



United States
General Accounting Office
Washington, D.C. 20548

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Office of the General Counsel

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November 23, 1987

Ms. Jeanne S. Archibald
Deputy Assistant General Counsel
International Affairs
Department of the Treasury
Washington, D.C. 20220

Dear Ms. Archibald:

In your letter of April 20, 1987, you asked whether the General Accounting Office is able to assume a lead agency role for a project under the U.S.-Saudi Arabian Joint Commission on Economic Cooperation (JECOR). In our opinion, the General Accounting Office is authorized under Section 607 of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended, 22 U.S.C. § 2357, to provide technical services to friendly countries on an advance-of-funds or reimbursement basis.

As you know, we have participated in foreign assistance programs with several organizations, such as the International Organization of Supreme Audit Institutions (INTOSAI), the United Nations Development Program, and JECOR. For example, the Assistant Regional Manager of our New York office recently took a temporary leave of absence to serve as an audit project manager in a JECOF project administered by the Department of the Treasury. In addition, GAO staff recently participated in an INTOSAI-sponsored conference to discuss the applicability of microcomputers to the work of audit agencies in developing countries.

Although we are pleased to participate in such projects, our primary mission is to aid and assist the Congress in carrying out its responsibilities. Accordingly, we continuously strive to maximize resources available to meet congressional requests for our assistance. Because of that responsibility, we do not believe we are in a position to act as a lead or "action" agency.

Sincerely yours,

James F. Hinchman
General Counsel