



SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 25th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. ABRASZEWSKI (Poland)

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

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The meeting was called to order at 10.55 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 105: FINANCIAL EMERGENCY OF THE UNITED NATIONS (continued)  
(A/C.5/37/15 and Corr.1)

1. Mr. PULLEIRO (Uruguay), referring to the first part of the Secretary-General's report on the financial emergency of the United Nations (A/C.5/37/15), noted with satisfaction that the Postal Administration had established 19 November 1982 as the date on which the special stamps devoted to the conservation and protection of nature would be issued in accordance with resolution 35/113. The project had two benefits. First, it served the noble cause of conserving and protecting nature, and, second, it was a new source of revenue, which the Secretary-General estimated in his report at \$2 million. He welcomed the co-operation between the United Nations Environment Programme and the Postal Administration in arranging a symposium.

2. With regard to the deficit of the Organization, dealt with in the second part of the Secretary-General's report, he recalled that, unless the Organization had sufficient resources at its disposal, it would not be able to discharge the responsibilities assigned to it by the Charter and the Secretariat would not be able to carry out the many tasks set for it by the General Assembly. In paragraph 3 of resolution 36/116 B, the General Assembly had urged all Member States to pay their contributions in good time. However, as could be seen from the table in paragraph 8 of the Secretary-General's report, the percentage of assessed contributions paid on time, instead of rising, had fallen markedly. That was doubtless a consequence of the international economic crisis, which was growing worse with each passing day, but his delegation agreed with the delegation of Zaire that delays by the major industrialized countries in making payments had a greater impact on the financial stability of the Organization since their assessments far exceeded the amount owed by all developing countries taken together. In addition, the capacity of their economies to rebound was much greater than that of the developing countries, which had to devote all their scarce resources to promoting economic recovery.

3. At the thirty-seventh session, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Uruguay had stated in the General Assembly that his Government was prepared to support all efforts to strengthen the Organization and help it to discharge its responsibilities. Accordingly, his Government had approved an appropriation under the national budget to cover its contribution to the United Nations budget, which would be paid very shortly. The solution to the financial emergency of the United Nations did not consist in granting bonuses to Members which paid their assessments on time, nor in penalizing those which were late in their payments. The solution was to be found in understanding, good faith and the will to co-operate.

4. Mr. LAHLOU (Morocco) welcomed the efforts made by the United Nations Postal Administration in response to the request which had been addressed to it. He was confident that the special issue of postage stamps would be successful with the public and that the Organization would realize the expected income from the sale of the stamps.

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(Mr. Lahlou, Morocco)

5. Referring to the information provided by the Secretary-General on the current and foreseen extent of the financial deficit of the Organization, he said that it was disturbing to learn from paragraph 9 of the report (A/C.5/37/15) that the rate of payment of assessed contributions in 1982 had been the lowest of recent years. While the level of withholdings in respect of technical assistance costs was decreasing each year, the situation with regard to peace-keeping in the Middle East seemed to be static.

6. There was no justification for the withholding of assessed contributions for peace-keeping operations. Politically, the situation was very clear: the aggressor had been condemned, the victim recognized. Given the facts of the situation, it was not enough to maintain that the aggressor should assume the costs resulting from its aggression. From a higher point of view, when a Government contributed to the budget of the Organization, it was not to resolve a specific situation but to support the activities of the Organization, promote the broad principles which guided its action and further the cause of international peace and security. All Governments had a duty to participate in the efforts of the United Nations. To refuse to do so on the pretext that a given State was in the wrong was to evade one's responsibilities and deny the principles which were the very foundation of the Organization.

7. He therefore wished it to be known that his delegation considered unjustified the position of countries which withheld that part of their contributions which related to expenses incurred by the Organization in connection with peace-keeping operations in the Middle East.

8. Mr. FORAN (Controller), replying to a question asked by the representative of Japan concerning the table appearing in paragraph 8 of the Secretary-General's report (A/C.5/37/15), said that the percentage of assessed contributions paid as at 31 December of recent years was as follows: 1978: 83.01 per cent; 1979: 83.55 per cent; 1980: 81.80 per cent; 1981: 79.9 per cent. The Secretary-General was unable at the current stage to make projections for December 1982.

9. The representative of the German Democratic Republic had requested details on the number of posts financed from extrabudgetary resources which had been transferred to the regular budget. For the biennium 1980-1981, a total of 10 Professional posts and four General Service posts had been transferred to the regular budget, as follows: three Professional posts and two General Service posts in the Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees and seven Professional posts and two General Service posts in the Office of the United Nations Disaster Relief Co-ordinator. The new costs that had thus been transferred to the regular budget were estimated at \$770,000 per year. No posts had been transferred for the biennium 1982-1983.

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AGENDA ITEM 111: PERSONNEL QUESTIONS (continued)

(a) COMPOSITION OF THE SECRETARIAT: REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (continued)  
(A/37/143)

10. Mr. BETTINI (Italy) noted with satisfaction, that as indicated in table 9 of the Secretary-General's report on the composition of the Secretariat (A/37/143), the number of Italian nationals employed in the Secretariat had increased from 59 the previous year to 65. He thanked the Secretary-General for that favourable development. He noted however, that as at 30 June 1982, that figure was still below the mid-point of his country's desirable range. His delegation hoped that the Administration would take effective action to improve its recruitment policy and scrupulously carry out its medium-term recruitment plan.

AGENDA ITEM 107: JOINT INSPECTION UNIT: REPORTS OF THE JOINT INSPECTION UNIT  
(A/37/34, A/37/103; A/C.5/37/28)

11. Mr. BERTRAND (Chairman of the Joint Inspection Unit), introducing the annual report of the Joint Inspection Unit (A/37/34), recalled that, under its mandate, JIU was responsible for submitting specific reports on subjects which it had itself included in its work programme or which were assigned to it by the General Assembly or other intergovernmental organs. Its detailed recommendations and observations were therefore to be found in those reports. The annual report merely recapitulated the conclusions reached by the Unit in its individual studies and did not contain any recommendations other than those included in the relevant reports.

12. That approach had so far been appreciated because it had the advantage of providing a summary of all the reports prepared during the year under review, i.e. from 1 July to 30 June of the following year. However, the Joint Inspection Unit had been wondering for some time whether it should not alter its approach after 13 years of existence, review the results it had achieved and conduct a kind of self-evaluation. For example, instead of confining itself to submitting summaries of its reports - a practice which could, in any case, be continued since it had proven its usefulness - it might attempt to evaluate the follow-up given to its previous recommendations. Any suggestions which delegations might make on the subject would be welcome.

The meeting rose at 11.35 a.m.