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PATTERN OF CONFERENCES

REPORT OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL (CHAPTERS XXXVII AND XXXVIII)

Report of the Fifth Committee

Rapporteur: Mr. Ali Ben-Said KHAMIS (Algeria)

I. INTRODUCTION

1. At its 4th plenary meeting, on 21 September 1979, the General Assembly decided to include in the agenda of its thirty-fourth session the items entitled "Pattern of conferences: report of the Committee on Conferences" and "Report of the Economic and Social Council" and allocated the former, as well as certain chapters of the latter, among them chapters XXXVII and XXXVIII, to the Fifth Committee.
2. The Fifth Committee considered these items at its 11th, 12th, 15th, 17th, 19th and 25th meetings, held on 8, 10, 12, 15, 17 and 23 October 1979, respectively. It had before it the report of the Committee on Conferences 1/ containing, in paragraph 80, a draft decision recommended by the Committee on Conferences, and chapters XXXVII and XXXVIII of the report of the Economic and Social Council (A/34/3/Add.37 and 38) dealing respectively with the control and limitation of documentation and the calendar of conferences and meetings for 1980-1981.
3. The comments and observations made by delegations in the course of the discussion of the item are reflected in the relevant summary records of the Fifth Committee (A/C.5/34/SR.11, 12, 15, 17, 19 and 25).

1/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-fourth Session, Supplement No. 32 (A/34/32 and Corr.1).

II. ACTION BY THE COMMITTEE

4. At the 25th meeting, on 23 October 1979, the representative of Jamaica, on behalf of Barbados, Colombia, Costa Rica, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, Nigeria, Panama, Trinidad and Tobago and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, proposed an amendment (A/C.5/34/L.8) to the draft decision recommended by the Committee on Conferences in paragraph 80 of its report. The amendment provided for the insertion, at the end of paragraph (a), of the following:

"... except that the entries under the heading 'Location' in respect of items 37 and 128 of part A, as well as items 29 and 97 of part B, shall be amended to read 'To be determined.'"

5. The Fifth Committee adopted without objection the amendment referred to in paragraph 4 above, as well as the draft decision recommended by the Committee on Conferences (see para. 13).

6. At the same meeting, the Chairman of the Fifth Committee submitted for consideration by the Committee the following draft resolution (A/C.5/34/L.10) prepared during informal consultations:

"The General Assembly,

"Recalling its resolution 32/72 of 9 December 1977 in which it set forth, inter alia, the terms of reference of the Committee on Conferences,

"Noting the conclusions reached by the Committee on Conferences that the capacity of the United Nations Secretariat to service conferences and meetings and of Member States to participate actively in them is strained,

"Convinced of the necessity of rationalizing the procedures and organization of the conference activities of the United Nations,

"Further encouraging the continuation and development of close co-operation between the Economic and Social Council and the Committee on Conferences in areas of common concern,

"1. Welcomes the action taken by the Economic and Social Council on the pattern of conferences in its decision 1979/81 of 3 August 1979 and on control and limitation of documentation in its resolutions 1979/1 of 9 February 1979, 1979/41 of 10 May 1979 and 1979/69 of 2 August 1979;

"2. Approves the recommendation by the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination contained in part V of its report 2/ to the effect that, inter alia, the above-mentioned resolutions of the Economic and Social Council on control and limitation of documentation be applied to the General Assembly and its subsidiary bodies and that the Secretary-General be requested to implement them fully;

"3. Requests the Committee on Conferences to examine ways to enable it to play a more effective role in the scheduling of conferences and meetings and in the management of conference resources, and to report thereon to the General Assembly at its thirty-fifth session;

"4. Requests the Committee on Conferences to review the extent to which resolutions and recommendations adopted by the General Assembly on the pattern of conferences have been implemented, including an examination of the planned and actual duration of sessions of the subsidiary bodies of the Assembly, and to report its findings to the Assembly at its thirty-fifth session;

"5. Further requests the Committee on Conferences to monitor the implementation of all measures adopted by the General Assembly to control and limit documentation, including those on the provision of meeting records and the application of measures to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the conference activities of the Organization and to report thereon to the Assembly at its thirty-fifth session;

"6. Invites the Committee on Conferences when making any adjustment in the calendar of conferences for 1980-1981 to take full account of all conference facilities available at established United Nations headquarters;

"7. Requests the Committee on Conferences to review the organizational and servicing arrangements of past special conferences and their preparatory meetings with a view to identifying the most effective framework for the organization of such conferences in the future."

7. In the course of the 25th meeting, the representative of Tunisia proposed to amend the second preambular paragraph by inserting the word "present" after the phrase "Noting the conclusions reached by the Committee on Conferences that the".

8. The representative of Algeria suggested the insertion of the word "adequately" in the same preambular paragraph, after the words "United Nations Secretariat to service".

9. The representative of the Philippines proposed to insert in operative paragraph 6, after the words "for 1980-1981", the phrase "resulting from decisions by the General Assembly".

10. The representative of Mexico, acting as co-ordinator for the informal consultations held for the preparation of the draft resolution, accepted to revise the draft by incorporating the amendments referred to in paragraphs 7, 8 and 9 above.

11. The Committee then adopted without a vote draft resolution A/C.5/34/L.10 as revised (see para. 12).

III. RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE FIFTH COMMITTEE

12. The Fifth Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft resolution:

Pattern of conferences

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 32/72 of 9 December 1977 in which it set forth, inter alia, the terms of reference of the Committee on Conferences,

Noting the conclusions reached by the Committee on Conferences that the present capacity of the Secretariat to service adequately conferences and meetings and of Member States to participate actively in them is strained,

Convinced of the necessity of rationalizing the procedures and organization of the conference activities of the United Nations,

Further encouraging the continuation and development of close co-operation between the Economic and Social Council and the Committee on Conferences in areas of common concern,

1. Welcomes the action taken by the Economic and Social Council on the pattern of conferences in its decision 1979/81 of 3 August 1979, and on the control and limitation of documentation in its resolutions 1979/1 of 9 February 1979, 1979/41 of 10 May 1979 and 1979/69 of 2 August 1979;

2. Approves the recommendation by the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination contained in part V of its report 3/ to the effect that, inter alia, the above-mentioned resolutions of the Economic and Social Council on control and limitation of documentation should be applied to the General Assembly and its subsidiary bodies and that the Secretary-General should be requested to implement them fully;

3. Requests the Committee on Conferences to examine ways to enable it to play a more effective role in the scheduling of conferences and meetings and in the management of conference resources, and to report thereon to the General Assembly at its thirty-fifth session;

4. Requests the Committee on Conferences to review the extent to which resolutions and recommendations adopted by the General Assembly on the pattern of conferences have been implemented, including an examination of the planned and actual duration of sessions of the subsidiary bodies of the Assembly, and to report its findings to the Assembly at its thirty-fifth session;

3/ A/34/38 (Part V).

5. Further requests the Committee on Conferences to monitor the implementation of all measures adopted by the General Assembly to control and limit documentation, including those on the provision of meeting records and the application of measures to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the conference activities of the Organization, and to report thereon to the Assembly at its thirty-fifth session;

6. Invites the Committee on Conferences, when making any adjustment in the calendar of conferences for 1980-1981 resulting from decisions by the General Assembly, to take full account of all conference facilities available at established United Nations headquarters;

7. Requests the Committee on Conferences to review the organizational and servicing arrangements of past special conferences and their preparatory meetings with a view to identifying the most effective framework for the organization of such conferences in the future.

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13. The Fifth Committee also recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft decision:

Pattern of conferences

The General Assembly decides:

(a) To adopt the calendar of conferences and meetings of the United Nations for 1980-1981 as set forth in annex II to the report of the Committee on Conferences, 4/ except that the entries under the heading "Location" in respect of items 37 and 128 of part A, as well as items 29 and 97 of part B, shall be amended to read "To be determined";

(b) To adopt the recommendations of the Committee on Conferences contained in chapter VI of its report.

4/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirty-fourth Session, Supplement No. 32 (A/34/32 and Corr.1).