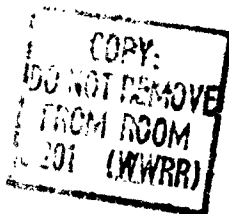


United Nations
**GENERAL
ASSEMBLY**

THIRTY-NINTH SESSION

Official Records*



FIFTH COMMITTEE
58th meeting
held on
Thursday, 11 April, 1985
at 10.30 a.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 58th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. MAYCOCK (Barbados)

later: Mr. DITZ (Austria)

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Distr. GENERAL
A/C.5/39/SR.58
15 April 1985

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

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The meeting was called to order at noon

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

Programme budget implications of draft decision A/39/L.47 concerning agenda item 93 (b) (A/C.5/39/102)

1. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions), orally presenting the report of ACABQ, said that the Commission on the Status of Women acting as the Preparatory Body for the World Conference to Review and Appraise the Achievements of the United Nations Decade for Women had held a third session in Vienna earlier in 1985 but had been unable to complete its work. In accordance with the draft decision contained in document A/39/L.47, the General Assembly would reaffirm the need to ensure a successful outcome for the Conference and request the Commission to resume its third session in New York for a period of no more than seven days starting from 29 April 1985, in order to complete successfully its preparatory work.
2. The programme budget implications of the draft decision were set forth in a statement submitted by the Secretary-General (A/C.5/39/102), which indicated that conference-servicing requirements would arise which were estimated on a full-cost basis at \$133,700. In addition, travel expenditures amounting to \$31,200 would arise from the provision of the substantive support described in paragraph 5 of the Secretary-General's statement. No additional appropriations were requested since it was intended that the costs of staff travel would be met from existing appropriations and that any additional conference-servicing requirements that might arise would be reflected in the second performance report on the programme budget for the biennium 1984-1985.
3. The Advisory Committee felt that expenditures for travel to the resumed session of the Commission could be combined with those for the first regular session of the Economic and Social Council in May 1985, which would meet immediately after the Commission and was requested to consider the results of the deliberations of the Preparatory Body. ACABQ noted that the draft decision constituted an exception to General Assembly resolution 31/140 and that it would be necessary to make adjustments in the approved programme of meetings to accommodate the resumed session. The views of the Committee on Conferences would have to be sought in that regard. Since conference-servicing requirements could be entirely absorbed, the Fifth Committee might wish to inform the General Assembly that the adoption of the draft decision contained in document A/39/L.47 would not lead to additional appropriations under the programme budget for the biennium 1984-1985.
4. Mr. NYGARD (United States of America) sought confirmation from the Secretariat that no additional appropriations would be required either for the resumed session of the Commission or as a result of the rescheduling of other meetings to accommodate it.
5. Mr. MURRAY (United Kingdom) observed that the Fifth Committee was considering the second request in two days to make additional conference time available to a

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(Mr. Murray, United Kingdom)

body which had failed to complete its work. His delegation was concerned about the increasing tendency of preparatory bodies to make such requests on the assumption that the necessary resources would somehow magically be found. He recognized the importance of ensuring a successful outcome for the World Conference at Nairobi and noted that no additional budget appropriations were being requested to service the Commission. At the same time, he wished to emphasize that the resumed session would nevertheless involve the expenditure of resources and savings which might otherwise remain available to Member States.

6. Mr. KHALEVINSKI (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that his delegation understood the importance of the work being carried out by the Commission on the Status of Women, but felt that further savings were possible with regard to the proposed resumption of its third session. In addition to the potential for absorption described in document A/C.5/39/102, such savings could be made, for example, by limiting travel of staff from the various regional commissions. His delegation believed that the decision to hold the resumed session of the Commission away from its established headquarters, which constituted an exception to General Assembly resolution 31/140, should not be regarded as a precedent for the future.

7. Mr. DITZ (Austria) felt that the Commission should hold its resumed session in Vienna and not New York. However, in view of the need to ensure a successful outcome to the World Conference, his delegation was also prepared to agree to New York as venue on the understanding that the departure from resolution 31/140 was not considered as a precedent.

8. Mr. PIRSON (Belgium) said that the Fifth Committee was being asked to approve further meetings for the Commission on the Status of Women despite the fact that the results of its last session in Vienna had been highly disappointing. While the Commission's task was an important one, it was regrettable that an exception would have to be made to resolution 31/140 and that inconvenience should be caused to other bodies as a result of the rescheduling of meetings. He sought further clarification as to whether the draft decision would have financial, if not programme budget, implications and he wondered whether the Fifth Committee should not consider steps to discourage such requests for additional conference servicing in the future.

9. Mr. FORAN (Controller), replying to questions raised by members of the Committee, said that for the benefit of the United States representative, he could confirm that, on the basis of available information, the draft decision would not entail additional costs. The Committee on Conferences was, however, due to meet the following week to consider the calendar of meetings. While statements made in the Fifth Committee with regard to the resumed session would obviously be taken into account, he could not anticipate what action might be taken by that Committee.

10. With regard to the question raised by the representative of Belgium, the draft decision was not expected to have programme budget implications. However, it was an inescapable fact that meetings cost money. Conference facilities in New York as well as Vienna were almost fully booked and meetings would therefore have to be

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(Mr. Foran)

postponed or cancelled to accommodate the resumed session. It was difficult to identify what the actual costs of the session would be and where potential for savings could be found. By and large, however, conference-servicing capacity would in any case be utilized one way or another and any savings, should the session not be resumed, would probably be minimal.

11. 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 draft decision contained in document A/39/L.47, conference-servicing requirements would arise which were estimated, on a full-cost basis, at \$133,700, but that no additional appropriations would be required under the programme budget for the biennium 1984-1985.

12. It was so decided.

13. Mr. MUDHO (Kenya) said that the Government of Kenya, which would host the World Conference to Review and Appraise the Achievements of the United Nations Decade for Women, had taken every step to ensure that the necessary facilities would be provided for the successful outcome of the Conference. His delegation shared the concern expressed by some delegations about the need for the Commission on the Status of Women to resume its third session in New York, and agreed that strict control over the expenditures of the Organization was essential. He was pleased to note, however, that the Commission would be able to pursue its preparatory work for the Conference. Kenya would co-operate fully in seeking acceptable solutions to the outstanding problems.

14. Mr. BUSHEV (Bulgaria), speaking as acting Chairman of the Committee on Conferences, said that in accordance with paragraph 6 of General Assembly resolution 35/10 A, he had held consultations with the Bureau of the Committee and interested delegations with regard to the draft decision contained in document A/39/L.47. Although the holding of a resumed session of the Commission on the Status of Women in New York constituted an exception to resolution 31/140, it had been felt that in view of the need to ensure a successful outcome for the World Conference and since the Economic and Social Council was requested to consider the results of the deliberations of the Commission during its first regular session in May 1985, the Committee on Conferences should accept the proposed venue on the understanding that it would not be taken as a precedent. He wished to stress that some delegations had nevertheless been strongly opposed to such a departure from conference-servicing regulations.

15. The Secretary-General had indicated that it would be necessary to make adjustments in the approved programme of meetings by rescheduling or postponing one of the meetings currently scheduled during the period in question. In accordance with paragraph 3 of resolution 39/68 A, the Committee on Conferences would therefore meet the following week to consider what changes in the calendar would have to be made should the General Assembly adopt the draft decision. The Committee intended to ensure that meetings were serviced to the fullest extent possible within existing resources.

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AGENDA ITEM 115: SCALE OF ASSESSMENTS FOR THE APPORTIONMENT OF THE EXPENSES OF THE UNITED NATIONS: REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON CONTRIBUTIONS (continued) (A/39/11 and Corr.1, and A/39/844; A/C.5/39/L.18, L.26 and L.34, A/C.5/39/CRP.5-9)

16. The CHAIRMAN drew attention to draft resolution A/C.5/39/L.34, which he had orally revised at the 57th meeting, and invited delegations to make comments on the revised draft.

17. Mr. NYGARD (United States of America) said that his delegation was opposed to the draft resolution and would not participate in any decision taken by the Fifth Committee with regard to it. However, his delegation would present its views when the matter was discussed by the General Assembly in plenary meeting.

18. The CHAIRMAN said that if he heard no other comments, he would take it that the Committee was prepared to adopt draft resolution A/C.5/39/L.34, as orally revised, without a vote.

19. It was so decided.

20. Mr. KHALEVINSKI (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that his delegation had not objected to the taking of a decision on draft resolution A/C.5/39/L.34 because the draft resolution reconfirmed that the real capacity to pay of Member States was the fundamental criterion for determining the scale of assessments. However, he wished to reiterate that his delegation had very serious objections to the inclusion in the resolution of several measures whose cumulative effect would eventually lead to something quite different from the concept of a scale of assessment based on real capacity to pay.

21. His delegation objected to the arbitrary way in which Member States' contributions had been changed, since doing so obviously departed from the principle of real capacity to pay as defined by the General Assembly. Furthermore, the limits proposed by the Committee on Contributions, which had been modified further in the draft resolution, had also been set in an arbitrary and mechanical fashion and would, if applied, result in a distortion of capacity to pay in the long term. The approach reflected in the new preambular paragraph and the request made to the Committee on Contributions in paragraph 1 (e) was also mechanical.

22. Mr. TAKASU (Japan) said that the resolution which the Committee had just adopted clearly represented a compromise on the part of all delegations, including his own. His delegation's reservations applied specifically to the first preambular paragraph and paragraphs 1 (b), 1 (c), 1 (e), 1 (f) and 3.

23. It was important that the integrity of the Committee on Contributions should be preserved. Thus the General Assembly should give the Committee general policy guidelines, but should leave technical refinements to the Committee's experts. In the light of those considerations, paragraphs 1 (e) and 1 (f) required some explanation.

24. Paragraphs 1 (d) and (e) both contained provisions which might conceivably allow some Member States to benefit twice from certain relief schemes. It was his delegation's understanding that any particular difficulties facing Member States

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(Mr. Takasu, Japan)

which were not fully reflected in national income data but which merited sympathetic consideration were already being taken into account by the Committee on Contributions, and he trusted that the Committee would continue to study ways and means of taking into account the serious economic and financial situation in the world without prejudging the outcome of that study.

25. While his delegation supported the introduction of the scheme to avoid excessive variations of individual rates of assessment between successive scales called for in paragraph 1 (f) of the resolution, it had reservations regarding the latter part of that paragraph. Any future technical modifications of the scheme should be left entirely to the judgement of the Committee on Contributions.

26. Since another important principle underlying the scale of assessments related to the obligation of Member States to bear the administrative expenses of the Organization, his delegation did not believe that the concept of transferring resources from developed to developing countries or of differentiating between Member States should play a role in apportioning the expenses of the Organization. With regard to the redistribution of the burden of relief mentioned in paragraph 1 (c), it was to be hoped that the Committee on Contributions would utilize an appropriate limit in the mitigation process. Finally, he was not convinced that there was currently any need to raise the income limit, a move which would greatly favour middle-income countries.

27. Ms. ARCHINI (Italy), speaking on behalf of the States members of the European Economic Community, expressed support for the fundamental principle of the real capacity to pay as the basis for determining the scale of assessments. She also reiterated the community's confidence in the role of the Committee on Contributions. While the guidelines which the General Assembly gave to the Committee on Contributions should be clear, coherent and flexible to a certain extent, it had become apparent over the years that different, and often contradictory, interpretations of capacity to pay existed. The Ten had expressed their disagreement in the past with interpretations that favoured individual interests at the expense of common interests. The resolution which had just been adopted contained certain instructions to the Committee on Contributions which were indicative of that trend.

28. To date, the scale of assessments had been based largely on national per capita income data, a method which should be retained until such time as the Committee on Contributions found a satisfactory alternative. The adoption of any new methods for measuring capacity to pay should be based solely on scientific evidence and not on the consequences of those methods for the contributions of certain groups of States. That was particularly important for data pertaining to rates of inflation and exchange rates.

29. Throughout the lengthy negotiations on agenda item 115, the Ten had been guided by the conviction that a decision on such an important question ought to be taken by consensus. While they had agreed to accept much of the resolution in a spirit of compromise, it nevertheless appeared that the principle of capacity to pay was not suitably respected in the resolution, nor were the criteria which the Committee on Contributions was asked to use in establishing the next scale of assessments a true reflection of that principle.

(Ms. Archini, Italy)

30. With regard to paragraph 1 (a), the Ten had already stated their views with regard to the maintenance of the 10-year statistical base period. In fact, a shorter period would better reflect real capacity to pay. The measure specified in paragraph 1 (b) represented an artificial departure from the principle of capacity to pay and should be employed to assist the poorest countries rather than middle-income countries.

31. With regard to the measures provided for in paragraphs 1 (c) and 1 (e), the Ten understood the concerns of certain countries, but believed that the multiplication of detailed instructions to the Committee on Contributions in order to accommodate problems affecting only a small number of States obscured the fundamental principle of capacity to pay. In addition, the mandate given to the Committee on Contributions in paragraph 1 (e) should be viewed as being exploratory in nature; if the Committee on Contributions was unable to devise a methodology for the next scale of assessments, the question should be reconsidered.

32. Finally, the additional relief measures provided for in paragraph 1 (f) were not only unnecessary but unrelated to the principle of capacity to pay. Scheme III had originally been intended to limit excessive variations between successive scales, and its use was justifiable only if a short statistical base period was used and if the scheme was not discriminatory. The scheme as proposed by the Committee on Contributions was unsatisfactory, because it benefited a limited number of countries, and the introduction of further modifications would only aggravate that trend.

33. She had no objection to the studies requested in paragraphs 2 and 3 so long as they did not detract from the essential work of the Committee on Contributions, which was drawing up the scale of assessments. The Fifth Committee should reconsider its methods of work in order to arrive at a system for assessing capacity to pay as simply and objectively as possible, on the basis of comparable data, particularly since the scale of assessments used by the United Nations served as a model for other international organizations both within and outside the system.

34. Mr. EL-SAFY (Egypt), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77, said that, even though the Group was not satisfied with many of the provisions of the resolution which had just been adopted, it had joined in the consensus on the condition that the resolution would be adopted both in the Fifth Committee and in a plenary meeting of the General Assembly by consensus. However, if the draft was put to a vote in a plenary meeting, he reserved the right to present amendments to it at that time, and would explain his position then as the situation warranted.

35. Ms. MUSTONEN (Finland), speaking on behalf of the Nordic countries, said that the negotiation process of recent months and the text of draft resolution A/C.5/39/L.34 compelled her to draw attention once again to certain principles regarding the scale of assessments. It was the obligation of each Member State to bear its fair share of the expenses of the Organization in accordance with the Charter. That duty should be approached in a spirit of generosity and with a sense of proportion. The independent status of the Committee on Contributions should be fully respected. Member States should focus attention on the merits of the existing methodology, which was the best available in view of the fact that it was

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(Ms. Mustonen, Finland)

the only one that could be verified on the basis of actual statistical data, and best reflected real capacity to pay.

36. In the light of those principles, the resolution which had just been adopted contained several proposals which did not meet the expectations of the Nordic countries for the further development of the scale of assessments. She referred in that connection to paragraphs 1 (a), 1 (b), 1 (c), 1 (e), 1 (f) and 3. The Nordic countries had always willingly paid their assessed and voluntary contributions as an expression of their commitment to the United Nations, which was of greater importance to them than the actual sums of money involved. However, she was concerned at the direction taken by the recent discussion of the scale of assessments, which reflected a weakening of support for the United Nations and might eventually jeopardize its credibility.

37. Mr. ADDABASHI (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) said that, although his delegation had joined in the consensus on the resolution, it had reservations regarding the wording of the text. Despite certain amendments, the text still did not reflect or address the concerns of his delegation properly. The clarifications provided by the Chairman with regard to paragraphs 1 (e) and (f), and the new preambular paragraph which the Chairman had introduced had been instrumental in convincing his delegation to join in the consensus.

38. It was not logical that certain developing countries should be required to bear increases of more than 25 per cent of their apportionment under the previous scale of assessment as a result of a redistribution of the burden of relief. It was to be hoped that the Committee on Contributions would consider that matter and that the situation would be resolved before scheme III was adopted. At the very least, the Committee on Contributions should ensure that the increase in the developing countries' assessment should not exceed the assessment under the previous scale by more than 5 per cent.

39. The Libyan Arab Jamahiriya was doing everything it could to assist other developing countries and was willing to bear an increased burden so long as that increase was reasonable. He therefore urged the developed countries to show the same degree of flexibility as his own country had demonstrated, in view of the fact that the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya was a country whose economy depended on a single natural resource which was being depleted. Moreover, his country required most of its resources to complete its development. If a country was forced to halt its development projects because of limited resources, then its capacity to pay should be considered nil.

40. Mr. MONIRUZZAMAN (Bangladesh) said that his delegation had joined in the consensus on the draft resolution in recognition of the long and arduous negotiations that had led to a compromise and despite the fact that subparagraph (d) of paragraph 1, which affected it directly, did not meet its concerns. In its view, subparagraph (d) was restrictive and sought to benefit only those least developed countries whose economies would show an increase in national income, rather than those with either stagnant or declining economies. Its original intent had been to provide relief for the economically most disadvantaged

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(Mr. Moniruzzaman, Bangladesh)

countries, however, and it should therefore be applied across the board. That had been the reasoning behind paragraph 2 (e) of draft resolution A/C.5/39/L.18, sponsored by the Group of 77, which unfortunately had not found favour among other groups. His delegation believed that, in the calculations for the next scale, at least three least developed countries would be shown on the machine scale at one point above the floor level. Of those three, two would benefit from the provision by one point each because they were currently at the floor level, while the third would not qualify for the same mitigation because it was not at the floor level. The Committee on Contributions would have to deal with that broad question of equity and his delegation had every confidence that it would prevent such a discriminatory situation from arising. It was his delegation's understanding that the Committee on Contributions would take note of his country's legitimate concerns and take appropriate remedial action in line with the letter and spirit of earlier resolutions on the subject, and it wished to place on record that an understanding to that effect had been reached during the informal consultations.

41. Mr. MONAYAIR (Kuwait) said that his delegation had considerable reservations with regard to draft resolution A/C.5/39/L.34, in particular paragraph 1 (c), which was vague and inaccurate and would be open to debate. Such a situation would hinder its implementation, notwithstanding the Chairman's assertion that it was designed to protect those developing countries which shared in the burden of relief. The resultant increase in the rates of assessment of those countries was unduly high and might exceed 25 per cent in some cases, thereby contradicting numerous resolutions of the General Assembly. A specific limit must therefore be imposed on the relief burden borne by those countries. The Committee on Contributions must also work to avoid excessive variations of individual rates between successive scales and study scheme III further to make it more objective and impartial. It must also refine the current methodology to take account of countries' economic situation in order to ensure that a fair scale of assessments was established. In so doing, it should take account of the views expressed on that subject in the Fifth Committee.

42. His delegation had voted against the previous scale of assessments and would have done so again had it not been for the considerable efforts made by all delegations to achieve a compromise.

43. Mr. RYDZKOWSKI (Poland) said that his delegation was not entirely happy with the draft resolution but had supported the consensus out of recognition for the spirit of co-operation that had prevailed in the Committee. It wished to reiterate its position of principle that the problem of the over-assessment of Poland must be resolved, and hoped that such a solution would be found during the coming revision of the scale.

44. Mr. Ditz (Austria) took the Chair.

45. Mr. ZAHID (Morocco) endorsed the statement made by the representative of Egypt on behalf of the Group of 77. Real capacity to pay was the fundamental criterion for determining rates of assessment and any other approach was unfair. The developing countries' capacity to pay had been heavily undermined by the serious

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(Mr. Zahid, Morocco)

economic crisis of recent years, a situation which the draft resolution did not take entirely into account. His delegation hoped therefore that the Committee on Contributions, acting pursuant to operative paragraph 1 (e), would find some additional formula which took account of the developing countries' difficulties. It had every confidence that the Committee on Contributions would be able to propose an appropriate mechanism to that end to the Fifth Committee at its fortieth session.

46. Mr. ORTEGA (Mexico) expressed appreciation for the flexibility and spirit of compromise shown by delegations in seeking to achieve a consensus. His delegation endorsed the statement made by the representative of Egypt on behalf of the Group of 77, but wished to add that application of the present formula for determining the scale of assessments had led to an increase in the shares of the developing countries as a group at a time when their capacity to pay had declined. If capacity to pay was the fundamental criterion for determining the scale of assessments, it was clear that the use of national income and per capita GNP statistics alone did not adequately reflect Member States' real capacity to pay and that the scale must be made more equitable.

47. The Committee on Contributions should base itself on General Assembly resolution 36/231 A in its efforts to improve the present methodology, and paragraph 1 (e) of draft resolution A/C.5/39/L.34 was essential to ensuring that the methodology reflected the real capacity to pay of all Member States and not just the group of countries mentioned. While his delegation was not totally satisfied with subparagraph (e), it had supported it in a spirit of compromise to ensure that a consensus was achieved on the draft resolution as a whole, for the draft resolution would be the key to determining the next scale of assessments. His delegation interpreted subparagraph (e) as being closely linked with the fourth preambular paragraph and as meaning that the present formula must be supplemented systematically to include indicators that reflected countries' capacity to pay. In developing a methodology, the Committee on Contributions must receive assistance from other United Nations organs and base itself on General Assembly resolution 36/231 A in order to arrive at a methodology which yielded a scale that reflected faithfully Member States' economic situation and real capacity to pay. While the formula in subparagraph (e) might give rise to technical problems, his delegation was confident that the Committee on Contributions would be able to resolve any such problems.

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

49. Mr. CHUA (Singapore) observed that the draft resolution took account of all delegations' concerns and provided a sound basis for the efforts of the Committee on Contributions to arrive at an acceptable scale of assessments. His delegation had been actively involved in the negotiations on paragraph 1 (c) and endorsed the understanding spelt out by the Chairman at the previous meeting whereby a distinction must be made between developed and developing countries in apportioning the burden of relief, in order to take account of the latter countries' development responsibilities. That was why a limit on the burden was being requested for developing countries and subparagraph (c), in referring to those developing countries that were bearing the burden of relief, was not in any way discriminatory.

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50. Mr. KHAN (Saudi Arabia) said that draft resolution A/C.5/39/L.34 reflected a delicate balance between differing interests in the Committee and thus could not satisfy any delegation including his own, fully. His delegation had made the maximum concessions possible in order to promote the common interest.

51. His delegation's position on item 115 had been based consistently on the principles of justice and equity, even though, under the current methodology, no country in the world had been subject to a greater measure of inequity over the years. In absolute terms, Saudi Arabia's actual gross assessed contributions had increased by 2,562 per cent and its rate of assessment by 1,333 per cent between 1976 and 1983.

52. His delegation believed that the real capacity to pay of Member States, as currently measured by gross national income, should continue to be the fundamental criterion for determining the scale of assessments pending the development of a better measure of the real capacity to pay, for the current methodology unfairly overstated the real capacity to pay of some States while understating that of others. Despite all the studies carried out by the Committee on Contributions, Member States were still subject essentially to the assessment methodology established in 1945, and the use of per capita national income as a criterion for determining capacity to pay had led to an unfair and, in some cases, distorted determination of the rates of assessment of a number of countries over a very long period of time. His delegation therefore welcomed the proposal in paragraph 3 of the draft resolution. Under the current assessment methodology, each Member State was assigned a different relief gradient according to its specific per capita income, with the result that the principle of a graduated relief scale had already been established. Per capita income was a micro-economic concept, however, and insufficient for the purpose of determining the relief entitlement of a Member State. A macro-economic measure was also required, namely gross national product. At present, a large economy with a large GNP was entitled to the same base relief gradient as a small economy with a small GNP. That was clearly unfair and the proposal in operative paragraph 3 was designed to address that inequity. Each Member State entitled to relief under the present formula would first be assigned a relevant base relief gradient according to the level of its GNP before the low per capita allowance formula was applied. Per capita income and GNP would thus be given equal weight.

53. His delegation hoped that the Committee on Contributions would ensure that the study called for in paragraph 3 was completed in time for it to be considered at the fortieth session and implemented in connection with the scale of assessments for the period 1986-1988. In his introductory statement, however, the Chairman had said that the Committee on Contributions would not be required to carry out the studies referred to in paragraphs 2 and 3 at its June 1985 session. His delegation interpreted paragraph 3 to mean that the study called for therein must be initiated at the June session and, if possible, completed in time for the fortieth session of the General Assembly. In other words, the Committee on Contributions could exercise its discretion only in deciding whether or not to complete the study, and not whether or not to initiate the study, at its June session.

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(Mr. Khan, Saudia Arabia)

54. As a founding Member of the United Nations, Saudi Arabia had always fulfilled its financial obligations to the Organization. The strength of its commitment was reflected in the fact that, between 1979 and 1982, its total voluntary contributions had exceeded its total assessed contributions to the entire United Nations system by \$US 296,803,400. Its generosity was a token of its commitment to fulfilling all its international obligations on the basis of the principles of fairness, equity and justice. It would therefore stand firm in seeking a fair, equitable and realistic assessment methodology for all.

55. Mr. CASTROVIEJO (Spain) expressed satisfaction at the strenuous efforts made by both the officers and members of the Committee in order to achieve a consensus on draft resolution A/C.5/39/L.34. His delegation was far from satisfied with the draft resolution, however, in particular with the fact that, after reconfirming the principle that the real capacity to pay of Member States was the fundamental criterion for determining the scale of assessments, it went on to provide for numerous exceptions to that principle. Such a state of affairs was not conducive to a spirit of solidarity and responsibility among Member States and he hoped that the Committee on Contributions would be able to find the fairest way to determine the level of Member States' contributions.

56. The CHAIRMAN noted that, since the Committee had adopted draft resolution A/C.5/39/L.34, no further action was required on the other draft resolutions concerning item 115. The Committee had thus concluded its consideration of agenda item 115 and the Rapporteur would report direct to the General Assembly thereon.

57. After an exchange of courtesies, the CHAIRMAN declared that the Committee had concluded its work for the thirty-ninth session.

The meeting rose at 1.45 p.m.

