



FIFTH COMMITTEE
46th meeting
held on
Tuesday, 11 December 1984
at 7 p.m.
New York

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SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 46th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. MAYCOCK (Barbados)

later: Mr. BUSHEV (Bulgaria)
Mr. DITZ (Austria)

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

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The meeting was called to order at 7.25 p.m.

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

Programme budget implications of draft resolutions A/39/L.28-L.32 concerning agenda item 31 (continued) (A/C.5/39/75)

1. Mr. TUAN (Liberia) said that, if his delegation had been present during the vote on the programme budget implications of draft resolutions A/39/L.28 to L.32 at the Committee's 45th meeting, it would have voted in favour.

Programme budget implications of the recommendations of the United Nations Council for Namibia in its report to the General Assembly (A/39/24 (Part II)) (continued) (A/39/7/Add.13; A/C.5/39/70 and Corr.1 and Add.1)

2. Ms. MUSTONEN (Finland), speaking in explanation of vote before the vote, reiterated the reservations her delegation had expressed the previous year in connection with the vague proposals regarding meetings of the Council and in particular the many exceptions to the provisions of General Assembly resolution 31/140 concerning the additional costs of holding sessions away from Headquarters. However, bearing in mind the Council's unique nature for Namibia and the need to reach a political solution without delay, her Government endorsed the objectives outlined in the Council's recommendations (A/39/24 (Part II), para. 1) and, accordingly, would vote in favour of the Advisory Committee's report (A/39/7/Add.13).

3. Mr. OKEYO (Kenya) disagreed with the concern expressed at the Committee's previous meeting about the Council's growing expenditures and about the fact that too many meetings were being held away from Headquarters. Monetary concerns must not divert attention from the political importance of the Council's work. The Council played a vital role in educating public opinion and promoting support for Namibian independence. It therefore deserved the Committee's full support.

4. Referring to the comments made at the previous meeting about the work of the Committee on Conferences, he wished to correct the impression that a member of the Secretariat had challenged that Committee's mandate.

5. Mr. MOUSSAKI (Congo), speaking on behalf of the African Group, observed that, unlike the big corporations that were plundering the resources of southern Africa, the Council for Namibia had not been created for profit-seeking purposes. He deplored the negative comments made at the Committee's previous meeting in connection with the relatively small amounts requested for the Council's activities. South Africa's allies used every possible ploy to delay Namibia's independence. The funds requested were therefore justified and should be granted. The international community must not remain indifferent to the suffering of the Namibian people.

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6. Mrs. KNEZEVIC (Yugoslavia) said that the crux of the Namibian problem was the failure to implement the United Nations plan for the independence of Namibia and in South Africa's continued obstruction. Her delegation was deeply concerned about the dangerous persistence of neo-colonialism in Namibia and, accordingly, fully supported both the Secretary-General's request for additional resources and the Advisory Committee's recommendations. The political importance of the activities described in the Council's report far outweighed their cost.

7. Mr. SOEPRAPTO (Indonesia) said that, since the Namibian people were currently no closer than before to achieving independence and since the Council played an important role in monitoring the situation and in mobilizing public support for their cause, his delegation would support the Advisory Committee's recommendations as well as the observations submitted by the Committee on Conferences (A/C.5/39/70/Add.1).

8. Mr. LADJOUI (Algeria) disagreed with the comments made at the Committee's previous meeting about the need to reduce the Council's budget. No price was too high to pay for Namibia's independence and the Council should be given all the means it needed to accomplish its important task.

9. Mr. FONTAINE ORTIZ (Cuba) drew attention to the miserable conditions in which many African peoples were still living, for example under the scourge of apartheid. However, the Committee was currently witnessing an attempt by those who were sustaining the apartheid régime to extend it even more support under the guise of financial reservations, and he supported previous comments to the effect that the cost of two super-bombers would pay for the Council's activities for one year. Moreover, all those speakers who had opposed the programme budget implications of the recommendations in the Council's report represented countries of origin of transnational corporations having operations in Namibia, as well as in Azania. If Member States complied with the relevant United Nations resolutions and stopped such operations, the apartheid régime would soon collapse. His delegation would therefore vote in favour of providing the resources recommended for the Council for Namibia.

10. Mr. OULD MALLOUM FALL (Mauritania) said that his delegation fully endorsed the comments made by the representative of Kenya and would vote in favour of funding for the Council for Namibia. Since the Territory would be under the direct responsibility of the United Nations until independence, the Council should be given all the necessary means to fulfil its mandate.

11. Mr. ROY (India) supported the Secretary-General's statement of programme budget implications (A/C.5/39/70), the recommendations of the Advisory Committee (A/39/7/Add.13) and the observations of the Committee on Conferences (A/C.5/39/70/Add.1). However, he drew attention to the contradiction between the support some delegations expressed for Namibia's independence and their reluctance to provide the resources necessary to achieve that goal.

12. Mr. ODUYEMI (Nigeria) observed that the programme budget implications were not really at issue; the current debate actually concerned the independence of Namibia and, therefore, political considerations far outweighed monetary considerations. Accordingly, his delegation would vote in favour of providing the resources needed by the Council.

13. Mr. ORTEGA (Mexico) recognized the unique mandate of the Council for Namibia, which was basically a political body. The United Nations should do everything possible to help Namibia to accede to independence, and that included appropriating funds and authorizing exceptions to certain rules. He was surprised that some delegations used those two issues as a pretext to obstruct the Council's work, and he supported the comments made by the representative of Kenya on that matter. His delegation would therefore vote in favour of providing the resources recommended for the Council.

14. Mr. WITHEFORD (Australia) said that his Government was committed to the independence of Namibia and to the United Nations plan. However, his delegation had reservations about many aspects of the Council's programme of work and could not accept that rules should be waived merely because of the Council's unique nature. The Council had an important role to play, for example in mobilizing public opinion, but he could not support the convening of plenary meetings away from Headquarters, which constituted a departure from General Assembly resolution 31/140.

15. The expenditure of \$200,000 for missions of consultation and representation at international meetings did not seem justified, and the sum of \$907,000 for the convening of plenary meetings away from Headquarters could be better spent, for example on the problem of Namibian refugees.

16. He also expressed concern about the proliferation of meetings in all parts of the world, which should be either funded by voluntary contributions or held at Headquarters. Referring to the institution of legal proceedings in European countries in connection with compliance with Decree No. 1, he pointed out that the Council had not yet decided to take such action. For all those reasons, his delegation would vote against the statement of the Secretary-General contained in document A/C.5/39/70.

17. Mr. TUAN (Liberia) said that those delegations which saw difficulties for political reasons in financing the Council for Namibia were not doing the United Nations or the Namibian people justice. The Council was playing an important role in seeking to secure the independence and restore the dignity of the Namibian people and it was incumbent on the international community as a whole to provide it with financial and moral support.

18. Mr. MOJTAMED (Islamic Republic of Iran) said that he shared the views expressed by the representatives of Cameroon and Kenya. The problem of Namibia lay in the reluctance of the colonial Powers to implement the relevant resolutions of the United Nations. His delegation would vote in favour of the recommendations on the financial implications.

19. Mr. PINEIRO ARAMBURU (Argentina) said that one could hardly put a price on the independence of Namibia. His delegation would, therefore, vote in favour of the recommendations of the Advisory Committee.

20. Mr. DITZ (Austria) said that Austria, as a small country which had suffered under foreign occupation, was committed to the early independence of Namibia. With regard to the programme of work of the Council for Namibia, he agreed with the representative of Kenya that it was necessary to impress upon world public opinion the need to expedite the independence of Namibia, but he had increasing doubts as to whether the work programme was of a nature to achieve that goal.

21. Mr. MAJOLI (Italy) recalled that at the previous meeting the representative of Ireland had spoken of the concern of the ten EEC countries over the proposed exceptions to resolutions adopted unanimously. His delegation fully supported the cause of Namibian independence and wanted to see it achieved as soon as possible by peaceful political means. It was in the interest of the Namibian people that money should be wisely spent in that cause. That was not the case with the proposed expenditures outlined in the Secretary-General's statement of programme budget implications, particularly those relating to the holding of extraordinary plenary meetings of the Council away from Headquarters. For that reason, his delegation would abstain in the vote.

22. Mr. TOMMO MONTHE (Cameroon) said that he wished to reply to certain questions of a technical nature raised at the preceding meeting. The representative of the United Kingdom had asked why the Council for Namibia had departed from regulation 4.9 of the Regulations Governing programme planning, the Programme Aspects of the Budget, the Monitoring of Implementation and the Methods of Evaluation. He wished to point out that in the debate on resolution 38/227 at the previous session, members of the Committee had noted that that regulation was very broad and could not be applied in every case. For that reason, resolution 38/227 specifically provided that the integrated statements of programme, financial and administrative implications envisaged in regulation 4.9 should apply only to draft resolutions submitted to the General Assembly. That was clearly the explanation as to why such a statement had not been submitted to the Council.

23. With reference to comments that the extraordinary plenary meetings of the Council could be held at an established United Nations centre, he pointed out that the calendar did not always allow it and that some meetings were held at the invitation of individual Governments. He also stressed the extraordinary character of the meetings in question.

24. Replying to criticism that the Council had not achieved any noteworthy results, he said that the serious obstacles faced by the Council in its work were being placed there by those who were making such reproaches. With regard to financing, the funds requested in order to institute legal proceedings against companies exploiting Namibia were minimal in comparison with the profits such companies were reaping from their operations in Namibia.

25. Mr. ANNAN (Director, Budget Division) said that it was clear from the debate that all delegations agreed on the importance of the Council's programme of work, but that some would like to see resources used more judiciously. The Secretariat wished to assure delegations that the useful points they had raised, as well as the comments and recommendations of the Advisory Committee contained in document A/39/7/Add. 13, would be borne in mind when the next statement of the programme budget implications of the Council's programme of work was being prepared. Furthermore, he wished to assure members of the Fifth Committee that the Council's programme would be subject to the same scrutiny as other programmes.

26. The CHAIRMAN proposed that, on the basis of the recommendations of the Advisory Committee, the Fifth Committee should inform the General Assembly that, should it adopt the recommendations of the United Nations Council for Namibia in its report to the General Assembly (A/39/24, (Part II)), additional appropriations totalling \$4,097,000 would be required under the programme budget for the biennium 1984-1985, apportioned in the following way: \$12,900 under section 1B; \$3,014,200 under section 3C; \$1,043,900 under section 27; \$6,200 under section 28; \$19,800 under section 29. An additional appropriation of \$26,100 would also be required under section 31 (Staff assessment), which would be offset by an increase of the same amount under Income section 1 (Income from staff assessment). Conference - servicing requirements would arise which were estimated, on a full-cost basis, at \$2,415,800. The actual additional appropriations that might be required in that respect would be considered in the context of the consolidated statement to be submitted at a later stage during the current session. Adoption of the recommendations would, furthermore, constitute authorization for exceptions to be made to the relevant provisions of General Assembly resolutions 3415 (XXX), 31/140, section I, and 37/14 C.

27. Mr. AMNEUS (Sweden) said that his delegation would vote in favour of the Chairman's proposal, because of Sweden's strong support for the work of the United Nations with regard to Namibia. However, his delegation was concerned at the programme budget implications of several of the draft resolutions on Namibia, especially with regard to meetings away from Headquarters, and also at the sharp increase in the cost of some items. He hoped that in carrying out its programme of work the Council would endeavour to achieve economies wherever possible.

28. At the request of the representative of Cuba, a recorded vote was taken on the Chairman's proposal.

In favour: Afghanistan, Algeria, Angola, Argentina, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burma, Burundi, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, China, Congo, Costa Rica, Cuba, Czechoslovakia, Democratic Yemen, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, Ethiopia, Finland, German Democratic Republic, Ghana, Greece, Guyana, Honduras, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Ivory Coast, Jamaica, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lebanon, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives,

Mali, Mauritania, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Philippines, Romania, Rwanda, Saudi Arabia, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Somalia, Spain, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Thailand, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Arab Emirates, Venezuela, Yemen, Yugoslavia, Zaire, Zambia.

Against: Australia, Canada, France, Germany, Federal Republic of, Japan, Netherlands, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America.

Abstaining: Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Iceland, Italy, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal.

29. The proposal was adopted by 92 votes to 8, with 8 abstentions.

30. Ms. van DRUNEN LITTEL (Netherlands) recalled the statement made at the previous meeting by the representative of Ireland on behalf of the ten States members of the European Economic Community expressing support for the objective of Namibian independence and the view that reservations on the financial implications were not inconsistent with such support. Her delegation's vote against the proposal was based on its concern for sound and prudent management of the United Nations budget.

31. Mr. WESTPHAL (Federal Republic of Germany) also recalled the statement made by the representative of Ireland on behalf of the Ten. His Government felt strong concern with regard to the financial implications of the work programme of the Council for Namibia. The Council's noble cause should not serve as an excuse for not exercising financial discipline.

Communications system of the United Nations (A/39/7/Add.12; A/C.5/39/39)

32. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions), introducing the report of the Advisory Committee on the communications system of the United Nations (A/39/7/Add.12), said that the report of the Secretary-General (A/C.5/39/39) described the present United Nations communications network and proposed a number of measures to improve and expand that system. Measures were proposed to improve and expand the communications network for peace-keeping missions by replacing the satellite earth stations at Geneva, Jerusalem and Naqoura with new stations, to comply with the technical specifications of INTELSAT. It was also proposed to establish four additional earth stations at New York, Damascus, Nicosia and Rawalpindi, the Rawalpindi satellite earth station to be hooked up to a new leased satellite channel on an Indian Ocean satellite.

33. The Secretary-General proposed to lease additional AVD circuits which would connect all main United Nations duty stations and London, Paris, Rome and Montreal, and to acquire a reserve of communications equipment to be available in the event

(Mr. Mselle)

of new peace-keeping missions. The estimated costs of those proposals, which would be spread over the three-year period 1985-1987, were summarized in paragraph 8 of report of the Advisory Committee (\$1,572,600 in recurrent annual costs after 1987 and a non-recurrent investment of \$5,762,500).

34. The Advisory Committee, for the reasons given in paragraph 12 of its report, had not recommended expansion of the satellite communications network as proposed by the Secretary-General. It had accepted that the stations at Geneva, Jerusalem and Naqoura should be upgraded, but considered that there should be no further expansion, thus saving \$2,550,000 at 1984 prices. For the reasons given in paragraph 14 of its report, the Advisory Committee had not accepted the proposal to procure reserve communications equipment, thereby reducing the cost of the plan by a further \$1,580,000. However, the Committee had accepted the proposed expansion of the AVD network, except for the proposed link with London, Montreal, Paris and Rome (A/39/7/Add.12, para. 19), and had requested that information in that regard be submitted to it at its 1985 spring session. It was also recommending (A/39/7/Add.12, para. 21) that the Secretary-General should submit a report to the Advisory Committee in 1986 on how the new system recommended by the Advisory Committee was working.

35. The recommendations of the Advisory Committee were summarized in paragraph 24 of its report. It was recommending for the biennium 1984-1985 additional appropriations of \$1,537,000 under various expenditure sections and additional estimates of income of \$39,600 under income sections 1 and 3, so that net appropriations would amount to \$1,497,400.

36. Mr. KHALEVINSKI (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that the proposals contained in document A/C.5/39/39 would lead to the creation of a complex technical system, including satellites, which was not in keeping with the actual communications needs of the United Nations. The Advisory Committee had gone some way towards assessing actual needs but its mandate had prevented it from examining the very principle of creating such a system. His delegation felt that the advanced high-frequency radio and telephone communications and the broad range of commercial channels available to the United Nations were sufficient to resolve all problems relating to communications among United Nations offices. Rather than establishing a world-wide independent system of communications, the United Nations should use the existing facilities available to it. Since even the recommendations of the Advisory Committee still included appropriations which went beyond rational needs, his delegation requested that there should be recorded vote on the matter, and it would vote against the proposed expenditures.

37. Mr. NYGARD (United States), speaking in explanation of vote before the vote, said that, while the recommendations of the Advisory Committee were reasonable in many respects, his delegation remained unconvinced of the need for many of the proposed expenditures and would vote against them. The Secretary-General's report did not provide convincing examples of ways in which the work of the United Nations had suffered because of inadequacies in the current communications system. The proposed expenditures were still quite large, even after the significant reductions

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(Mr. Nygard, United States)

proposed by the Advisory Committee. Expenditure of that magnitude must be carefully weighed against competing alternatives. It was difficult to see its direct impact on the maintenance of peace, the protection of human rights, the reduction of poverty, or the elimination of hunger.

38. The CHAIRMAN invited the Committee to take a decision on the Advisory Committee's recommendation to approve additional appropriations totalling \$1,497,400 apportioned as indicated in paragraph 24 of the report of the Advisory Committee (A/39/7/Add.12).

39. At the request of the representative of the Soviet Union, a recorded vote was taken on the Advisory Committee's recommendation.

In favour: Algeria, Argentina, Austria, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Burma, Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, China, Congo, Costa Rica, Cuba, Democratic Yemen, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, Ethiopia, Finland, Ghana, Greece, Honduras, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Ireland, Ivory Coast, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Mauritania, Mexico, Morocco, Mozambique, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Philippines, Saudi Arabia, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Somalia, Spain, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Sweden, Thailand, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, Venezuela, Yugoslavia, Zambia.

Against: Bulgaria, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Czechoslovakia, German Democratic Republic, Mongolia, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United States of America.

Abstaining: Australia, Belgium, Canada, France, Germany, Federal Republic of, Israel, Italy, Japan, Netherlands, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Portugal, Romania, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

40. The Advisory Committee's recommendation for additional net appropriations totalling \$1,497,400, apportioned as indicated in paragraph 24 of its report (A/39/7/Add.12), was adopted by 75 votes to 8, with 14 abstentions.

AGENDA ITEM 112: ADMINISTRATIVE AND BUDGETARY CO-ORDINATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS WITH THE SPECIALIZED AGENCIES AND THE INTERNATIONAL ATOMIC ENERGY AGENCY (continued)

(a) REPORT OF THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON ADMINISTRATIVE AND BUDGETARY QUESTIONS (continued) (A/39/592)

(b) IMPACT OF INFLATION AND MONETARY INSTABILITY ON THE REGULAR BUDGET OF THE UNITED NATIONS: REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (continued) (A/C.5/39/44)

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(c) FEASIBILITY OF ESTABLISHING A SINGLE ADMINISTRATIVE TRIBUNAL: REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (continued) (A/C.5/39/7 and Corr.1)

41. Mr. THORSTEINSSON (Iceland), speaking on behalf of the Nordic countries, said that the report of the Advisory Committee (A/39/592) contained much useful information. The overview and comparisons provided in section III could be very helpful in understanding and dealing with the various budgetary practices within the United Nations system. While noting the reasons for the differences in budgetary practices within the United Nations system, as explained in paragraphs 16 and 17 of the report, he supported the Advisory Committee's conclusion that further efforts at harmonization should be encouraged.

42. Table C in the report showed the regular budget contributions to technical co-operation activities, including the excess of support costs over reimbursement. That was a complex subject the Advisory Committee might profitably study in greater detail in reports. Consideration could be given not only to different methods of calculating support costs but also to the actual utilization of reimbursements.

43. The report of the Secretary-General on the impact of inflation and monetary instability on the regular budget of the United Nations (A/C.5/39/44) explained why the causes of inflation and monetary instability were extremely difficult to pinpoint and relate to individual countries and regions. The interplay of many economic and financial factors did not lend itself to simple explanations, and there could be widely differing interpretations of a given set of data on inflation and monetary instability. The Nordic countries felt that it would be a waste of resources for the Secretary-General to conduct another study on the subject.

44. Mr. DITZ (Austria), speaking on the report of the Joint Inspection Unit entitled "Common services of United Nations organizations at the Vienna International Centre (VIC)" (A/39/520), said that the common services structure at Vienna had proven to be extremely successful in keeping operating costs at a minimum. The conversion of UNIDO into a specialized agency might mean changes in the scope and configuration of that structure. The report contained many useful observations and suggestions on the subject.

45. The current common services structure was cost-effective and had stood the test of time. The question of whether or not other support services should be included should be carefully examined in order to assess how well they could be provided under a common services arrangement. He was pleased that the Secretary-General had initiated a review of the Memorandum of Understanding concerning the organization of common services and that the possibility of broadening the scope of such services was being considered in the context of that review.

46. The question of conference services was of pivotal importance to every international organization. From an administrative and management point of view, there was obviously a strong argument for pooling conference services at Vienna. It should, however, be borne in mind that an independent international organization should be in a position to service the programme of meetings mandated by its governing body. The highly specific nature of the work of IAEA and UNIDO would

(Mr. Ditz, Austria)

require specialized interpreters and translators. As far as the management of such a single conference-servicing operation was concerned, the most practical solution would be for the United Nations to assume that responsibility. The structure of such an operation must, however, take into account the interest of all organizations concerned and allow the organizations to retain, if they so wished, a nucleus of conference-servicing staff of their own. The concept of a single conference-servicing operation and the cost and management efficiency which it entailed was compatible with the need to ensure that the specific requirements of the individual organizations were met.

47. The pooling of conference resources could be achieved in two phases. First, existing conference services would be strengthened and a conference co-ordinating mechanism in which all the organizations concerned were represented would be established. Conference services at Vienna, which currently relied heavily on free-lance assistance, should be provided with the permanent staff required to service the regular programme of meetings. The number of full-time interpreters should be increased to 20, to provide at least one full team covering all official languages. He therefore requested the Secretary-General to consider the question of providing for that number of interpreter posts in the context of his budget proposals for 1986-1987. He hoped that the Advisory Committee, following its traditional policy regarding the conversion of temporary assistance into permanent posts, would approve such a request by the Secretary-General. In addition to the joint co-ordinating mechanism, there should be a strong and permanent unit for planning, co-ordinating and servicing all the organizations concerned. On the basis of the experience gained during the first phase, it should then be possible to establish a conference-servicing pool encompassing all the organizations at the Vienna International Centre. In order to provide for the specific conference - servicing requirements of UNIDO and IAEA, those organizations would retain a nucleus of conference-servicing staff of their own.

48. While he supported the first three recommendations of the Joint Inspection Unit, he found it hard to support the fourth, which suggested that the Secretary-General should review the establishment of separate United Nations services in the areas of personnel, public information and legal affairs. The support services concerned had been entrusted to UNIDO at a time when it had been an integral part of the United Nations Secretariat. With the conversion of UNIDO into a specialized agency, administrative and technical exigencies militated in favour of the establishment of separate United Nations services in those fields. The General Assembly had already approved such a proposal by the Secretary-General, and there was no need to go back on that decision.

49. Mr. Bushev (Bulgaria) took the Chair.

50. Mr. KOULIK (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic) said that it was clear from the report of the Advisory Committee (A/39/592) that budgetary co-ordination among the agencies of the United Nations system was limited to such areas as the synchronization of budget cycles and the development of common budget structures and uniform tabular presentations of financial data. While he supported the view

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(Mr. Koulik, Ukrainian SSR)

of the Advisory Committee that the practice of standardizing and harmonizing budget documents should be continued, he stressed that administrative and budgetary co-ordination should be carried out at a higher level. Its end-product should be not only a volume of documents with uniform data but a specific economic effect achieved by spreading the most advanced methods of work of the individual secretariats throughout the system, identifying and terminating ineffective programmes, and eliminating duplication. The financial and human resources thereby released should then be redeployed to agreed priority tasks.

51. He regretted that despite the efforts undertaken in recent years in the field of co-ordination, there remained many important problems which required prompt solution. The reduction of the rate of growth of regular budgets was one such problem. As could be seen from table A.1 in the report, the total amount of the regular budgets of the United Nations and the specialized agencies for 1984-1985 stood at almost \$3.5 million. Table A.2 showed that States were finding it increasingly difficult to meet fully and on time their financial obligations towards the Organization. Because of the serious cash-flow situation arising as a result of those difficulties, it was all the more important to seek economies. The savings referred to in the report were the result not so much of the conscious efforts of the administrations concerned as of the fluctuations in the dollar exchange rate in the countries where the agencies were located. All international organizations could save resources by making efficient use of their available permanent staff, whose remuneration accounted for some 80 per cent of the regular budgets. He appreciated the policy of curbing the growth of and stabilizing staffing levels pursued by a number of specialized agencies, including FAO, WMO, ILO and ICAO. He hoped that the modest 0.2 per cent reduction in the overall number of posts throughout the United Nations system planned for 1985 would be achieved.

52. He noted with concern that the regular budget expenditures on the technical co-operation activities of the United Nations and the specialized agencies were still growing and, according to paragraph 23 of the report, would amount to 21.5 per cent of the combined regular budgets of the organizations. A significant amount of those expenditures went not on operational activities but on administration, management and other non-substantive functions. In UNDP, for example, administration accounted for 33.2 per cent of such expenditure, which represented an increase of 6.3 per cent over the previous three years. His Government's position was that the regular budgets should not be used for technical co-operation activities. It was also essential for UNDP and the other extrabudgetary funds to reimburse in full all support received from the regular budgets of the United Nations and other agencies in the system.

53. As in previous years, the report of the Secretary-General on the impact of inflation and monetary instability on the regular budget of the United Nations (A/C.5/39/44) was too superficial and descriptive. The conclusions in paragraphs 24 to 26 suggested no rational measures for even a partial solution to the problem. He recalled that resolution 37/130, in accordance with which the report had been prepared, expressed the conviction that many Member States were not

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(Mr. Koulik, Ukrainian SSR)

responsible for the losses that the budget of the United Nations experienced as a result of the monetary phenomena in those developed countries in which the United Nations made its expenditures, while resolution 36/230 spoke of the need for an additional procedure that would help meet the costs such phenomena accounted for in the regular budget. Neither concern had been addressed in the report. He hoped that, in subsequent reports, the Secretary-General would not simply make forecasts about the future inflation rate but would propose measures to ensure that the effects of inflation were met through savings and budgetary adjustments or through contributions, including voluntary contributions, by the developed market economy countries where the offices which incurred additional expenditures as a result of inflation were located. As a first step, he might undertake preliminary consultations with those States.

54. The CHAIRMAN said that, with regard to item 112 (c), he intended to propose that the Fifth Committee should recommend to the General Assembly that it should defer consideration of the question until its fortieth session; that, in the meantime, the Secretary-General should be requested to forward his report to Member States for examination and comments and that such comments as might be received prior to the fortieth session should be borne in mind in deciding how best to proceed in considering the question at that session. That was not a formal proposal but simply a possibility that delegations might consider.

AGENDA ITEM 111: FINANCIAL EMERGENCY OF THE UNITED NATIONS (continued)

- (a) REPORT OF THE NEGOTIATING COMMITTEE ON THE FINANCIAL EMERGENCY OF THE UNITED NATIONS (continued) (A/C.5/39/10 and Corr.1)
- (b) REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (continued) (A/39/622)

55. Mr. MONIRUZZAMAN (Bangladesh) expressed regret that the item should remain on the agenda of the General Assembly year after year, particularly when the solution of the problem depended on the political will of Member States. There was a tendency to assign precedence to the exercise of national discretion over the obligation arising out of Article 17, paragraph 2, of the Charter, apparently forgetting that States had become parties to that Charter through the exercise of that same national discretion. Once a State had become a party to an international instrument, the obligations arising therefrom should be paramount. His delegation endorsed the views of the Nordic countries that the withholding of assessed contributions for any reason was an illegal act.

56. Owing to genuine financial difficulties, a number of developing countries had been unable to pay even their minimum assessments. Bangladesh, too, had serious financial difficulties, but accorded the highest priority to meeting its obligations to the United Nations system. Affluent countries which withheld part of their assessed contribution on grounds of national positions of principle should simply express their reservations concerning the United Nations activities which were inconsistent with their principles, without withholding payment.

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(Mr. Moniruzzaman, Bangladesh)

57. The interesting short-term proposals to deal with the immediate liquidity problem deserved serious consideration. In particular, his delegation supported the proposal to increase the Working Capital Fund. However, a long-term solution of the problem must deal with it from the standpoint of the contravention of Article 17 of the Charter. In that connection, the efficacy of Article 19 to deal with the problem should also be reviewed.

58. Mr. DITZ (Austria) took the Chair.

59. Mr. ABRASZEWSKI (Poland) said that although his country shared the general concern at the deterioration in the financial solvency of the Organization, the position it had expressed over the years had not changed. Articles 17 and 19 of the Charter were not applicable to the expenses of peace-keeping operations, especially those which had aroused deep political controversy among Member States.

60. With regard to possible remedial action, Poland was prepared to consider the wide variety of short-term measures that had been suggested, provided that they did not serve as an excuse for postponing the search for a comprehensive long-term solution based on strict compliance with the Charter. Since the underlying causes of the financial crisis were essentially political, the solution must also be based on the political will of Member States. His delegation was ready to consider any proposal concerning the bodies which should seek such a comprehensive solution, including the reactivation of the Negotiating Committee on the Financial Emergency of the United Nations.

61. The CHAIRMAN proposed that the Committee should suspend its consideration of the item, pending the submission of a draft resolution.

62. It was so decided.

63. Mr. Maycock (Barbados) resumed the Chair.

AGENDA ITEM 116: PERSONNEL QUESTIONS (continued)

(c) OTHER PERSONNEL QUESTIONS: REPORTS OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (continued)
(A/C.5/39/CRP.4)

64. Mr. FONTAINE ORTIZ (Cuba) said that his delegation was one of those which had asked the Secretary-General to submit a document on the functions of the proposed Co-ordinator for the Improvement of the Status of Women to be appointed in the Secretariat and the co-ordinator's relationship with the Office of Personnel Services (OPS). The conference room paper submitted (A/C.5/39/CRP.4) confirmed his delegation's initial concern that the appointment of a co-ordinator at the same level as the head of OPS would undermine the latter's authority in various matters of great interest to the Cuban delegation. His delegation was not, however, opposed to the appointment of a co-ordinator under the authority of the Assistant Secretary-General for Personnel Services.

65. Mr. CASTROVIEJO (Spain) welcomed the Secretary-General's decision to appoint, on an experimental basis for 1985, a senior official with the title of Co-ordinator for the Improvement of the Status of Women in the Secretariat of the United Nations. In that connection, he wished to point out that the Spanish text of document A/C.5/39/CRP.4 referred to the "legal and social" status of women, whereas the English and French texts did not.

66. During the Fifth Committee's discussion of agenda item 102 on ways and means within the United Nations system for improving the effective enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms, his delegation had agreed that it might be necessary to complement the existing structures in the Secretariat by new appointments. The appointment of a co-ordinator would improve the legal and social status of women within the Secretariat, with inevitable repercussions throughout the world. Improvements had been made in the legal status of women in most countries, but they were meaningless unless accompanied by tangible improvements in the social sphere.

67. His delegation did not think that the functions of the Co-ordinator as described in paragraph 6 (b) of the conference room paper (A/C.5/39/CRP.4) could be considered as interference in the domestic affairs of a country. It considered the first two sentences of paragraph 3 of the conference room paper appropriate, especially since the good judgement of the Secretary-General and the Assistant Secretary-General for Personnel Services could be relied upon to choose a suitable candidate for the post.

68. Mr. TAKASU (Japan) said that his delegation supported any measures designed to improve the status of women in the Secretariat, especially better representation in Professional posts, so long as such measures did not disturb existing lines of authority. The Secretary-General's decision to appoint a co-ordinator for the status of women should be considered from two angles: whether the appointment would effectively contribute to achieving the desired results and whether an appointment at the level of Assistant Secretary-General would not undermine the authority of the Office of Personnel Services.

69. He wondered whether the functions listed in paragraph 6 of the conference room paper were were not already being performed by OPS and, if not, whether the work would not be too much for the small staff to be assigned to the Co-ordinator. Questions also arose as to how the Co-ordinator could draw on the expertise and support of OPS.

70. According to paragraph 3 of the conference room paper, the Co-ordinator would have no authority to take decisions but only to make recommendations to OPS. In that case, the Co-ordinator's role would be limited. If not, he wondered what would happen in the case of disagreement between the Co-ordinator and OPS. In order to clarify the matter, it might be preferable to amend paragraph 3 to read: "The Co-ordinator will assist the Assistant Secretary-General for Personnel Services and work as part of the Office of Personnel Services, drawing fully on the staff and expertise of that Office."

(Mr. Takasu, Japan)

71. His delegation would like further clarification on the financial implications of such an important decision. For instance, it would like to know whether the savings which would be used to finance the post were to be made only from funds available or temporary assistance or also from other sources, whether there would be transfer of resources between programme budget sections and how large a Secretariat support staff was envisaged.

72. Since the appointment was to be made on an experimental and temporary basis, his delegation understood that the post would cease to exist at the end of 1985, at which time the General Assembly would be asked to take a further decision on the matter.

73. Mr. BARRETT (New Zealand) reiterated his delegation's support for the appointment of a co-ordinator, especially in view of the need to implement the resolutions adopted during the United Nations Decade for Women. An appointment at Assistant Secretary-General level was consistent with the degree of commitment required to improve the situation of women in the Secretariat. The tasks set out in paragraph 6 of the conference room paper were more related to policy formulation and the preparation of a consistent and comprehensive plan of action than to the actual appointment of women. That was appropriate, since the results of the Co-ordinator's work, developed in consultation with the OPS would be implemented by that Office. The appointment would therefore strengthen the work of OPS rather than interfere with it. His delegation was sure that the Secretary-General would never seek to weaken one part of the Secretariat and therefore hoped that the decision would meet with general support.

74. Ms. LUOSTARINEN (Finland) said that her delegation welcomed the Secretary-General's decision to designate a senior official as Co-ordinator for the Improvement of the Status of Women in the Secretariat and looked forward to the comprehensive plan of action which the Co-ordinator would be asked to prepare. It also welcomed the assurance that the appointment was experimental and temporary in nature and that the Co-ordinator would work in close consultation with the Assistant Secretary-General for Personnel Services, while having an independent status in the Department of Administration and Management. Her delegation was confident that measures to improve the status of women were not incompatible with such other policy objectives as a more equitable geographical distribution of posts in the Secretariat.

75. Mr. WITHEFORD (Australia) said that the document under consideration should certainly meet most if not all of the concerns expressed by delegations. He welcomed the reference made by the representative of Spain to the question of human rights. It should be remembered that women were not a minority but constituted at least half of the human race. The fact that they were currently subject to prejudices, therefore, warranted the adoption of special measures. The proposed appointment was a response to the wishes expressed by the General Assembly at previous sessions and by many delegations at the current session, and above all to the wishes of a very outspoken and determined section of the Secretariat.

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76. Mr. LADJOUZI (Algeria) said that his delegation was concerned about improving the status of women in the Secretariat and would not oppose the proposed appointment provided that it did not impair the authority of OPS. Like the representative of Cuba, he considered that the Co-ordinator should work under the Assistant Secretary-General for Personnel Services.

The meeting rose at 10.25 p.m.