

EDITORIAL

The reform of the United Nations is progressing under its new Secretary-General, who has established a two track reform process. The first track involves those managerial initiatives and decisions falling within his authority that could be taken within the first quarter of this year. The second track involves the preparation of a programme of reform incorporating further measures within his authority, including those which he believes would benefit from consultations with Member States; and also his proposals in respect of the more fundamental issues which could only be decided by governments. This track would culminate in a report which he would submit in July of this year.

Kofi Annan has appointed Maurice Strong – who has asked for the token payment of \$1 dollar per year – as the Executive Coordinator for UN Reform. Maurice Strong is chairing a UN Steering Committee, whose membership represents the span of activities of the Organisation. It will be the principal vehicle for monitoring and coordinating the reform process within the Secretariat and for ensuring participation and involvement of all relevant UN Departments, Funds and Programmes in support of the Executive Coordinator.

However, the G-77 Chairman has said that irrespective of budget constraints, the present system of appointing gratis personnel is undemocratic and if not corrected quickly, might begin a process of dismantling the UN's international character and culture. "Developing countries have virtually been shut out from participating in the exercise of offering gratis personnel, because the system is set against them". Of the 63 gratis personnel for the international tribunals, only one P-3 came from one of the 132 members of the G-77/China. The Assembly should approve the use of all such personnel, he said, as it was disturbing to see instances of gratis personnel representing the Secretary-General and consulting with member States, as if they were ordinary staff members and had been requested by the General Assembly.

* * *

There was a CSD intersessional Working Group from 24 February to 7 March and the Fifth Session of the Commission from 7 to 25 April. On page 168 you will find combined information on the two meetings and will see how the very able Co-Chairmen of the former continued their work in the CSD. We are happy that our prediction was accurate and the widely admired Mostafa Tolba has become Chair of the Commission. We are also glad that the more and more respected Ms. Linn-Locher was appointed a Vice-Chair.

We have not printed the "conclusions" of this meeting, as we consider them a long way from being final. The text has still many square brackets; and in particular, the sections dealing with international legal instruments and the declaration are far from giving an impression of their final form.

Informal negotiations will be held before the UN Special Session on all these brackets, and during the Meeting there will be a Committee of the Whole to prepare all texts for adoption.

* * *

You will see that the Elizabeth Haub Prize was given to Tommy Koh (page 215), mainly for his work in the preparations for UNCED and as the Chairman of its Main Committee in Rio.

At the ceremony, a new Prize was also announced for environmental diplomacy and Mrs. Helga Haub invited all former laureates to take part in a Colloquium on international environmental law. The papers presented at the Colloquium and the report of the discussions, will be published in a special issue of this Journal.

- Wolfgang B. Sney -

27 May, 1997