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PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 1980-1981

Revised estimates: section 5B. Centre for Science and  
Technology for Development

Thirty-third report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative  
and Budgetary Questions

1. The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions has considered the revised estimates submitted by the Secretary-General for section 5B. Centre for Science and Technology for Development (A/C.5/35/83 and Corr.1). The Secretary-General should have issued the document before the date originally set by the General Assembly for the completion of the substantive work of the Fifth Committee. The Committee urges the Secretary-General to ensure that documents for future sessions of the Assembly, especially those related to large appropriations, are submitted within the prescribed time-limits.

2. In document A/C.5/35/83 and Corr.1, the Secretary-General requests additional appropriations in the amounts of \$758,600 under section 5B, \$63,300 under section 28 and \$129,400 under section 31 (to be offset by an increase in the same amount under income section 1). He also requests the transfer of appropriations totalling \$1,454,100 from sections 4A and 6 to section 5B. The request for additional resources under section 5B is attributable in large measure to the fact that the appropriations approved by the General Assembly at its thirty-fourth session related almost exclusively to requirements for 1980: of the \$1,350,100 appropriated at that time only \$68,800 was for 1981 (see A/C.5/35/83, table 10).

3. As can be seen from table 9, the total revised estimate for section 5B for the biennium 1980-1981 amounts to \$3,631,600, of which \$1,878,600 relates to 1980 and \$1,753,000 to 1981. The 1980 portion, however, includes \$800,000 by way of a reimbursable advance to the United Nations Development Programme for the initial administrative and programme support costs of the Interim Fund for Science and Technology for Development (see para. 15 below). On a comparable basis, therefore, the estimates show an increase from \$1,078,600 in 1980 to \$1,753,000 in 1981, i.e. by \$674,400. The increase comprises \$267,400 for staff costs (established posts, general temporary assistance, common staff costs, representation allowance)

and \$407,000 for other objects of expenditure (ad hoc expert groups, travel, grants and contributions) (A/C.5/35/83 and Corr.1, table 9).

4. The Advisory Committee has been informed that of the increase of \$267,400 under staff costs, \$197,800 is attributable to the fact that full provision must be made for 1981 for posts which were budgeted with a delayed recruitment deduction in 1980. An amount of \$5,000 relates to the proposed reclassification of one P-5 post to the D-1 level. The balance of the increase under staff costs (\$64,600) is due to the use of higher standard costs in 1981 compared to 1980 and to the vacancy situation in 1980.

5. The staff of the Centre currently comprises established posts and temporary-assistance posts, as follows:

<u>1980 staffing</u> <u>table</u>	<u>ASG</u>	<u>D-2</u>	<u>D-1</u>	<u>P-5</u>	<u>P-4</u>	<u>P-3</u>	<u>P-2/1</u>	<u>Sub-</u> <u>total</u>	<u>G-5</u>	<u>G-4/1</u>	<u>Sub-</u> <u>total</u>	<u>Total</u>
Established posts	1	1	1	2	2	1	-	8	2	6	8	16
Temporary-assistance posts	-	1	1	3	1	1	2	9	1	6	7	16
Total	1	2	2	5	3	2	2	17	3	12	15	32

6. For 1981 the Secretary-General requests that all the temporary-assistance posts be converted into established posts and that one of the P-5 posts be reclassified to the D-1 level. Thus, the staff resources requested by the Secretary-General for 1981 are as follows:

<u>1981</u> <u>proposals</u>	<u>ASG</u>	<u>D-2</u>	<u>D-1</u>	<u>P-5</u>	<u>P-4</u>	<u>P-3</u>	<u>P-2/1</u>	<u>Sub-</u> <u>total</u>	<u>G-5</u>	<u>G-4/1</u>	<u>Sub-</u> <u>total</u>	<u>Total</u>
Established posts	1	2	3	4	3	2	2	17	3	12	15	32

7. Except for the post at the ASG level and two General Service posts, all the established posts have been drawn from the Office of Science and Technology, which has been abolished pursuant to General Assembly resolution 34/218 of 19 December 1979. The Advisory Committee notes from paragraphs 5B.33-35 that three Professional (one P-5, one P-4 and one P-3) and one General Service post on the staffing table of the Office of Science and Technology have been retained by the Department of International Economic and Social Affairs. It is not clear from the report by the Secretary-General whether the functions attached to these four posts will continue to be performed in DIESA or whether the arrangement has resulted in the provision of additional resources to the Department. The Advisory Committee requests the Secretary-General to clarify the point in his proposed programme budget for 1982-1983.

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8. As regards the 16 posts currently provided on a temporary-assistance basis (see para. 5 above) the Advisory Committee recalls that they have been financed in 1980 out of a lump-sum credit of \$300,000 appropriated by the General Assembly at its thirty-fourth session in response to the request by the Secretary-General in paragraph 29 of his statement in document A/C.5/34/101. Thus the grading of the posts in question was not considered by the Fifth Committee. The Advisory Committee inquired whether the grades have since been reviewed and endorsed by the Classification Service of the Office of Personnel Services; according to the representatives of the Secretary-General, the review is still in progress. In the circumstances and bearing in mind the very late submission of document A/C.5/35/83, the Advisory Committee believes that it would be premature at this stage to convert the temporary-assistance posts into established posts. The Committee recommends that this question and the proposed reclassification of one P-5 post to the D-1 level should be considered in the context of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1982-1983, with a consequential reduction of the estimate by \$5,000.

9. As was stated in paragraph 3, increases in 1981 over 1980 proposed by the Secretary-General for objects of expenditure other than staff costs amount to \$407,000. Table 9 in document A/C.5/35/83 shows that increased estimates are submitted for consultants (\$145,200 in 1981 as against \$70,000 in 1980), ad hoc expert groups (\$90,000 in 1981, compared to no provision in 1980), travel of representatives (\$270,400 as against \$100,000) and travel of staff to meetings and on other official business (\$105,700 as against \$38,000). The Advisory Committee notes the information provided in document A/C.5/35/83, in particular in paragraphs 5B.14-16 and 5B.22-25. The Committee is of the opinion, however, that economies should be within reach in the four areas in question. As regards travel of representatives, the Committee recalls that not all representatives attend all meetings or stay there for their entire duration. As regards travel of staff, steps should be taken to combine journeys. Instead of engaging consultants, recourse could be had to expertise already available in the United Nations or the specialized agencies, several of which have long been active in the field of science and technology. Accordingly, the Advisory Committee recommends the following reductions under objects of expenditure other than staff costs:

	<u>\$</u>
Consultants	35,000
<u>Ad hoc</u> expert groups	15,000
Travel of representatives	30,000
Travel of staff	25,000
	<u>105,000</u>

10. In paragraphs 8 and 9 above, the Advisory Committee has recommended reductions totalling \$110,000. On that basis, the Committee recommends that the General Assembly appropriate an additional amount of \$648,600 under section 5B.

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11. The Advisory Committee concurs in the Secretary-General's request for the transfer of appropriations of \$169,200 from section 4A to section 5B, and of \$1,284,900 from section 6 to section 5B.

12. The Advisory Committee recommends that the amount of \$63,300 under section 28D for common services costs requested by the Secretary-General in paragraph 5B.42 of document A/C.5/35/83 should be absorbed within already approved resources.

13. The Committee's recommendation in paragraph 8 above entails a reduction of \$2,800 in the estimate for section 31 (Staff assessment) from \$129,400 to \$126,600. The estimate of additional income under income section 1 would likewise need to be reduced to \$126,600.

14. The Advisory Committee notes the statement by the Secretary-General in paragraph 5B.44 of document A/C.5/35/83 that conference-servicing costs (which are estimated at \$546,300 on a full-cost basis) would be reflected in the consolidated statement of conference-servicing requirements.

#### Interim Fund for Science and Technology for Development

15. The Advisory Committee notes from the Secretary-General's report in document A/C.5/35/91 that of the reimbursable advance of \$800,000 to the Interim Fund for Science and Technology for Development approved by the General Assembly at its thirty-fourth session, \$185,800 was withdrawn before 19 May 1980 when the Interim Fund was declared operational. Since then the total amount advanced has been refunded to the United Nations.

16. The Advisory Committee notes from paragraph 9 of document A/C.5/35/91 that, whereas in 1980 administrative and programme support costs of the Interim Fund will not exceed 2 per cent of the Fund's total resources, the percentage will be exceeded in 1981 unless the currently available resources are approximately doubled over the next year.

17. In paragraph 10 the Secretary-General states that:

"In view of the very substantial demands made on the Interim Fund and the importance of responding to government requests in an efficient and timely manner, the Administrator of UNDP considers it essential and requests the authorization of the General Assembly to incur the staff and other administrative costs within the level indicated for 1981 in the Secretary-General's report, so as to ensure effective operation."

18. The Advisory Committee recalls that the level in question is \$1,145,140 (A/34/587/Add.2, annex II). While the Committee does not object to the Administrator's request, it believes that the situation will need to be reviewed in the course of the year in the light of developments as regards additional pledges.

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