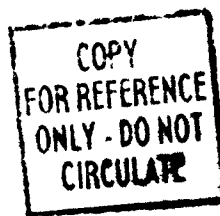


**United Nations**  
**GENERAL**  
**ASSEMBLY**

**THIRTY-NINTH SESSION**

**Official Records\***



FIFTH COMMITTEE  
35th meeting  
held on  
Tuesday, 27 November 1984  
at 5 p.m.  
New York

DEC 18 1984

**SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 35th MEETING**

Chairman: Mr. MAYCOCK (Barbados)

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

**CONTENTS**

AGENDA ITEM 113: JOINT INSPECTION UNIT: REPORTS OF THE JOINT INSPECTION UNIT  
(continued)

AGENDA ITEM 110: PROGRAMME PLANNING (continued)

(a) REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE FOR PROGRAMME AND CO-ORDINATION

(b) REPORTS OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

AGENDA ITEM 109: PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 1984-1985 (continued)

Revised estimates resulting from decisions of the Economic and Social Council at its first and second regular sessions, 1984

Revised estimates under section 28G, Electronic Data Processing and Information Systems Division - Advisory Committee for the Co-ordination of Information Systems (United Nations share)

Compensation in the event of death, injury or illness attributable to service with the United Nations and health insurance for members of commissions, committees or similar bodies

Industrial Development Decade for Africa: proposals to reimburse \$1 million drawn from savings in the 1982-1983 programme budget to initiate the activities called for in section II of General Assembly resolution 38/192

\*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 DC2-750, 2 United Nations Plaza, 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.5/39/SR.35  
30 November 1984

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

84-58013 3871S (E)

/...

The meeting was called to order at 5.25 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 113: JOINT INSPECTION UNIT: REPORTS OF THE JOINT INSPECTION UNIT  
(continued) (A/39/34, A/39/87, A/39/145 and Corr.1, A/39/239 and Add.1, Add.1/Corr.1  
and Add.2, A/39/299 and Add.1, Add.2 and Corr.1, A/39/602, A/39/603)

1. Mr. FORBES (Ireland), speaking on behalf of the member States of the European Community, said that the Ten attached great importance to the Joint Inspection Unit's independent status and powers of investigation in all matters concerning efficiency and the proper use of funds. To be effective, the Unit must be staffed by the most competent personnel available, who should be selected with due regard to the principles of equitable geographical distribution and reasonable rotation. JIU should, within the limits of its statute, concentrate upon the areas of greatest importance in the United Nations system.

2. The Ten hoped that the the Unit's recommendations would be given serious consideration and that the Main Committees and subsidiary bodies would set aside time for those reports that fell within their areas of responsibility. The Secretary-General's report on the implementation of the Unit's recommendation was in the main encouraging.

3. Mr. WEDICK (Canada), referring to the report on co-operation between and management of libraries of the United Nations system (A/39/299), said that the United Nations depended upon the dissemination of accurate information and needed to ensure that information services, notably libraries, were well organized. His delegation was disturbed by the lack of a co-operative library network. Libraries generally acted in isolation in organizing information flows, which bred inefficiency and duplication and discouraged standardization. His delegation would support the establishment of an inter-agency panel to study inter-library co-operation provided it was granted a mandate which would encourage substantive results, notably a realistic, comprehensive plan of action. A background paper should be prepared outlining proposed terms of reference, a schedule of meetings and objectives.

4. Canada recognized the need for United Nations libraries to keep up with technological developments in information to avoid inefficiency. Current systems were inadequate, and new technology should be introduced, within available resources, under a long-term plan. User requirements should first be identified, and the cost of introducing new technology weighed against projected benefits.

5. With respect to the report on publications policy and practice in the United Nations system (A/39/239), his delegation endorsed the ACABQ view regarding the use of a medium-term plan for the period 1984-1989 as a backcloth for all recommendations. The significant costs of publications could be rationalized provided they accurately reflected the needs of organizations and reached their intended recipients in a timely and cost-effective manner. Publications policy could be determined only when the mandates of organizations, for example, the priority given to disseminating information, were clearly understood. The concerns raised in paragraph 59 of the Joint Inspection Unit's report (A/39/34) required definitive remedial action.

/...

6. Mr. PINEIRO ARAMBURU (Argentina) said that his delegation was gratified that JIU had continued to maintain contact with the various regional groups, with a view to increasing their participation in its work. The General Assembly should support JIU recommendations, to ensure that they were implemented by the various organizations of the system.

7. The United Nations system needed an efficient library network which applied modern data-processing and information technology. The "systems approach" recommended by JIU would improve administration and strengthen library operations. His delegation was concerned by the personnel and recruitment policy of the International Labour Organisation and the disequilibrium in the geographical composition of the ILO secretariat. It trusted that the JIU recommendations on the subject would be duly considered. With respect to publications policy, his delegation endorsed the Unit's recommendations, provided that management guidelines were in harmony with the information needs of Member States.

AGENDA ITEM 110: PROGRAMME PLANNING (continued) (A/37/6/Add.2 (Parts I and II) and Corr.1 and Corr.2; A/39/6 and Corr.1, A/39/38, A/39/173 and Corr.1 and Add.1, A/39/667; A/C.5/39/1 and Corr.1, A/C.5/39/21 and Corr.1, A/C.5/39/45)

(a) REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE FOR PROGRAMME AND CO-ORDINATION

(b) REPORTS OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

8. Mr. FORBES (Ireland), speaking on behalf of the member States of the European Community, said that the Ten welcomed the renewed emphasis placed by CPC on the timely submission of reports, and supported the CPC suggestion that more systematic efforts should be made to apply fully the methodology prescribed in General Assembly resolution 34/224 on procedures for medium-term planning. The Ten attached particular importance to priority-setting, which was an integral part of planning and management, and were therefore perturbed that the current system of priority-setting had yet to be fully implemented by some intergovernmental bodies and Secretariat services. With regard to co-ordination, they believed that better use could be made of the joint meetings of ACC and CPC, which were intended to contribute to system-wide co-ordination, and in that spirit they supported the recommendations contained in Economic and Social Council resolution 1984/61, section VIII B.

9. The Ten welcomed the improvements which had been made in cross-organizational programme analyses and the request to the Secretary-General to pay particular attention in future analyses to economic and technical co-operation among developing countries. They trusted that the recommendations on UNDP-financed technical co-operation activities of UNIDO in the field of manufactures would be implemented in full. Such activities should be kept under review with the aim of improving their effectiveness further.

10. Statements of programme budget implications were an essential element in promoting greater efficiency and should enable Member States to take informed decisions on relative priorities. The Ten wished to underline the importance of the role of the Main Committees in establishing and reviewing programme priorities. Thus

/...

(Mr. Forbes, Ireland)

all the Main Committees should receive all relevant information on possibilities and alternatives for financing activities resulting from draft resolutions. Unfortunately, at the current session the information provided to the Main Committees had been inadequate.

11. It was to be hoped that there would be a substantial improvement in the provision of Secretariat support to CPC. The Ten, which believed that planning and programming functions should not be submerged by the budgetary function, welcomed the Secretary-General's commitment to effectiveness and trusted that there would be no needless restructuring of areas of the Secretariat already fulfilling their roles adequately. Any changes effected should improve programme planning, not lessen its importance in the integrated management process.

AGENDA ITEM 109: PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 1984-1985 (continued)

Revised estimates resulting from decisions of the Economic and Social Council at its first and second regular sessions, 1984 (A/C.5/39/25; A/39/7/Add.6)

12. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that, as indicated in the Secretary-General's report in document A/C.5/39/25, the revised estimates resulting from decisions of the Economic and Social Council at its first and second regular sessions, 1984, were: \$963,300 gross or \$895,600 net of staff assessment (\$517,000 for 1984 and \$378,600 for 1985) for costs other than conference servicing, and \$1,285,300 (\$873,500 for 1984 and \$411,800 for 1985) for conference-servicing costs.

13. With regard to the costs other than for conference-servicing, the amount of \$517,000 for 1984 had already been approved by the Advisory Committee in the context of resolution 38/237 on unforeseen and extraordinary expenses for the biennium 1984-1985. In considering requirements for 1985, the Advisory Committee had taken account of information provided by the representatives of the Secretary-General on the extent to which commitments had already been entered into in respect of the amount of \$517,000. On the basis of that information and of the considerations referred to in paragraph 22 of document A/39/7/Add.6, the Advisory Committee was recommending reductions totalling \$101,600 in the Secretary-General's request of \$378,600 for 1985. Accordingly, it was recommending an additional appropriation of \$277,000 for 1985, bringing the total appropriation for the two-year period to \$794,000 under sections 4, 23 and 27, plus an amount of \$50,600 under section 31 for staff assessment, to be offset by the same amount under income section 1.

14. Mr. MURRAY (United Kingdom) recalled that, when the Economic and Social Council had adopted resolution 1984/45 on preparations for the Seventh United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders, his delegation had supported the resolution but had expressed reservations regarding its financial implications, which it had viewed as excessive. His delegation noted that the Advisory Committee was recommending a reduction in the projected expenditures, but it questioned the need for what was still a considerable sum of money. He wished to know why the number of expert consultants invited to the Congress had been increased

/...

(Mr. Murray, United Kingdom)

to 25 from the original 5 provided for in the programme budget, and why so many DPI staff were to attend the Congress, at considerable financial cost.

15. Mr. FORAN (Controller) recalled that paragraph 12 of resolution 1984/45 had in fact requested the Secretary-General to invite 25 expert consultants to participate in the Congress.

16. Mr. NYGARD (United States of America) requested a vote on the revised estimates. His delegation had explained its position on the various Economic and Social Council resolutions in the relevant substantive committees. It considered the additional appropriations as a whole to be excessive however, and could not support them.

17. The CHAIRMAN proposed that, on the basis of recommendations of the Advisory Committee, the Fifth Committee should approve additional appropriations totalling \$794,000 under the programme budget for the biennium 1984-1985, to be apportioned in the following way: section 4: \$116,600; section 23: \$649,900; section 27: \$27,500; as well as an additional appropriation of \$50,600 under section 31, to be offset by an increase of the same magnitude in the estimates under income section 1.

18. The related conference-servicing requirements had been estimated on a full-cost basis at \$873,500 for 1984 and \$411,800 for 1985. The actual additional appropriations that might be required in that respect for 1984 would be dealt with in the context of the first performance report on the programme budget for the biennium 1984-1985. Conference-servicing requirements in respect of 1985 would be considered in the context of the consolidated statement of conference-servicing requirements to be submitted at a later stage in the current session.

19. The Chairman's proposal was adopted by 77 votes to 2, with 7 abstentions.

Revised estimates under section 28G, Electronic Data Processing and Information Systems Division - Advisory Committee for the Co-ordination of Information Systems (United Nations share) (A/C.5/39/35)

20. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) explained that the General Assembly had approved an appropriation of \$1,306,000 for ACCIS for 1984-1985, the United Nations share of which had been 43 per cent or \$561,600. Of that \$561,500, the Advisory Committee had already approved an amount of \$273,400 in its first report on the 1984-1985 biennium, leaving a balance of \$288,200. At the thirty-eighth session, however, the Secretary-General had indicated that no additional appropriation would be required to cover that balance, since expenditures during the previous biennium had been below the approved estimates. According to the latest estimates, ACCIS requirements for the current biennium would total \$960,000, of which the United Nations share was \$412,600. Since \$273,400 had already been approved, that left a balance of \$139,200. The Secretary-General was requesting an additional appropriation to cover that balance, yet, according to information available to the Advisory Committee, inflation at Geneva had been lower than the estimated 5.5 per cent and the dollar had been quite

/...

(Mr. Mselle)

strong, with the result that there appeared to be less justification for requesting an additional appropriation at the current session than there would have been at the thirty-eighth session, when the Secretary-General had in fact said that no additional appropriation was required. Accordingly, the Advisory Committee was proposing that the revised estimates for ACCIS should be approved but that no additional appropriations under section 28G should be authorized at the current stage. If that created problems, the Secretary-General could always raise the matter in the context of the review of the second budget performance report at the fortieth session.

21. The CHAIRMAN proposed that, on the basis of the recommendation of the Advisory Committee, the Fifth Committee should decide that any additional appropriation that might be required in respect of the United Nations share in the costs of ACCIS for the biennium 1984-1985 should be reported on in the context of the programme budget performance report to be considered by the General Assembly at its fortieth session.

22. The Chairman's proposal was adopted.

Compensation in the event of death, injury or illness attributable to service with the United Nations and health insurance for members of commissions, committees or similar bodies (A/C.5/39/36)

23. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) recalled that, by its resolution 34/233, the General Assembly had requested the Secretary-General to review the scale of compensation in the event of death, injury or illness attributable to service with the United Nations at least once every four years, in the light of inflation and currency fluctuations, and to examine the feasibility of providing insurance coverage for members of commissions, committees or similar bodies. The results of the review of the scale of compensation and the Secretary-General's proposals in that regard were reproduced in paragraph 6 of document A/C.5/39/36, while paragraphs 9 to 14 of that document contained the Secretary-General's findings with regard to health insurance. On the basis of that document and of information provided by the representatives of the Secretary-General, the Advisory Committee could support the Secretary-General's recommendations.

24. The CHAIRMAN proposed that, on the basis of the Advisory Committee's recommendation, the Fifth Committee should recommend to the General Assembly that it take note of the Secretary-General's report (A/C.5/39/36) and that it approve the proposals of the Secretary-General contained in paragraph 6 of that report.

25. The Chairman's proposal was adopted.

Industrial Development Decade for Africa: proposals to reimburse \$1 million drawn from savings in the 1982-1983 programme budget to initiate the activities called for in section II of General Assembly resolution 38/192 (A/C.5/39/42)

26. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) recalled that the Secretary-General had been requested to submit to the General Assembly at its thirty-ninth session proposals to achieve the reimbursement

(Mr. Mselle)

of \$1 million through savings out of the programme budget for 1984-1985 or through redeployment. In his report in document A/C.5/39/42, the Secretary-General indicated that savings totalling \$127,100 under section 17, as described in paragraphs 6 and 7 of that document, could be reported thus far. The Secretary-General could not indicate yet where the balance of \$872,900 would come from, but would be able to do so by the end of the current biennium. The Advisory Committee endorsed the approach taken by the Secretary-General: since the budget was approved on a two-year basis, savings could not be reported unless it was certain that a programme activity would not be implemented in either year. The representatives of the Secretary-General had moreover informed the Advisory Committee that current forecasts gave every indication that the full amount would be available by the end of the biennium.

27. Mr. TOMMO MONTHE (Cameroon) said that, in 1983, the Secretary-General had been requested to consider reimbursement of the funds drawn from savings in the 1982-1983 programme budget through savings out of the programme budget for 1984-1985 or through redeployment. It was therefore not clear why the Secretary-General had decided to consider those savings in a restrictive way, exclusively under section 17. He asked if the balance of \$872,900 required to reimburse the \$1 million fully would also be obtained from further savings under section 17.

28. According to paragraph 6 (c) of the report (A/C.5/39/42), savings of \$15,000 would be realized as a result of a Secretariat decision to make less use of the services of experts at certain meetings. He inquired if that was the result of an earlier decision of the Secretary-General to engage fewer consultants and experts or if that decision and the consequent savings were related to the fact that, as indicated in paragraph 6 (b), fewer experts had attended another group of meetings.

29. Mr. TAKASU (Japan) said that, since the General Assembly had decided that the \$1 million was to be reimbursed through savings out of the programme budget for 1984-1985 or through redeployment, it was puzzling that the economies were expected under sections 17 and 28M alone. While he understood that it was difficult for the Secretary-General to forecast potential savings early in a biennium, the Organization had clearly benefited from the recent sharp fluctuations in exchange rates. Since certain disbursements had already been made in 1984 at an exchange rate beneficial to the Organization, it was unclear why the resulting savings had not been recorded.

30. Mr. YONIS (Iraq) inquired if the Secretary-General, on the basis of past experience, was able to foresee which sections of the budget were most likely to produce the required savings. His delegation considered that some sections of the programme budget could do so more easily than others.

31. Mr. FORAN (Controller) said that since programme managers had a two-year period to execute their programmes and achieve the goals contained in the programme budget proposals, it was not appropriate to ask them to forecast, early in the biennium, what they hoped to accomplish or would have to postpone. However, that had been done in a preliminary way in UNIDO, and the Secretariat had reported on the outcome of that exercise. The report of the Secretary-General therefore referred exclusively to savings from section 17, UNIDO, and section 28M, Administrative Services, Vienna.

/...

(Mr. Foran)

There had been a pattern of savings in some sections of the programme budget and he was confident that the \$1 million would be found. However, it was inappropriate to single out specific sections or programme managers at that time.

32. With regard to the second concern raised by the representative of Cameroon, there was no relationship whatsoever between paragraph 6 (c) and the measures taken by the Secretary-General to engage fewer consultants and experts. The savings of \$15,000 indicated in paragraph 6 (c) had been identified before measures had been taken to reduce appropriations for consultants.

33. With regard to probable gains as a result of exchange rate fluctuations and inflation, any gains favourable to the Organization had to be reported to the General Assembly before action could be taken on their utilization.

34. The CHAIRMAN said that, on the basis of the recommendations of the Advisory Committee, he proposed that the Fifth Committee should take note of the report of the Secretary-General and approve the transfer of \$25,100 from section 28M to section 17 of the programme budget for 1984-1985, as well as a reduction of \$24,900 in the income estimates under income section 2.

35. The Chairman's proposal was adopted.

36. Mr. YONIS (Iraq), explaining his country's position, said that, while his delegation had joined in the consensus on the \$1 million for the Industrial Development Decade for Africa, it hoped that the savings required in that connection would not affect the programmes under section 14 of the budget.

37. Mr. TOMMO MONTHE (Cameroon) trusted that it would be possible to realize the additional savings from sections other than section 17 of the budget.

The meeting rose at 6.55 p.m.