

1996/35. The need to harmonize and improve United Nations informatics systems for optimal utilization and accessibility by all States

The Economic and Social Council,

Conscious of the deep interest of Member States in harnessing the benefits of new information technologies for furthering the objectives of the United Nations, including the objectives of economic and social development,

Recalling its resolutions 1991/70 of 26 July 1991, 1992/60 of 31 July 1992, 1993/56 of 29 July 1993, 1994/46 of 29 July 1994 and 1995/61 of 28 July 1995 on the need to harmonize and improve United Nations information systems for optimal utilization and accessibility by all States, with due regard to all official languages,

Recalling also that in its resolution 1995/61 it requested the President of the Economic and Social Council to convene, initially for one year, an ad hoc open-ended working group, from within existing resources, to make appropriate recommendations for the due fulfilment of the provisions of previous resolutions on this item,

Welcoming the oral report presented by the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group on the need to improve United Nations information systems for optimal utilization and accessibility by all States on the progress achieved so far by the Working Group in fulfilling its mandate,

Appreciating that the work of the Working Group has not involved any additional expenditures and that its needs have been met from within existing resources,

Appreciating also the actions taken by the Working Group significantly to expand and improve the connectivity between United Nations databases and those of Member States, including their permanent missions, and the training programme initiated to that end,

Taking note with interest of the proposed initiatives, including the setting up of videoconferencing rooms that the permanent missions could use, and the updating of the connection between the United Nations Internet facility and its optical disk system,

Taking note of the request made by the Commission on Sustainable Development in its decision 4/5 of 3 May 1996⁹⁹ that the Working Group give particular attention to devising a means of facilitating the access of Member States to environmental databases throughout the United Nations system,

Agreeing with the assessment contained in the report of the Working Group that further work needs to be done by the Working Group to fulfil its mandate,

Taking note of the report of the Secretary-General on follow-up action taken,¹⁰⁰

1. *Reiterates*, once again, the high priority it attaches to easy, economical, uncomplicated and unhindered access for States Members and for observers, through, *inter alia*, their permanent missions, to the growing number of computerized databases and information systems and services of the United Nations;

2. *Calls* for the urgent and continued implementation of measures required to achieve these objectives;

3. *Stresses* the continuing need for representatives of States to be closely consulted and actively associated with the respective executive and governing bodies of United Nations institutions dealing with informatics within the United Nations system, so that the specific needs of States as internal end-users can be given due priority;

4. *Decides* that the action programme to harmonize and improve United Nations informatics systems for optimal utilization and accessibility by all States should continue to be implemented from within existing resources and in full consultation with the representatives of States;

5. *Commends* the Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group on the need to improve United Nations information systems for optimal utilization and accessibility by all States for the concrete actions it has taken in pursuance of its mandate;

6. *Requests* the President of the Economic and Social Council to convene the Working Group for one more year, from within existing resources, for the due fulfilment of the provisions of the Council resolutions on this item;

7. *Requests* the Secretary-General to extend full cooperation to the Working Group and to give priority to implementing its recommendations;

8. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to report on the follow-up action taken on the present resolution, including the findings of the Working Group, to the Economic and Social Council at its substantive session of 1997.

*50th plenary meeting
25 July 1996*

⁹⁹ See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1996, Supplement No. 8 (E/1996/28)*, chap. I, sect. C.

¹⁰⁰ E/1996/81.