicating in fact those world-wide ESA publications discussed above. The major opportunities for useful corrective action appear to be as follows:^{1/}

(a) Economic Bulletin for Europe

116. Two editions of this Bulletin are issued each year. The edition issued in the spring includes a Statistical Appendix of about 117 pages, which presents imports and exports of countries in Western Europe with countries in Eastern Europe, Soviet Union and Mainland China, by commodity groups, for the previous two years (with a time-lag of about 15 months). This Appendix is not related to studies presented in the Bulletin, but is a regular feature of the spring edition of the Bulletin. The data included in this Appendix can also be found in Commodity Trade Statistics on a more timely basis, and in the OECD, Series C publication on exports and imports; but not in quite as convenient a form.

^{1/} Officials of ECE stated that they could not prepare formal comments on the draft of this report before September. They were advised to send their comments to the Secretary-General.

117. It is recommended that this Statistical Appendix be discontinued.

(b) Annual Bulletin of General Energy Statistics for Europe

118. This Bulletin was issued for the first time in 1970. Consideration is being given by ECE to replacing the quarterly, half-yearly, and annual Coal, Gas and Electrical Energy statistical bulletins with this one Bulletin. It is understood that two of the three ECE Committees involved are prepared to accept this change.

119. It is recommended that the Publications Board should not approve the separate coal, gas, and electricity statistical bulletins for either external printing or internal reproduction in the future.

(c) Indices of Concentration in the Coal Industry

20. Based on the User Survey, this recurrent publication is the "least useful" of the 84 publications reported on in the Survey. No doubt the "colliery concentration" indices and "face concentration" indices are of great interest to the experts on the ECE Coal Committee, but this enthusiasm is not generally shared by the wide range of addressees to whom it is mailed free around the world.

121. It is strongly recommended that this recurrent publication, which was authorized by the ECE Coal Committee in 1961, be terminated.

(d) Transport of Dangerous Goods

122. The User Survey also disclosed very little interest in the recurrent publication Transport of Dangerous Goods. However, a careful review of the background of this publication indicated its potential value. Important considerations are as follows:

- (i) the problem of transport of dangerous goods is growing, and is receiving increasing world-wide attention;
- (ii) the UN Committee of Experts on the transport of dangerous goods is starting to make some headway in helping to co-ordinate the activities of different parts of the UN family in this area;
- (iii) the 1970 edition of this publication is a review of the last edition in 1966, and contains a broad series of recommendations. ECOSOC resolution 1488 (XLVIII) authorized its issuance, and requested the Secretary-General to receive comments on it from Governments of Member States, specialized agencies, IAEA and other interested international organizations;
- (iv) since this document was to be distributed for comments and is designed to be read only by certain specialists, it is not clear why it was issued as a recurrent publication.

123. It is recommended that any future compilations of these recommendations with further reviews be mailed only to the specialists in the field for comment, and not issued as a recurrent publication.

(e) Statistics on Road Traffic Accidents in Europe

124. This is another recurrent publication with a low rating according to the User Survey. Data included in this publication are collected from various countries by the ECE Inland Transport Committee. Most of these countries publish an annual bulletin on their countries' road accidents.

125. It is considered appropriate to ask why the United Nations is spending money to collect these statistics on road traffic. For example, why is the United Nations concerned with the number of road traffic accidents in Denmark, broken down between fatal and non-fatal accidents, and between accidents in built-up areas and all areas? Is it reasonable to think that users of a depository library in Australia are interested in accidents to drivers and passengers of cycles with auxiliary engines in Malta, broken down by age groups (under 6 years, 6-9 years, 10-14 years, etc.) and by persons killed and injured in built-up areas and elsewhere, presented in English, French and Russian? Just what is the United Nations supposed to do with the information that in 1969 in Hungary, 779 pedestrians were injured or killed in accidents "in which the effect of alcohol was involved"?

126. It is recommended that this publication be stopped.

(f) Bulletin of Statistics on World Trade in Engineering Products

127. The User Survey discloses a comparatively low rating for this publication, except among Member Governments. It is not clear, however, why the ECE is publishing a Bulletin on world-wide trade. Nearly all of the data are obtained from ESA in New York, and cover Machinery and Transport Equipment (Section 7) of the SITC (Standard International Trade Classification), Revised. These data are already issued in another form by the Statistical Office of the United Nations in New York. It might also be asked why, of the tremendous range of commodity trade statistics issued by UN Headquarters, "engineering products" were singled out for a special bulletin with world-wide coverage by ECE.

128. It is recommended that this publication be stopped.

(g) Annual Bulletin of Housing and Building Statistics for Europe

129. This publication has been selected from among the several annual statistical bulletins of ECE to raise certain questions that may apply to all of them.

130. One justification for the Bulletin of Housing and Building Statistics would be that it is necessary for the ECE Committee in this field. At the time this publication was first approved in 1958, a periodic review was being issued called "European Housing Trends and Policies", which was discontinued in 1963. A review of all special reports on housing and building between 1965 and 1969 did not disclose any study requiring the compilation of a broad set of statistics such as in this Bulletin, except two studies in 1967.

131. Since the ECE membership consists of developed countries, presumably most of the Governments involved publish these Statistics in their own publications. There may be some lack of comparability of such data between countries, but just who would be handicapped by the lack of such comparability?

132. It is suggested that it might be more useful for ECE to start issuing again a publication on European Housing Trends and Policies every three years together with a Statistical Appendix, rather than publish a lot of raw statistics each year on housing and building without any interpretation or analysis.

(h) Quarterly Bulletin of Steel Statistics for Europe

133. It is not clear why this Bulletin is on a quarterly basis when bulletins on energy, transport, housing and timber are on an annual basis. Furthermore, why should this quarterly bulletin report annual data running back to 1962 in some cases, in each quarterly issue? It should be adequate to include it only once a year, perhaps in the Bulletin for the first quarter of a year or in a single annual publication.

134. It is recommended that this publication either be put on an annual basis, or that the annual historical data be restricted to one quarterly issue each year.

ECAFE

(a) Statistical Yearbook for Asia and the Far East

135. The User Survey indicates that this Yearbook is one of the most useful of all of the statistical publications. A major reason for the popularity of this Yearbook is undoubtedly the fact that it pulls together data from many sources by countries, so that you can find the key statistics for each country in the ECAFE area in one place. It is noted that the 1969 edition has a 21 months time-lag, which is much too long for a statistical yearbook.

(b) Electric Power in Asia and the Far East

136. This annual publication includes both statistics and a review of the electric supply industry in each country. It received a low rating in the User Survey.

Perhaps part of the difficulty is that the 1967 issue for example, had a 23 months time-lag. Consideration should be given to issuing this publication every other year rather than on an annual basis.

(c) Foreign Trade Statistics for Asia and the Far East

137. This publication consists of several volumes, two of which include nearly 1,000 pages each of statistics in fine print. These large volumes have a time-lag of nearly four years before the data for a given year are finally available.

138. Even if there was not an unacceptable time-lag of nearly four years, it is difficult to understand the rationale for this publication, for the following reasons:

- (i) it is organized on a commodity basis. The average user interested in such data wants it on a world-wide, not a regional basis. In economic terms, there is no reason why the user's interest should be confined to the 22 countries that happen to be included in this publication. Such world-wide data are available;
- (ii) ECAFE is interested in stimulating trade between the developing countries in its region, but there are no detailed statistics available today that are arranged for that purpose. Why not reorganize this publication to fill that need?
- (iii) ECAFE is interested in supporting the "country programming" approach now sponsored by UNDP, but there is a serious lack of reliable, internally consistent data for many developing countries. Would it not have been better to focus on pulling trade statistics together by country as a major contribution to country development programmes?

139. It is recommended that the present publication on Foreign Trade Statistics be discontinued, and that a revised publication be developed to meet the needs of developing countries along the lines suggested above.

ECLA

(a) Statistical Bulletin for Latin America

140. The contents of this Bulletin are disappointing. It is organized on a subject matter rather than a country basis. It is suggested that many users of such statistics are not interested in (for example) the production of wheat, flour or iron ore in the particular countries included in ECLA, but would prefer world-wide data (which are available). The same observation would apply to such data on the harvested area of cotton or merchant fleets in operation.

141. It is believed that if this Bulletin were organized by country, as is the Statistical Yearbook for Asia and the Far East, it would be a far more useful document, and not be so vulnerable to charges of duplication.

142. It is also noted that this publication has a time-lag of over $1\frac{1}{2}$ years before distribution, which is too long for a statistical publication.

C. Economic and Social Affairs Publications

143. The User Survey discloses a strong demand for annual economic surveys and bulletins, and for publications whose title includes the word "planning". Use of other publications in the economic and social affairs category is very uneven.

Individual Analyses

(a) Annual Economic Surveys

144. ESA and each of the regional commissions issue annual surveys that are given high ratings by the User Survey. These surveys are prepared for the Economic and Social Council meeting in Geneva in July, and earlier meetings of the executive boards of the commissions. These publications present an annual review, and usually also include special studies. A review of these publications indicates that the annual reviews seldom stimulate useful discussion.

145. For example, a review of General Assembly and ECOSOC resolutions for the past 10 years failed to disclose a single resolution resulting from the annual review in the World Economic Survey (Part II). The record of discussion of the general economic and social situation that takes place during the early part of each summer session of ECOSOC in Geneva was reviewed for several years, but only three rather superficial references were found to Part II of the World Economic Survey. In each case an observation was made on a particular statistic in Part II. A review was also made of the minutes of the Economic Committee of ECOSOC for a period of several years, but only one minor reference to Part II was noted.

146. The above analysis, plus discussion with several officials regarding Part II of the World Economic Survey and the comparable survey of ECE, indicated that these annual reviews are not an effective medium for raising important economic problems in ECOSOC on which specific action is desired. A condensed annual review indicating how countries are doing is probably justified, but if high level policy decisions, and approval of action programmes, are sought on a given matter, it appears to be necessary to have a special study on that subject which includes concrete recommendations. More general analyses of major economic problems in an annual review just do not seem to lead to any discussion or action no matter how sound the reasoning.

147. More specifically, it is recommended that the annual reviews be restricted to a condensed summary of "how the various countries are doing". It is also proposed that

consideration be given to presenting such summaries as an integrated annual review of ECOSOC with inputs from the four regional commissions and ESA.

(b) Journal of Development Planning

148. Two issues of the new Journal of Development Planning have now been published. In view of the many professional journals on the shelves of libraries that include articles on planning, the question must be asked as to why the United Nations is adding another journal in the already crowded field. Is ESA in a position to make a unique contribution?

149. The first two articles of Volume I were examined in detail. The first article, written by a distinguished economist, discusses "criteria for evaluation of national development effort". This is a rather elementary discussion of the subject, containing material found in any good textbook on development economics. It contains nothing new, and makes no specific reference to the experience of United Nations experts in developing countries.

150. The second article is also written by a well-known economist who addresses himself to "some questions concerning growth, transformation and planning in agriculture in developing countries". A comparative analysis is attempted of experiences in India, Taiwan and Mexico. No reference is made, however, to the profoundly important differences in the "management" of the agricultural programmes in the three countries, a fact which would have to be thoroughly examined in any realistic comparative analysis of results achieved in these three countries.

151. A less detailed examination of the rest of Volume I and of Volume II, indicated that they are oriented largely to the econometric model building approach to planning, which is not particularly relevant to developing countries because of the lack of key statistics and qualified experts on such matters.

152. Unless the Journal of Development Planning is reoriented to serve as a means of making available first hand case studies and experiences of UN experts in the field, who are not wedded to only the mathematical aspects of planning (for which key statistical data are not available anyway), it is difficult to find any justification for continuing the publication.

(c) Newsletters

153. ES in New York issues at least three "newsletters" - Statistical Notes, Monthly Bulletin covering work of ESA and Division of Narcotic Drugs, and Population Newsletter; plus newsletters of the regional economic commissions. Some of these

newsletters bear a UN symbol, some do not. Some cover only past events. Others have some discussion about the future. One document discusses the activities of numerous officials. Others do not mention names.

154. Statistical Notes cover the whole UN family. Other ESA newsletters cover only ESA. (Unless the scope of the Population Newsletter is widened soon to include United Nations Fund for Population Activities, the latter plans to issue its own newsletter).

155. It seems clear that ESA lacks a policy regarding newsletters. It is recommended that ESA review these various newsletters, and determine if any which are issued by ESA apart from beyond the Monthly Bulletin are justified. If the other ESA newsletters can be justified, then presumably every part of ESA could start issuing newsletters.

(d) Report on the World Social Situation

156. The User Survey indicated that this recurrent publication was the most useful of all of the publications in this Survey. It is published once every three years, and its distribution has a time lag of slightly over one year. The publication represents a joint effort of the ESA Office in Geneva, the regional commissions, ILO, FAO, UNESCO and WHO, under the leadership of the Social Development Division of ESA in New York. It appears to be a very professional piece of work, well written and covering a wide range of subjects on a little over 200 pages. From the standpoint of the criteria used in this study, the 1967 Report on the World Social Situation is considered to be the outstanding publication examined by this Inspector.

(e) The External Financing of Economic Development

157. This publication had a comparatively high rating in the User Survey, particularly for Member States. A review of the pertinent resolutions, and discussion in ECOSOC and at the General Assembly, clearly indicate that the international flow of long-term capital is a matter of great concern, particularly to developing countries.

158. The sources of much of the data for this publication were OECD, IMF and IBRD, but the presentation and analysis were oriented to provisions of ECOSOC and General Assembly resolutions, such as placing emphasis on "reverse flow" from developing countries. Duplication with OECD publications does not appear to be excessive.

(f) Studies on Selected Development Problems in Various Countries in the Middle East, and Studies on Social Development in Various Countries in the Middle East

159. These two publications had above average ratings in the User Study. They provide penetrating, imaginative studies of various practical development problems in the Middle East and should be useful to those concerned with planning in that area. The publications are well designed, and clearly oriented towards action, not merely description and analysis.

(g) Mineral Resources Development Series, Water Resources Series and Regional Economic Co-operation Series

160. These three recurrent publications of ECAFE include many examples of recurrent publications being used to report on Conferences, Working Groups and Seminars. In most cases such reports were too long, primarily because papers and addresses presented at the Conference were included in full, complete with several pages of footnotes in a number of instances. It is strongly recommended that such reports should be limited to carefully prepared summaries of key matters included in papers and addresses, and be issued within a year after the meeting was held. For example, Mineral Resources Development Series No.30 is a report on a special working group that met in Tokyo in November 1965. The report was not distributed until the fall of 1969. Comparatively expensive methods of typing and printing were used.

161. It is not clear why such publications as described above should be classified as "recurrent publications". Their comparative rating in the User Survey was about average.

(h) Small Industry Bulletin for Asia and the Far East

162. This publication rated about average in the User Survey. It is obvious from an inspection of this publication that a lot of time and effort has been expended to collect a broad cross-section of views on the main theme selected for each of the issues. The discussion on each issue is usually at a practical level, which of course is appropriate in view of the subject matter.

163. The principal question raised by this publication is the possible duplication with Small-scale Manufacturing Studies issued by UNIDO. It is suggested that ECAFE is probably in a better position than UNIDO to tap sources of information on small-scale industry in its area, and to persuade appropriate persons to contribute to a publication in this field. Thus it might be concluded that the proper arrangement

should be for ECAFE and the other regional commissions to prepare and print publications on such matters as small-scale industry, but with the strong support, and in some cases direct collaboration, of UNIDO.

164. On the other hand, UNIDO can bring to the ECAFE area the experience of other parts of the world. There was not a suitable opportunity during this inspection to review the problem in depth, but it is not clear that these two publications necessarily involve an excessive amount of duplication. It is noted that the User Survey discloses more use of the UNIDO publication than the Bulletin issued by ECAFE.

165. It is concluded that rigid guidelines should not be adopted for the situation described above, and that there is room for both organizations in this field, but the situation does call for active co-operation.

(i) Transport and Communications Bulletin

166. This publication has a rather low rating in the User Survey. It has been issued by ECAFE since 1950. The Bulletin for 1970 consists of five articles - all reprints of articles published elsewhere - "news on recent developments" copied mostly from trade publications, and "documentation" which summarizes information from various published sources. This publication is not primarily related to UN activities in the Transport and Communications field, but is primarily concerned with what is happening in other parts of the world that might be of interest to member countries of ECAFE.

167. This publication could have been written almost as well in Madrid or Chicago as in Bangkok. Only four out of fifty-six pages are related to any activities of ECAFE. A review of its contents for 1970 does not disclose any particular criteria for determining what would be of most interest to Member States of ECAFE. No attempt was made to indicate the implications of the material in this publication for Member States.

168. It is concluded that in its present form, this publication represents a very low priority type of activity and should be terminated.

(j) Social Welfare Services in Africa Series

169. Two issues of this publication were examined in some detail. One issue was entitled Youth Employment and National Development in Africa. It is a monograph prepared in connexion with the Regional Meeting on Youth Employment and National Development, held in Niamey, Niger, 21-30 May 1968. The report includes a carefully prepared digest of nineteen statements by country and UN representatives, together

with a summary of recommendations resulting from the meeting. The publication also has a thoughtful, informative and well-written introduction. The UN Division of Social Development, ILO, WHO, UNICEF and UNESCC all assisted ECA in preparing this regional meeting and the monograph. It represented the first major inter-agency effort in the promotion of youth work in Africa.

170. The other publication examined in this series was entitled Directory of Regional Social Welfare Activities (second edition). This is a very detailed directory, by country in Africa, which is designed to help facilitate a regular exchange of information and experience, as social service programmes become more and more a direct government responsibility. The Directory appeared to be well designed and informative.

171. The User Survey indicates an above average rating for this Series.

(k) Agricultural Economic Bulletin for Africa

172. This publication is issued twice yearly by ECA. It consists of signed articles and articles written by ECA/FAO which are oriented towards agricultural problems in Africa. A review of the titles of all articles published from 1962 to 1969 clearly indicates that the editors of the publication are seeking resumés of the practical experiences of well-qualified experts in coming to grips with African agricultural problems. The method of reproduction is the "fair copy, offset" which is fast and inexpensive, but the publication is still very presentable.

D. Other Publications

173. USA issues two recurrent publications in the field of cartography, namely the Annual Report on the International Map of the World, and World Cartography. The justification for continuing these publications is not convincing. They both had very low ratings in the User Survey.

(a) Annual Report of the International Map of the World.

174. Work has been under way on the World Map since 1913. The map is still not completed, particularly for Canada. Since it has not been finally completed after almost 60 years, it cannot have a very high priority. About half of a total of around 800 sheets completed so far have been prepared by the United States Army, Map Service. There is some overlapping of this map with the World Aeronautical Chart Series of ICAO.

175. No doubt the preparation of this map has led to agreements on certain standards between countries regarding maps. Also, in some cases this project may have provided maps in some areas in the past where nothing existed before. During the past 20 years, however, the UNDP and other foreign assistance organizations have provided very substantial funds for the much more detailed mapping required for development purposes around the world than is provided by the World Map.

176. Because of a year and a half time lag in the issuance of this recurrent publication on the International Map of the World, the latest issue in the UN library was the report for 1968. It included 80 pages listing published sheets, even though only a few of the approximately 800 sheets listed were new or revised in 1968. The number of new or revised sheets issued in recent years is as follows:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Sheets</u>
1965	49
1966	13
1967	12
1968	24

177. It is recommended that this publication be terminated, or at least restricted to three or four pages listing the changes in a given year if some continuing interest by the UN in this project can be justified.

(b) World Cartography

178. The publication 'World Cartography' raises a different set of questions. The initial issues of the publication 20 years ago were highly relevant to UN activities, well organized, and interesting to read. The table of contents included four parts as follows:

- I. General Questions
- II. Technical Notes and Studies
- III. Reports on Activities
- IV. Bibliography

79. After a few years the very thoughtful articles in Part I were dropped. By 1962 the bibliography was dropped and there was no breakdown in the tables of contents. The latest issue of this publication contains three technical articles - one on earth-observation satellites, one on side-looking radar, and one on land registration in developing countries. There was nothing in this issue relating to the United Nations activities. The articles were similar to those found in many professional and trade publications.

180. If the Cartography Section of ESA were in a position to exercise real leadership in the many mapping and related activities of the UN family, a recurrent publication on such activities might be fully justified. Under present circumstances, however, no convincing case was found for continuing the World Cartography publication.

(c) Bulletin on Narcotics

181. ESA also has responsibility for recurrent publications of the Division of Narcotic Drugs in the UN office in Geneva. This Division has issued a Bulletin on Narcotics for over 20 years. However, it seems to be "running out of steam".

182. The initial volumes of this publication included articles on (1) international control problems, (2) technical problems of the drugs themselves, (3) reports on international meetings and legislation, and (4) a bibliography. Recently, however, the issues have been more limited in scope and content, and this suggests that less effort is perhaps being made to provide in each issue a real contribution to the narcotics problem.

183. Each volume does have a good index, and is issued promptly. In view of the growing world wide interest, however, in the narcotics problem, and the expanding scope of duties of the Division of Narcotics, it is suggested that this Bulletin should receive more attention and support than is indicated by an historical review of its contents, and by the User Survey, which gives it a fairly low rating.

Chapter V. Division of Human Rights

184. One recurrent publication of the Division of Human Rights was examined.

Yearbook of Human Rights

185. One of the most controversial of the recurrent publications is the Yearbook of Human Rights. Information is presented on internal constitutional, legislative and judicial developments each year in the human rights field in the various countries of the World. The resolution authorizing this Yearbook provided that this publication would present all of the constitutions and internal legislation concerned with human rights in the various countries. However, since such a task would have involved an unmanageable amount of material, the Yearbook has always been restricted to changes and additions each year for the countries covered in each edition. It also contains a few pages of similar information for Trust Territories and Non-Self-Governing Territories, and comparable data in certain international agreements. The Yearbook, an annual publication, has a good index.

186. The most frequent criticism of this publication is the delay in its issuance. For example, the Yearbook for 1967 has only just become available (over a three year time-lag). This long delay reflects (a) the time required to translate into English and French the information received in many languages from about 90 countries, (b) the lengthy research necessary to identify much information not volunteered by governments and which must be sent to them for clearance before inclusion in the Yearbook, and (c) the time required to prepare the subject index after all of the material is assembled.

187. A second criticism is the duplication of information in this Yearbook with information submitted in periodic reports by the Member Governments and specialized agencies. ECOSOC resolution 10740 (XXXIX), dated 28 July 1965, provides for periodic reports by Member States and specialized agencies on a three-year cycle. The first year includes developments in the field of civil and political rights; the second year, developments in the field of economics, social and cultural rights; and the third year, developments in the field of freedom of information. These reports are mimeographed and distributed rather widely but not sold.

188. These periodic reports may cover approximately the same information included in the Yearbook, have a similar time-lag, but only cover a little more than 50 countries. Through research, including a review of official gazettes of the various countries,

information of other countries is found - submitted to the Governments for clearance for the Yearbook, so that the Yearbook includes information on about 90 countries.

189. The information on international agreements in the back of the Yearbook duplicates information in the Treaty Series, and partially duplicates information in the publication entitled Multilateral Treaties in respect of which the Secretary-General Performs Depositary Functions.

190. Although the questions presented above raise serious doubts about the Yearbook, it is suggested that there is a more fundamental question. Just what use can be made of the information in the Yearbook? It does not present the status of human rights in any one country, but only the changes in laws and regulations (if any) that took place in a given year. There is no interpretation or analysis of such changes - a much delayed presentation of the raw data.

191. It is suggested that if there is a rationale for the kind of information included in this Yearbook, it is to provide guidance to developing countries in expanding and strengthening constitutional provisions, laws, and judicial decisions in the human rights area. The present Yearbook, however, presents specific changes "out of context". Unless the related laws, court decisions, etc., were known, it would be difficult to evaluate such changes in terms of serving as a model for another country whose related laws and court decisions might be significantly different. Furthermore, some of the changes reported in the Yearbook for a given year may be regarded by human rights experts as of doubtful value, but no such evaluation is presented in the Yearbook.

192. If the Yearbook were completely reorientated, for example, and presented a resume each year of significant changes in the human rights field around the world, and perhaps a model law or constitutional provision in a major sector of the human rights field as a special feature in each edition, then the Yearbook might serve a very useful purpose. I recommend that the Yearbook in its present form be terminated, but that a thorough review be made of the rationale for this publication with the objective of designing a Yearbook that will have maximum usefulness to developing countries.

Chapter VI. Office of Public Information

193. The Yearbook of the United Nations was the only OPI publication examined in detail. I found this publication more difficult to evaluate than any other one included in this report. Key considerations are as follows:

- (a) the publication has a long time-lag (the 1968 edition only appeared on library shelves in the late spring of 1971);
- (b) the material in the Yearbook is written by the same individuals who write the "Official Records" of the main organs in the form of annual reports to ECOSOC or the General Assembly, and largely duplicates those records;
- (c) since the official records are printed in several languages and are mailed free to libraries, information centres, and governments all over the world, does the UN have further responsibilities for disseminating this same information about the activities on a periodic basis? Is the Yearbook supposed to have more "sell" than official records? Or is the Everyman's United Nations, also published by the Office of Public Information, designed to promote the United Nations? If so, what is the basic rationale for the Yearbook? Surely it is not "convenience". The Secretary-General's Annual Report is a more convenient document to find out what is happening in the UN, it is up-to-date and reads about as easily as the Yearbook.
- (d) on the other hand, several of the official reports to the General Assembly, such as the report of the Security Council, are merely noted and not discussed, so why not include them in the Yearbook and not publish them separately? Although there seems to be a tendency to treat those who publish official records, and the Office of Public Information, as living in two different worlds, would it not be possible to include, for example, a report of the Security Council in the Yearbook and designate it as the "official record"?

193. It is recognized that Article 15 of the Charter provides that all UN organs shall submit annual reports on their activities to the General Assembly for its consideration. Why not just bind these official records together as Part I of the Yearbook, and issue it in time for the General Assembly?

194. It will be argued that the Yearbook is intended for a different audience, has a much more relaxed style and is easier to read. This may be true in theory, but this Inspector has opened copies of the Yearbook at random and tried to read them. In

my opinion, its style is anything but relaxed and reads just like the official records - which is to be expected since the same people contribute the texts of both documents.

195. If Part I were issued in time for the General Assembly, Part II, which covers the specialized agencies would have to be issued later since their reports are issued on a calendar year basis. The question can be asked as to why the Office of Public Information is issuing a resumé of activities of those agencies which duplicates their annual reports.

196. One argument frequently made for justifying the duplication involved in the Yearbook is that "it pays for itself". If you count only the out-of-pocket printing costs of copies for sale, this may be true. If you add in the costs of authorship, supervision, typing and distribution, the figures tell a different story, and may involve a total cost running well into six figures.

197. When the various annual "official" reports involved in the above discussion are put side-by-side, a considerable amount of duplication between these official records can be identified, particularly with reference to the Secretary-General's Annual Report. If these official records were designed to be bound together, there are opportunities for reducing the total size by many pages.

198. It is recommended that the principle be adopted that annual summaries of the various UN organs will not be printed twice in different forms; and that the necessary steps be taken to design a single publication with official status that can meet the requirements of Article 15 of the Charter and also be distributed as a recurrent publication.

Chapter VII. United Nations Office at Geneva

199. The Library at the Palais des Nations in Geneva has been issuing two recurrent publications since 1928: a Monthly List of Selected Articles, and a Monthly List of Books catalogued in the Library of the United Nations. They received about an average rating in the User Survey. A detailed review of the submissions for this Survey] indicated that large libraries had little use for these publications, but specialty libraries found them more useful.

200. From the standpoint of duplication, it is understood that the UN Library in New York has an accession list for use at that Library, but does not in fact duplicate these two publications. It is also noted that the Geneva Library feels that it has been able to purchase all of the really worthwhile books of interest to the UN family, so that its Monthly List can serve as a guide or check to other libraries and to individuals interested in new books being published around the world in the fields covered by the UN.

201. For the List of Selected Articles 2,600 periodicals from all parts of the world are regularly indexed on political, legal, economic, financial and other questions of the day. This list has been found useful by members of the Secretariat as well as by scholars.

202. It is noted that the Library has taken steps to cut costs to a minimum. For example, the cards prepared for the card catalogue are also used in reproducing the Monthly List of Books. Also, these two publications have served as a basis for exchanges with other libraries, thereby permitting books and documents to be obtained free.

203. Although a really strong case cannot be made for these publications, it is recommended that they be continued, but that consideration be given to applying a recommendation made earlier in this report that a note be sent to each addressee on the free mailing list with instructions that the form attached thereto must be filled out in order to remain on the mailing list.

Chapter VIII UNIDO

204. Thirteen publications classified as "recurrent" were examined in Vienna. However, it should be emphasized that although UNIDO is preparing, processing and distributing such documents as in other parts of the United Nations, this organization also has an Industrial Information Section of 35 people, financed in part by a trust fund from the Austrian Government, that is ultimately working towards the day when an integrated world-wide information system will permit us to push a button and receive any kind of recorded information from around the world on a TV screen in our office. This will be the ultimate answer to that part of the resolution establishing UNIDO in 1966 providing for "dissemination of information in technological innovations". It may be many, many years before we have the organization, satellites and super computers to fully achieve this goal, but a few words about preliminary steps now being taken in this direction may help bring the present recurrent publications programme into perspective with the world of tomorrow.

205. The Industrial Information Service project, which has been under way for several years, is designed to establish a focal point that will serve as a clearing house for industrial information, with a network of informants in "developed" countries and correspondents in developing countries. Its documentation service will become a comprehensive industrial data bank, based on library reference material; it will also include a specialized data bank based on technical assistance reports and feasibility studies produced within and without the system. These services will be combined with an industrial enquiry service and a publications unit.

206. Highlights of progress made to date are as follows:

(a) Economic and Social Development Aligned List of Descriptors.

207. OECD, ILO and E.C.O. each compiled a list of terms used in their documentation work, and pooled them into a common thesaurus. By 1969 a common list had been tested and jointly published by these three organizations and several others. Since then, UNIDO, GATT, UNESCO and others have prepared their list of descriptors to be included in successive editions of the Aligned List. This List is regarded as a major step towards an inter-agency development information network.

(b) ILO Central Library and Documentation Centre.

208. ILO has moved more rapidly than others towards a documentation centre controlling large quantities of bibliographic data by computer. For information retrieval it uses a visual display cathode ray tube terminal located in the library

and connected to the computer. An outstanding feature is a data record format structured on that used by the United States Library of Congress. In the spring of 1970 UNIDO started a field project limited to a bibliographical control system for documents, with a data record structure modelled after that used by ILO. At present only UNIDO-produced information material is being processed, including UNIDO's recurrent publications. The bibliographical record sheet used in processing includes an abstract of the material. These record sheets are being processed in Geneva by ILO by being keyed in directly on the typewriter of the cathode ray terminal in the ILO library that was referred to above. With this set-up, a person wanting certain information will send his request to the librarian or operator. The answer to these "arch" questions will be printed in batch by the computer's high-speed printer at periodic intervals, and the user will be able to order his hard copy of the results, including bibliographic description and abstracts of matching documents. ILO estimates that the cost of a single manual search is \$ 65.00, while the cost of a computerized search is \$ 9.01 at a rate of fifteen searches per day, and only \$ 5.46 at a rate of forty searches per day.

209. When libraries around the world are eventually "wired in" to an integrated system, it is obvious why the present programme involving the printing and distribution of reports will be drastically changed. In the meantime, however, the questions raised by the General Assembly regarding "recurrent publications" are just as relevant to UNIDO as to other parts of the United Nations.

General Observations

210. The evaluation of recurrent publications of UNIDO raised several key problems as follows:

- (a) User Survey. UNIDO publications did not have a very high rating in the User Survey. However, several of those submitting replies to the User Survey volunteered the view that UNIDO publications are comparatively new, and will undoubtedly be used more as they become better known. Furthermore, since a number of developing countries have not yet established Ministries of Industry, publications on training foremen and building fertilizer plants for example are mailed to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs which usually has no direct interest in such matters.
- (b) Distribution List. The present channel of distribution for recurrent publications is probably less suitable for UNIDO than for any other part of the United Nations because so many of its potential readers are in private enterprise.

(c) Capacity. UNIDO has grown so fast that its senior officials are under very heavy pressure to maintain reasonable control over the operations. It was evident that officials were not finding time to screen candidates for writing publications, for reading manuscripts before final approval for printing, etc. The organization chart, the administrative procedures, the description of the UNIDO Publications Committee, the instructions regarding discussion of manuscripts before editing, translation, and printing, etc. all suggest that UNIDO is extremely well organized to handle recurrent publications efficiently. In practice, however, there do not seem to be enough hours in the day for well-intentioned officials to carry out their programmes. For example, it is understood that (as of March 1971) the UNIDO Publications Committee had met only twice since it was established on 6 March 1970.

(d) Number of Recurrent Publications. There was a strong feeling by senior officials of UNIDO that only about three of the thirteen recurrent publications so identified in the United Nations Budget really qualified for that category. The others were "studies" and "reports".

(e) Quality of Publications. There was a general unhappiness about the quality of publications so far, and a determination to do something about it.

Periodicals

211. UNIDO has been publishing the Industrial and Productivity Bulletin, and the Industrial Research and Development News, as well as the Industrial Development Survey. Some of the senior officials of UNIDO are convinced that these three recurrent publications fall far short of the challenge of the world-wide communications requirements of UNIDO. They have only limited reader interest and are reaching only a fraction of the top management officials that should be contacted. Furthermore, there is no industrial or business periodical on the market today - produced commercially - which is oriented primarily to the developing countries.

212. In order to remedy the above situation, UNIDO is proposing a new magazine, which might be called "Industrial Development News", to be published monthly and aimed at executives of all nations in the fields of finance, business, industry and development. It would be published as a commercial journal with paid advertising and news-stand sales, with the ultimate objective of stimulating interest in business and industry in developing countries. It would not be a UNIDO or United Nations publication, but a commercial publication under the guidance of UNIDO. Eventually it might take the place of part or all three of the UNIDO publications mentioned above.

213. Attempts have been made to locate a printer plus publisher, and a pilot issue will be produced in the summer of 1971. There are legal and other problems involved which are being reviewed in United Nations Headquarters, including the not insubstantial financial risks (to be shared between the publisher and UNIDO).

214. This proposal goes far beyond the question of whether recurrent publications should be prepared primarily for information or for profit. The question raised is whether UNIDO can meet the challenge of industrial development without attempting to directly reach and influence those executives who in the final analysis control the flow of capital and technical know-how in finance and industry to developing countries. Such communication calls for a different style of writing than is normally found in United Nations publications, and different channels of distribution.

215. UNIDO is to be commended for this bold approach to making a major impact on industrial development in developing countries, but it is not clear to this Inspector whether it has the staff to make the sustained effort necessary to get this project off the ground during the next two years.

Other recurrent publications.

216. There are ten other recurrent publications, nearly all of them Series such as the Fertilizer Series, Food and Industry Series, and the Project Formulation and Evaluation Series. Samples of each Series were examined. Within a Series, each publication was usually quite different from the others. One might be concerned with a specific engineering innovation, another with a broad management problem. It was sometimes difficult to determine to whom they were addressed or just why they were relevant. It was difficult to identify any strategy or plan behind the large number of individual publications.

217. One difficulty underlying the UNIDO publications programme appeared to be the Special Service Agreements. These were financed by an item in the UNIDO budget for consultants, which totalled between \$ 300,000 and \$ 350,000. Most of the money was spent to hire authors for publications and for writing paper for meetings. The money was split between the Industrial Technology Division, Industrial Policies and Programming Division, and Industrial Services and Institutes Division, and financed about 300 Special Service Agreements each year in 1968, 1969 and 1970. It proved to be quite difficult to recruit so many consultants. As one official explained it, the money was chasing the authors rather than vice versa.

218. More specifically, there was evidence that there were rather wide variations in the amounts paid to different authors that could not be explained by differences in qualifications or length of manuscript; authors were not carefully screened, due partly to a lack of candidates from which to choose; and there was more money for authors than there were good projects. Under the circumstances, officials were not sufficiently cost conscious. Some reduction in funds for consultants appears to be at least part of the answer. Such a reduction would certainly strengthen the hand of those UNIDO officials who would like to tighten up the whole publications programme.

219. There appeared to be a more careful control of printing costs in UNIDO than in most parts of the United Nations, and its working relationships with I.E., which does most of its printing, appeared to be excellent. There were the usual complaints about lack of sales data from New York, and long delays in publication in second and third languages.

220. In summary, the time has come to put more emphasis on quality and less on quantity. This can be achieved in part at least through reducing the programme for recurrent publications to the level which UNIDO has the capacity to control.

Chapter IX. UNCTAD

221. The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development in Geneva issues five recurrent publications, as follows:

1. Handbook of International Trade and Development Statistics
2. Review of International Trade and Development
3. Trade in Manufactures of Developing Countries
4. Commodity Survey
5. Review of Current and Long-Term Aspects of Maritime Transport

222. The User Survey gave a very high rating to all of these publications except the last one which rated about average. It is clear that there is a comparatively strong interest in analysis of international trade.

223. A review of these publications indicates that reliance is placed on trade statistics collected by others. There was no indication of duplication at the collection or processing level. They are all dealing with matters on which there is a strong, continuing world-wide interest. The texts of the publications are prepared by the UNCTAD Secretariat, and do not include reprints from other publications. A cursory review of the texts suggests that they are of professional quality.

224. The principal orientation of these five publications appears to be towards a review of world trade policies from the standpoint of developing countries, and towards the sort of questions that are reviewed in periodic meetings of members of UNCTAD. Such matters are of course of great interest to Member States, and background studies and information are essential in efforts to improve the status of developing countries in international trade. However, it was rather disappointing to note that all of the recurrent publications appear to be oriented almost completely towards high-level international matters, with little direct recognition of the problems faced by developing countries in developing their trade programmes at the country level.

225. Whereas UNCTAD in the past has confined its activities largely to research at Headquarters and holding meetings, all of which were necessary and important, it is noted that some steps are now being taken to expand its activities at the country level, i.e., to become more "operational". It is widely recognized that UNDP country programming in the past has been unbalanced because of a lack of emphasis on trade matters, and that an expanded future role for UNCTAD at the country level is under way. Such a shift of emphasis is not reflected so far, however, in UNCTAD's recurrent publications.

226. For example, when you bring country level problems into focus, you become concerned with management. Developing countries would no doubt be interested in how the governments of other countries are organized to handle trade matters. A separate Ministry? Advisory Committees? How to control smuggling? What has been the experience of other countries with export taxes? With quality control arrangements for exports? and so on. Periodic news on what is happening in developing countries on such matters might be very welcome.

227. As another example, individual countries cannot deal with aggregates covering a number of countries as in many tables in the Handbook of International Trade and Development Statistics. They want to know, for example, what are the principal exports of their neighbours to each other, and what has been the trend? Are there real opportunities for intra-regional trade which might diversify the present concentration on trade with the United States and Europe? Can't UNCTAD put out some information periodically that will help them on this problem?

228. It is recommended that the recurrent publications of UNCTAD be reviewed from the standpoint of more emphasis on assistance and guidance on country level trade matters.

ANNEX A

UNITED NATIONS RECURRENT PUBLICATIONS

1. Office of Legal Affairs

- (a) Treaty Series.
- (b) Cumulative Index to the Treaty Series.
- (c) Status of Multilateral Conventions.
- (d) Reports of International Arbitral Awards.
- (e) United Nations Legislative Series.
- (f) United Nations Juridical Yearbook.

2. Department of Economic and Social Affairs

- (a) International Tax Agreements.
- (b) World Economic Survey.
- (c) Journal of Development Planning.
- (d) External Financing of Economic Development.
- (e) Annual Report on the International Map of the World.
- (f) World Cartography.
- (g) Natural Resources Forum.
- (h) International Review of Criminal Policy.
- (i) International Social Development Review.
- (j) Report on the World Social Situation.
- (k) Monthly Bulletin of Statistics.
- (l) Statistical Yearbook.
- (m) Demographic Yearbook.
- (n) Yearbook of International Trade Statistics.
- (o) Yearbook of National Accounts Statistics.
- (p) Commodity Trade Statistics.
- (q) Bulletin on Narcotics.
- (r) Studies on Selected Development Problems in Various Countries in the Middle
- (s) Studies on Social Development in Various Countries in the Middle East. ^{East.}
- (t) *The Growth of World Industry
 - Vol. I : General Industrial Statistics.
 - Vol. II : Commodity Production Statistics.

* Added too late to the list for inclusion in User Survey.

ANNEX A

- (u) *Population and Vital Statistics Report.
- (v) *World Energy Supplies in Selected Years.
- (w) *Concise Report on the World Population Situation.
- (x) *Report on the World Population Situation.
- (y) *Population Newsletter (Quarterly).
- (z) *Triennial Report on Water Resources.

4. United Nations Office at Geneva

- (a) Monthly List of Selected Articles.
- (b) Monthly List of Books catalogued in the Library of the United Nations.

5. Economic Commission for Europe

- (a) Economic Survey of Europe.
- (b) Economic Bulletin for Europe.
- (c) Annual Bulletin of Coal Statistics for Europe.
- (d) Annual Bulletin of Transport Statistics for Europe.
- (e) Annual Bulletin of Housing and Building Statistics.
- (f) Annual Bulletin of Electric Energy Statistics.
- (g) Annual Bulletin of Gas Statistics for Europe.
- (h) Annual Bulletin of General Energy Statistics for Europe.
- (i) Quarterly Bulletin of Steel Statistics.
- (j) Timber Bulletin for Europe.
- (k) Statistical Standards and Studies.
- (l) Statistics on World Trade in Steel.
- (m) Indices of Concentration in European Coal Industry.
- (n) Annual Review of Forest Products Market.
- (o) Statistical Indications of Short-Term Economic Changes in ECE Countries.
- (p) Half-yearly Bulletin of Electric Energy Statistics.
- (q) Statistics of Road Traffic Accidents in Europe.
- (r) Quarterly Bulletin of Coal Statistics.
- (s) Bulletin of Statistics on World Trade in Engineering Products.
- (t) Transport of Dangerous Goods.

* Added too late to the list for inclusion in User Survey.

ANNEX A

5. Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East

- (a) Economic Survey of Asia and the Far East.
- (b) Economic Bulletin for Asia and the Far East.
- (c) Water Resources Series.
- (d) Transport and Communications Bulletin for Asia and the Far East.
- (e) Electric Power in Asia and the Far East.
- (f) Small Industry Bulletin for Asia and the Far East.
- (g) Asian Development News.
- (h) Mineral Resources Development Series.
- (i) Statistical Yearbook for Asia and the Far East.
- (j) Regional Plan Harmonization and Economic Co-operation Series.
- (k) Trade Promotion in Asia and the Far East Series.
- (l) Regional Economic Co-operation Series.
- (m) *Foreign Trade Statistics for Asia and the Far East.
- (n) *Statistical Indicators of Short-term Economic Change.

6. Economic Commission for Latin America

- (a) Economic Bulletin for Latin America.
- (b) Economic Survey of Latin America.
- (c) *Statistical Bulletin for Latin America.

7. Economic Commission for Africa

- (a) Survey of Economic Conditions in Africa.
- (b) Economic Bulletin for Africa.
- (c) Social Welfare Services in Africa Series.
- (d) Small-scale Industry Bulletin for Africa.
- (e) *Foreign Trade Statistics, Series A.
- (f) *Foreign Trade Statistics, Series B.
- (g) *Agricultural Economics Bulletin.
- (h) *Population Studies Series.

8. Division of Human Rights

- (a) Yearbook of Human Rights.

* Added too late to the list for inclusion in User Survey.

9. United Nations Conference on Trade and Development

- (a) Commodity Survey.
- (b) Review of International Trade and Development.
- (c) Review of Current and Long-Term Aspects of Maritime Transport.
- (d) Trade in Manufactures of Developing Countries.
- (e) Handbook of International Trade and Development Statistics.

10. United Nations Industrial Development Organization

- (a) Industrial Research and Development News.
- (b) Industrialization and Productivity Bulletin.
- (c) Industrial Development Survey.
- (d) Fertilizer Industry Series.
- (e) Food Industry Series.
- (f) Legislative Series.
- (g) Small-scale Manufacturing Studies.
- (h) Industrialization Planning and Programming Series.
- (i) Project Formulation and Evaluation Series.
- (j) Industrial Location and Regional Development Series.
- (k) Implementation of Industrial Programme Series.
- (l) Summaries of National Industrial Development Plans.
- (m) Industrial Programme Manual.

11. Office of Public Information

- (a) *Yearbook of the United Nations.

* Added too late to the list for inclusion in User Survey.

ANNEX B

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF RECOMMENDATIONS

1. It is very difficult to measure even roughly the financial implications of the recommendations in this report because of the lack of cost data, and some overlapping between the general recommendations and those for specific publications. The following estimates may, however, provide some indication of the probable order of magnitude of potential savings.

Publications Recommended for Termination

2. The printing costs of publications proposed for termination - both external printing and internal reproduction - are about \$50,000. It should be noted that some of the publications recommended for termination are now reproduced internally. Their termination would free internal reproduction capacity for publications now printed externally, and thus result in a larger saving in external printing costs shown in the UN Budget than might otherwise have been expected.

3. There should also be a related reduction in authorship, supervision, translation, typing and distribution costs, but most of these costs are very difficult to estimate, and significant savings would not appear until the following fiscal year when the usual requests for increases in staff and other items would tend to be somewhat lower than would otherwise have been the case. Also, in some cases part of these related costs would continue because the information in the recurrent publication would still be required by the Secretariat or a Committee or Commission even although the publication was terminated or subject to major revision. At a very rough estimate, these related savings might total \$50,000 thus suggesting \$100,000 as a conservative estimate of total savings because of terminated publications.

Publications Subject to Major Revision

4. Recurrent publications in this category include the largest ones and the potential savings are very substantial. Reductions in printing costs achieved through such recommendations should total at least \$125,000, thus suggesting a total saving of printing and related costs (authorship, supervision, translation, etc.) of \$250,000. This total saving could be much higher if certain of the major recommendations were found to be fully practical from a technical or administrative point of view. (For example, the Treaty Series and Yearbook of the United Nations.)

ANNEX B

General Recommendations

5. Some of the general recommendations are designed to improve the quality and usefulness of recurrent publications - rather than to save money. Other recommendations should provide considerable savings that do not duplicate the above estimates. Net potential savings are probably around \$100,000.

6. Thus a conservative estimate of total potential annual savings based on the recommendations in this report is between \$400,000 and \$500,000. Such savings, however, would not materialize during the next few years unless controls along the lines proposed in this report were adopted soon.