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SYSTEM OF SUBSISTENCE ALLOWANCES FOR STAFF MEMBERS
OF LONG TERM MISSIONS

(Report by the Secretary-General)

The present system of subsistence allowances for staff members assigned to United Nations missions was established in the spring of 1949 after a comprehensive study of the question had been made by the Secretary-General and the Advisory Committee.^{1/}

Since the adoption of this system, the Secretary-General has reviewed the subsistence allowance rates for each of the missions and, in most cases, had found it possible to effect substantial reductions. In addition, staff members without dependents have been reduced to a level \$3.00 less than is paid to staff members with dependents. For example, the basic subsistence allowance rate for the Palestine Mission has been reduced from \$15 per day for all staff to \$10 for staff with dependents and to \$7 for staff without dependents.

The normal practice has been to utilize regular United Nations staff members for mission service and to require that they remain on the mission for a period of one year. The majority of the missions are of a temporary nature, of limited authorization. The seat of many of the missions is subject to movement within the mission area, according to the requirements of the work.

However, the Libya and Somaliland missions are of a different type. These missions have a greater element of stability from the standpoint of expected duration and permanent location of the seat of the mission. The Secretary-General has, therefore, considered it advisable to undertake further studies of the mission per diem arrangements for this more permanent type of mission. In making these studies he has had to bear in mind not only the United Nations service

^{1/} A/CN.1/W.84, 4 March 1949 and AC/236-A, 6 April 1949.

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requirements, but also the policies and probable future developments on this question under the Technical Assistance Programme, since it is contemplated that technical assistance experts will be working closely with staff of United Nations Political Missions in some cases.

The experience on the Libyan mission has shown that staff who are assigned for periods of longer than one year, and thus wish to make semi-permanent housing arrangements, have relatively high installation expenditures for such items as redecorations, repairs etc. At the time the mission was established, the Secretary-General agreed that the staff would be given assistance in meeting such costs, since the rules do not permit movement of household goods to mission areas, and has taken this factor into account in fixing the mission per diem rate.

The rate in Libya for a staff member with dependents has been \$11.50 per day since the establishment of the mission. This is being reduced to \$9.50, effective 1 December 1950, for staff who have taken houses and apartments and have incurred substantial installation costs, and to \$8.50 for those living in hotels and clubs. (The corresponding rates for staff without dependents are \$3.00 less).

The majority of the staff will have completed one year of service on the mission by 1 March 1951. In view of the rate of per diem which has been payable during the first year of mission service, the Secretary-General considers that reasonable assistance will have been given to the staff by the end of the first year to meet their extra-ordinary housing installation expenses, in addition to meeting the additional subsistence expenses which normally arise from mission assignment.

Since the staff of this mission can make semi-permanent housing arrangements and are able to plan for a definite period of service, the Secretary-General has considered it reasonable and equitable to reduce their allowance after one year of service. A decision has been taken, therefore, subject to further study of this general question, that after one year of service on the Libyan mission the allowance will be as follows:

Staff with dependents	\$150 per month
Staff without dependents	\$100 per month

This arrangement was worked out, having in mind the practices of national governments with respect to their foreign services, and considering the level

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of the cost of living in the area. This allowance, which averages about 50 per cent of the basic per diem rate, will at least cover the cost of lodging and will, in most cases, give a small margin in addition.

After there has been an opportunity to give further study to this question, both within the United Nations and jointly with the Specialized Agencies through the TAB, it is hoped to develop this plan to a greater degree and to apply the arrangement to other missions of a similar character, wherever practical.
