

United Nations
**GENERAL
ASSEMBLY**

THIRTY-SEVENTH SESSION

*Official Records**



FIFTH COMMITTEE

63rd Meeting

held on

Friday, 10 December 1982

at 3 p.m.

New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 63rd MEETING

Chairman: Mr. ABRASZEWSKI (Poland)

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

CONTENTS

AGENDA ITEM 112: REPORT OF THE INTERNATIONAL CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION (continued)

AGENDA ITEM 113: UNITED NATIONS PENSION SYSTEM (continued)

(a) REPORT OF THE UNITED NATIONS JOINT STAFF PENSION BOARD

(b) REPORTS OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

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.63
17 December 1982

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

The meeting was called to order at 3.35 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 112: REPORT OF THE INTERNATIONAL CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION (continued)
(A/37/30; A/C.5/37/L.38)

1. Mr. PEDERSEN (Canada), introducing draft resolution A/C.5/37/L.38, said that the sponsors, which had been joined by Denmark, had tried to accommodate the remaining divergences of opinion to the maximum extent possible. The fourth, fifth and sixth preambular paragraphs cited the reasons why it had been impossible to recommend a salary increase for the Professional and higher categories in 1982. The members of the International Civil Service Commission had held different views on the interpretation and application of the Noblemaire principle, and no specific recommendation for a salary increase had therefore been made. Because of the very difficult global economic situation, an increase in salaries might compel donors to reduce their assistance to such important institutions as UNICEF and UNDP, which none of them wished to do.
2. Turning to section I of the draft resolution, he said that the Commission and the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Board had co-operated closely ever since the two-track formula for determining levels of pensions in countries where taxes were lower than in the United Nations Headquarters country had been devised in 1981. An effective formula had been worked out on the basis of identical proposals from both bodies.
3. Referring to section II, paragraph 1, he said that the draft resolution was not designed to extend the study of compensation to the expatriate benefits of the comparator civil service. Most delegations understood that the expatriate element was taken into account by the approximately 16-per-cent margin between the United Nations and that service. Given that margin, the cost of the study (at least \$400,000) and the current financial stringency of the United Nations, it had not been thought necessary to extend the study.
4. Referring to paragraph 2, he said that the Commission had reported on the post adjustment system for several years. Under the Noblemaire principle, all staff should have equal pay for equal work; furthermore, international civil servants should come under the authority of the Organization, not of their Governments. The sponsors could not agree to any practice which might undermine the independence and integrity of the international civil service.
5. With regard to paragraph 3, since the General Assembly had first requested the review of the purposes and operation of the post adjustment system, considerable progress had been made and a new methodology introduced. The report of the Commission revealed, however, that it was still necessary to improve the system, particularly the methodology for cost-of-living measurements. The Commission intended to publish a booklet and manual on the system, which should prove helpful in understanding its operation.

/...

(Mr. Pedersen, Canada)

6. In relation to paragraph 4, he said that many national civil services were currently imposing pay freezes and that, in a number of countries, small or no pay increases were projected for one year and even beyond. The global economic situation would not improve in a mere few months. It had therefore been deemed appropriate for the Commission to review the basis for the determination and the level of remuneration of the Professional and higher categories and to make recommendations thereon to the General Assembly at its thirty-ninth session.

7. Turning to section III, paragraphs 1 and 2, he said that the Commission was undertaking a comprehensive review of conditions of service at non-headquarters duty stations. The staff in developing countries worked towards improving the lot of many Member States, and it was therefore appropriate to review their conditions of service and to compare those conditions to conditions in other services. The Commission's report on that matter would be welcomed.

8. With respect to paragraph 3, in 1981 the Commission had been requested to review the extension of the education grant to non-expatriates, including locally recruited staff and, having done so, it had reaffirmed that it was an expatriate benefit. It had noted the problems of reassignment and educating children, however, and had felt that families should receive the grant for the remainder of an academic year upon returning to their home countries. It was continuing its review of the grant and would report in 1983 on its level and on the percentage of reimbursement of education costs. It had not been able to make a recommendation on the subject in 1982 for lack of sufficient facts, but would study the level of and formula for the grant and take the comments of members of the Fifth Committee, including their recommendations on reviewing or changing the formula for reimbursement, fully into account.

9. The children's allowance was a controversial item. Some delegations had felt that the present practice of strictly following the comparator civil service should continue, while others had favoured an increase in the allowance. Since it was impossible to recommend a salary increase, and having in mind the interests of equity, the sponsors were prepared to go along with the Commission's recommendation to increase the children's allowance for Professional and higher categories to \$700 as from 1 January 1983.

10. In paragraph 5, the draft resolution took note of the Commission's decision to increase the assignment allowance and the lump-sum portion of the installation grant received by field staff, which had been adopted at the urging of the executive heads in order to improve conditions of service in the field. It had been widely recognized that the existing levels of the allowance had impeded staff mobility.

11. Referring to paragraph 6, he said that the high rents in New York City and other headquarters duty stations were a very serious problem. The Commission had already established a working group on that matter and the sponsors hoped that the Commission would take action on the subject in view of the hardships.

12. As for health insurance (para. 7), everyone was aware of its high cost both in New York and in other headquarters duty stations, and it was hoped that the

/...

(Mr. Pedersen, Canada)

Commission would review that matter very carefully. Some delegations had favoured an immediate increase, but there were sound reasons for awaiting the Commission's recommendations. There was already some compensation for the health insurance payments made by staff in the General Service category and, if the United Nations paid a higher ratio, that would upset the present General Service salary scale and the total compensation ratio between Professional staff and the comparator civil service salary levels, further increasing the margin. The sponsors believed that that was a technical matter which the Commission should review and which required close and professional study so that sound recommendations could be made and considered by the Committee.

13. Turning to section IV, he said that paragraphs 1, 2 and 3 related to matters which the Commission had been working on for the past two years. The study it had completed took into account the views expressed by the organizations of the common system, the staff, the Joint Inspection Unit and the members of the Committee. The degree of consensus reached by the various organizations concerning the matters under study was encouraging. Career development was only one part of integrated personnel management, however, and the sponsors welcomed the Commission's intention to continue its work on human resources planning. The Commission had established a system of job classification and the sponsors trusted that all the organizations of the common system would apply it and that, as further standards developed, they would be adopted so that the same standards and pay levels would prevail for similar jobs in all organizations of the system.

14. With regard to paragraph 4, he said that different organizations had different requirements for fixed-term versus permanent contracts. It would be counter-productive to impose an arbitrary level for those contracts; rather, their levels should be examined on a continuing basis in the light of the needs of a particular organization.

15. With regard to paragraph 5, staff in continuing jobs who were considered to provide good service should have every reasonable consideration for career appointments but organizations with fixed-term technical requirements would continue to need fixed-term staff.

16. Concerning paragraph 6, he noted that considerable work had been done in the United Nations on competitive examinations. In view of the reluctance of some organizations to introduce them, the Commission would undertake a comprehensive study in the context of its review of recruitment policy.

17. In relation to paragraph 7, he said that it was easy to focus on salary and allowance questions, but that job classification and personnel policy, including career development, recruitment, training, promotion and other matters, were also important for the entire United Nations and that the General Assembly should therefore continue to support the Commission's work in those areas.

18. Turning to section V, he said that a number of United Nations bodies could make studies and recommendations on personnel matters. As the Commission had the

(Mr. Pedersen, Canada)

primary responsibility for regulating conditions of service and personnel policies in the United Nations system, however, it was important that diverse proposals should not be made without appropriate and adequate co-ordination.

19. The sponsors trusted that the draft resolution would provide a basis for further progress. The decision not to propose an increase in salaries was by no means a reflection on the work performed by the international civil service.

20. Mr. EL SAFTY (Egypt) said that the draft resolution met all the concerns of Member States and should therefore be adopted. He believed, however, that more time was needed for consultations in order to eliminate a few remaining ambiguities. For example, the principle expressed in section III, paragraph 3, that the education grant should be solely an expatriate benefit could not be contested, but, the language in which it was couched was somewhat restrictive and should be made more flexible. He would prefer a formulation such as "the education grant shall remain for the time being an expatriate benefit". The draft resolution should also include a request to the Commission to study the issue of children's allowances in respect of the General Service and related categories. With regard to the request in section III, paragraph 7 that the Commission should examine the need for raising the ratio of contributions by organizations for health insurance of staff members, he said that a practical reason for doing so might arise very soon. Beginning 1 January 1983, health insurance for all residents of New York would be raised by 30 to 50 per cent. The take-home pay of the staff would thus be drastically reduced, and he was sure that Member States did not wish to see United Nations employees put in such a situation. In order to solve that problem, the ratio of contributions made by the United Nations could be raised from one half to two thirds of the total cost of health insurance, or the Commission could be asked to study the question and, if an increase was decided on, it could be made retroactive to 1 January 1983.

21. Mr. LANDAU (Austria) said that the draft resolution was a balanced document which could provide guidance for future planning. He asked whether section III, paragraph 7, applied to retired staff members, who were also covered under the United Nations health insurance system.

22. Mr. OREBI (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations) requested clarification as to the use of the word "periodically" in section II, paragraph 4. How often did that mean that the Commission would make recommendations, and who would determine the periodicity with which it would do so?

23. Mr. HADID (Algeria) said that the draft resolution covered almost all fields of the Commission's activities in recent sessions. The final preambular paragraph was somewhat ambiguous, however, and he believed that the intention would be better expressed by a formulation such as "Desirous of ensuring adequate financial support for programme delivery". He hoped that informal consultations could be held to clear up the ambiguities.

24. Mr. FONTAINE ORTIZ (Cuba) requested clarification of section II, paragraph 2, and particularly of what was meant by "supplementary payments or deductions".

/...

25. Mr. GODFREY (New Zealand) said that his delegation had taken an active part in the consultations on the draft resolution and had seriously considered becoming a sponsor. It was particularly pleased that the text included certain selective improvements in conditions of service; that was particularly desirable in view of the fact that the Committee had not felt able to recommend a salary increase. The recommendation to raise the children's allowance was particularly welcome.

26. His delegation also welcomed the Commission's recommendation regarding the way in which the education grant should be applied in the case of nationals returning to their home country. It had suggested to the sponsors that they should adopt a slightly more positive formulation which, without changing the Commission's recommendation, would ensure that that aspect of the grant was kept under review. It should be remembered that the goal of the education grant was to ensure reasonable continuity of schooling. He cited the hypothetical case of a United States national working for UNDP being posted to a "hardship" duty station abroad at a time when his child had completed one year of high school education. Assuming that it was not appropriate for him to accompany his parents, the child would be accommodated in an alternative school with boarding facilities in the United States and the staff member would receive the education grant for the two years of his posting. On returning to Headquarters, he would continue to receive the education grant for up to one school year. It was at that point that the problem arose; given that high school education normally lasted five years, the parent would be faced with the choice of either keeping the child at the school and bearing the costs himself or moving the child to yet another school. Even if the child returned to his original school, three changes would be necessary at a critical stage in his education. There was a strong case for further study of the question and possibly a modest improvement in grant conditions at a subsequent stage. He proposed that the Committee should consider the inclusion of the following new paragraph 4 after paragraph 3: "Requests the Commission to keep the question of the education grant under review, particularly in regard to the situation of officials subject to rotation between Headquarters and other duty stations." The present paragraphs 4 to 7 would then be renumbered accordingly.

27. Mr. PEDERSEN (Canada) thanked delegations for their constructive suggestions and comments on the draft resolution. The question, raised by the representative of Austria, as to whether retirees would be included in the examination of the ratio of health insurance contributions was one which the Commission was in a better position to answer.

28. The representative of FAO had asked a question regarding the meaning of the words "and thereafter periodically" in paragraph 4 of section II. The question of periodicity in that context was one on which the Commission should make recommendations to the General Assembly.

29. As far as the comments of the representative of Algeria were concerned, he was sure that the intentions of that representative and those of the sponsors were exactly the same. There was perhaps room, however, for improvements in drafting.

30. The Cuban representative's question regarding the size of the supplementary payments or deductions referred to in paragraph 2 of section II must be answered by

/...

(Mr. Pedersen, Canada)

the Commission, but for a clearer statement of the issue it might be worth referring to General Assembly resolution 36/233 and to paragraph 121 of the Commission's report (A/37/30).

31. The sponsors of the draft resolution would be contacting the representatives of Egypt and New Zealand in response to their comments.

32. Mr. NDOM MOUNGUEN (United Republic of Cameroon) said that his delegation recognized the merit of the compromise which had been achieved in the draft resolution and the effort involved. However, he endorsed some of the reservations voiced by previous speakers. With respect to the education grant, in particular, his delegation felt that the order of paragraphs 3 and 4 of section III should be reversed and it had some difficulty in accepting that a parent returning from service at another duty station to his country of origin should receive reimbursement of educational costs for a further year.

33. His delegation also had strong reservations in connection with paragraph 7 of section III. Nevertheless, it would be happy to join in further consultations in an effort to reach a compromise.

34. Mr. PAPENDORP (United States of America) said that his delegation wished to be associated with the expressions of appreciation to the sponsors of the draft resolution, and especially to Canada for its co-ordinating role. It also wished to participate in any further consultations but felt obliged to express concern regarding the potential implementation costs of the draft resolution as it stood and any further such costs which might arise as a result of later amendments. He reserved his delegation's right to submit amendments on that aspect if necessary.

35. Mr. AKWEI (Chairman of the International Civil Service Commission) expressed his appreciation to the sponsors, and particularly to Canada, for their commendable achievement.

36. He had noted the explanation given by the representative of Canada of the reasons, also reflected in the fourth, fifth and sixth preambular paragraphs, why the Committee had not been able to approve the recommendation for a salary increase. Those reasons would be taken seriously into consideration, but the Commission, together with the executive heads and staff, were naturally disappointed that their request had not been met. In spite of the difficulties experienced in the Commission in reaching agreement regarding the interpretation and application of the Noblemaire principle, he had felt that a sufficiently good case had been made on technical grounds for an interim increase.

37. He had noted the comments made by the representative of FAO concerning the periodicity of the review referred to in paragraph 4 of section II. He shared the view expressed by the representative of Canada on that matter, and felt that it would not be difficult for the Commission to make a recommendation to the General Assembly.

/...

(Mr. Akwei)

38. The request that the Commission should review the basis for the determination and level of remuneration of the Professional and higher categories raised a very important issue. He regretted that the Committee had not deemed it possible to accede to the Commission's request for the authorization of funds to enable it to finalize its study of total compensation methodology. If it was not able to include expatriate benefits in the comparison, the conclusions which it reached would necessarily be incomplete, and it would then be very difficult to make a reasoned recommendation with respect to the margin to be maintained with the comparator civil service, a crucial element in determining salary levels. The margin had been fluctuating between 9 and 18 per cent, with the result that no one could be certain what was the adequate level of increase, but the problem could be largely, if not entirely, resolved if the Commission was enabled to finish its study. It might be useful for the Committee to reconsider the question at some future time when it was in a better position to handle the financial aspect of the problem.

39. The Commission would give careful consideration to the comments made by the representative of Egypt in connection with the education grant. There were two remaining issues to be decided: first, the level of the grant, which would be a function of the educational costs reported to the Commission at future sessions and, secondly, the percentage formula to be used.

40. As far as the ratio of contributions for health insurance was concerned, the reasons why an immediate solution had not been possible had been stated clearly by the representative of Canada: General Service staff were already sufficiently compensated in accordance with prevailing levels of ratios, and any change in relation to Professionals might cause some imbalance in the comparison with the United States Federal civil service. Since all organizations were affected, it was important to look at the overall implications of the issue. The Commission would certainly be giving consideration to the matter and he was grateful to the representative of Egypt for putting forward the idea of retroactivity.

41. The representative of Austria had raised the question of retirees in connection with health insurance, referred to in paragraph 7 of section III. There was no reason why retirees should be excluded from the consideration of the question, but they might fall within a separate category in view of the development of the special index for pensioners. In any event, their interests would certainly be taken into account.

42. He was unable to give precise information in response to the question raised by the representative of Cuba; the size of supplementary payments depended entirely on the action taken by Governments. The same was true of deductions, although the Commission had made no specific study of that aspect. The question had been brought before the Commission for the first time in 1980 at the request of the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination but it had been necessary to refer it back to ACC because much more information had been required from Governments.

43. The question raised by the representative of New Zealand regarding staff members subject to rotation was largely a matter to be dealt with by the sponsors,

/...

(Mr. Akwei)

although the Commission would be willing to give the idea consideration. The same remark applied to the comments made by the representative of the United Republic of Cameroon.

44. The CHAIRMAN suggested that interested delegations should meet for further brief consultations on the draft resolution so as to enable the Committee to take a decision on it the following day.

AGENDA ITEM 113: UNITED NATIONS PENSION SYSTEM (continued) (A/37/9, A/37/674; A/C.5/37/16, A/C.5/37/90 and Add.1; A/C.5/37/L.40 and L.41)

(a) REPORT OF THE UNITED NATIONS JOINT STAFF PENSION BOARD

(b) REPORTS OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

45. Mr. RUEDAS (Under-Secretary-General for Administration and Management) said that the note by the Secretary-General (A/C.5/37/90) provided information on the financial implications of extending participation in the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Fund to the members of the Joint Inspection Unit, the Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions and the Chairman and the Vice-Chairman of the International Civil Service Commission. The note had been prepared in response to the observations made by the Advisory Committee in paragraphs 20 to 30 of its report under item 113 (A/37/674), in which it had expressed the view that the General Assembly should have an analysis of the full impact of extending pension coverage to such officials before taking a decision. In that report the Advisory Committee had also provided background information on the General Assembly's previous decisions relating to those officials and had referred to some of the elements to be taken into account in determining the implications of their participation in the Fund.

46. The note by the Secretary-General elaborated on the elements identified by ACABQ. Paragraph 5 of the note described the situation of the JIU inspectors. As indicated, they were currently entitled to a post-retirement benefit. Their contribution was 7 per cent of pensionable remuneration, set at the D-2, step IV level, with the organizations contributing 14 per cent. The total amount was maintained in a separate Provident Fund and the interest was credited at the statutory rate established in article II (c) of the Pension Fund Regulations, which was currently 3.25 per cent. As the Advisory Committee indicated in paragraph 29 of its report, the participation of the Inspectors in the Fund would therefore have no financial implications because the amounts they currently contributed were equal to what would be required in the future. However, if coverage of past service was to be provided, an actuarial costing would be required. It was expected that the amounts accrued in the past beyond the 3.2 per cent interest credited to the Inspectors would largely, if not fully, offset the cost of providing coverage for past services. As indicated in paragraph 5 of the note, the Secretariat had considered, in consultation with JIU, a proposal that the interest earned in excess of 3.25 per cent should also revert to the Inspectors on a pro rata basis, subject to certain conditions specified in that paragraph. In that connection, he drew attention to document A/C.5/37/90/Add.1, which set forth the unanimous view of the Inspectors that they should not be made participants in the Fund and gave their reasons for adopting that position.

/...

(Mr. Ruedas)

47. As to the other officials, the Chairman of ACABQ and the Chairman and the Vice-Chairman of ICSC were not at the present entitled to any post-retirement benefit. They were thus the only full-time officials of the United Nations in that situation. Since their annual compensation was established by the General Assembly in net terms, it would be necessary, should pension coverage be extended to them, to establish an appropriate level of pensionable remuneration for them. On the basis of the methodology used in the past to determine net compensation, it was suggested that the pensionable remuneration of those three officials should be set at \$120,000, i.e., slightly more than that of an Assistant Secretary-General. The organizations would be expected to contribute 14 per cent of that amount, or \$16,800 for each official, for a total of \$50,400 for 1983. If coverage for past services was to be provided, an actuarial costing would be required.

48. Mr. MAYCOCK (Barbados), introducing the amendments in document A/C.5/37/L.40 to the draft resolution proposed by the Board, said that, in the course of consultations, it had become clear that several delegations had difficulties with the second paragraph of section I of the draft resolution. The first amendment in document A/C.5/37/L.40 was, therefore, intended to replace that paragraph.

49. It had also been agreed to add to the draft resolution two new sections. The first, which would become section V, dealt with the financial obligations of pensioners to their spouses or former spouses, and was intended to deal with hardship which might arise as a result of conflicting national laws in cases where separated spouses lived in different countries or the staff member remarried after retirement. The proposed new paragraphs would request the Board to examine the matter and make recommendations thereon. The last paragraph of the proposed new section specified that the Board should bear in mind that its recommendations should have no financial implications for the Fund.

50. The second proposed section, which would become section VI, sought information from member organizations of the Fund regarding the exclusion of some members from participation and requested the Board to make proposals for removing such exclusionary provisions.

51. When the Committee took a decision on extending pension coverage to various officials of JIU, ACABQ and ICSC, it might be necessary to add an additional section to the proposed amendments in A/C.5/37/L.40, unless the matter was dealt with in a separate decision.

52. Turning to draft decision A/C.5/37/L.41, he said that there was general agreement that the question of the investments of the Pension Fund should not be a bone of contention at the current session. The proposed decision would, therefore, have the General Assembly simply take note of the Secretary-General's report in document A/C.5/37/16.

53. Mr. DUQUE (Secretary of the Committee) drew attention to an error in the proposed text of article 24 (a) of the Pension Fund Regulations contained in annex XII to the report of the Board (A/37/9). The words "within one year of

/...

(Mr. Duque)

recommencement of his participation" should be added after the word "may". A corrigendum would be issued in due time.

54. Mr. KUTTNER (United States of America) said that his delegation supported the Board's proposal to extend participation in the Fund to the Chairman of the Advisory Committee, the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of ICSC and the members of JIU. Not only was it good social policy but it was also the responsibility of every organization and employer to provide pension coverage to individuals working for them. He noted the views of the JIU Inspectors as set out in document A/C.5/37/Add.1 but continued to believe that membership in the Fund would not in any way compromise their integrity. Pension coverage should be provided for those officials with effect from 1 January 1983. Monies deposited in the JIU Provident Fund would be held with interest for the Inspectors and be paid to them, together with a Pension Fund benefit, on retirement.

55. He proposed that the reference to part-time employment in supplementary article B recommended by the Pension Board should be deleted and that the Board should be asked to study further the question of pension coverage for part-time staff and to report thereon to the General Assembly at its thirty-eighth session.

56. The package of measures proposed by the Board to redress the actuarial imbalance of the Fund included the deletion of article 26 of the Pension Fund Regulations, which provided for the reimbursement to member organizations of one half of their contributions in respect of any staff member who left before five years of service. It was estimated that such a measure would result in a loss of \$1 million for the United Nations and some \$8 million for other member organizations. In the past, the General Assembly had decided that changes in the pension system should not entail any present or future liabilities for Member States. His delegation therefore proposed that article 26 should be retained.

57. Mr. MAJOLI (Chairman of the Standing Committee of the United Nations Joint Staff Pension Board) said that "part-time employment" was defined in paragraph (f) in the Introduction to the Administrative Rules of the Fund as meaning employment under conditions requiring attendance for duty during at least half the normal weekly working hours at the duty station in question. In the light of that definition, he wondered if the United States representative still wished to press his proposed amendment.

58. Mr. KUTTNER (United States of America) replied that his delegation would still prefer the Board to examine all the ramifications of amending the provisions relating to part-time employment.

/...

AGENDA ITEM 111: PERSONNEL QUESTIONS (continued) (A/37/675; A/C.5/37/26, A/C.5/37/34 and Corr.1, A/C.5/37/L.30, L.36, L.37 and L.39)

(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

59. Mr. MAYCOCK (Barbados), introducing draft resolution A/C.5/37/L.30, said that negotiations were still underway with regard to a number of points and that, if they were successfully concluded, it might be necessary to include an additional paragraph.

60. He drew attention to the sixth preambular paragraph, in which the word "of" had inadvertently been omitted after the word "conscious".

61. It was generally felt among delegations that, in view of the comprehensive resolutions adopted by the General Assembly at its thirty-third, thirty-fourth and thirty-fifth sessions, it was unnecessary at present to elaborate on the package of policy directives already agreed on. The majority of delegations felt that the Organization was generally on the right track with regard to personnel policy, and that progress had been made in specific areas. The general thrust of draft resolution A/C.5/37/L.30 was therefore to encourage the Secretary-General to pursue those policies.

62. On the basis of the continuing consultations on the draft resolution it might be necessary to introduce an amendment.

63. Ms. CONWAY (Ireland), introducing draft resolution A/C.5/37/L.39 on the representation of women in the Secretariat, announced that Mexico had been added to the list of sponsors. Since consultations had been held with a number of other interested delegations, she hoped that the draft would be broadly acceptable to the Committee.

64. While its subject was part of the overall package of personnel questions, the aim of the draft was to reiterate the General Assembly's commitment to previous resolutions, in particular section III of 33/143 and section V of 35/210. The draft took note of the progress made and the reports submitted on the subject and aimed at ensuring the continued implementation of the relevant General Assembly resolutions by the Secretary-General and the executive heads of all the organizations of the system. It did not establish any new targets for the employment of women in posts subject to geographical distribution. While the Secretary-General and the executive heads of the other organizations of the system were requested in paragraph 7 to examine additional measures that would advance the attainment of the policy directives covering the appointment, promotion and assignments of women in the United Nations system, that examination and the

/...

(Ms. Conway, Ireland)

implementation of any additional measures would have to be undertaken in accordance with the principles of equitable geographical distribution.

65. Resolution 24 of the World Conference of the United Nations Decade for Women, referred to in the second preambular paragraph, urged the United Nations to take the necessary steps to increase the proportion of women in decision-making posts in the Secretariat in accordance with General Assembly resolution 33/143. The sixth preambular paragraph was intended to take account of the fact that the Assistant Secretary-General for Personnel Services had stated that, although first priority of the Medium-Term Recruitment Plan was to bring the under-represented and non-represented Member States within their desirable geographical ranges by 1985, it had as an additional priority to improve the representation of women in the Secretariat. The other preambular paragraphs were self-explanatory.

66. The sponsors had made some amendments to the text of paragraphs 3 and 7 in order to clarify the relationship between the Committee, the General Assembly and other organizations of the United Nations system. In paragraph 3, after the word "invite", the words "each agency to submit updated status reports" had been replaced by the words "organizations to continue to provide updated information". In paragraph 7, after the words "policy directives", the words "of the appropriate legislative bodies" had been inserted.

67. Paragraphs 1 and 2 were designed to take account of the situation described in the report of the Secretary-General on the composition of the Secretariat (A/37/143), which showed that, while progress had been made, the proportion of posts subject to geographical distribution that were occupied by women still fell short of the 25 per cent target, and the proportion of women at senior levels was still small. Paragraph 3 was designed to ensure that the issue would be kept under review by the General Assembly. Paragraph 4 recognized the important role of Member States. Paragraphs 5 and 6 were designed to encourage further compliance with paragraph 5 of section V of resolution 35/210, since only ILO and WHO had so far taken action on the request to consider the possibility of designating a senior official to monitor and report on the compliance with the policy directives concerning the appointment and promotion of women. Paragraph 7 was based on the relevant JIU recommendations and its language had been taken from paragraph 5 of section V of resolution 35/210. While the JIU reports on the status of women had contained much valuable information and useful recommendations, the sponsors had felt it desirable that, given its system-wide responsibilities, ICSC should keep the question under review and report as appropriate to the General Assembly. Hence, paragraph 8 had been included.

68. Mr. CROM (Netherlands), introducing draft resolution A/C.5/37/L.37, noted that Belgium had been omitted from the list of sponsors and announced that Nigeria had become a co-sponsor. The sponsors had also added the words "inter alia" after the word "shows" in the first operative paragraph.

69. The thrust of the draft was very familiar in the light of previous discussion of the subject and General Assembly resolution 36/232. The draft noted with concern the increased number of cases in which the privileges and immunities of

(Mr. Crom, Netherlands)

officials of the United Nations and of the specialized and related agencies had not been respected and welcomed the measures taken by the Secretary-General and the executive heads of other organizations to alleviate the situation. With respect to the format of the report of the Secretary-General on the subject, he expressed the hope that, in his next report, the Secretary-General would present his own analysis and evaluation of the situation. Given the nature of the issue and the fact that, following extensive consultations, the draft already enjoyed widespread support, he hoped that it would be adopted without a vote.

70. Mr. MAJOLI (Italy) said that his delegation would like to be added to the list of sponsors of draft resolution A/C.5/37/L.37.

71. Mr. KUTTNER (United States of America), introducing document A/C.5/37/L.36, containing a draft amendment to the annex to the draft resolution contained in document A/37/675, annex II, said that the two simple changes proposed by his delegation should not cause any difficulty.

The meeting rose at 6 p.m.