



SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 30th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. KUYAMA (Japan)

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

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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. Mr. ZAKHAROV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that his delegation had often stressed the role that JIU could and should play in increasing the efficiency of the United Nations and in limiting the growth of the budget by increasing staff productivity, making optimum use of internal resources, and instilling order in the system of salaries, pension benefits and other allowances for the staff of international organizations. It accordingly favoured an increase in the part to be played by JIU in the formulation of proposals on administrative, financial and personnel questions.
2. The work of the Unit over the past year generally deserved commendation and support. The inspectors had tackled a variety of subjects; his delegation felt that the reports on the use of consultants and experts in the United Nations, the organization and methods for official travel, secretariat organization and procedures for preparation of United Nations special conferences and the application of the principle of equitable geographical distribution of the staff of the United Nations Secretariat could be of significant help in promoting efficiency and the frugal use of resources.
3. In the past, the Unit had tended to concentrate on individual problems of little importance for the Organization as a whole. His delegation still wished that the Unit would show more initiative in dealing with the Organization's truly pressing problems, such as curtailing the growth of the regular budget, developing regulations on the effective use of human resources, increasing productivity, tightening controls on the adoption of programmes and the expenditure of resources by intergovernmental bodies, increasing the geographical diversification of and return on investments of the Joint Staff Pension Fund, and modifying the United Nations pension system so as to prevent an increase in the financial burden on Member States. He had learned with satisfaction of the Unit's intention to evaluate its own work. In so doing, the Unit should go beyond the bounds of its normal reporting procedure and analyse the implementation of those of its recommendations that had been adopted by governing bodies.
4. The report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of JIU recommendations (A/C.5/37/28), instead of providing a comprehensive analysis of the reasons for the Secretariat's failure to comply with specific recommendations by the Unit, as requested by the General Assembly, confined itself to repeating information that had been presented before. It did, admittedly, hint at non-compliance with individual recommendations, but it employed such general terms that Member States could form no clear idea of the real state of affairs. Such an approach to a question as important as the implementation of JIU recommendations was entirely unacceptable to his delegation: it did nothing to enhance the Unit's authority, and it neutralized the large amount of useful work that the inspectors had done.

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(Mr. Zakharov, USSR)

5. His delegation wished that the Unit would include in its work programme, together with the list of reports to be prepared, a brief evaluation of their topicality, usefulness and priority.

6. The reports of JIU submitted to the Fifth Committee for consideration revealed some improvement in the Unit's work. He wished, nevertheless, to stress that by no means all the Unit's recommendations were conducive to the establishment of a truly effective and universal Organization.

7. Mr. OREBI (Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations), replying to a question put by the Japanese representative at an earlier meeting, said that the reports of the Joint Inspection Unit that were of relevance to FAO were considered by FAO's Programme Committee, then by its Finance Committee, and subsequently by both Committees jointly; the recommendations formulated at the joint meeting were submitted to the Council - the governing body of FAO - for legislative action. The Council would be meeting from 22 November to 3 December 1982, and the following JIU reports were on its agenda: Control and limitation of documentation in the United Nations system (A/36/167), Status of internal evaluation in the organizations of the United Nations system (A/36/181), Second report on evaluation in the organizations of United Nations system (A/36/182), Methods of determining staff requirements (A/36/108), Management services in the United Nations system (A/36/296), and application by the United Nations system of the Mar del Plata Action Plan on water development and administration. The Council would also have before it, for information, the Unit's work programme. Following action by the Council, the Unit's recommendations would be implemented within FAO as the Council determined.

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

Programme budget performance for the biennium 1982-1983: section 13 (Economic Commission for Africa) (A/37/7/Add.7; A/C.5/37/13)

8. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that, in its eighth report (A/37/7/Add.7), the Advisory Committee was recommending an additional appropriation of \$483,100 under section 13 of the programme budget for 1982-1983. He reminded members that the Advisory Committee had previously recommended an additional amount of \$84,400, in the context of the Secretary-General's revised estimates arising out of decisions and resolutions of the Economic and Social Council, to cover the costs of a fifth consultative technical meeting to be held in 1983 in connection with the Transport and Communications Decade in Africa.

9. The Advisory Committee had been informed that the preparations for the second phase of the Decade were now expected to cost \$1,690,000, or slightly more than the initial draft budget (A/36/342, para. 44 and annex II) had indicated. The Committee had been informed that UNDP would provide \$1 million of that sum rather than \$600,000 as stated in the Secretary-General's report (A/C.5/37/13, para. 6). Arrangements had been made for the balance of \$147,600, which was not covered by

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(Mr. Mselle)

the UNDP contribution or the contribution from the regular budget, to be met from bilateral sources.

10. The amount now recommended by the Advisory Committee was in addition to the sums of \$250,600 and \$145,000 already approved under the 1980-1981 and 1982-1983 programme budgets.

11. The CHAIRMAN announced that the United States delegation had requested a vote on the Advisory Committee's recommendation.

12. Mr. KELLER (United States of America), speaking in explanation of vote before the vote, said that it had become plain from the Fifth Committee's discussions that the budget was becoming a burden to most Member States. Refraining from making additional appropriations in the middle of a budget cycle was one way of reducing that burden.

13. Mr. ZINIEL (Ghana) expressed his gratitude to those Governments that had indicated a willingness to finance the difference between the estimated total cost of preparatory activities for the second phase of the Transport and Communications Decade in Africa and the contributions to be paid from the regular budget and by UNDP. In view of the importance of the Decade to the African continent, he would have been happier had the Advisory Committee given its approval to the total amount requested by the Secretary-General. He had, indeed, been tempted to ask for the reinstatement of the Secretary-General's proposals, but had decided not to out of respect for the Advisory Committee. He would vote in favour of the Advisory Committee's recommendation as presented in paragraph 11 of its report, and hoped that other delegations would do likewise, in conformity with their declared policy of supporting the opinions of the Advisory Committee.

14. The recommendation of the Advisory Committee for an additional appropriation of \$483,100 under section 13 for the biennium 1982-1983 was approved by 69 votes to 1, with 10 abstentions.

15. Mr. ZAKHAROV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics), speaking in explanation of vote after the vote, said that his delegation fully supported ECA's preparations for the second phase of the Transport and Communications Decade in Africa, but opposed the introduction of additional expenditure items during the budget cycle. It should have been possible to obtain the necessary resources through redeployment, the elimination of duplication and the termination of obsolete and marginally useful activities. His delegation had therefore abstained.

16. Mr. MURRAY (United Kingdom) said that his delegation had voted for the Advisory Committee's recommendation in conformity with its traditional policy of supporting the Advisory Committee. It had every confidence in the Advisory Committee's judgement, but remained opposed to the voting of appropriations other than those already provided for in the programme budget. His delegation's support of the Advisory Committee's recommendation therefore indicated only the recognition that resources would be required, not that his delegation supported additional

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(Mr. Murray, United Kingdom)

appropriations, nor that it agreed with the view that the Transport and Communications Decade in Africa deserved higher priority than some other programmes. His delegation still expected the funds just approved to be found through the redeployment of existing resources in the Secretariat. The Secretary-General suggested that resources must be brought into line with objectives (A/37/296, para. 19); his delegation would much prefer to see objectives brought into line with resources.

17. In order to save time, he would refrain from making a similar statement on each occasion the Fifth Committee took action on a request for additional appropriations, but his delegation's attitude should be understood to be the same.

18. Mr. TAKASU (Japan) said that his delegation welcomed the preparatory activities for the second phase of the Transport Decade, which his Government was doing its utmost to support. Although normally in agreement with the Advisory Committee, his delegation felt that in the present case the Advisory Committee's recommendation was not fully in conformity with the requirements of General Assembly resolution 36/177, paragraph 13.

19. Mr. TUNSALA (Zaire) said that since improved transport and communications were the key to economic development on the African continent, his delegation had had no choice but to vote in favour of the Advisory Committee's recommendation.

20. Mr. GEBRU (Ethiopia) said that his delegation had voted for the Advisory Committee's recommendation out of the belief that the activities concerned would contribute to the implementation of the General Assembly's resolution proclaiming the Transport and Communications Decade in Africa.

21. Mr. NKOUNKOV (Congo) said that his delegation had supported the Advisory Committee's recommendation in view of the importance of the consultative technical meetings for all African countries.

22. Mr. BANGURA (Sierra Leone) and Mr. TEKAIA (Tunisia) said that, had their delegations been present, they would have voted in favour of the Advisory Committee's recommendation.

AGENDA ITEM 105: FINANCIAL EMERGENCY OF THE UNITED NATIONS (continued)  
(A/C.5/37/15 and Corr.1, A/C.5/37/30; A/C.5/37/L.22\*)

(a) REPORT OF THE NEGOTIATING COMMITTEE ON THE FINANCIAL EMERGENCY OF THE UNITED NATIONS

(b) REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

23. Mr. DUQUE (Secretary of the Committee) said that the draft resolution contained in document A/C.5/37/L.22 had had to be reissued for technical reasons. The text of the draft resolution remained unchanged but the list of sponsors should read: Australia, Denmark, Egypt, Finland, Ghana, Ireland, Jamaica, Nigeria, Norway, Pakistan, Philippines, Sierra Leone and Sweden.

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24. Mr. AMNEUS (Sweden) paid a tribute to the representative of Pakistan, Mr. Kemal, the Vice-Chairman of the Negotiating Committee on the Financial Emergency of the United Nations, for his untiring efforts to find a solution to the financial problems of the Organization. His dedication, energy, imagination and courage had played a critical role in alleviating the problem and keeping the sad issue alive in the Fifth Committee in a constructive manner.

25. During the consultations which had led to the submission of the draft resolution, his delegation had maintained that information at the beginning of each year on the expected pattern of payments could facilitate financial planning by the Secretary-General. Such planning was currently difficult since some Member States were not in a position to inform the Secretary-General exactly when their contributions would be paid. In that connection, his delegation had also maintained that the better informed the Secretary-General was regarding the reasons for delayed payments, the better equipped he would be to suggest measures aimed at improving the situation. Those ideas were reflected in the draft resolution in paragraphs 5 and 7 (a).

26. The draft resolution contained several provisions which, though modest in scope, could help in the long run to improve the financial position of the Organization.

27. He announced that Iceland and Zaire had asked to be included in the list of sponsors of the draft resolution.

28. Mr. GARRIDO (Philippines) said that his Government had paid a major part of the arrears for the Philippines indicated in annex I to the Secretary-General's report on the financial emergency (A/C.5/37/15).

29. Mr. PEDERSEN (Canada) said that his delegation had informed the sponsors of the draft resolution of its desire to join in co-sponsoring the draft resolution and it was his understanding that their agreement had been obtained. He wished that fact to be reflected in the record.

30. Mr. M'TESA (Zambia) said that his country, too, had paid a major portion of its contribution and his Government had arranged for the remainder to be paid very shortly.

31. The CHAIRMAN said that the Soviet delegation had requested a vote on the draft resolution.

32. Draft resolution A/C.5/37/L.22\* was adopted by 68 votes to none, with 17 abstentions.

33. Mr. FONTAINE ORTIZ (Cuba) said that his delegation was grateful for the efforts of the sponsors to find a solution to the problem and could support virtually all the measures proposed in the draft resolution. It regretted, however, that the draft resolution, like the previous resolutions on the financial

(Mr. Fontaine Ortiz, Cuba)

emergency referred to in the second preambular paragraph, failed to mention the fundamental causes for the emergency and for that reason it had abstained in the voting.

34. Miss ZONICLE (Bahamas) observed that the central provision of the draft resolution was paragraph 1, concerning a lasting solution to the Organization's financial problems. However, no means were provided for elsewhere in the draft resolution for the implementation of that paragraph. As had become apparent in the Negotiating Committee, further partial measures would be inadequate, and her delegation therefore had felt constrained to abstain in the voting.

35. Mr. GRODSKY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that his delegation would support a proposal to end the financial difficulties of the Organization, provided that it was in strict compliance with the provisions of the Charter. Unfortunately, the draft resolution did not refer to the real reasons for those difficulties. At the same time, it contained a number of references to previous resolutions which contained erroneous judgements as to the real reasons for the emergency and against which his delegation had voted at preceding sessions. The draft resolution also contained an appeal to Member States to pay their contributions in full. His delegation could not agree to such a provision as long as the United Nations budget continued to include expenditures relating to activities that were contrary to the Charter and States were denied the possibility of paying contributions in their national currencies. His delegation had therefore abstained in the vote.

36. Mr. M'TESA (Zambia) said that his delegation had voted in favour of the draft resolution because it agreed with its general approach. His Government was likely to have difficulties with paragraph 3 because of the difference between his country's fiscal year and that of the United Nations.

37. Mr. MAYCOCK (Barbados), Mr. BARTLETT (Jamaica), Mr. RUSSO (Peru), Mr. ABOLY (Ivory Coast), Mr. HADID (Algeria), and Mr. MOUNGUEN (United Republic of Cameroon) said that, had their delegations been present during the voting, they would have voted in favour of the draft resolution.

AGENDA ITEM 111: PERSONNEL QUESTIONS (continued) (A/36/407 and Add.1, A/36/432 and Add.1 and Add.2, A/37/30 (annex I), 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, A/C.5/37/26 and A/C.5/37/34)

- (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

38. Miss FRANKLIN (Suriname) said that her delegation was conscious of the difficulties faced by the Secretary-General in administering the Secretariat and

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(Miss Franklin, Suriname)

would support every measure designed to facilitate his task. It noted with satisfaction the appointment of Miss Doss as Assistant Secretary-General for Personnel Services.

39. She congratulated the Secretariat for the tangible results achieved in filling 43.2 per cent of the vacancies arising in the Professional category with nationals of unrepresented and under-represented Member States and in reducing the number of unrepresented or under-represented countries. It was to be hoped that the medium-term recruitment plan would achieve its goals with respect to the recruitment of nationals of unrepresented and under-represented States and women.

40. Notwithstanding the efforts made by the Secretariat, her country remained unrepresented. It was disappointing that none of the candidates recommended for immediate recruitment as a result of the competitive examinations held recently was of Surinamese nationality. High priority should therefore be given to rectifying that situation in the medium-term recruitment plan and, in that connection, her Government would welcome the sending of a publicity and recruitment mission to Suriname, if possible before the end of the year.

41. She noted that for many important vacancies there were no job descriptions available. It sometimes seemed that vacancies were not announced until a privileged candidate had been found, and only then was a job description drawn up, tailored to the qualifications of that candidate. Clearly, that practice should cease and job descriptions should be made available within one week of the announcement of a vacancy, in order to promote a fair geographical distribution of posts within the Secretariat. Fair treatment should be accorded to all candidates for a post. Interviews should be conducted by a panel of interviewers so as to ensure impartiality and contribute to a better understanding of the recruitment process.

42. Her delegation was concerned over the arrest and detention of United Nations staff members. The personal attention of the Secretary-General to such matters was essential and her delegation would give its full support to all efforts by him to defend and protect international civil servants. Her delegation looked forward to the Secretary-General's report on respect for the privileges and immunities of international officials.

43. The current international economic crisis affected not only the members of the Secretariat but also Member States. Mutual understanding between the two parties was therefore essential.

44. Mr. RICHTER (German Democratic Republic) said that, nine years after becoming a Member of the United Nations, his country was still grossly under-represented. It was not, therefore, encouraged by general references by the Assistant Secretary-General for Personnel Services to the progress which had been made in carrying out the policies laid down in resolutions 33/143 and 35/210. There had been, in

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(Mr. Richter, German  
Democratic Republic)

fact, little progress as far as the socialist countries in general, and his country in particular, were concerned. Indeed, "progress" hardly seemed an apt word to describe the minute reduction in the number of under-represented States, from 26 to 24.

45. His delegation was, of course, aware that the Secretary-General was seeking measures to rectify the situation. It welcomed, in particular, his proposal to eliminate under-representation by means of a medium-term recruitment plan covering the period 1983-1985. The visit to his country by the Chief of the Division of Recruitment to interview candidates for posts in the Secretariat was a sign of goodwill, even if it had not resulted in a single appointment so far. Serious efforts must be made by the Office of Personnel Services to recruit candidates from his country, and his country's Government and Permanent Mission to the United Nations had demonstrated their willingness to co-operate in bringing about an improvement in the situation.

46. His delegation noted with satisfaction the view expressed by the Secretary-General to the effect that the principle of securing the highest standards of efficiency, competence and integrity was not only fully compatible with the need for the broadest possible geographical representation but was also inseparable from that need. However, that view seemed to have been contradicted by the Assistant Secretary-General for Personnel Services when she had stated at the 23rd meeting that it would unduly restrict the flexibility required by the Secretary-General in the exercise of his responsibilities, if the principle of equitable geographical distribution were to be rigidly applied to each and every entity of the Secretariat. His delegation had repeatedly emphasized the necessity of considering Article 101 of the Charter in its totality, including the requirement of recruiting staff on as wide a geographical basis as possible. It therefore resolutely opposed one-sided interpretations of the relevant Charter provisions and resolution 35/210. It was concerned that heads of departments and offices who had demonstrated their negative attitude towards the observance of the principle of equitable geographical distribution might interpret such statements by the Assistant Secretary-General as support for their views.

47. Resolution 35/210 stipulated that the proportion of staff working on the basis of fixed-term contracts was to be increased, and the studies carried out by the Joint Inspection Unit had confirmed the correctness of that approach. His delegation, of course, favoured the existence of a core of career staff but considered that fixed-term contracts had several important advantages. First, the constantly changing tasks of the Organization could best be carried out by specialists on fixed-term contracts. By recruiting staff on fixed-term contracts, the United Nations could take advantage of the experience gained in specific fields of activity by the nationals of countries with different political, economic and social systems and at different levels of development. Second, fixed-term contracts would ensure that new talent was continuously brought into the Organization. Third, fixed-term contracts would increase flexibility and facilitate the achievement of a more equitable geographical distribution.

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(Mr. Richter, German  
Democratic Republic)

48. He noted with satisfaction the progress made in increasing the proportion of women in the United Nations system. However, the relevant reports gave the impression that an important requirement of resolution 35/210, namely that the increase in the proportion of women in the Secretariat should be in accordance with the principle of equitable geographical distribution, was being overlooked. Failure to observe that provision could further increase the over-representation of certain countries, particularly the host countries.

49. With regard to the access of staff to the Fifth Committee, his delegation had growing doubts, following the statements made by a representative of the United Nations Secretariat staff at the 26th meeting and by the designated representative of FICSA at the 29th meeting, as to the usefulness or even the necessity of hearing oral explanations from staff representatives. His delegation opposed any efforts to turn the Fifth Committee into a bargaining forum for the demands of various staff associations. It wondered, in fact, whether anyone could claim to speak on behalf of a majority of the staff of the Secretariat. In considering the question of staff access, Members should be guided by the provisions of the Charter, under which the Secretary-General was the chief administrative officer of the Secretariat. Accordingly, the staff should consult with the Secretary-General and not with the Fifth Committee. The procedure provided for under resolution 35/213, which had not enjoyed unanimous support, was perhaps too far-reaching.

50. His delegation saw no need for the Committee to adopt a lengthy omnibus resolution on personnel questions at the current session. Resolution 35/210, which continued to be the basic document, should be reaffirmed and the Secretary-General requested to implement it in its entirety by 1985.

51. Mr. ENODIEN (Nigeria) said that his delegation noted that the Secretariat was tackling the problems of equitable geographical distribution, the employment of women and the representation of developing countries in senior posts. Although Nigeria welcomed the competitive method of selection for filling P-1 and P-2 posts, it was rather sceptical about its effectiveness. Only some 7.4 per cent of candidates had passed a recent United Nations examination - a surprising low pass rate. Moreover, there had been a recruitment drive in only one African country, and only one African country had submitted candidates.

52. It was surprising to note that South Africa had been classified as an under-represented State. The list of staff of the United Nations Secretariat (A/C.5/37/L.2) revealed that South African nationals occupied some of the most senior positions in the Secretariat, including that of Director and Chief Editor of the Editorial and Official Records Division, a most influential position.

53. While the proportion of female employees in the Secretariat had increased, it still fell short of the target of 25 per cent established by the General Assembly. The measures being considered to increase that percentage, such as the introduction of part-time employment and recruitment missions to selected countries, did not seem to be adequate. The root cause of the problem was surely the inadequate

(Mr. Enodien, Nigeria)

advertising of the positions available. While his delegation had no serious objection to the introduction of part-time employment, it might compound the difficulties of promoting equitable geographical distribution, since such employment would be limited to women residing in the vicinity of the organization in question. Where at all possible, the spouses of United Nations employees should be considered for appointment.

54. The key to improving geographical distribution in the Secretariat, as well as to employing more women, lay in concerted efforts by all departments of the Secretariat, supported by Member States. Unfortunately, no precise indication had been given of the role that Member States could play.

55. It was important to consider the financial implications of proposals relating to appointments, career development and staff welfare, in addition to demonstrating their feasibility. For example, the ultimate objective of the proposed child-care facilities, namely to attract more female employees, should be carefully evaluated. In that regard, it might be desirable to provide information on the desirable age range of women candidates, the normal place of abode of their husbands and the ages of their children.

56. Personnel policy required constant review, and in that regard his delegation was ready to support all reasonable measures aimed at providing adequate incentives and welfare provisions for the staff of the United Nations.

57. Nigeria noted with dismay the long list of United Nations staff members who had allegedly been arrested and detained or who were missing. Any solution to the problem required the concerted efforts of Member States and his delegation appealed to the Member States concerned to take urgent action to secure the release of the staff affected. The safety and the protection of the staff were essential to the smooth functioning of the Organization.

58. His delegation attached great importance to the work of the Panel to Investigate Allegations of Discriminatory Treatment in the United Nations Secretariat since it was totally committed to the elimination of all forms of discrimination. The Panel should be provided with administrative and secretarial support and other facilities to enable it to function effectively. The Secretary-General should confer on it a quasi-judicial status in order to ensure that its rulings were respected. His delegation urged the Secretary-General to take a personal interest in the matter.

59. The efforts to classify General Service posts at the various United Nations offices were commendable, particularly as many organizations tended to neglect the interests of the General Service. His delegation trusted that, in addition to classifying the posts, it would be possible to design a set of incentives and fringe benefits for the General Service category and a definite system of advancement both within and beyond the category.

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60. Mr. EL SAFTY (Egypt) said that the staff of the United Nations were of the finest calibre. The arrogant tone adopted by a certain staff representative when addressing the Committee, apparently forgetting the fact that he was in the company of representatives of Member States, had surely been an isolated occurrence.

61. His delegation looked forward to progress in the area of geographical distribution and to the day when all Member States would be represented in the Secretariat. There was no doubt that efficiency, competence and integrity were the prime considerations in recruiting staff, but where candidates were equal in that regard, selection should be made in accordance with the principle of equitable geographical distribution. The proposal made by the Joint Inspection Unit that that principle should be applied within each department of the United Nations, while meritorious, might impair the efficiency of the Organization. Nevertheless, all departments should take account of such considerations, and JIU should monitor them to ensure that no bias existed.

62. With regard to salaries, the validity of the Noblemaire principle was incontestable. When comparing the salaries offered by the international civil service with those available in the comparator national civil service, it should be borne in mind that it was essential for the international civil service to offer higher remuneration, or it would fail to attract the best qualified candidates. His delegation was sympathetic to the proposal for a salary increase of 5 per cent. Unfortunately, the time was not ripe. Member States were beset by economic problems, and any increase in administrative costs would mean less money for development. That did not imply that the staff of the United Nations were expected to pay for development projects from their salaries, but it did indicate that patience was needed.

63. It was nevertheless, possible to introduce certain improvements for the staff. For example, the amount of the child allowance should be the same for all staff and all should be eligible for education grants for their children. The education grant should be determined according to a sliding scale, without any maximum limit, so that staff could meet their legitimate needs to provide education for their children without being obliged to send them away from home, a consideration which applied even in the case of university-level education.

64. With regard to the retirement age, the age of 60 had been adopted by the Organization at the outset, at a time when life expectancy had been much lower than it was today. The Committee had been informed that the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund would be unable to meet its obligations unless benefits were reduced, which would create legal and practical problems, or unless Member States contributed to the Fund, which would also create difficulties, or unless the retirement age was increased to 62. In view of the increase in life expectancy, the last solution seemed the most advisable. His delegation therefore believed that the retirement age should be increased to 62 for a trial period of 5 years, at the end of which the situation could be re-examined.

65. The question of supplementary payments by certain Governments to their nationals was serious, as was the contrary practice of requiring staff to contribute part of their salary to their national Governments. Both practices

(Mr. El Safty, Egypt)

contravened Article 100 of the Charter, and should cease forthwith. His delegation would not, however, support drastic measures such as the dismissal of the staff members affected by such practices.

66. Excessive use was made in the United Nations of consultants. Regular staff members should be used instead, even if incentives had to be provided. The Secretary-General should ensure that minimum use was made of consultants in the next biennium and should provide details of the work performed by consultants and the remuneration they received as compared with regular staff costs.

67. With regard to the privileges and immunities of the international civil service, strict adherence to the Charter would solve the problem. The good offices of the Secretary-General, not confrontation, should be employed to resolve outstanding cases and, if the efforts of the Secretary-General were unsuccessful, the General Assembly must be so informed and take action. Such questions should be referred to the Sixth Committee rather than the Fifth.

68. His delegation supported the comments of the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination in paragraph 7 to 14 and 24 to 26 of its comments (A/37/528/Add.1), but did not agree with the JIU recommendations on the proportion of fixed-term appointments. With regard to a percentage limit on the number of P-1 and P-2 posts reserved for General Service staff, his delegation felt that priority should be given to General Service staff in filling such vacancies. Finally, the efforts made by the Secretary-General to increase the number of women employed in the Secretariat were commendable. Further efforts should be made to meet the target established by the General Assembly.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.