

United Nations
**GENERAL
ASSEMBLY**

THIRTY-SEVENTH SESSION

*Official Records**



FIFTH COMMITTEE
28th meeting
held on
Monday, 8 November 1982
at 10.30 a.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 28th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. ABRASZEWSKI (Poland)

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

CONTENTS

AGENDA ITEM 107: JOINT INSPECTION UNIT: REPORTS OF THE JOINT INSPECTION UNIT
(continued)

AGENDA ITEM 103: PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 1982-1983 (continued)

Administrative and financial implications of the draft resolution submitted by
the Sixth Committee in document A/C.6/37/L.3 concerning agenda item 124

AGENDA ITEM 112: REPORT OF THE INTERNATIONAL CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION

AGENDA ITEM 111: PERSONNEL QUESTIONS (continued)

- (a) COMPOSITION OF THE SECRETARIAT: REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL
- (b) RESPECT FOR THE PRIVILEGES AND IMMUNITIES OF OFFICIALS OF THE UNITED
NATIONS AND THE SPECIALIZED AGENCIES AND RELATED ORGANIZATIONS: REPORT OF
THE SECRETARY-GENERAL
- (c) OTHER PERSONNEL QUESTIONS

* This record is subject to correction. Corrections should be sent under the
signature of a member of the delegation concerned *within one week of the date of
publication* to the Chief of the Official Records Editing Section, room A-3550,
866 United Nations Plaza (Alcoa Building), and incorporated in a copy of the
record.

Corrections will be issued after the end of the session, in a separate fascicle for
each Committee.

Distr. GENERAL
A/C.5/37/SR.28
11 November 1982

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

The meeting was called to order at 10.40 a.m.

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

1. Ms. HOUSHOLDER (United States of America) said that it was altogether appropriate that the Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) should have devoted so much time to considering personnel matters, since the international civil servants were the backbone of the Organization. Yet the personnel of the United Nations did not exist for their own sake alone.
2. The United Nations system comprised a complex group of organizations and was, therefore, difficult to manage. Nevertheless, efficient management was absolutely vital, and JIU assisted in that regard by identifying areas in which savings could reasonably be made and management practices improved so that services were provided at the lowest possible cost. Her delegation had the highest regard for the Unit's work and took its recommendations very seriously.
3. The JIU report on organization and methods for official travel (A/37/357) stated that the United Nations and its affiliated bodies spent some \$60 million a year on travel, which amounted to 5 per cent of the total budget. While it was understandable that an international organization should spend a considerable sum on travel, the United Nations appeared to have been less than diligent in making cost-effective arrangements. Her delegation would be particularly interested to learn more about the terms of the current agreement between the United Nations and a travel agency, and about the possibility of negotiating discounts and using block-booking with airlines directly. There should certainly be more control over the duration of individual trips. The United States delegation had reservations about the idea of establishing an in-house travel agency: it was not certain that the Organization would save money or that the legal obstacles could readily be surmounted.
4. With regard to the JIU report on communications in the United Nations system (A/37/372), it should be recalled that communication was not an end in itself, but a means to make United Nations organizations more effective. Her delegation favoured appropriate improvements in the communications network, but only if they could be achieved within current budget levels or if it could be demonstrated that they would produce significant cost savings and management benefits. Rigorous cost-benefit analysis and planning should be carried out to ensure co-ordination and compatibility among all the organizations before any proposals were submitted to Member States. It was gratifying that the Secretary-General had taken a similar approach in his comments on the report (A/37/372/Add.1).
5. Her delegation agreed with JIU that the Economic Commission for Africa had a valuable role to play by providing a focal point for activities in the region. The United States supported the restructuring and decentralization of those activities, and the JIU recommendation (A/37/119) that there should be an investigation into possible new approaches to regional and subregional problems and the progress made

/...

(Ms. Housholder, United States)

in decentralization should, in particular, ensure that resources as well as responsibilities had been transferred from Headquarters, since the object of decentralization was not to duplicate Headquarters staff but to strengthen field operations. Her Government was opposed to the funding of the Multinational Programming and Operational Centres from the regular budget.

6. Concerning the implementation of previous recommendations of the Joint Inspection Unit (A/C.5/37/28), her delegation believed that those recommendations should not be lost sight of.

7. Mr. KRISTIANSEN (Denmark), speaking on behalf of the members of the European Economic Community, said that the delegations concerned held in high regard JIU's role in the administrative structure of the United Nations system, and trusted that the Committee would give serious consideration to its reports. The comments of the Secretary-General on those reports were encouraging.

8. The Unit fulfilled a real need within the United Nations system, yet there was one agency which had still not accepted the Unit's statute, which meant that that agency did not have the benefit of the Inspector's expert advice and the Unit's reports were not universally applicable. The Community thus urged the General Assembly to encourage that agency to accept the statute of the Joint Inspection Unit as soon as possible.

AGENDA ITEM 103: PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 1982-1983 (continued)

Administrative and financial implications of the draft resolution submitted by the Sixth Committee in document A/C.6/37/L.3 concerning agenda item 124 (A/C.5/37/33)

9. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions), presenting orally the report of the Advisory Committee, said that the draft resolution would decide that the United Nations Conference on Succession of States in respect of State Property, Archives and Debts would be held from 1 March to 8 April 1983 in Vienna. The Secretary-General's estimates had been presented on the basis of New York and Vienna as venues. The Austrian Government had agreed, under the terms of General Assembly resolution 31/140, to defray any additional costs involved if Vienna was chosen.

10. The Secretary-General was requesting an additional appropriation of \$25,500 in respect of travel and subsistence of representatives of liberation movements, in addition to which there were estimated costs of \$11,000 for the engagement of the International Law Commission's former Special Rapporteur on the topic of succession of States in respect of matters other than treaties as an expert consultant. It was not, however, yet clear whether that person would be available.

11. The Advisory Committee considered that that amount could be met from existing resources, should the need arise. It thus recommended approval of an additional appropriation of \$25,500 only. In accordance with standing practice, conference-

/...

(Mr. Mselle)

servicing costs would be reviewed separately in the context of a consolidated statement to be submitted towards the end of the thirty-seventh session of the General Assembly.

12. Mr. KELLER (United States of America) said that implementation of the draft resolution would result in conference-servicing costs in excess of \$3 million, including \$25,500 in respect of national liberation movements. While his delegation had accepted the consensus on the draft resolution in the Sixth Committee, it was opposed to the payment of travel and subsistence allowances for representatives of liberation movements, and to the provision of summary records, which would cost almost \$670,000. The United States was thus opposed on financial grounds to the holding of the Conference in the spring of 1983.

13. Mr. LADOR (Israel) said that his delegation had reservations concerning paragraph 2 (c) of the draft resolution.

14. The CHAIRMAN suggested that the Fifth Committee, in the light of the recommendation of the Advisory Committee, should inform the General Assembly that, should it adopt the draft resolution in document A/C.6/37/L.3, an additional appropriation of \$25,500 would be required under section 26 of the programme budget for the biennium 1982-1983. The related conference-servicing costs, which were estimated on a full-cost basis at \$3,067,500, would be considered in the context of the consolidated statement of total conference-servicing requirements to be submitted toward the end of the current session.

15. The delegation of the United States had requested that a vote should be taken.

16. The recommendation of the Advisory Committee for an additional appropriation of \$25,500 under section 26 for the biennium 1982-1983 was approved by 62 votes to 3, with 10 abstentions.

17. Mr. RALLIS (Greece) said that, had he been present during the voting, he would have voted in favour of the recommendation.

AGENDA ITEM 112: REPORT OF THE INTERNATIONAL CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION
(A/37/30; A/C.5/37/29)

18. Mr. AKWEI (Chairman of the International Civil Service Commission) said that the Commission had followed its usual practice of taking into account the relevant views of representatives of member organizations and of the staff before making recommendations or taking decisions. Certain developments had occurred in the grouping of staff associations which the Commission had under close review in order to ensure appropriate participation of the staff in its work.

19. With regard to pensionable remuneration and pension entitlements as elements of total remuneration, the Committee should note that, in accordance with the procedure for the automatic adjustment of pensionable remuneration for the Professional and higher categories, pensionable remuneration levels had increased

/...

(Mr. Akwei)

by approximately 7.1 per cent in October 1982 over the October 1981 level. The Commission had under consideration, in co-operation with the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Board, the development of a special index for pensioners. Phase I, namely modification of the pension system to make adjustments to the cost-of-living differential in countries where such a differential was applied and where tax rates were zero or lower than at the base, had been completed. As to phase II, the elaboration of the special index, it was the intention of the Commission to make appropriate recommendations to the General Assembly at its thirty-eighth session.

20. Having taken into account the divergent views of the executive heads and the different staff representatives concerning the age of retirement, the Commission had decided that it could not recommend a change, especially since the establishment of a clear rationale for a given retirement age required a comprehensive examination of the issues in the broader context of an overall retirement policy, such as was included in the Commission's 1983 work programme. Pending that examination, the Commission recommended that the Assembly should take no decision on the age of retirement at the current session.

21. A considerable part of the report was taken up with remuneration questions. As it showed, the margin between United Nations and United States federal civil service salaries had increased considerably since the period 1977-1978, when increases in remuneration received by United States federal civil service employees had begun to be consistently lower than increases in the consumer price index over the same period. The widening of the margin should not, however, be taken to mean that United Nations employees were receiving net real income increases; on the contrary, their net real income continued to decline, and the widening of the margin only showed that the losses in real income in the comparator civil service had been greater.

22. The Commission's latest documentation on the question of total compensation methodology reflected the differences pointed out at the thirty-sixth session between the United Nations and the comparator civil service where average length of service and mandatory age of separation were concerned. Recent changes in benefit provisions applicable to both sides had also been taken into account. The ICSC secretariat had used United States as well as United Nations population profiles in quantifying pension benefits wherever applicable and had argued that the application of the mandatory age of separation of 60 years in the United Nations could not be taken into account in quantifying pension benefits but nevertheless was a factor which should not be overlooked when reviewing real total compensation. The Commission, after considering the information provided by the secretariat, had stated that if the United Nations mandatory retirement age was considered an advantage to United Nations staff, an upward adjustment to the United Nations remuneration package must be made; if, on the other hand, the mandatory retirement age was considered a disadvantage to the staff, several possible alternatives could be considered to account for the advantage enjoyed by United States federal civil service employees. Unable to agree on whether it would be advantageous to extend the mandatory retirement age in the United Nations beyond 60, the members of the

/...

(Mr. Akwei)

Commission had instructed the secretariat to carry out further research and report on the matter at the following session of the Commission.

23. During its discussion of the determination of remuneration of the Professional and higher categories, the Commission had reaffirmed that the Noblemaire principle continued to be valid, and that the United States was still the proper comparator. Differing views on the means of applying the Noblemaire principle had been expressed (paras. 87-106 of the report). As the Commission had been unable to reach agreement on the matter, or on other issues concerning the basis for determining salaries, such as the level of the margin between United Nations and comparator civil service salaries, and the relationship between salaries and levels of responsibility, further consideration of those subjects had been deferred.

24. Because of the difference in views, the Commission was unable, despite ACC's proposal for a 5 per cent increase in net base salary and the staff's request for a 10 per cent increase, to recommend to the General Assembly an appropriate level for Professional salaries. That did not mean that the Commission wished no decision to be taken. Some of its members believed that no increase was justified, but the majority favoured an increase, with some members supporting an increase based on the existing application of the Noblemaire principle, some favouring an increase of 3 per cent, some feeling that a case could be made for more than 5 per cent, and others arguing for the 5 per cent recommended by ACC. It had been agreed to transmit all their views to the General Assembly for consideration and a decision.

25. The Commission had already acted within the limitations of its authority on the subject of supplementary payments to international civil servants, and reiterated the recommendation it had made to the Assembly in earlier reports.

26. The Commission had completed its comprehensive review of the purposes and operation of the post adjustment system (paras. 125-138 of the report). The revised methodology for cost-of-living measurements was already being applied in surveys in Montreal, New York, Paris, Rome, Vienna and Washington, DC, and would be implemented in Geneva in 1983. It would be applied world-wide over the coming three years, and the Commission would monitor the results on a continuing basis. Considerable progress was being made in the computerization of the work of the Cost-of-living Division, which would contribute greatly to the more efficient operation of the system. The Commission intended to deal with the treatment of housing costs in the post adjustment at its spring 1983 session. It would shortly be producing a booklet on the post adjustment system for the staff at large, and a technical manual for administrators. Interested delegations would be provided with copies of the booklet as soon as it was issued.

27. The general methodology for surveys of best prevailing conditions of employment for the General Service and related categories was dealt with in chapter V and annex II of the report. The Commission had approved that methodology, together with a system of periodic adjustments for updating salary levels between major surveys.

/...

(Mr. Akwei)

28. The Commission had decided that the children's allowance should remain a social benefit available to all staff, but that the method of calculation should be different for each category. For the General Service, the allowance should be a flat rate established on a duty-station-by-duty-station basis; the amount should be uniform except where local practice required differentiation; and a floor value for the allowance should be set in relation to the mid-point of the local salary scale. Having analysed data on tax abatements and social security benefits at the seven headquarters duty stations, which showed an average of \$728 per child, the Commission had decided to recommend an increase in the children's allowance for the Professional category from \$450 to \$700 per child, effective as from 1 January 1983, with a currency floor based on the average exchange rate for the 12 months ended 30 June 1982 at all duty stations.

29. With regard to the spouse allowance, the Commission had decided to maintain the current method of determining dependency through dual rates of staff assessment for the Professional category. For staff in the General Service and related categories, the amount of the allowance should continue to be governed by local practice, subject to certain technical requirements.

30. The Commission had reviewed the language allowance and decided to endorse it as currently established and administered, while in the case of the non-residents' allowance for General Service staff, it had reaffirmed the principle that staff in the General Service category should be locally recruited in all but exceptional circumstances. The Commission would be examining the non-residents' allowance further in 1983.

31. After studying the differences in remuneration between men and women in Geneva, the Commission had decided to apply a correction factor to salaries for women in Geneva, with effect from March 1980. Partly as a result of that adjustment, and partly owing to the cost-of-living adjustment procedure, salary scales for General Service staff in Geneva recruited after 1 January 1978 had almost completely caught up with those applicable to staff employed before that date.

32. The Commission planned to report on the question of staff assessment for the General Service category in 1983. It would also be reviewing the level of the education grant in 1983, but had meanwhile concluded that the education grant should remain solely an expatriate benefit. To meet the problem of staff mobility between duty stations, however, it recommended that the application of the grant to nationals returning to their home country should be allowed for the balance of the school year after return from expatriate service.

33. The Commission had started a comprehensive review of conditions of service in the field, the details of which were provided in chapter VII of its report. It had decided to increase the assignment allowance and the installation grant, but to defer consideration of any innovations until it had considered the results of a comprehensive review of the field conditions of other organizations and services.

/...

(Mr. Akwei)

34. Statistics from reporting organizations indicated that the Master Standard had been applied to about 15 per cent of all the posts in the system. That rate of progress, although slower than expected, could be considered satisfactory. Difficulties in interpretation were being resolved in consultations between CCAQ and the ICSC secretariat. The rate of implementation could be expected to increase, since the new standards enjoyed the broad support of the organizations and the staff alike. The Commission had promulgated Tier II grading standards for technical co-operation administrators and electronic data processing specialists. Standards would be developed for other fields of work in 1983. The Commission secretariat had conducted four training workshops on the use of the Master Standard.

35. The Commission had established a seven grade structure for the classification of General Service posts in the three organizations in New York, and had promulgated corresponding classification standards under article 13 of its statute. In that connection, he paid tribute to the work done by the United Nations/UNDP/UNICEF Co-ordination Committee, whose proposals the Commission had been able to accept in full. The classification standards promulgated had been extensively tested, and the Commission had reached the conclusion that the standard would provide a solid basis for the grading of General Service posts. Accordingly, it had requested the organizations concerned to ensure the quality of the standards by developing common benchmark jobs. It had also requested the Co-ordination Committee to develop standards for categories of work not yet covered, so that the work could be completed in 1983.

36. Finally, the Commission had taken up a new item under article 14 of its statute: human resources planning. Its discussions on the subject were described in chapter IX of its report. It was noteworthy that both the organizations and the staff representatives had agreed that human resources planning met a definite need. The Commission had decided to submit a secretariat study on human resources planning to the organizations and staff representatives for further analysis, and had requested CCAQ to provide a synopsis of existing practices and mechanisms within individual organizations. Extensive consideration was expected to be given to the topic in the forthcoming year.

AGENDA ITEM 111: PERSONNEL QUESTIONS (continued) (A/36/407 and Add.1, A/36/432 and Add.1 and Add.2, A/37/143, A/37/378 and Add.1, A/37/469 and Add.1, A/37/528 and Add.1, A/C.5/37/5, A/C.5/37/6 and Corr.1, A/C.5/37/24 and 26)

- (a) COMPOSITION OF THE SECRETARIAT: REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL
- (b) RESPECT FOR THE PRIVILEGES AND IMMUNITIES OF OFFICIALS OF THE UNITED NATIONS AND THE SPECIALIZED AGENCIES AND RELATED ORGANIZATIONS: REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL
- (c) OTHER PERSONNEL QUESTIONS

37. Mr. AKWEI (Chairman of the International Civil Service Commission), introducing the study on the concept of career, types of appointment, career development and

/...

(Mr. Akwei)

related questions, contained in annex I to the annual report of the International Civil Service Commission (A/37/30), said that, in studying the subject, ICSC had taken into account General Assembly resolution 35/210, the views of the Joint Inspection Unit, the position of the organizations as formulated by the Consultative Committee on Administrative Questions and the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination, the position of the Federation of International Civil Servants Associations, the views expressed by delegations in the Fifth Committee, and a number of related studies, some of which had preceded the establishment of the Commission. He was pleased to be able to report that agreement had been reached on many of the highly complex issues which the Commission had studied.

38. The study looked at the concepts of career, types of appointment and career development in the context of integrated human resources management and identified their interaction with such related questions as recruitment, job classification, promotion policy and training. As stated in paragraph 3 of the study, the principles set forth therein were generally valid for both Professional and General Service staff, although their application might vary according to a staff member's functions.

39. ICSC wished to emphasize that the efficient management of human resources in the international civil service required a comprehensive approach in which elements of personnel policy were applied not in isolation but rather within the broader framework of an integrated system. In developing recommendations for such an integrated system, the Commission had, of necessity, to deal with one particular area of personnel policy at a time and gradually broaden its scope as it proceeded with the various stages of its work programme. The system as such, however, could only be considered completed when the areas of human resources planning, recruitment policy and promotion policy had been fully examined. At that time, the recommendations previously made, and those contained in the study before the Committee, would gain additional relevance as they were reinforced and complemented by further recommendations.

40. The Commission was pleased to note the positive reactions in all quarters to the introduction of human resources planning, which was step 10 of its work programme. The fundamental principles for such a system were set out in the Charter and the Staff Regulations of the United Nations and in the corresponding instruments of the other organizations. Those principles needed to be translated into a distinct recruitment policy, common job classification standards, a common pay policy and salary system, a promotion policy, a contractual policy, a training policy, a budgetary planning system linked to job classification and, above all, a human resources planning system to organize the interrelationships between the areas and to transform those policies into action.

41. In that context, the Commission had developed a detailed set of policy considerations and recommendations stressing the need to build on the framework it had already established, especially in the area of job classification. That was why the Commission had concluded that the job classification standards already

/...

(Mr. Akwei)

accepted as the basis for staff management and pay policy in the common system were not compatible with the concept of linked grades. The Commission had suggested concrete measures in the areas of recruitment and promotion policy to resolve the managerial problems that the advocates of a linked-grades approach had adduced in defence of their position.

42. The Commission was heartened by the general agreement which had evolved with respect to the use of the Common Classification of Occupational Groups it had approved in 1979, which was a very important career development tool.

43. The Commission recommended that the organizations should, to the extent possible, prepare forecasts of their human resources requirements and reassess their needs for permanent and fixed-term staff on an ongoing basis, taking into account, inter alia, the nature of the functions to be performed and whether they were continuing or non-continuing. That would preclude the use of a predetermined ratio reflecting circumstances that might no longer be valid and the current practice in some organizations of employing staff for lengthy periods without providing an element of job security. Five years would appear to be a reasonable time in which to decide whether a staff member should be permanently retained. The Commission therefore recommended that, upon completion of five years of service, a fixed-term employee should be considered for a career appointment. That recommendation did not by any means restrict the flexibility of organizations to determine the ratio of permanent to fixed-term staff according to the particular needs of their programmes. If the ratio truly reflected the operational realities, the phenomenon of long-term staff on short-term contracts should disappear.

44. Although career and fixed-term appointments constituted the two broad divisions of types of appointment in the common system, the nomenclature used by the various organizations differed considerably. Once the Commission's recommendations on types of appointment were accepted by the common system, it should be possible to develop a common terminology.

45. On the subject of secondments by Governments, the Commission stressed the need to safeguard the legitimate interests of both the seconding Government and the staff member before permanent appointments were offered.

46. With regard to recruitment, he said that the quality of the recruitment process determined to a large extent the quality of the organization. Every recruitment decision implied a major commitment of funds, with the common staff costs of a mid-level two-year fixed-term Professional appointment amounting to some \$125,000. The Commission had made many recommendations in the past to improve the recruitment process, and a full examination of all major aspects of recruitment policy was scheduled for 1983. While the lack of resources and funds might be a serious constraint for some organizations, a well-equipped recruitment programme with the characteristics described in paragraph 41 of the study would go a long way to producing a flow of candidates from all Member States who met the highest standards. The Commission therefore recommended that organizations should allocate sufficient resources to their recruitment programmes.

/...

(Mr. Akwei)

47. The Commission was in complete agreement with the concept of recruiting on the basis of objective criteria. It concurred in the views of ACC (A/37/528/Add.1, paras. 15-17) to the effect that, although written examinations might be useful, the number of instances in which they would be applicable was perhaps smaller than suggested. Thus, the recommendations of JIU concerning competitive examinations deserved careful review by the Commission in the light of the experience gained in the United Nations. Bearing in mind the Charter's emphasis on efficiency, competence and integrity, the Commission therefore had agreed to undertake an evaluation of competitive examinations and other elements of recruitment policy.

48. All the Commission's recommendations required a fully integrated approach to personnel policy issues and it was the intention of the Commission, as required by its statute, to lead the common system in that direction. The Chairman of JIU had urged the Fifth Committee to take action rather than merely note the broad range of general agreement on basic issues. As far as action affecting the common system was concerned, it would be well for the Fifth Committee to keep closely to the programme of 17 steps envisaged by ICSC, on which agreement had been reached by all concerned.

49. Mr. SHAHANKARI (Jordan) noted with satisfaction the improvements which had been made during the past year in personnel policy and administration. His delegation welcomed in particular the progress achieved with respect to the recruitment of candidates from unrepresented and under-represented States. There was a need, however, to increase opportunities for nationals of developing countries to serve in the Secretariat in senior and policy-making posts. His delegation believed that staff in departments financed from extrabudgetary resources should not be subject to geographical distribution.

50. His delegation was pleased by the positive trend with respect to the recruitment of women. Of symbolic importance had been the appointment of a distinguished woman as Assistant Secretary-General for Personnel Services.

51. On the subject of the mandatory age of retirement, his delegation considered that, the need to recruit young staff members notwithstanding, the United Nations should have the benefit of the extensive experience of those who were approaching the age of retirement. It should also be borne in mind that when the current age of retirement had been set average life expectancy had been much lower. The retirement age should therefore be increased proportionately to reflect the increase in life expectancy, without prejudice to those staff members who wished to retire at age 60. Increasing the age of retirement would also help to make the Pension Fund solvent.

52. Turning to the report of the staff unions and associations of the United Nations Secretariat (A/C.5/37/24), he noted that paragraph 10 contained a reference to the "West Bank" in connection with countries in which United Nations staff members had been arrested. Needless to say, the West Bank was not, and had never been, a country. As everyone was aware, the West Bank was an occupied Arab territory under the control of the military forces of Israel. Accordingly, Israel was the party responsible for all the violations perpetrated against civilians there.

/...

53. Miss CASTILLO (Dominican Republic) said that, in the recruitment of staff, due regard must be paid to regional distribution so as to put an end to the situation in which some countries had an excessive number of their nationals in the Secretariat, while others were unrepresented or, like her country, grossly under-represented. There were only 16 nationals of the Dominican Republic in the United Nations, although it was a founding Member of the Organization. It was to be hoped that the Secretariat's medium-term recruitment plan would bring about a fair regional distribution of posts in the Secretariat and improve the representation of the developing countries.

54. Her delegation concurred in the recommendations of the Joint Inspection Unit concerning human resources planning and career development.

55. Women comprised the majority of the world's population and there was an abundance of professional and other women throughout the world who could serve the United Nations. It was therefore unfair to set only 25 per cent as the target for the proportion of women in the Secretariat.

56. The United Nations had six official languages and there was no justification for continuing the monopoly of one of those languages in administering examinations for personnel purposes; candidates should be allowed to choose from among the six official languages. Consideration should be given to increasing the age of retirement to 65 or 70, or to eliminating the mandatory age of retirement altogether; efficiency was not always synonymous with youth. Her delegation would favour the establishment of a United Nations travel agency if substantial savings would result, as was stated by JIU.

57. She was not certain that she understood the purpose of the amendment to staff rule 104.3 as described in document A/C.5/37/6. If there was a break in the service of a staff member, her delegation did not consider it appropriate to take periods of prior service into account in determining seniority in grade.

The meeting rose at 12.35 p.m.