



SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 39th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. PIRSON (Belgium)

Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative
and Budgetary Questions: Mr. MSELLE

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The meeting was called to order at 10.30 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 98: PROPOSED PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIIUM 1980-1981 (continued)
(A/34/6 and Add.1, A/34/7, A/34/38, Parts I-V; A/C.5/34/28, A/C.5/34/L.9,
A/C.5/33/L.49)

First reading (continued)

Section 29. Conference and library services (continued)

Section 29.D. Library, Headquarters (continued)

1. Mr. LEWANDOWSKI (Under-Secretary-General for Conference Services and Special Assignments), answering a question asked at the previous meeting by the representative of Egypt regarding paragraphs 19 to 21 of document A/C.5/34/28, said that those working strictly with material in Arabic were two Professional staff members, two from the General Service category and one from the Manual Workers category, with the following distribution: one Professional staff member and one from the General Service category working on the preparation of indexes to the proceedings of the General Assembly sessions, in Arabic; one Professional staff member and one from the General Service category on cataloguing and bibliographic work, selection of materials and ordering and acquisition of Arabic books and periodicals; and the staff member in the Manual Workers category on sorting, filing and marking Arabic materials for placing on the shelves. Two other Professional staff with Arabic as a main language were assigned full-time to the documents reference service to answer queries in Arabic. The Arabic language skills of other staff were used as required during peak periods.
2. As for the meaning of the expression "active acquisition and dissemination programme", he said that the expression, and particularly the word "active", had been used to describe as succinctly as possible the special effort that was being made to acquire Arabic materials and information and circulate them to users. That effort differed from the routine procedures established over a period of years for the procurement of materials in official languages other than Arabic. Since Arabic had been introduced only recently as an official language of the Organization and the library collections were weak in material in Arabic, particularly reference works and periodicals, a special effort had had to be made, and was still being made, to establish sources of procurement and to select and circulate essential materials on a priority basis, particularly to the Arabic Translation Service. As for the expression "Arabic mother-tongue", concerning which the representative of Egypt had asked for clarification since it had perplexed him, the expression had been used to indicate the degree of proficiency or fluency in Arabic.
3. In answer to a question from the representative of Poland as to why in table 29.48 there was an entry of \$2,900 for library books and supplies under Executive direction and management, while a much larger sum (\$547,700) had been entered for the same object of expenditure under library and documentation services in table 29.50, he explained that the figure of \$2,900 in table 29.48 referred exclusively to that portion of common supplies administered centrally in the Office of the Director. For the sake of uniformity, a standard form of tabular

(Mr. Lewandowski)

presentation and terminology had been used, and therefore the entry in table 29.48 might appear misleading or confusing.

4. In answer to the comment by the representative of France that the amount requested in paragraph 29.111 of the proposed programme budget appeared extravagant when one considered that only 3,500 books would be acquired, he observed that the amount requested was intended to cover expenditures for a two-year period while, as indicated in paragraph 29.111, the 3,500 books and 500 titles of serials referred to were annual figures. The price of books, particularly reference works such as encyclopaedias and dictionaries had increased substantially, as had the cost of subscriptions to journals and postal rates. Seventy per cent of the appropriations were spent on the procurement of journals and newspapers essential to the work of the Organization, and many of those materials were acquired from abroad at airmail rates so that they could be immediately available.

5. Mr. RAMZY (Egypt) recalled that he had asked if the Professional staff mentioned in document A/C.5/34/28, whose mother-tongue was Arabic, were actively assigned to the acquisition, classification and handling of Arabic material in the Library; that question had not received an answer. The Under-Secretary-General's remarks led to the conclusion that that was not the case. He had also asked if there was a separate Arabic programme in the Library, not only for periodicals but also for reference materials, and he was not completely satisfied with the answers received. Even though the Organization still did not give Arabic the importance it assigned to the other five official languages, it was a language that was used in the General Assembly and its Main Committees, and the necessary steps had to be taken to procure material in Arabic. In his visits to the Library, he had not found adequate stocks of material in Arabic, such as those that were available to delegates using the other official languages.

Section 29.F. Library, Vienna

6. Mr. GARRIDO (Philippines) asked when the report on library services at Vienna mentioned in paragraph 29.125 of the proposed programme budget would be ready.

7. Mr. RUEDAS (Assistant Secretary-General for Financial Services) answered that the report, concerning all support services, would be issued in mid-November.

8. The CHAIRMAN announced that any subsequent statements should refer to section 29 as a whole.

9. Mr. GARRIDO (Philippines) said that, despite the many studies of the Department of Conference Services made by investigating bodies, it appeared that the problems of the timely submission of documents and the volume of documentation could not be resolved without the co-operation of Member States, especially with regard to recurrent and new documents.

10. Regarding the circulation as official documents of letters sent by Member States, the Department of Conference Services should be more flexible in complying with requests from diplomatic missions because situations constantly arose which required the circulation of pertinent documents. He asked if the

(Mr. Garrido, Philippines)

Under-Secretary-General had any objection to make or wished to suggest any solution in that regard.

11. As for providing conference services away from headquarters locations, the Secretary-General should limit the number of staff members sent, so that the work of the headquarters offices would not be affected. Most countries generally had efficient temporary staff on call and it was not necessary to send a large number of staff from the headquarters locations.

12. His delegation endorsed the Secretary-General's observations to the effect that conference servicing requirements could not be predicted with any accuracy in advance, and it supported the submission of estimates based on the calendar of conferences. The Department of Conference Services had made praiseworthy to meet the needs of delegations as best it could.

13. Mr. PALAMARCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) noted with satisfaction the constant concern of the Department of Conference Services to raise productivity, introduce technical innovations, fulfil its plan and control the increase in the costs of those services. The Department's efforts to reduce United Nations expenditure could count on the firm support of the Soviet Union. His delegation emphasized in that regard that the expenditure for conference services could and should be reduced; to that end, Member States should recognize the limited nature of the material and human resources available in the United Nations to provide the meeting's services and should exercise moderation in their continual requests for the holding of new meetings. To that end, an important role could be played by the quota system for the allocation of resources for the holding of conferences in the various fields of activity of the United Nations. At the same time, the Secretariat should keep under constant review the use of allocated resources and should not permit their inefficient or unnecessary use. It would therefore be very useful to have a periodic self-evaluation of requirements and resources, which would make it possible to discover hidden, unused resources that could help to raise productivity.

14. In the preparation of requests for funds, a very precise evaluation was called for. Unfortunately, as shown in the analysis of section 2^o of the proposed programme budget for 1980-1981, the assessment carried out in respect of conference services was neither realistic nor objective. The Advisory Committee had discovered an underestimate in the amount of \$3 million and had indicated that the estimates submitted were excessive, particularly in respect of the reclassification of posts, temporary staff and overtime. The Advisory Committee had therefore recommended a reduction in the amount of \$1.7 million. His delegation considered that that reduction was insufficient and that the Advisory Committee should have taken a more critical position with regard to the Secretary-General's request. The Soviet Union therefore proposed an additional reduction in the amount of \$2 million in respect of the expenditure for temporary staff.

15. His delegation considered that the Secretariat had considerable resources in other units that could absorb an increase in expenditure on conference services without submitting additional estimates. Lastly, he maintained that it was essential that meetings of new bodies and conferences should be financed, as far as possible,

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(Mr. Palamarchuk, USSR)

out of the funds released through an ordering of priorities, a reduction in the length of meetings, a more rational use of resources and a reduction in the costs of documentation.

16. Mr. HAMZAH (Syrian Arab Republic) drew attention to the two documents before the Committee on the Arabic language services for the General Assembly and its Main Committees (A/C.5/34/28 and A/C.5/34/L.9), the second of which, in paragraph 6, had financial implications. However, the Fifth Committee usually examined the documentation after the Advisory Committee had studied it and made its recommendations. He therefore wished to know whether the usual procedure had been followed in the case of that document.

17. Various delegations representing Arab countries had criticized the situation with regard to Arabic language services and had posed certain questions. His delegation considered that deeds rather than words were called for if that problem was to be solved once and for all. However, the report by the Secretariat (A/C.4/34/28) offered no solution. In order to be viable, any solution must clearly proceed from the premise that Arabic was an official language and, moreover, a working language of the General Assembly and its Main Committees, in pursuance of General Assembly resolution 3190 (XXVIII). In document A/C.5/501, paragraph 3, the General Assembly had defined what it understood by a "working language" in the following way: "When an official language becomes a working language for any organ, all documentation of that organ, including the official records, supplements, annexes, resolutions and working papers, must be translated into that language. Furthermore, a time-limit is imposed for the performance of this obligatory task; for instance, the summary records must be translated into the working languages and issued within 24 hours after the distribution of the original text. Draft resolutions and amendments must be translated as quickly as possible, otherwise the meaning of the words 'working language' loses its significance."

18. In order to rectify that situation in respect of translation, the number of staff must be sufficiently increased to cope with the workload. Consequently, it was necessary to determine whether permanent or temporary staff would be engaged. According to paragraph 7 of the note by the Secretariat (A/C.5/34/L.9), the available pool of Arabic free-lance staff was limited and the number of intergovernmental and international organizations drawing on it was increasing; as a result, the Organization had not always been able to recruit the number and the quality of short-term staff needed. It was conceivable, therefore, that, if the Assembly decided to appropriate the necessary funds, the Secretariat would still experience difficulties in recruiting sufficiently qualified staff. Accordingly, the only solution was to appoint permanent staff. Furthermore, the expenditure in respect of Arabic free-lance staff engaged for the sessions of the General Assembly was hardly any lower than the corresponding annual expenditure in respect of the permanent staff. During periods of low workload, the permanent staff could be seconded to the many conferences for which Arabic was a working language. Economies could thus be achieved and the quality of the documentation improved.

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(Mr. Hamzah, Syrian Arab Republic)

19. As for interpretation, the General Assembly had decided, in resolution 32/205, to transfer to Geneva, the posts already established at Headquarters, in order to deal with UNCTAD documentation. In order to meet the staffing needs during the sessions of the General Assembly, use was made of staff seconded from Geneva. That not only entailed exorbitant expenditure but also had the disadvantage that those staff members, while familiar with matters relating to UNCTAD, lacked training in respect of the work of the sessions of the General Assembly. His delegation proposed that the 17 Arabic language posts at Geneva should be used to establish a permanent unit at Headquarters to provide services to the General Assembly during its sessions and to UNCTAD at other times of the year.

20. With regard to reproduction and library services in the Arabic language, his delegation shared the view expressed by the Arabic-speaking representatives at the previous session and hoped that the necessary steps would be taken to rectify that situation.

21. Lastly, referring to the Arabic Typing Pool, he noted that the typists were appointed for a two-year period, after which the respective Governments obliged them to resign. Those staff members then had two alternatives: to leave the United Nations and return to their country of origin or to continue working in the Organization on fixed-term contracts, a situation which created a sense of insecurity. His delegation requested the Assistant Secretary-General to consider the possibility of offering them permanent contracts.

22. Mr. BROCHARD (France) said that his delegation wished once more to raise the question of the increasing difficulties French-speaking delegations had in obtaining United Nations documents in French in good time. He was not referring specifically to the Fifth Committee, where the situation was less serious than in other parts of the United Nations system. The attempts at justification on the part of the Secretariat concerning the delay in issuing documents were unconvincing. His delegation found it difficult to accept the explanation that a high proportion - he understood it was 88 per cent - of the original texts were in English, so that the French translation and typing services had an excessively heavy workload. The situation, far from improving, was deteriorating every year, and affected only documentation in French. In fact, documents in French were the object of a wholly unacceptable discrimination. The French delegation appealed to the Secretariat to take the necessary measures of elementary justice to remedy the situation. Despite those criticisms, his delegation would vote for the amount requested for that item.

23. Mr. MONAYAIR (Kuwait) said that the Arabic translation services had had insufficient qualified staff from the outset, and the situation must be remedied. It was an important problem, not only for the Arab delegations but also for their Governments, and, moreover, the situation was harmful to communication between the Arab countries and others, and to the Arab countries' knowledge of United Nations activities. The documents of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) had been published in Arabic from the outset, which was welcomed by the

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(Mr. Monayair, Kuwait)

Governments of the Arab countries, since it had made it easier to understand the Centre's aims. He therefore wished to reiterate his view that the time had come when the Arabic language should have the same status as the other official languages of the United Nations, and that documents should be published simultaneously in Arabic and in the other official languages.

24. Mr. LEWANDOWSKI (Under-Secretary-General for Conference Services and Special Assignments) said that the general problem of documentation, which represented a crisis situation in all languages, could not be solved by increasing the efficiency of the staff of conference services, since recent reviews had shown that the staff's efficiency could not be increased by more than 5 per cent. The staff of conference services were doing their best; if that proposition was accepted, there was no room for an atmosphere of hostility or for polemics, and some practical solution could be proposed.

25. In reply to the question put at the preceding meeting by the representative of Tunisia, he said that basically the language staff for translation and interpretation were at the P-2, P-3, and P-4 levels; the grade of P-5 was almost automatically for a semi-administrative post, and that of D-1 was purely for an administrative post. Therefore the limited career development for language staff who were experienced, and who in many cases had two university degrees, meant that a good interpreter or translator who wished to advance must leave the profession. That was not a logical policy, and it must be corrected. The Office of Personnel Services had recently carried out a job classification exercise for language staff. It was too late to include the resulting proposals in the proposed programme budget under consideration, but specific proposals would be submitted at the thirty-fifth session. He personally believed that sooner or later a special language category would have to be established with many opportunities for promotion within the profession.

26. The representative of Tunisia had also asked about the results of the job action in the language services at the beginning of 1979. Some production had been lost in the English, French and Spanish languages, and some of the problems had still not been resolved, for example, the question of the word-processing machines, but he hoped that all concerned now had a better understanding of the problems and that such situations would not occur in the future.

27. In reply to a question by the representative of Egypt about the number of translators for each language, he said that, excluding supervisory and senior reviser posts, there were at Headquarters 34 Arabic translators, 84 Chinese, 28 English, 69 French, 62 Russian, and 56 Spanish. In Geneva the figures were: 13 Arabic translators, 8 Chinese, 20 English, 39 French, 41 Russian and 27 Spanish.

28. The representative of the Philippines had suggested a more flexible approach concerning the issue and circulation of government communications. Those documents were reproduced and distributed on a first priority basis because they had a political character and the Secretary-General could not make decisions as to what was or was not important in that area. Unless contrary instructions were issued, the Secretariat would continue to proceed on the same lines, because a most sensitive issue was involved.

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(Mr. Lewandowski)

29. The representative of the Philippines had also referred to meetings held away from the various headquarters and the question of conference service staff for such meetings. It must again be emphasized that any conference held away from the headquarters locations - whether New York, Geneva or Vienna - constituted an administrative disruption for the conference service staff, and it was not so much the number of participants at the conference that mattered as the number of languages in which it was to be serviced. Representatives would be aware that many conferences worked rather differently from the meetings held at Headquarters. During such conferences, the work of the translators and interpreters might be very irregular, and it always accumulated in the last few days. The representative of the Philippines had asked if there could not be a limit set to the number of language staff sent to such conferences. Although there might be cases in which such a measure would be disliked, many language staff would welcome it; for example, that would be true for the Chinese interpreters, who had to travel constantly and had complained that their family life and their stability suffered. The same applied to some other language staff. But if it was decided to limit or stop the participation of language staff from the various headquarters and use temporary and locally recruited staff, then it must of course be stipulated that the conference services would be relieved of the responsibility for those conferences. It was relevant that many wise decisions that had been taken, such as the decision that the United Nations would not hold more than one special conference a year, were no longer complied with.

30. The representative of the Soviet Union had proposed an additional reduction of \$2 million in the budget for temporary assistance. It was the Fifth Committee that decided what conferences were to be held and what documentation was to be published, and it would have to provide the means to carry out those decisions. Whatever budgetary decisions were taken, services would have to be provided for the meetings that were approved, and the required amounts would have to be appropriated for that purpose. In any case, everything possible would be done to make the conference services operation as cost-effective as possible.

31. The question of Arabic language services was of the utmost importance since he believed that, unless the Fifth Committee adopted decisions in that regard, it would not be possible to proceed any further. With regard to the delicate question of languages, he assured the Committee that the Department of Conference Services would take no steps to favour or disadvantage any language, and requested delegations to inform him if they knew of any instances of that nature so that he could react in the severest manner. From the moment the Arabic decision had been taken to make an official language of the General Assembly and its Main Committees only, organizational, personnel, training and other problems had been created. There were certain anomalies with regard to the use of Arabic: recently, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development had adopted a decision making Arabic obligatory for the smallest UNCTAD working group; yet, Arabic was not a working language of the Security Council. In his view, it was not for the Secretariat to tell the Committee what should be done.

32. There were problems with respect to all languages, but especially with respect to Arabic owing to the great limitations on the free-lance market. The decision to transfer the Arabic language interpreters from New York to Geneva had not been

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(Mr. Lewandowski)

taken by the Secretariat but by the Committee itself. Those interpreters were needed in New York only during the three months of the General Assembly session, while in Geneva they were needed to service UNCTAD all year round. If it was desired to create a permanent establishment of Arabic interpreters in New York, the Fifth Committee itself would have to take a decision to that effect. Of course, both the Advisory Committee and the Fifth Committee would want to know what those interpreters would do when the General Assembly was not in session. The market for free-lance Arabic interpreters was virtually non-existent, as shown by the fact that in New York the United Nations knew of only one Arabic interpreter. Doubtless the number of free-lance Arabic interpreters would be increasing in the near future, but it was unlikely that the United Nations would be able to attract such interpreters to permanent service since it offered recruitment at the P-2 or P-3 levels only, while on a free-lance basis they could earn income equal to that of a D-1. That was not the only reason why the Secretariat had been unable to fill the vacancies in the Arabic section, but it was one of the most important.

33. With regard to training, it was true that the Secretariat had announced that a training programme would be carried out. In fact, six trainee posts had been created with the intention of setting up a special training programme. A programme had even been developed, but had never been implemented. Replying to the question asked by the representative of Iraq concerning the type of training provided in Russian and Chinese, he emphasized that only with respect to training in those two languages did the United Nations have agreements with Governments. The Organization provided resources to the language training institutions and in return received priority in recruiting trained staff. He had visited the headquarters of the League of Arab States three years earlier and had proposed that the League might sponsor a similar training arrangement. Unfortunately, his proposal had not been followed up. The Secretariat provided assistance in the form of advice, expertise and materials to all countries interested in such training. The representative of Iraq would find out that his own country had received such assistance. In addition, co-operation had been established with the Bourguiba Institute in Tunisia.

34. With regard to summary records, it was his personal opinion that they would sooner or later be abandoned entirely. Nevertheless, he understood the desire of the Arabic-speaking delegations to receive the same treatment as others and for the summary records to be translated into Arabic during the Assembly session. However, it should be recalled in that connexion that the Fifth Committee had decided, with the concurrence of the delegations of Arab countries, that for the first three years during which Arabic was used the summary records would be translated only during slack periods. If there was a desire to change that decision, the Committee would have to take the necessary action. It had been asked whether such a situation would be tolerated if it affected other languages. He recalled that as a result of the job action which had taken place in January, regarding which the representative of Tunisia had asked a question, the summary records of meetings of the Fifth Committee that took place during that period had not been issued, since the staff, which had not been paid for that period, had refused to process the records, and had managed to persuade the free-lance staff not to process them either. The issue had still not been resolved.

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(Mr. Lewandowski)

35. The representative of Iraq had asked why the supplements to the official records of the General Assembly in Arabic were not issued in printed form. Typesetting facilities in Arabic were difficult to find and very expensive in the New York area. Time permitting, the document was sent out for printing in an Arabic-speaking country, but the Secretariat usually had to issue the document in typescript. That situation could not be improved unless heavy investment in equipment was authorized.

36. Thus, on examination, every problem had its explanation. He would gladly reply to any further questions which might be asked.

37. Mr. BEGIN (Director, Budget Division) said that at the preceding meeting the representative of Tunisia had asked why the cost of meetings was higher in Geneva than in New York, and that he had mentioned in particular the cost of the summer session of the Economic and Social Council held each year in Geneva. The reason for the higher cost was that salaries were higher in Geneva than in New York. It was difficult to determine precisely what savings would be made if the Council held its summer session in New York. Provision was made in table 4.6 of section 4 of the proposed programme budget for \$246,400 for travel and subsistence of staff needed to service the Council at its spring session in New York and its summer session in Geneva. If both sessions were held in New York, there would be some savings, but they would be offset by the cost of bringing Europe-based staff to New York. However, it might be possible to save some \$75,000 per annum in staff travel costs.

38. The representative of Iraq had referred to paragraph 6 of document A/C.5/34/L.9, in which it was stated that, if the General Assembly decided that summary records of the Main Committees should be issued in Arabic during the session, an amount of \$995,000 would be needed for temporary assistance during the biennium 1980-1981, and he had asked what the cost would be if the staff involved were recruited on a full-time basis. The establishment of the 47 posts required for that purpose would entail expenditure of \$3.2 million for the biennium, \$2,767,000 of which related to salaries and common staff costs and \$433,000 to associated costs of general services. Thus, the difference between the use of temporary assistance and the recruitment of permanent staff would be \$2,205,000.

39. The representative of Japan had asked why the Secretariat had not excluded from the resource base used to calculate conference servicing costs all conferences and meetings which, as the Advisory Committee had indicated in paragraph 29.29 of its report (A/34/7), were non-recurrent items, although they had not been identified as such. It should be pointed out that in paragraph 29.13 of its report the Advisory Committee itself had recognized that it was not possible to identify in advance what resources pertained to individual conferences or meetings. From a practical point of view, it was not very important whether a conference was regarded as a recurring or a non-recurring item. Conference servicing costs were projected on the basis of the preceding biennium and the figures were adjusted depending on whether there was an increase or reduction in the services required. The result was what was called resource growth or negative growth. Perhaps those terms were not entirely appropriate when applied to conference services, but they were used in the interests of uniformity in budgetary terminology. The concept of

growth as used in the budget was more appropriate when applied to substantive programmes, since it could be shown how activities had been expanded and resource requirements increased as a result. Obviously, that did not have the same meaning when applied to conference services.

40. The representative of Italy had commented on the apportionment of costs for library services. The direct costs of library services, to which the estimates related, like the other direct costs under section 29, were apportioned among the substantive programmes. Statistics on the use of the library and requests for documents had been used for that purpose.

41. Mr. RAMZY (Egypt) said that some of the questions he had asked at the previous meeting had still not been answered. For example, there had been no explanation why the five vacant posts in the Arabic interpretation section referred to in paragraph 2 of document A/C.5/34/28 still had not been filled, nor had any reason been given for the statement at the end of the same paragraph (which he had questioned) that it was hoped that the section would be at full strength at the beginning of 1980. He asked also how long it had taken the Secretariat to fill the post which was said in paragraph 2 of the same document to be in the course of being filled. It was important that there should be system-wide co-ordination in order to alleviate the shortage of Arabic interpreters, yet he had received no answer to his questions. He also asked what had prevented the Secretariat from replacing the proofreader/copy preparer who was stated in paragraph 17 of document A/C.5/34/28 to have resigned in May of the current year.

42. With reference to the answers given by the Under-Secretary-General, he entirely agreed that the Secretariat could not proceed without instructions in the form of resolutions and decisions of the Fifth Committee. But how could the Committee take those decisions if it was not given the information it needed? He was trying to obtain such information in order to make a definite proposal, but all delegations must have a clear idea as to what the problems were.

43. Mr. Lewandowski had stated that Arabic was used only in the General Assembly and its Main Committees, and that that led to organizational, administration and personnel problems. Nevertheless, the responsibility for solving those problems lay entirely with the Secretariat. If the Secretariat could not solve them with the means at its disposal, it should make definite proposals so that the Fifth Committee could take a decision on the matter. No delegation could take a decision which would result in changes in the organization, structure or administration of the Secretariat without having adequate information, or the Secretary-General's own proposals. Delegations had never interfered with the work of the Secretariat or imposed an unworkable remedy on the Secretary-General.

44. With regard to the shortage of free-lance interpreters, he would like to know the recruitment procedures employed by the United Nations. There was indeed severe competition between the United Nations and other organizations for that category of interpreters, and the other organizations offered them contracts sometimes a year in advance while the United Nations approached them on very short notice. He asked whether the Secretariat had looked into that aspect of the problem and tried to work out a solution by giving more notice to interpreters.

(Mr. Ramzy, Egypt)

45. With reference to the training programme for Arabic interpreters which it had not been possible to carry out, he asked for what period the training course had been scheduled and whether the Secretariat had taken any action to recruit more trainees for another training course in the future. On the question of training, there were two approaches: a training programme within the United Nations, as for other languages, or an external training programme. The Secretariat must pursue the matter energetically, it was not something that was done on a periodic basis. He would also like to know when co-operation with the Bourguiba Institute in Tunis had started.

46. His delegation was posing objective and direct questions and hoped to receive direct and detailed answers; he asked that the answers to his questions at the current and previous meetings should be given in a conference room paper to be circulated to members of the Committee.

47. With regard to the library, he would like to know the exact number of General Service and Professional staff employed on materials in each of the official languages other than Arabic. He also would like to know whether the total of 34 staff members directly involved in translation into Arabic at Headquarters included revisers, as stated in document A/C.5/34/28 and the other relevant documents. If it did, he asked how that figure of 34 could be reconciled with the figure in paragraph 7 of document A/C.5/31/60 in which it was stated that 43 permanent Professional posts were required and that further temporary posts would be needed. The measures suggested in paragraph 11 of document A/C.5/33/L.49 showed that 42 temporary posts were needed, or 36 in addition to the 6 mentioned in paragraph 3 of the same document. However, the measure suggested in paragraph 13 of document A/C.5/34/28 indicated the need for only 36 temporary staff. He asked for an explanation of the discrepancy in the number of posts, because the analysis on which the suggested measure was based was the same in both documents.

48. He would also like more information on the optimum number of additional permanent staff who would be required to carry out the tasks assigned to the Arabic language services. It was for the Secretariat to determine that number and not the Fifth Committee. He also asked the Secretariat to provide a comparative table of the number of additional established and temporary posts required during the sessions of the General Assembly for the Chinese, French, Russian and Spanish Translation Services. Again, for the sake of comparison, he would like to know the volume of non-General Assembly documentation produced by those Services during the General Assembly session, and how many days' work that represented.

49. With regard to paragraph 9 of A/C.5/33/L.49, he inquired how much the Arabic translation services for the conferences referred to in that paragraph would have cost if temporary assistance alone had been used. The information should also include the cost of pre-session and post-session documentation. He would also like to know what savings had accrued to the Organization as a result of the fact that those conferences had been serviced by permanent staff from the Arabic Service at Headquarters. He would also like estimates of comparative costs of Arabic language services for conferences scheduled during the biennium 1980-1981.

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(Mr. Ramzy, Egypt)

50. On the question of interpretation, paragraph 4 of document A/C.5/34/28 referred to the possibility of having a small high-quality Arabic interpretation service in New York. That was a very interesting proposal, and possibly the only constructive one in the document. He would therefore like further information from the Secretariat as to how many staff would be required to cope with the workload at Headquarters during the General Assembly and of other meetings at which Arabic was used as a working language.

Administrative and financial implications of the draft resolution contained in document A/34/L.6 relating to agenda item 22 (A/C.5/34/25)

51. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions), referring to the draft resolution on the Third United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea (A/34/L.6), the financial implications of which had been set forth by the Secretary-General in document A/C.5/34/25, said the Advisory Committee considered that the amount requested for the Department of Public Information was slightly higher than it would have expected in view of the relatively few meetings that were scheduled in New York between the end of February and April. The Advisory Committee had nevertheless decided not to recommend a reduction in the amount shown in paragraph 3 (ii) of the Secretary-General's statement (A/C.5/34/25). Paragraph 5 of document A/C.5/34/25 indicated that, if agreement was reached on the final text of the convention at the ninth session, it would become necessary to produce, at short notice, the text in six languages through external printing; in that case, financial provision would be requested in the first performance report on the programme budget for 1980-1981. The representative of the Secretary-General, when consulted by the Advisory Committee on the subject, had replied that he was unable to determine the exact amount which would be required but he estimated that it would be approximately \$50,000. The Advisory Committee therefore considered that any expenditure for that item not exceeding \$50,000 should be absorbed within existing resources.

52. The Advisory Committee was therefore recommending that the Fifth Committee inform the General Assembly that, should the Assembly adopt the draft resolution, an amount of \$399,700 would be required. In addition, an amount of \$18,500 would need to be appropriated for staff assessment, to be offset by the same amount under income section 1. The related conference servicing requirements would be shown in the consolidated statement that would shortly be submitted to the Assembly.

53. In paragraph 9 of document A/C.5/34/25, the Secretary-General had dealt with another matter relating to the Conference. The Advisory Committee had taken note of that paragraph and was recommending that the Fifth Committee inform the General Assembly that, should it wish to continue the present arrangements, an amount of \$55,100 would be required, as was indicated by the Secretary-General.

54. Mr. GARRIDO (Philippines) said that his delegation, in keeping with the position it had taken in the previous year, did not support what was proposed in document A/C.5/34/25, paragraph 9, with regard to the honorarium of the President of the Third United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea.

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55. The CHAIRMAN suggested that the Rapporteur should be authorized to inform the General Assembly that, should it adopt draft resolution A/34/L.6, additional appropriations of \$399,700 would be required under sections 2 C (\$348,100) and 27 (\$51,600) of the programme budget for the biennium 1980-1981. A further provision of \$18,500 would be required for additional staff assessment under section 31, offset by an increase of the same amount under income section 1.

56. With regard to conference servicing costs, additional requirements not exceeding \$3,664,800 would arise under sections 28 and 29. Those requirements would be considered in the context of a consolidated statement on conference servicing requirements to be submitted to the Fifth Committee towards the end of the current session of the General Assembly.

57. Furthermore, should the Assembly wish to continue, for the year 1980, the arrangements which it had approved by its decision 33/405 of 10 November 1978, in respect of the position of the President of the Conference, an additional appropriation of \$55,100 would be required under section 2 C of the programme budget for the biennium 1980-1981.

58. It was so decided.

Administrative and financial implications of the draft resolution submitted by the Sixth Committee in document A/C.6/34/L.3 relating to agenda item 116 (A/C.5/34/20)

59. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that in document A/C.5/34/20 the Secretary-General had indicated that the adoption of the draft resolution concerning the report of the Special Committee on Enhancing the Effectiveness of the Principle of Non-Use of Force in International Relations, which was contained in document A/C.6/34/L.3, would give rise to conference service costs not exceeding \$440,000 for the biennium 1980-1981. The General Assembly would consider the approval of that amount in the context of the consolidated statement that would shortly be submitted.

60. The CHAIRMAN drew attention to paragraph 2 (c) of document A/C.5/34/20, which indicated that, under the terms of draft resolution A/C.6/34/L.3, the General Assembly would request the Secretary-General to provide the Special Committee with the necessary facilities and services, including the preparation of summary records of the meetings of the Committee, with a view to enhancing the effectiveness of the principle of the non-use of force in international relations. He also pointed out that the Assembly's decision in that regard would depend on the final decision it took on the draft resolution which the Fifth Committee had adopted without a vote and which would be submitted to the Assembly before the end of the current week.

61. He then suggested that the Rapporteur should be authorized to inform the General Assembly that, should it adopt draft resolution A/C.6/34/L.3, no additional appropriations would be needed at the current stage. As for conference servicing costs, additional requirements not exceeding \$440,000 would arise under sections 28 and 29. Those requirements would be considered in the context of the consolidated statement of conference servicing requirements to be submitted to the Fifth Committee towards the close of the current session of the General Assembly.

62. Mr. PEDERSEN (Canada) requested that a vote should be taken on the Chairman's suggestion concerning the administrative and financial implications of draft resolution A/C.6/34/L.3.

63. Mr. PAPENDORP (United States of America) asked whether it would not be better to postpone a decision on the financial implications of draft resolution A/C.6/34/L.3 until the Assembly had taken a decision on the Committee's proposals concerning the control of documentation. Otherwise, a recommendation might be adopted concerning the preparation of summary records for the meetings of the Special Committee that would override the over-all decision on the control of documentation.

64. The CHAIRMAN replied that the General Assembly would decide on the recommendations concerning the control of documentation before considering draft resolution A/C.6/34/L.3. He invited the Committee to vote on his suggestion concerning the administrative and financial implications of draft resolution A/C.6/34/L.3.

65. The Chairman's suggestion concerning the administrative and financial implications of draft resolution A/C.6/34/L.3 was adopted by 71 votes to 3, with 7 abstentions.

66. Mr. PEDERSEN (Canada), speaking in explanation of vote, said that in 1977 and 1978 his delegation had abstained in the voting on General Assembly resolutions 32/150 and 33/96, on the question of the non-use of force in international relations, because it had had grave doubts as to the desirability of a treaty on that subject which would run the risk of deviating from certain basic principles or would be potentially harmful or useless. It had not voted against those resolutions, because the Special Committee's mandate had been flexible enough to allow it to make any recommendations which might seem appropriate and which might strengthen the principle of the non-use of force. However, the original supporters of the draft treaty in the Special Committee had interpreted the Committee's mandate in a restrictive way, as a result of which no progress had been made. Given that situation, his delegation, together with others, had suggested in the Sixth Committee that the Special Committee should be requested to show more flexibility on the question of its mandate and should try and see where agreement on substance might be possible, putting aside the question of the form of the document that would eventually be adopted. However, the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.6/34/L.3 had gone in exactly the opposite direction: the last preambular paragraph of the draft resolution failed to mention some of the important elements which lay within the Special Committee's mandate, and emphasized precisely the aspect of the exercise which presented very serious difficulties for a number of delegations. There was no indication that a treaty would be more acceptable now to the opponents of the idea than it had been in the past, and the Special Committee was likely to engage in the same "dialogue of the deaf" which had prevailed in the current year. For those reasons, his delegation had voted against the Chairman's suggestion concerning the financial implications of draft resolution A/C.6/34/L.3.

67. Mr. LASARTE (Uruguay) said that his delegation had abstained in the vote because, although Uruguay felt that it was playing its full part in all efforts to enhance the effectiveness of the principle of the non-use of force in international relations, it could not support draft resolution A/C.6/34/L.3, which gave one-sided consideration to the origins of an item of utmost priority, did not give appropriate and fair consideration to other initiatives on the subject and left in suspense the Special Committee's successful work in the search for new and effective measures for the peaceful settlement of disputes. The current structure of the Special Committee's activities was inconsistent with his country's aspirations and convictions concerning the non-use of force in international relations.

68. Mr. PALAMARCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) explained that his delegation had supported the Chairman's two suggestions on the understanding that the costs of the Conference and meetings envisaged in the draft resolutions to which the Chairman's suggestions referred would be financed out of appropriations under the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1980-1981 and not through additional appropriations.

The meeting rose at 1.25 p.m.