ST/AI/261
12 December 1978

ADMINISTRATIVE INSTRUCTION

To:     Members of the staff

From:   The Under-Secretary-General
        for Administration and Management

Subject:  FORMS MANAGEMENT

1.   Under the broad framework of ST/SGB/155 on management improvement in the Secretariat, a forms management programme has been established with the objective of simplifying paperwork, reducing time spent on forms-related procedures and ensuring greater efficiency through forms utilization.  The purpose of this administrative instruction is to describe the scope of the programme and state the responsibilities of departments and offices in its implementation.  This administrative instruction supersedes document ST/AI/156 of 26 April 1963.

Definitions

2.   A form is a document containing preprinted text requesting specific information to be filled in.  It is a standardized tool for gathering, recording, processing and storing information.  For the purposes of this administrative instruction, this definition excludes letterheads and other stationery.

3.   Forms management comprises the following:

    (a)  Forms analysis.  This involves challenging the need for each form, each element in the form and each copy of the form, determining the retention period and end use of each copy, analysing the underlying procedures with a view to work simplification, determining the best sequence in which needed information can be recorded with a minimum of errors and facilitating the handling of the information at all user points.  It also involves the maintenance of a forms-function file to permit the regular review of existing forms in order to eliminate forms that may no longer be necessary, to improve and update others in the light of changing requirements and to avoid duplication.

    (b)  Forms control.  This function consists of authorizing the reproduction of only those forms which are determined to be necessary after analysis.  It involves the assignment of an identifying symbol and the maintenance of a file on each form, which serves as a record of all relevant transactions, e.g., initial

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