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FIFTH COMMITTEE
20th meeting
held on
Friday, 23 October 1981
at 10.30 a.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 20th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. GODFREY (New Zealand)

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

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4 November 1981
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The meeting was called to order at 10.40 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 100: PROPOSED PROGRAMME FOR THE BIENNIUM 1982-1983 (continued)
(A/36/6, A/36/7, A/36/38 chaps.V and VII D))

First reading (continued)

Section 1. Over-all policy-making, direction and co-ordination (continued)

1. Mrs. HOUSHOLDER (United States of America) observed that during the general debate her delegation had expressed its concern at the growing number of requests for post reclassifications. She wished to know if the reclassification of two posts in the Executive Office of the Secretary-General, proposed in section 1 of the budget, complied with the criteria laid down by the Classification Section and whether it reflected increased responsibilities for the posts concerned. She expressed surprise at the intention to recruit temporary personnel to replace staff on maternity leave or sick leave, since that would amount to recruiting two persons for a single job. Good management required that the work of an absent employee should be distributed among those present.

2. Her delegation was opposed to the utilization of the Organization's funds for travel of members of the Committee of the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, as contemplated in section I, paragraph 7, of the proposed programme budget; it considered that the Committee's work was not assisting the search for a peaceful solution to the Middle East question. For the same reasons, it opposed the appropriation of funds for the Special Unit on Palestinian Rights, which provided the secretariat for the Committee.

3. Mr. FERNANDEZ MAROTO (Spain) said that there was an error in paragraph 1.10 of the Advisory Committee's report (A/36/7) with respect to the Committee on Contributions. In 1979, the Committee on Contributions had met for a total of 36 days (from 4 June to 6 July 1979), and not 39 days as was indicated in that paragraph.

4. Mr. ORON (Israel) said that, for the reasons of principle which it had explained to the Committee at its thirty-fourth session (A/C.5/34/SR.20), his delegation was opposed to appropriations under sections 1A and 1B for the Committee on the Exercise of the Unalienable Rights of the Palestinian People and the Special Unit on Palestinian Rights. Accordingly, it requested a separate vote on those appropriations.

5. Mr. KUYAMA (Japan) said that the estimate for section 1 had increased by 20.2 per cent compared with the appropriation for 1980-1981, whereas the growth

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(Mr. Kuyama, Japan)

of the budget as a whole was approximately 14 per cent. The increase was due largely to additional requirements for the World Food Council and the General Assembly.

6. With respect to the World Food Council, an additional amount of \$23,100 was requested for contractual services to cover the cost of public information activities over and above those provided by the Department of Public Information. It would be recalled that the Secretary-General had included a similar request in the proposed programme budget for 1980-1981 and that the Advisory Committee had not recommended approval of the request. The new request appeared to be no more justified than the previous one, since it was not clear why the Council secretariat needed to engage in public information activities over and above those already carried out by the information services of the United Nations and FAO. The Advisory Committee had again recommended that the amount requested should be deleted. His delegation would like to know what had prompted the renewal of the request.

7. His delegation also noted that the requirements for the United Nations Board of Auditors and the Office of the Co-ordinator of Assistance for the Reconstruction and Development of Lebanon were subject to an upward change.

8. Mr. ENODIEN (Nigeria) requested further information from the Secretariat on the nature of the public information activities of the World Food Council.

7. Mr. FALL OULD MAALLOUM (Mauritania) expressed his objections to the obstructionist policy engaged in by some countries towards the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People, which was a subsidiary organ of the General Assembly and should receive the funds it required to function properly.

10. Mr. BOUZARBIA (Algeria), Mr. MEMMI (Tunisia), Mr. YOUNIS (Iraq), Mr. DIA (Senegal) and Mr. AL KHAYYAL (United Arab Emirates) said that they supported the appropriation of \$71,800 under section 1 for the Committee on the Exercise of the Unalienable Rights of the Palestinian People and hoped that the Committee would receive more substantial funds in order to facilitate the settlement of the Palestinian question.

11. Mr. BEGIN (Director, Budget Division) said that the Secretariat would check the point raised by the Spanish representative and would, if appropriate, issue a corrigendum. He drew attention to an error in the English version of volume I of the proposed programme budget 1982-1983 (A/36/6: on page 71, in table 1.1 "Analysis of over-all costs, A. Direct costs, (1) Regular budget", the figure in the first column should be 29 906.1 instead of 28 114.7. A corrigendum would be issued shortly.

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(Mr. Begin, Director, Budget Division)

12. Regarding the reclassification of two posts in the Executive Office of the Secretary-General, he said that all existing Secretariat procedures for the classification of posts had been complied with. The reclassifications were warranted because of the increased responsibilities attaching to those posts.

13. The appropriation requested for information activities to be carried out by the secretariat of the World Food Council was required for the financing of part of the activities under the subprogramme "Co-ordination of world-wide action to combat hunger". The intention was to disseminate information on the activities of the World Food Council in the form of press releases, brochures or fact sheets. The fact that the World Food Council had its headquarters at Rome gave rise to practical problems in relations between the Council secretariat and the Department of Public Information at New York. It had therefore been deemed more appropriate to include the requirements for the Council's information activities in section 1, instead of in section 27 (Public information) as had been recommended by the Advisory Committee; in any event, the Advisory Committee did not deny the usefulness of those activities but merely questioned the funding arrangements.

14. The CHAIRMAN said that, as requested by the representative of Israel, he would call for a separate vote on the Advisory Committee's recommendations concerning the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People (section 1A) and the Special Unit on Palestinian Rights (Office of the Under-Secretary-General for Political and General Assembly Affairs) (section 1B).

15. The recommendations of the Advisory Committee for appropriations in the amount of \$71,800 under section 1A and \$1,082,600 under section 1B for the biennium 1982-1983 were approved in first reading by 57 votes to 3, with 16 abstentions.

16. Mr. PEDERSEN (Canada), speaking in explanation of vote after the vote, said that the appropriations just approved were an unfortunate allocation of the Organization's funds.

17. Mr. ENODIEN (Nigeria) proposed that the amount of \$23,100 requested under section 1 for contractual services for the World Food Council, to which the Advisory Committee was opposed (A/36/7, para. 1.16), should be maintained.

18. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that the Advisory Committee had felt that the Department of Public Information was capable of implementing the projects indicated by the Secretary-General in paragraphs 1.30 to 1.33 of the proposed programme budget. The Committee had consequently recommended that the amount of \$23,100 requested for that purpose should be deleted and that the information

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(Mr. Mselle, Chairman of the Advisory Committee
on Administrative and Budgetary Questions)

activities covered should be financed from the resources to be approved under section 27.

19. Mr. PALAMARCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that the reduction recommended by the Advisory Committee, which was in any event minimal, was fully warranted and the proposal of the Nigerian representative was without justification.

20. Mr. MAJOLI (Italy) said that his country generally supported the Advisory Committee's recommendations and was opposed in principle to duplication and overlap. However, in view of the importance of food questions, it might be justified either to transfer the amount requested to section 27, or to maintain it in section 1 in accordance with the Secretary-General's original intention. In any event, Italy would accept the decision of the majority.

21. Mr. WILLIAMS (Panama) said that the Advisory Committee was recommending not that the activities proposed by the Secretary-General should be suppressed but that they should be taken up in the context of the appropriations under section 27. He therefore appealed to the representative of Nigeria to withdraw his proposal so as obviate the need for a vote.

22. Mrs. HOUSHOLDER (United States of America) supported the Advisory Committee's recommendation.

23. Mr. ENODIEN (Nigeria) said that he had been convinced by the arguments of the Chairman of the Advisory Committee and felt that the Department of Public Information could indeed handle the activities planned. He withdrew his proposal.

24. The CHAIRMAN invited the Committee to vote on the Advisory Committee's recommendation on section 1 as a whole.

25. The recommendation of the Advisory Committee for an appropriation in the amount of \$33,534,400 under section 1 for the biennium 1982-1983 was approved in first reading by 84 votes to 2.

26. Mr. ANDRIANONY (Madagascar) said that if he had been present for the vote, he would have voted in favour of the appropriation.

27. Mr. ALI (Bangladesh) said that, if he had been present for the vote, he would have voted for the appropriation.

Section 2. Political and Security Council affairs; peace-keeping activities

28. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and

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(Mr. Mselle, Chairman of the Advisory Committee
on Administrative and Budgetary Questions)

Budgetary Questions) recalled that section 2 consisted of five subsections for which the Secretary-General had submitted a total estimate of \$72,423,800.

29. With regard to the policy-making organs, the Advisory Committee approved the estimate of \$604,600 submitted by the Secretary-General.

30. The Secretary-General was requesting an amount of \$16,815,200 for the Department of Political and Security Council Affairs. In requesting a total of 144 posts for the Department for 1982-1983, the Secretary-General proposed to convert to established posts five temporary posts (one D-1, two P-5, one G-5, one G-4/1) in the Security Council and Political Committees Division, and one D-1 post currently charged to consultant funds in the Outer Space Affairs Division. In addition, the Secretary-General proposed the reclassification of one P-2 post to the P-3 level in the Security Council and Political Committees Division and the redeployment of a number of posts among the various programmes (A/36/7, para. 2.9).

30(a). He recalled that the Secretary-General had submitted the same request to convert the temporary posts to the General Assembly at its thirty-third session and that the Advisory Committee had found that it was not sufficiently justified at the time. The Committee was still not convinced that the workload warranted the conversion of the temporary posts to established posts and it further recommended that if the workload remained at its current level, the Secretary-General should examine whether those temporary posts needed to be continued (A/36/7, para. 2.16).

31. Moreover, the Advisory Committee was not convinced that the request for a reclassification of one P-2 post to the P-3 level in the Security Council and Political Committees Division was justified and consequently did not recommend that it be approved.

32. The Advisory Committee had noted that resources continued to be requested for consultant services to be used to publish Repertoire of the Practice of the Security Council and regretted that the Secretariat was disregarding the opinion it had previously expressed on the subject, which the Fifth Committee had endorsed. The Advisory Committee continued to feel that the establishment of the Repertoire should be undertaken by existing Secretariat staff, particularly those who possessed a profound knowledge of Security Council affairs and were better equipped to do the work. With regard to the estimate of \$68,200 (at revised 1981 rates) for consultant services for a study on conventional disarmament, he said that he was prepared to provide any additional information which members of the Fifth Committee might desire. Consequently, the Advisory Committee recommended a net reduction of \$40,300 (at 1982-1983 rates) in the

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(Mr. Mselle, Chairman of the Advisory Committee
on Administrative and Budgetary Questions)

estimate for consultant services for the Department, taking into account the recommendation it made elsewhere (A/36/7, para. 2.21) that the Fifth Committee reject, as it had done in the past, the proposal to convert the D-1 post of the expert on space applications, currently financed from consultant funds, to an established post. Adoption of that recommendation would result in a reduction totalling \$141,000 at 1982-1983 rates for salaries and common staff costs.

33. For the reason given in paragraph 17 of chapter I of its report (A/36/7), the Advisory Committee recommended that the estimate submitted by the Secretary-General for communications for the Department should be reduced by \$4,300. Finally, he drew the attention of the Fifth Committee to the Advisory Committee's recommendation that the estimate for general temporary assistance should be reduced by an amount equivalent to \$79,200 at 1982-1983 rates (A/36/7, para. 2.17).

34. Mr. PAL (India) again deplored the fact that the Advisory Committee, during its detailed consideration of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1982-1983, had been unawared of the relevant recommendations by the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination. In paragraphs 477 to 481 of its report, CPC put forward a number of recommendations concerning section 2. Two of those recommendations were in line with the recommendations of the Advisory Committee and had been approved by the Economic and Social Council at its second regular session in 1981. He hoped, therefore, that the Fifth Committee would take them into account when taking a decision on the appropriations under section 2.

35. In paragraph 477 of its report, CPC considered that the Department of Political and Security Council Affairs had the expertise for which consultants were requested in paragraphs 2.18, 2.26 and 2.37 of section 2 of the proposed programme budget, and therefore recommended that the requests should be rejected. The reductions amounted to a total of \$29,700. If one took into account the recommendation in paragraph 479 of the CPC report, namely that programme element 3.4 (Conventional disarmament) and the related request for consultants should be deleted, the reduction would amount to \$97,900. He noted that the Advisory Committee recommended a reduction of \$117,000 in the total appropriation requested for consultants for the Department and endorsed that recommendation. If the General Assembly approved the CPC recommendations, the Fifth Committee's report would have to make it clear that the Department could not use consultants for activities whose deletion CPC had recommended. Furthermore, if the Fifth Committee accepted the CPC recommendation to eliminate programme element 3.4 and the related consultant services altogether, the amount of the appropriation under section 2B would have to be adjusted accordingly.

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36. Mr. KUYAMA (Japan), after observing that section 2 was one of the largest in the budget in terms of both the activities involved and the appropriations requested, said that CPC had made a number of proposals with financial implications concerning it; one such proposal was to be found in paragraph 477 of its report. Besides the problem of co-ordination between CPC and the Advisory Committee, which the representative of India had already raised, he wondered why the Secretariat had not come forward with a detailed justification for the appropriations requested after CPC had recommended cuts. The recommendation in paragraph 479 of the CPC report, calling for the outright deletion of programme element 3.4 and the related consultant services, was a further example of the lack of co-ordination between CPC and the intergovernmental bodies, whose recommendation regarding that programme element did not tally with that of CPC. On another point raised by CPC, namely the efficiency of maintaining the United Nations Supply Depot at Pisa, he again deplored the fact that the recommendations by CPC and the Advisory Committee (see A/36/7, para. 2.32) were at odds with each other.

37. Like the rest of the budget, section 2 provided inadequate information on the use made of extrabudgetary funds. His delegation would like the exact relationship between extrabudgetary funds and the posts charged to them to be more clearly explained in future.

38. His delegation welcomed the fact that the presentation of requirements had improved, especially where certain items of expenditure such as staff travel (see A/36/6, vol.I, para. 2.9 and 2.33) were concerned. Savings could have been made in that area, and the related recommendation by the Advisory Committee, in paragraph 2.4 of its report, seemed over-generous. As to consultant services, his delegation fully supported the reductions recommended by the Advisory Committee in paragraphs 2.12 and 2.14 of its report.

39. Mrs. HOUSHOLDER (United States of America) said she shared the Japanese representative's concern for economy and wondered whether it would be possible for the Committee on Disarmament to have summary records for its meetings instead of verbatim records.

40. The CHAIRMAN, replying to questions from the representatives of India and Japan, said that the problem of co-ordination between CPC and the Advisory Committee would be the subject of discussions in which the Bureau of the Fifth Committee would take part. Meanwhile, the vote on section 2 as a whole would be postponed to another meeting.

41. Mr. BUNC (Yugoslavia) said that the Committee ought to take the recommendations of CPC into account when it voted on section 2.

42. Mr. TAKASU (Japan) endorsed that view. As for the procedure for enhancing co-ordination between CPC and the Advisory Committee, the representative of India had suggested during the general debate that the introduction of the Advisory Committee's report on each section of the proposed programme budget should be followed by a statement from the Chairman or a representative of CPC.

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(Mr. Takasu, Japan)

Such a solution would allow all relevant recommendations to be taken into consideration, and he hoped that the Bureau would adopt it.

Section 3. Political affairs, trusteeship and decolonization

43. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administration and Budgetary Questions), presenting the Advisory Committee's recommendations on section 3 of the proposed programme budget, said that the Secretary-General had submitted an estimate of \$15,908,100. The Committee was proposing a slight reduction - in the amount of \$67,000 - in that estimate as follows.

44. In paragraph 3.4, the Advisory Committee recommended that the estimate be reduced by \$17,000 because, in its view, the appropriation of \$100,000 approved for 1980-1981 should be sufficient to cover the expenses of the Trusteeship Council in 1982-1983. In paragraph 3.7, the Advisory Committee proposed a slight reduction, of \$5,000, because it considered that the estimate for temporary assistance was not entirely necessary. The same applied to paragraph 3.20, concerning temporary assistance for the Centre against Apartheid, in which the Advisory Committee recommended that the estimate should be reduced by \$13,500. In paragraph 3.8, the Advisory Committee noted that the increase in real terms for travel expenses requested by the Secretary-General was not fully justified and recommended, for the reasons given in paragraph 3.8, that the estimate for travel should be reduced by \$26,800. Paragraphs 3.9 and 3.17 were designed to implement the recommendations on inter-city and international long-distance telephone calls made in paragraph 17 of chapter I of the Advisory Committee's report. It was accordingly proposed that the estimate for communications should be reduced by \$2,700.

45. The CHAIRMAN said that, if he heard no objection, he would take it that the Committee wished to approve by consensus the recommendation of the Advisory Committee for an appropriation of \$15,841,100 under section 3.

46. Mrs. HOUSHOLDER (United States of America) requested that a vote be taken. The United States would vote against the appropriation requested under section 3, since part of it would be used to finance SWAPO's office in New York.

47. The CHAIRMAN invited the Committee to vote on the recommendation of the Advisory Committee on section 3, as a whole.

48. The recommendation of the Advisory Committee for an appropriation in the amount of \$15,841,100 under section 3 for the biennium 1982-1983 was approved in first reading by 89 votes to 1, with 1 abstention.

48. Mr. WILSKI (Poland) said that his delegation would have voted in favour of the appropriation, had it been present.

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50. Mr. ZINIEL (Ghana) said that his delegation would have voted in favour of the appropriation, had it been present.

51. Mr. BRODININGRAT (Indonesia), speaking in explanation of vote following the vote, said that his delegation had voted for the appropriation recommended under section 3. Yet, in so doing, it wished to reaffirm its strong opposition to expenditure on activities relating to the so-called question of East Timor, activities which had violated the Charter of the United Nations and which should be included among the marginal activities.

AGENDA ITEM 18: APPOINTMENTS TO FILL VACANCIES IN SUBSIDIARY ORGANS AND OTHER APPOINTMENTS (continued)

52. The CHAIRMAN said that, if he heard no objection, he would take it that, in all cases where the number of candidates equalled the number of vacancies, the Committee agreed to dispense with a secret ballot.

53. It was so decided.

(c) APPOINTMENT OF A MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF AUDITORS (A/36/163; A/C.5/36/21)

54. The CHAIRMAN recalled that the General Assembly would, during the current session, be called upon to appoint the Auditor-General of a Member State to fill the vacancy which would arise, on 1 July 1982, in the membership of the United Nations Board of Auditors as a consequence of the expiration, on 30 June 1982, of the term of office of the Auditor-General of Ghana. In his note (A/C.5/36/21), the Secretary-General had informed the Committee that the Government of Ghana had nominated the Auditor-General of Ghana for reappointment for a term of office beginning on 1 July 1982 and ending on 30 June 1985. Since the number of candidates equalled the number of vacancies, he suggested that the Fifth Committee should recommend to the General Assembly the reappointment of the Auditor-General of Ghana for a term of office beginning on 1 July 1982 and ending on 30 June 1985.

55. The recommendation was adopted.

(d) CONFIRMATION OF THE APPOINTMENT OF THREE MEMBERS OF THE INVESTMENTS COMMITTEE (A/36/164; A/C.5/36/20)

56. The CHAIRMAN said that, in accordance with the provisions of article 20 of the regulations of the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund, the Secretary-General, after consultation with the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Board and the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, had submitted for confirmation by the General Assembly the names of the persons he had appointed as members of the United Nations Investments Committee. In

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(The Chairman)

document A/C.5/36/20, the Secretary-General, after holding the required consultations, had submitted for confirmation by the General Assembly the names of the persons he had appointed as members of the Investments Committee for a term of three years, beginning on 1 January 1982: Messrs. Jean Guyot, George Johnston and Michiya Matsukawa. He suggested that the Fifth Committee should recommend to the General Assembly that it should confirm the appointments proposed by the Secretary-General.

57. The recommendation was adopted.

(e) APPOINTMENT OF TWO MEMBERS OF THE UNITED NATIONS ADMINISTRATIVE TRIBUNAL (A/36/165; A/C.5/36/11)

58. The CHAIRMAN recalled that it would be necessary for the General Assembly, during its current session, to appoint two people to fill vacancies in the United Nations Administrative Tribunal resulting from the expiration, on 31 December 1981, of the terms of office of Mr. Francisco Forteza and Mr. Endre Ustor. In his note (A/C.5/36/11), the Secretary-General had informed the Fifth Committee that the Government of Uruguay had nominated Dr. Luis María de Posadas Montero and that the Government of Hungary had nominated Mr. Endre Ustor to fill those vacancies in the United Nations Administrative Tribunal for a term of three years. Since the number of candidates equalled the number of vacancies, he suggested that the Fifth Committee should recommend to the General Assembly the appointment of Dr. Luis María de Posadas Montero and Mr. Endre Ustor to the United Nations Administrative Tribunal for a term of three years beginning on 1 January 1982.

59. The recommendation was adopted.

(k) APPOINTMENT OF AN ALTERNATE MEMBER OF THE UNITED NATIONS STAFF PENSION COMMITTEE (A/C.5/36/8/Add.1, A/C.5/36/14)

60. The CHAIRMAN said that in his note (A/C.5/36/14), the Secretary-General had informed the Fifth Committee of the resignation of Mr. Rudolf Schmidt (Federal Republic of Germany) from the United Nations Staff Pension Committee, of which he had been an alternate member. He had also informed the Committee that the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany had nominated Mr. Jobst Holborn to fill the vacancy for the remainder of Mr. Schmidt's term, namely until 31 December 1982. Since the number of candidates equalled the number of vacancies, he suggested that the Fifth Committee should recommend to the General Assembly the appointment of Mr. Jobst Holborn as an alternate member of the United Nations Staff Pension Committee, for a term beginning on the date

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(The Chairman)

on which the General Assembly approved the appointment and ending on 31 December 1982.

61. The recommendation was adopted.

ORGANIZATION OF WORK

62. The CHAIRMAN said that the Committee would no doubt wish to take advantage of the presence of programme directors, in particular the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme and the Executive Director of HABITAT, when considering the sections of the proposed budget relating to those programmes. In addition, the Chairman of the Committee on Contributions had stated his willingness to participate in any discussion on the scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations, with a view to expediting a consensus.

63. Mr. MARTORELL (Peru), Rapporteur, asked the representative of Algeria, as Chairman of the Group of 77, if the draft resolution sponsored by the Group was about to be submitted to the Committee.

64. Mr. BOUZARBIA (Algeria) said that the Group of 77 was making progress in its work and the draft resolution would be submitted to the Committee as soon as the Group had determined a common position.

The meeting rose at 12.55 p.m.