



FIFTH COMMITTEE  
55th meeting  
held on  
Friday, 3 December 1982  
at 3.00 p.m.  
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 55th 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 3.25 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 110: SCALE OF ASSESSMENTS FOR THE APPORTIONMENT OF THE EXPENSES OF THE UNITED NATIONS: REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON CONTRIBUTIONS (continued) (A/37/11 and Add.1 and Add.1/Corr.1)

1. Mr. FADAKA (Nigeria) commended the Committee on Contributions for its efforts in carrying out a very difficult assignment but observed that the Committee's recommendation in document A/37/11/Add.1 was not based on any scientific criteria. His delegation had submitted to the Secretary-General further details on which Nigeria's assessment should have been based but it appeared that the information provided had not been taken into account by the Committee on Contributions at its special session. Nevertheless, it was prepared to agree to the report of the Committee in the hope that the study requested in General Assembly resolution 36/231 A would be completed in time for submission to the General Assembly at its thirty-eighth session.
2. Mr. WILLIAMS (Panama) observed that the Fifth Committee seemed to have forgotten at what point it had left off at its preceding meeting. He recalled that the Committee had already entered into the decision-making process and that he had invoked rule 117 of the rules of procedure. Accordingly, delegations could speak only in explanation of vote.
3. The CHAIRMAN, noting that no delegation was opposed to the motion to close the debate, declared that the process of voting had begun. The representative of Spain had requested that a recorded vote should be taken on the draft resolution contained in paragraph 14 of the addendum to the report of the Committee on Contributions (A/37/11/Add.1).
4. Mr. PEDERSEN (Canada) said that his delegation would vote in favour of the draft resolution, primarily so that the financing of the United Nations could be ensured on a proper basis. The revised scale proposed by the Committee on Contributions differed only slightly from its original proposal and had been made possible by a procedure which, while somewhat extraordinary, had yielded positive results. His delegation was convinced that the revised proposal was in the interest of the Organization. The Committee on Contributions had been asked to perform a difficult task - one that was in essence political - and had done so successfully. His delegation's vote should also be construed as a vote of confidence in the Chairman of the Committee on Contributions, who over the years had demonstrated leadership, discretion and the determination that the fundamental purposes of the Organization should ultimately prevail.
5. Mr. YOUNIS (Iraq) said that, although resolution 36/231 A had not been fully applied and there were many shortcomings in the revised scale of assessments, the Committee on Contributions had made a serious effort at its special session to reduce the inequities in the assessments of developing countries. Acceptance of the revised scale was the only course open to the Fifth Committee if it was to overcome the difficult situation it was facing. Accordingly, his delegation would vote in favour of the new draft resolution proposed by the Committee on Contributions.

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6. Mr. KRISTIANSEN (Denmark), speaking on behalf of the ten member States of the European Economic Community, said that the new recommendation before the Committee only confirmed the serious reservations which had led the ten delegations concerned to vote against the procedure adopted by the General Assembly to resolve the problem which had arisen earlier in the session with regard to the scale of assessments originally recommended by the Committee on Contributions. The revised scale was nothing more than the formalization of an understanding reached between certain members of the Fifth Committee to redistribute a number of points in the scale of assessments in accordance with purely political, rather than technical, criteria. The independent status and integrity of the Committee on Contributions had, therefore, been severely damaged. Not only had the Committee on Contributions rubber-stamped the informal agreement, it had gone even farther, despite objections from some of its members, and had taken 5 points from the proposed decrease in South Africa's assessment, knowing full well that that country had not paid its assessed contributions for several years. That would only add to the financial problems of the Organization and undermine the measures adopted to resolve its financial emergency. The delegations of the ten European States would therefore vote against the revised scale of assessments.

7. The manner in which the Fifth Committee had dealt with the item at the current session was profoundly unsatisfactory and potentially dangerous for the United Nations system as a whole. It must not be repeated. It was in the interest of all Member States that the independent status and freedom of action of the Committee on Contributions should be restored, and the delegations of the ten European States intended to work constructively with other delegations to prepare a draft resolution designed to attain that objective.

8. Mr. HERRERA (Venezuela) said that his delegation would vote against the new proposal of the Committee on Contributions because it disagreed with the procedure that had been followed and with the way in which points had been redistributed. His country's contributions to the United Nations system were substantial and for that reason it could not accept the unfair and inequitable arrangement for financial burden-sharing that had been proposed.

9. Mr. KEMAL (Pakistan) said that his delegation's support of the new proposal derived primarily from a desire to ensure that the Organization had the necessary financing to carry out its important work. His delegation would have preferred the scale of assessments originally proposed by the Committee on Contributions but recognized that, in the absence of consensus on it, the procedure proposed by the representative of Morocco had offered the best hope of avoiding an impasse in the Fifth Committee. He expressed gratitude to the Committee on Contributions for acting expeditiously in accordance with the wishes of the Fifth Committee and to those Member States which had taken on additional points, including several low per capita income countries, for the financial sacrifice they would be making for the good of the Organization. The procedure adopted at the current session should not, however, constitute a precedent. If it became the established practice, it would mean an end to the effectiveness of the Committee on Contributions. He noted that, as indicated in paragraph 13 of the addendum to the report of the Committee on Contributions, various matters had been put to a vote. It would be preferable not to include information on votes in future reports of the Committee on

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(Mr. Kemal, Pakistan)

Contributions, since it might make it difficult for the Fifth Committee to take decisions, especially if the results of the voting were close.

10. Mr. BETTENCOURT BUENO (Brazil) said that his delegation could not support the new recommendation since the Committee on Contributions had failed to comply with the directives of the General Assembly as set forth in resolutions 34/6 B and 36/231 A, inter alia. Moreover, his delegation was not satisfied with the criteria which had been used to draw up the modified scale, which contained anomalies. His delegation would therefore vote against the draft resolution recommended by the Committee on Contributions.

11. Mr. PULLEIRO (Uruguay) said that as a sponsor of draft resolution A/C.5/37/L.20/Rev.1, his delegation had sought to promote a fair and equitable solution to the problem of the scale of assessments. The procedure followed by the Committee on Contributions on the recommendation of the Fifth Committee was unacceptable because of its political dimensions. The Committee on Contributions must remain a technical body. General Assembly resolution 36/231 A laid down the criteria for the calculation of the scale of assessments and the Committee on Contributions had not complied with that resolution. Accordingly, his delegation could not support the scale currently recommended and would abstain in the voting.

12. Mr. ALPER (Turkey) said that his delegation considered the modified scale of assessments to be unjust and unfair on technical grounds and would therefore vote against it.

13. Mr. YOACHAM (Chile) said that the modified scale of assessments was not in keeping with the requirements of General Assembly resolution 36/231 A. His delegation would therefore vote against it.

14. Mrs. LOPEZ ORTEGA (Mexico) said that her delegation would vote against the recommendation of the Committee on Contributions because the review carried out by the Committee at its special session had not been based on the guidelines laid down by the General Assembly, in particular in resolution 36/231 A.

15. Mr. de PINIES (Spain) said that his delegation would vote against the recommendation before the Committee because the modified scale of assessments was at variance with both the criteria established by the General Assembly and the Financial Regulations of the United Nations. It should be noted that four members of the Committee on Contributions had voted against the decision taken in that Committee, and two had abstained. He also wished to register his delegation's dissatisfaction at the anomalous procedure which had been followed in the Fifth Committee in discussing the new recommendation. The closure of debate had been moved and the debate closed on the ground that the Committee had amply discussed the matter in the past. However, as a result of the previous discussions in the Fifth Committee, the initial report of the Committee on Contributions had been referred back to it. Now many delegations were being barred from expressing their views on the procedure followed by the Committee on Contributions at its special session, which was not in keeping with established regulations or the wishes of the General Assembly.

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16. Mr. DITZ (Austria) said that the modified scale of assessments before the Committee was based on a decision which had been opposed by his delegation since it had restricted the discretion of the Committee on Contributions and hence hampered its efforts to calculate an equitable and fair scale. The calculation of a fair scale of assessments was a complex task which should be left to an expert body. The new recommendation of the Committee on Contributions represented a political compromise which would work to the detriment of the United Nations. Adding five points to South Africa's assessment would exacerbate the Organization's cash flow problems. His delegation would therefore vote against the draft resolution proposed by the Committee on Contributions.

17. Mr. GOH (Singapore) said that the modified scale of assessments was not an accurate reflection of the real capacity to pay of Member States. The procedure used to calculate the modified scale was a totally unprecedented and unorthodox way of solving a major problem, and the assessments recommended were based not on objective criteria but on give and take. The draft resolution recommended by the Committee on Contributions was, therefore, unacceptable to his delegation.

18. Mr. EL SAFTY (Egypt) said that his delegation would vote in favour of the draft resolution in order to enable the United Nations to pursue its activities and to allow the Committee on Contributions to complete without distraction the important studies requested of it by the General Assembly. In the circumstances, his delegation considered the revised scale recommended by the Committee on Contributions to be the compromise capable of commanding the widest support.

19. Mr. FONTAINE ORTIZ (Cuba) said that his delegation preferred the original proposal of the Committee on Contributions, which would have preserved that Committee's authority. However, in the spirit of compromise, it was prepared to accept the modified scale in the hope that the Committee on Contributions would now concentrate on the tasks assigned to it in General Assembly resolution 36/231 A.

20. Mr. ZINIEL (Ghana) expressed appreciation of the statement made by the Chairman of the Committee on Contributions at the previous meeting, and thanked the Committee for completing its work in so short a time. Although it had not succeeded in making a unanimous recommendation, his delegation was satisfied with the majority decision expressed in the modified scale of assessments in paragraph 14 of document A/37/11/Add.1 and in annex III in document A/37/11/Add.1/Corr.1. The Ghanaian delegation had been prepared to accept the scale originally recommended and, as there was no substantive difference between that and the modified scale, it would support the new recommendation, which was based on the general principles of General Assembly resolution 36/213 A. He hoped that when the Committee on Contributions reviewed the scale of assessments in 1985, it would endeavour to make the further improvements envisaged in that resolution.

21. Mr. GODFREY (New Zealand) said that his delegation would vote in favour of the modified scale of assessments but with certain reservations. In submitting its original recommendation, the Committee had done a difficult job well. However, opinion in the Fifth Committee had been divided and a compromise had been necessary. He regretted that the Committee on Contributions had been placed in the

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(Mr. Godfrey, New Zealand)

position of merely endorsing a decision arrived at informally beforehand. The Committee's independent expert role should be restored so that it could undertake the next review of the scale of assessments unhampered by any restrictive guidelines. It was quite foreseeable that in the next triennium, starting in 1985, the assessments of those States currently subject to mitigation could be increased in accordance with their economic progress. He was confident that at that point they would be happy to contribute in line with the progress achieved. His delegation, like that of Pakistan, would have preferred a procedure whereby the Committee could have presented the Fifth Committee with a unified recommendation.

22. Mr. LADOR (Israel) expressed appreciation for the work of the Committee on Contributions but could not concur in the way in which the modified scale had been arrived at. His delegation would therefore abstain from voting on the draft resolution in paragraph 14.

23. Mr. BANGURA (Sierra Leone) said that his delegation would vote in favour of the modified scale in order to demonstrate its appreciation of the valuable work of the Committee on Contributions. The modified scale, though unacceptable to some delegations, accorded considerable relief to the majority of developing countries. He hoped that those countries which possessed real capacity to pay would not frustrate the Committee's achievement. The Moroccan delegation was to be congratulated on proposing a compromise that had allowed the Fifth Committee to move forward from what would otherwise have been an impasse.

24. Mr. KAZEMBE (Zambia) said that his delegation would vote in favour of the modified scale. It would have liked a scale that met with general agreement and support from all Member States. The explanations of vote already given, however, showed that that was not possible. He hoped, nevertheless, that in future the scale could be arrived at by unanimous decision. The way in which the Committee on Contributions had decided on its proposal was not in the interest of the United Nations system.

25. Mr. MANSOURI (Syrian Arab Republic) thanked the Chairman of the Committee on Contributions for his explanation of the report on the Committee's special session (A/37/11/Add.1), and the Moroccan delegation for smoothing the way towards a decision by the Fifth Committee. The changes that had been made had produced a modified scale that was much fairer than the scale originally recommended, and that reflected in a clearer and more equitable form actual conditions in the developing countries and their economic circumstances. Henceforward the Committee on Contributions should focus on the matters for consideration left unfinished. He hoped that the next session of the General Assembly the Committee would submit recommendations that could form the basis for drawing up the scale of assessments for the following triennium. In the meantime, his delegation would vote in favour of the modified scale.

26. Mr. LAHLOU (Morocco) said that given the Fifth Committee's responsibility for the finances of the Organization, it had been essential to find a compromise on the scale of assessments for the period 1983-1985. He did not consider that the

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(Mr. Lahlou, Morocco)

integrity of the Committee on Contributions had been violated. The modified scale lightened the burden on the developing countries and reflected the general consensus that the gap between them and the developed countries should be reduced. As far as South Africa's assessment was concerned, a close reading of the report left the impression that the Committee on Contributions would prefer to draw a veil over that matter. He would therefore say no more.

27. Miss ZONICLE (Bahamas) said that her delegation was not insensitive to the effort that had been made to avert a real or imagined impasse. It must, however, record its continuing reservations regarding the political wisdom of the underlying reasoning and its implications for the effective functioning of the Committee on Contributions and the Fifth Committee and the stable financial operation of the United Nations. The arguments that had influenced her delegation's vote on the draft decision requesting the re-examination of the scale of assessments (A/C.5/37/L.23) were still valid and it would therefore abstain from voting on the modified scale.

28. Mr. TAKASU (Japan) said that if there was some dissatisfaction with the Committee on Contributions' re-examination of the scale of assessments at the General Assembly's request, the principal responsibility lay not with the Committee on Contributions but with the Fifth Committee itself, which had used the Committee on Contributions as a means of legitimizing informal negotiations and conclusions in the Fifth Committee and had required an expert body to engage in work of a basically political nature. Because of the nature of the task assigned to it, the Committee on Contributions had had to take the unprecedented course of reaching a decision by vote. His delegation was deeply concerned over the politicization of the scale of assessments that had been prompted by the General Assembly's hasty decision of the thirty-sixth session. The Assembly should return to the starting-point and reaffirm the procedure adopted when the United Nations was first created. The Committee should be a neutral, fair and independent expert body, free to consider all the relevant data and to work out a scale on the basis of objective criteria, and its recommendations regarding the scale of assessments should be respected by the General Assembly to the fullest possible extent. The procedure adopted at the current session must not constitute a precedent for the future. His delegation would abstain from voting on the proposed modified scale.

29. Mr. BENZEITUN (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) regretted that, though his delegation appreciated the efforts made by the Committee on Contributions to arrive at the modified scale, it was unable to accept it. There was no objective justification for the proposed scale: the assessments of the developing countries continued to increase while those of the Western developed countries and the centrally planned economies declined. The guidelines laid down in General Assembly resolution 36/231 A, in particular the provisions of operative paragraph 4 (c), had not been observed. The Libyan assessment had been increased three times since 1977. Even as revised, it was three percentage points above the 1980-1982 scale. Libya would not refuse to stand by its commitments, but justice must be restored in future scales. The criterion of real capacity to pay had not been followed in working out the current proposal. Moreover, those countries that enjoyed a privileged position in the United Nations ought to bear a larger share of the financial responsibility, and the steady decline in their contributions should be reversed.

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30. Mr. TOMMO MONTHE (United Republic of Cameroon) said that during the general debate on the scale originally proposed by the Committee on Contributions, a number of proposals had been made. The suggestions that the existing scale should be frozen or that the Committee's first proposal should be adopted had been discarded. An attempt to achieve unanimity in the Fifth Committee on a new recommendation had been abandoned as taking too long. A trend of opinion now seemed to be emerging in favour of accepting the new proposal of the Committee on Contributions for lack of anything better. The Cameroonian delegation would go along with that trend. As the Secretary-General had told the Fifth Committee, the scale of assessments must always represent a political compromise. The new scale recommended was the best possible for the time being, but the Committee on Contributions should be encouraged to seek further improvement for the future.

31. Mr. DURAN DUSSAN (Colombia) said that delegations would undoubtedly prefer the new programmes adopted by the General Assembly to involve no additional cost. Even apart from inflation, however, approving new programmes must involve additional expenditure and more money must therefore be raised. The original recommendation of the Committee on Contributions had caused considerable controversy. The Moroccan proposal had provided an opportunity for reviewing the scale and making some of the proposed increases in assessments less burdensome. Nevertheless, it was important that the countries of the third world should contribute as much as they could, rather than allow the United Nations to depend wholly on the developed countries and perhaps be subject to their domination. The Fifth Committee should vote without further delay in order to provide adequate financing for the development of United Nations activities over the forthcoming three years. Any postponement would cause serious difficulties and place limitations on the new proposals adopted at the current fruitful session of the General Assembly. He urged all delegations to vote in favour of the modified scale.

32. Mr. MONAYAIR (Kuwait) said that his delegation had supported the request that the Committee on Contributions should re-examine the proposed scale of assessments. While it appreciated the effort the Committee had made to restore objectivity, the way in which it had made the adjustments that had resulted in the modified scale was contrary to established principles. The new scale proposed was still unfair, and did not meet the guidelines set by the General Assembly in resolution 36/231 A. His delegation would therefore vote against it.

33. Mr. SHAHANKARI (Jordan) said that his delegation would accept the scale recommended by the Committee on Contributions, and would vote in favour of the draft resolution, on the understanding that the procedure that had been adopted would not set a precedent. The Committee on Contributions had been placed in a very difficult situation and had done its best to arrive at a fair scale. Rejecting that scale could have far-reaching and dangerous consequences and would undermine the work both of the Committee on Contributions and of the Fifth Committee and would have an adverse effect on the Organization as a whole. The Jordanian delegation joined that of Colombia, therefore, in urging all delegations to cast a positive vote.

34. Mr. ROWE (Australia) said that his delegation regretted that it had not been possible to adopt the scale of assessments originally proposed by the Committee on

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(Mr. Rowe, Australia)

Contributions. Nevertheless, it would vote in favour of the modified scale, which differed only slightly from that originally proposed, in view of the importance of allowing the United Nations to continue to function. The Australian delegation had reservations concerning the essentially political manner in which the modified scale had been prepared.

35. Miss CASTILLO (Dominican Republic) said that her delegation would vote against the modified scale, and trusted that future decisions of the Committee on Contributions would be based on technical considerations.

36. Mr. CAPPAGLI (Argentina) said that he would vote in favour of the draft resolution, since it represented the best solution under the circumstances. It was to be hoped that the study called for in General Assembly resolution 36/231 A would be carried out by the Committee on Contributions.

37. Mr. PAPENDORP (United States of America) said that the strait-jacket imposed by paragraph 4 of resolution 36/231 A created difficulties for his delegation. The remarks made by the representatives of Austria and Japan were most apt, and he endorsed much of what they had said. His delegation's intention to vote against the draft resolution should not be interpreted as a rebuff to the Committee on Contributions, which had been faced with an impossible task. He trusted that delegations would co-operate in restoring to that Committee its ability to perform its work in an atmosphere of professionalism, objectivity and privacy.

38. Mr. HADID (Algeria) said that his delegation had had reservations concerning the original proposal of the Committee on Contributions, and that it was not very satisfied with the new proposal, although it would vote in favour of it. That did not mean that the Committee was no longer bound by the provisions of resolution 36/231 A; the results of the studies requested therein should form the basis of the following scale of assessments.

39. Mr. KBAIER (Tunisia) said that his delegation would support the new scale. It appreciated the need for a sound financial basis if the United Nations was to operate effectively, and welcomed the efforts made by the Committee on Contributions.

40. Mr. NTAMBI (Uganda) said that at the special session of the Committee on Contributions it had become clear that there was no solution which would satisfy all delegations, and equally clear that there was a need for flexibility. If the Fifth Committee took a negative decision on the modified scale, it would have a devastating effect on the Committee on Contributions and on the United Nations itself. His delegation would vote in favour of the new scale, and urged other delegations to do likewise.

41. Mr. GARRIDO (Philippines) reiterated his delegation's confidence in the Committee on Contributions, and said that it would vote in favour of the Committee's recommendation.

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42. Mr. KABA (Guinea) said that the Committee on Contributions had succeeded in reconciling divergent positions. His Government was concerned to ensure that the United Nations could continue to work towards peace, and would thus support the modified scale.

43. At the request of the representative of Spain, a recorded vote was taken on the draft resolution recommended by the Committee on Contributions, as contained in paragraph 14 of the addendum to its report (A/37/11/Add.1).

In favour: Afghanistan, Algeria, Angola, Argentina, Australia, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Bhutan, Botswana, Burundi, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Canada, Central African Republic, China, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Cuba, Czechoslovakia, Democratic Yemen, Djibouti, Egypt, Ethiopia, German Democratic Republic, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ivory Coast, Jamaica, Jordan, Kenya, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Mali, Mauritania, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Nepal, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Romania, Rwanda, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Uganda, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Cameroon, United Republic of Tanzania, Upper Volta, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zaire, Zambia.

Against: Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Chile, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Finland, France, Germany, Federal Republic of, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Kuwait, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Luxembourg, Mexico, Netherlands, Norway, Singapore, Spain, Sweden, Turkey, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Venezuela.

Abstaining: Bahamas, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Ecuador, Israel, Japan, Uruguay, Yugoslavia.

44. The draft resolution was adopted by 84 votes to 25, with 8 abstentions.

45. Mrs. KNEZEVIC (Yugoslavia) said that her delegation had abstained, since the modified scale was not in accordance with General Assembly resolution 36/231 A. Although the Committee on Contributions had endeavoured to make the scale more balanced, Yugoslavia's contribution was inequitable. In future, the Committee should prepare a scale reflecting the capacity of States to pay. The way in which the new scale had been worked out should not constitute a precedent.

46. Mr. GRODSKY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that his delegation preferred the original scale of assessments. However, owing to the differences which had arisen in the Fifth Committee, the Soviet Union had taken action,

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(Mr. Grodsky, USSR)

together with the Group of 77, to achieve a compromise. It was to be hoped that a similar situation would not recur in the future. The scale of assessments must be based on the capacity of Member States to pay. Attempts by certain States to reduce their contributions - violation of that principle, should not be repeated. Relief should be sought, rather, by limiting the growth of the United Nations budget and by using resources more effectively.

47. His delegation did not agree that any strait-jacket had been imposed on the Committee on Contributions. At the special session the latter had carried out the task required of it, and, in so doing, had adopted a position more favourable to the majority, namely the developing countries.

48. Mr. BRODININGRAT (Indonesia) said that his delegation had voted in favour of the modified scale, even though it did not regard it as ideal, since there was no viable alternative. Yet its adoption represented only a short-term solution and the long-term question remained unsolved. He urged Member States and the Committee on Contributions, which should remain an independent body not representing the interests of any State, to seek to resolve the grave problems surrounding the scale of assessments.

49. Mr. BOUSHEV (Bulgaria) said that his delegation had abstained, since, in a spirit of compromise, it had not wished to impede the work of the Fifth Committee and the Committee on Contributions. His delegation appreciated the gesture made by those countries which had absorbed the 58 points, although it was not pleased with the increase in Bulgaria's contribution. The merits of the methods employed by the Committee on Contributions were not sufficiently evident and, consequently, in the Fifth Committee the modified scale had been supported by those countries which were obtaining relief and opposed by those that were not. Finally, his delegation trusted that the procedure followed in drawing up the modified scale of assessments would not establish a precedent which would be detrimental to the work of the Committee on Contributions.

50. Mr. BASHARAT ALI (Bangladesh) said that his country was the only least developed country whose contribution exceeded the floor of 0.01 per cent, a fact which contravened the letter and spirit of resolutions 2961 D (XXVII) and 31/95 A. His delegation had interpreted the continuance of that anomaly as reflecting the limited room for manoeuvre available to the Committee on Contributions in the current circumstances rather than the view that Bangladesh's claim was groundless. Nevertheless, his delegation was dissatisfied with its rate of assessment and trusted that the anomaly would be rectified in the next scale of assessments.

51. Mr. LOURENÇO (Portugal) said that Portugal had doubts about the way in which statistics were collected from Member States. The Committee on Contributions had, in the past, based the scale of assessments on certain principles, which had subsequently been amended by the General Assembly. In formulating its original proposal, however, the Committee had not complied with those principles but had adopted a compromise instead. Now the Fifth Committee had just adopted a modified scale based not on any principles but on the caprice of certain Member States.

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(Mr. Lourenço, Portugal)

Serious difficulties lay ahead if the United Nations continued in that vein. Although his delegation had voted in favour of the draft resolution because of the importance it attached to support for the United Nations and the international community, and in recognition of the need for compromise, it was far from happy about the way in which the scale of assessments for 1983-1985 had been drawn up.

52. Mr. WANG Xuexian (China) said that his delegation had voted in favour of the draft resolution for the reasons already explained in its statement at the previous meeting. China maintained its reservations about the method of computation, which was not in keeping with the principle of capacity to pay as the basic criterion for determining the scale of assessments. The assessment for China for 1983-1985 far exceeded China's real capacity to pay and it was only in consideration of the difficulties encountered by the Fifth Committee on Contributions and the Fifth Committee that China had agreed to accept it. Certain developing countries found themselves in similar situations and his delegation hoped that that state of affairs would be redressed in the future. The question of assessments had been dealt with in an unusual way to respond to an unusual situation but that approach should not constitute a precedent for the future.

53. Mr. AL-SHARHAN (United Arab Emirates) said that his delegation had voted in favour of the draft resolution even though the 60 per cent increase in the assessment for the United Arab Emirates was one of the highest. His delegation hoped that the Committee on Contributions would reconsider the scale of assessments in an objective and serious manner, taking into consideration the points which it had made in an earlier statement.

54. Mr. MOJTAMED (Islamic Republic of Iran) said that, although his delegation had voted in favour of the draft resolution in a spirit of compromise, that vote should not be taken to mean that it was satisfied with the new assessment for Iran. As his delegation had already stated, Iran's economic situation during and after the revolution clearly demonstrated how unfair the new rate was. His Government had brought the relevant facts to the attention of the Committee on Contributions and requested realistic treatment in the scale of assessments for 1983-1985. The 0.7 per cent reduction in Iran's assessment was inadequate and his delegation hoped that the Committee on Contributions would rectify the matter at its future sessions.

55. The CHAIRMAN said that the Committee had concluded its formal consideration of item 110. Nevertheless, the item would be kept open to allow interested delegations to conduct consultations about the future work of the Committee on Contributions. He hoped that all interested delegations would give the highest priority to those consultations in order to allow the Committee to dispose of the item as quickly as possible.

56. Mr. ALI (Chairman, Committee on Contributions) said that he would inform the Committee on Contributions at its next session about the criticism voiced by members of the Fifth Committee concerning the modified scale of assessments. A few delegations had asked questions about the work of the Committee on Contributions at its special session; the report of the Committee on Contributions was very clear and he did not feel that there was any need for further explanations.

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(Mr. Ali)

57. As to voting, over the years the Committee on Contributions had seldom voted but instead had ascertained the prevailing view of its members and recorded that as the majority opinion. The exceptional circumstances in which the special session had been held and the controversial nature of the proposals appeared to him to have justified the votes referred to in the addendum to the report. Nevertheless, the Committee on Contributions was always willing to be guided by the wisdom of the Fifth Committee.

58. Mr. Ri HOON HUR (Observer, Republic of Korea) expressed appreciation to the Committee on Contributions for the favourable consideration given to the observations made by his Government about the new scale of assessments. The Republic of Korea remained as willing as ever to contribute positively to all activities carried out by the United Nations.

The meeting rose at 5.55 p.m.