

United Nations
GENERAL
ASSEMBLY



FORTY-SECOND SESSION

Official Records*

FTFTH COMMITTEE

24th meeting

held on

Monday, 9 November 1987

at 10 a.m.

New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 24th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. AMNEUS (Sweden)

laterr Mr. MURRAY (Trinidad and Tohaqo)

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

CONTENTS

AGENDA ITEM 115: PROPOSED PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BTENNTL! 1988-1989 (continued)

ACENDA ITEM 116: PROGRAMME PLANNING (continued)

**AGENDA ITEM 91: REVIEW OF THE EFFICIENCY OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL
FUNCTIONING OF THE UNITED NATIONS: REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (continued)**

AGENDA ITEM 43: CURRENT FINANCIAL CRISIS OF THE UNITED NATIONS (continued)

General clebate (continued)

**Programme budget implications of draft resolution A/42/L.16 concerning agenda
item 31**

*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.5/42/SR.24

11 November 1987

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 115: PROPOSED PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNJUM 1988-1989 (continued)

AGENDA ITEM 116: PROGRAMME PLANNING (continued)

AGENDA ITEM 41: REVIEW OF THE EFFICIENCY OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL FUNCTIONING OF THE UNITED NATIONS: REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (continued)

AGENDA ITEM 431 CURRENT FINANCIAL CRISIS OF THE UNITED NATIONS (continued)

General debate (continued) (A/42/3, A/42/6 and **Corr.1, A/42/7** and Add.2, A/42/16 (Part I) and Add.1 (Part II), A/42/214, A/42/225 and **Add.1, A/42/234** and Cotr.1, A/42/283, 512, 532 and 640; **A/C.5/42/2/Rev.1**)

1. Mr. MELTKE (German Democratic Republic) said that recent developments had emphasised the fundamental importance for the United Nations of both financial security and the efficient utilization of funds. While considerable progress had already been made in increasing efficiency through the implementation of General Assembly resolution **41/213**, unilateral attempts to influence the course of the reform process, in the form of a refusal by the main **contributor** to fulfil its financial obligations, further complicated the already difficult task of the Secretary-General. Such an attitude was bound to cause damage to the Organisation.

2. Given the concurrent needs for financial restraint and increased efficiency, the reduced **pending** envisaged in the proposed programme budget for **the biennium 1988-1989** represented a step in the right direction. His delegation also fully concurred with the proposals for further savings contained in the report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions. However, considerable efforts were still required to implement the measures enumerated in the report of the Group of High-level **Intergovernmental** Experts (A/41/49) and in **resolution 41/213** in a manner consistent with the Charter and with the fundamental decisions of the Organisation, taking equal account of the legitimate interests of all States and groups of States.

3. The levels of savings proposed for individual budget sections differed enormously, and his delegation therefore supported the recommendation of the **Committee for Programme and Co-ordination (CPC)** that all programme **elements should be subject to a survey** of priorities. It fully endorsed the priority treatment of economic recovery and development in Africa and was also pleased to note an improvement in the position of **women** in the Secretariat. However, the latter question should not divert attention from **such vital** questions as the preservation of world peace, comprehensive international security and peaceful co-operation in the political, economic, ecological, social and humanitarian fields.

4. The various sections of the proposed budget appeared to imply that **United Nations** travel costs had been reduced only **by about 15 per cent**. A further reduction was required, as well as an effort **to ensure the relevance** of all programme activities. Costs for consultants should be reduced yet further,

(Mr. Meltke, German
Democratic Republic)

particularly through the recruitment of highly qualified staff on fixed-term contracts. The proposals submitted by the Secretary-General provided a good basis for further discussion of that subject.

5. It was regrettable that most of the savings so far had been achieved through the continuation of the recruitment freeze. If the freeze were to be lifted and vacancies filled with staff employed on fixed-term contracts, equitable geographical distribution would be enhanced and the work of the Organization would be enriched by new blood.

6. Ms. FRIESSNIGG (Austria) said that her delegation appreciated the difficulty of formulating budget proposals in the context of the Organization's financial crisis, uncertainty with respect to the payment of contributions and the initiation of the administrative reform process mandated by General Assembly resolution 41/213. It was to be hoped that, once such problems were overcome, the Advisory Committee's recommendation concerning further improvement in the presentation of the budget document would be implemented. While welcoming the provision of priority designations for an additional budget section, her delegation believed that the number of programme outputs assessed as obsolete, marginally useful or ineffective was inadequate and looked forward to a more objective assessment in due course.

7. It was regrettable that neither CPC nor the Fifth Committee had been able to undertake a detailed review of the budget performance report. The detailed information on programme implementation contained in the performance report for 1984-1985 could have constituted a useful additional tool in the review of budget proposals for 1988-1989, and her delegation would draw additional guidance from that report in its review of the United Nations intergovernmental structure and functions in the economic and social fields.

8. The Advisory Committee's declared intention to pay more attention to the extrabudgetary aide of United Nations expenditures was welcome. Both the Secretary-General and the Chairman of the Advisory Committee had been right to stress that the budgetary and reform processes should be linked in a meaningful and orderly manner. Her delegation appreciated the efforts made by the Secretary-General to implement the reforms envisioned in resolution 41/213 and also welcomed the commitment of many delegations to ensure the success of such reforms with a view to strengthening the Organization.

9. However, the process of reform should not promote short-term over long-term interests. Temporary assistance, for example, was not necessarily less expensive than the provision of a minimum level of permanent staff. The recruitment freeze should not impede the orderly management and implementation of programmes, particularly in the case of certain regional commissions affected by extremely high vacancy rates. In that connection, it should be noted that the payment of contributions by Member States which had yet to meet their financial obligations under the Charter would enable the Organization to carry out the mandated reforms in a meaningful and rational manner.

(Ms. Friessnigg, Austria)

in. It ~~was~~ unfortunate that CPC had been unable to make recommendations concerning the **establishment** of a contingency fund. A simple set of procedures should be in place when the fund came into operation, and her delegation welcomed the Advisory Committee's intention to address the **problem of additional** expenditures.

Disagreement on such problems would be detrimental to the **Organization**, and it might be useful for the Advisory Committee to **draw on the relevant** experience of some **specialized** agencies in its search for alternative solutions. Her delegation was willing to discuss the establishment of a contingency fund for the biennium **1988-1989** on an experimental **basis**, without prejudice to the future, and to negotiate matters such as the scope, period covered and procedures for the fund, **since** it was convinced that a consensus on those issues remained essential.

11. Following **an** extension of the current **medium-term** plan for a further two-year period, a meaningful policy directive should evolve **from** the consultative process among Member States. Believing that **consensus** ~~was~~ a necessary basic principle in ensuring that **all Member** States fulfilled their responsibilities to the Organisation, ~~her~~ delegation, which reserved the right to comment on certain budget sections at a later stage, fully agreed with the Secretary-General that any decision on the content, scope and level of the budget should ~~be~~ reached on the basis **of** the **broadest** possible agreement.

12. **Mr. ORTEGA-NALDA** (Mexico) said that his delegation fully supported the Secretary-General's determination to **achieve** maximum efficiency and effectiveness despite the difficulties created by continuing financial uncertainty. Although the **procr** which had ~~led~~ to the establishment of the Group of High-level International Experts and to the **subsequent adoption** of General Assembly resolution **41/213** had always been distinctly political, the withholding of contributions - which was a political act - made it impossible for the Secretary-General to ensure the process of reform. The initiation of a new budget process would become irrelevant if there was no money to meet the payroll. The State which bore primary responsibility for the financial crisis should fulfil its obligations under the Charter and associate itself with the vast majority of Member States that wished the process of reform to proceed in **an** orderly, clear, coherent and timely manner. Experience had shown that **hasty action** was unlikely to yield the desired result, and **some** of the ambiguities in General Assembly resolution **41/213** might have been eliminated if more time had **been** provided for negotiations. With respect to the establishment of a contingency fund, resolution **41/213** clearly stated that the outline of the programme budget submitted in off-budget years should contain an indication of the **size of the fund**. No mandate existed for the establishment of an experimental fund, nor did it appear **appropriate** to introduce **such a fund** during a transitional budget period. Problems relating to the fund should be solved on the basis of the Advisory Committee's suggestions before it was actually established, rather than allowing the Organisation's reform process to degenerate into a constant pattern of "trial and error".

13. His delegation agreed with the view expressed by the delegation of Finland, on behalf of the Nordic countries, to the effect that the budget process approved in resolution **41/213** was designed to produce a **more** focused discussion of programme budget priorities, rather than to be an exercise in reductions, and that

(Mr. Ortega-Nalda, Mexico)

intergovernmental bodies should participate in the new process to an even greater extent. It also welcomed the progress made by the Special Commission of the Economic and Social Council on the In-depth Study of the United Nations Intergovernmental Structure and Functions in the Economic and Social Fields, and agreed with CPC that the final shape of the Secretariat structure in those fields should be determined only after the Special Commission had completed its study.

14. In view of the transitional nature of the proposed programme budget, his delegation reserved the right to make detailed comments at a later stage. For the time being, it wished to express its support for the Advisory Committee's view that it was impossible at the present stage to set an overall figure for the revised estimates for the 1988-1989 proposed programme budget, its agreement with the view of certain delegations that the proposed budget could not set the pattern for future budgets, and its concern that the implementation of certain recommendations of the Group of High-level Intergovernmental Experts were having an adverse effect on programmes, particularly with respect to the activities of regional commissions, despite the request, in resolution 41/213, that the percentages referred to in recommendation 15 should be approached with flexibility.

15. In general, his delegation agreed with the conclusions and recommendations reached by CPC at its twenty-seventh session and took note of the Committee's recommendation that the perspectives on the work of the United Nations in the 1990s, as presented in document A/42/512, should be examined by the Main Committees of the General Assembly. While it was important to achieve the broadest possible agreement among Member States on the outline programme budget, the current geographical distribution of seats in CPC needed to be modified if such agreement were to be reached. In view of the need for Member States to participate in the budgetary preparation from its early stages and throughout the process, the Committee's membership should also be expanded prior to its twenty-eighth session, and its timetable of activities revised.

16. Mr. MURRAY (Trinidad and Tobago) took the Chair.

17. Mr. ABRASZEWSKI (Poland) said that the decrease in the overall level of resources requested for the forthcoming biennium might well be a turning-point. For many years, Poland had advocated a lower, stabilised rate of growth in the budget, which would not necessarily have decreased efficiency and programme delivery. In general, the additional reductions, totalling \$45.4 million, proposed by the Advisory Committee were reasonable and necessary. Those cuts, in such areas as underutilized balances, consultants, travel and publications, were consistent with a number of General Assembly resolutions. If the Secretariat became more efficient and productive, the cuts would not adversely affect programmes.

18. His delegation had participated actively in the extensive negotiations which had led to the adoption of resolution 41/213. The reforms initiated under that resolution must be carried out within the prescribed time-frame. Those reforms should streamline United Nations machinery without affecting substantive programmes. In restructuring the Secretariat, it would be important not to upset the balance of Member States' interests or discriminate against individual countries or groups of countries. Proposals submitted to the General Assembly should be

(Mr. Abraarewaki, Poland)

considered in the light of the Secretary-General's instructions to programme managers, contained in his first progress report on reform and renewal in the United Nations (A/42/234). Since the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination (CPC) had been unable to agree at its 1987 session on the overall level of the budget, that Committee would be expected to fulfil its expanded role in 1988,

19. The current session of the General Assembly should focus on the questions of the contingency fund, additional expenditure, and adjustments resulting from inflation and currency fluctuations. The Advisory Committee's views formed a good basis for taking a decision on the contingency fund. That fund should, inter alia, facilitate the redeployment of resources from low-priority to high-priority activities. As a sponsor of General Assembly resolution 3534 (XXX), Poland believed that more energy should be channelled into identifying activities which were obsolete, of marginal usefulness or ineffective.

20. His delegation agreed with the Advisory Committee that a contingency fund would be only one step toward a comprehensive solution to the problem of add-ons. At the forty-third session of the General Assembly, the Secretary-General should submit proposals for incorporating such additional costs - including those resulting from inflation and currency fluctuations - into the overall level of resources for the biennium. His delegation had noted with interest that the Advisory Committee intended to undertake an in-depth study of the question.

21. The current financial crisis - the worst the Organisation had ever faced - was the result of a politically motivated action. His delegation strongly opposed any attempt to use the Organisation's finances as a means of exerting pressure on Member States, or on the Secretariat, for political gain. An example of the damage resulting from such an approach was the adverse impact which the recruitment freeze had had on the representation of Poland and other Eastern European countries in the Secretariat. The freeze must be applied more flexibly to the nationals of underrepresented countries or countries whose nationals served mainly on fixed-term contracts. A permanent solution to the financial crisis must include measures to prevent it from ever again recurring.

22. While the medium-term plan was useful, his delegation had long maintained that its format must be simpler and more transparent. Under the extended time-frame of the new budgetary Procedure, preparation of the plan would be reduced to a guessing game in a rapidly changing world. That would place a substantial burden on the Department of Administration and Management, among others, a fact which should be borne in mind when deciding on staff reductions. Simplification was also necessary because not all Member States had the human resources to analyse the medium-term plan in its current form. In fact, during the informal negotiations on resolution 41/213, a number of States had indicated that the medium-term plan was of limited value to them. His delegation did not object to the Secretary-General's proposal to extend the current medium-term plan until 1991, or to have the subsequent plan cover a four-year period.

The meeting was suspended at 11.10 a.m. and resumed at 11.30 a.m.

23. Mr. Anneua (Sweden) resumed the Chair.

24. Mr. DJDUDI (Algeria) said that Algeria ehnred the Secretary-General's concern over the financial crisis and the difficulties it had placed in the way of reform and the funding of activities under the programme budget. Continued financial uncertainty would undermine efforts to improve the efficiency of the Organization, and a lasting solution to that problem had to be found at the current session. One of the very first steps that needed to be taken was for all Member States to honour their financial obligations to the Organization. In that connection" both the Soviet Union and Japan were to be commended, the first, for its recent decision to fulfil all its financial commitments and the second, for its voluntary contribution of \$20 million. They had set examples for other States to follow. The Organization's vulnerability was the result of the large share of the budget paid by a single Member state. The United Nations must be protected from financial pressures and its democratic functioning must be preserved. Perhaps expenditures should be reapportioned on the basis of capacity to pay, and in the light of prerogatives and privileges enjoyed by certain countries. Negative growth in the budget was being proposed at a time when the Organization was being called upon to play a wider role in resolving conflicts and dealing with an ailing world economy. Since the proposed program budget had been drafted at a time of crisis, and, hence, of transition, it should not serve as a precedent for the 1990-1991 outline.

25. His delegation agreed with the Advisory Committee that pending a comprehensive examination of the technical issues relating to the operation of the proposed contingency Fund, it was premature to include any provision for a fund in the 1988-1989 programme budget. It was regrettable that CPC had been unable to deal with those technical issues. An in-depth study of the matter by the general Assembly at the current session on the basis of the Advisory Committee's recommendations would help to facilitate agreement among Member States when the 1990-1991 outline was submitted. In the mean time, as the Advisory Committee had recommended, the normal procedures should be followed in making adjustments for inflation and currency fluctuations.

26. His delegation also supported the Advisory Committee's recommendation on the overall level of resources, principally because it would be difficult for both political and technical reasons to fix a budget ceiling. Moreover, the Secretary-General himself had indicated that revised estimates, reflecting the progress of reform, would be forthcoming.

27. The date proposed by the Secretary-General for submission of the budget outline in the off-budget year, namely 15 April, was perhaps not the most appropriate, inasmuch as it was not geared to the meeting schedule of the decision-making bodies which were required to state their views on budget estimates for their activities. The problem could be solved through a minor adjustment in the calendar of meetings.

26. It would be useful to have the Secretary-General's opinion on the extent to which project and programme delivery would be affected by the additional cuts of some \$45.5 million recommended by the Advisory Committee. In the interest of achieving a consensus, Algeria would agree to the Advisory Committee's recommendation, as long as staff reductions were applied flexibly and priority was given to the economic situation in Africa.

(Mr. Djoudi, Algeria)

29. His delegation questioned the reconsideration of estimates for construction projects at the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) and the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP). The General Assembly had approved those projects three years earlier, and at a time when reform and renewal were the order of the day, it was not particularly appropriate for it to reverse its decision on two projects which exemplified the trend towards universality and decentralization. The ECA and ESCAP construction projects had been delayed for too long. As a result, the Organization would incur even greater expenditures and lose credibility. For those reasons, the projects must be completed as early as possible.

30. While welcoming the priority which the Secretary-General assigned to economic recovery and development in Africa, his delegation was concerned over how that priority had been reflected in the programme budget. At the urging of Algeria and several other delegations, CPC had requested the Secretary-General to report on the measures he intended to take to ensure that due consideration was given to the priority he had assigned to the United Nations Programme of Action for Economic Recovery and Development in the biennium 1988-1989. His delegation would study the specific proposals in that report in the light of the budget reductions proposed by the Advisory Committee in order to obtain an accurate picture of the priority given to that Programme.

31. Although CPC had not been able to address the technical details of the contingency fund, Algeria was generally satisfied with its recommendation on the proposed programme budget, particularly the recommendations on maintaining programme and activities.

32. A two-year extension of the medium-term plan could be considered on an exceptional basis, especially if the 1992-1995 plan would stand to benefit from it. The paper entitled "Some perspectives on the work of the United Nations in the 1990s", enclosed with the note by the Secretary-General on the preparation of the next medium-term plan (A/42/512), should be examined carefully by the Main Committees with a view to improving the content and scope of the plan. The Organization must adapt to new situations and concerns without abandoning priorities that were still relevant - priorities such as decolonization, disarmament, and development. All measures to improve the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations should be referred to CPC. A more equitable geographical distribution of its membership would serve to affirm that Committee's strengthened role.

33. His delegation welcomed the intention of the Under-Secretary-General for Public Information to submit to CPC the proposal to restructure the Department of Public Information. Reforms affecting other Secretariat units should likewise be submitted to the relevant intergovernmental bodies. As suggested by the Foreign Ministers of the Group of 77 at their recent meeting, resolution 41/213 should be applied in a balanced manner to both intergovernmental bodies and the Secretariat. The prerogatives of the Special Commission of the Economic and Social Council which was reviewing the structure and functioning of the intergovernmental machinery in the economic and social fields must be respected.

(Mr. Djoudi, Algeria)

34. It should also be remembered that correction of the Organization's administrative and financial defect⁵ was an ongoing process dating back to the 1960s. As new measures would be called for in future, it was vital to agree upon a common definition of the direction and scope of current reform efforts. Since efficiency was the goal, reform should not be confused with economy measures, particularly in a budget which, as the Swedish delegation had pointed out two years earlier, did not, even amount to half the budget of the New York City Fire Department.

35. Mr. AFRIDI (Pakistan) said that the uncertainty of the Organisation's financial situation not only jeopardized the implementation of resolution 41/213 and the reform process, but made proper programme planning difficult. Financial certainty was a prerequisite of both budget and programme planning. Member States must ask themselves whether they wanted the Organisation to survive as a viable multilateral body - playing an essential role in international security, peace and development - or whether they were prepared not to extend their confidence and support, and risk a world without the United Nations. His delegation hoped that the wiser view would prevail, and welcomed the announcement by the Government of Japan of a voluntary contribution to help tide the United Nations over the present crisis.

36. He expressed appreciation for the Secretary-General's unremitting efforts to keep the United Nations functioning in the face of tremendous odds. The Secretary-General and the staff had displayed great vigour and determination in implementing resolution 41/213. The threat to the existence of the United Nations could be overcome if Member States respected their obligation to pay their assessed contributions, he called on all Member States to end the atmosphere of crisis that surrounded the United Nations by paying their arrears.

37. The initial appropriation requested by the Secretary-General for the biennium 1988-1989 was less than the revised appropriation for the current biennium, even before the "perennial" costs and allowances for inflation it included were taken into account. His delegation agreed with the Advisory Committee that such a budget was indispensable in the transition to the 1990s. He emphasised, however, that the negative growth in the proposed programme budget should be considered an exception, made in response to particular conditions, and should not form the basis of future budget proposals. Once the reform⁵ had been carried out, positive growth in the budget would demonstrate the Organization's vitality and enhanced role in international affairs.

38. An important reform in the budgetary process was the establishment of a contingency fund, as called for in resolution 41/213. The preliminary suggestions by the Advisory Committee as to how the fund should operate provided a sound basis for further study by the Secretariat with a view to the establishment of the fund during the biennium 1990-1991. On the question of expenditure over and above appropriations, his delegation agreed with the Advisory Committee that the current procedure for authorization should continue, to apply pending further examination of the question by the Advisory Committee and CPC.

(Mr. Afridi, Pakistan)

39. Resolution 41/213 emphasized that the reform measures should not have an adverse effect on programme. His delegation was concerned that that had not been the case. Levels of programming must be maintained unless the General Assembly decided otherwise. In the mean time, his delegation would like to receive information on the programme affected by the economy measures and how the reforms, as they progressed, led to reductions in the budget.

40. He was concerned at the continued recruitment freeze which, he hoped, would not be used as means of bringing about the mandated reduction in Secretariat posts. Such a move would not only damage programmes but distort the geographical distribution of posts in the Secretariat. Measures such as the vacancy management scheme and the staff redeployment scheme should serve to minimize the effect of the freeze.

41. The Secretary-General had begun changes in important Secretariat departments without awaiting the results of the in-depth study of the United Nations intergovernmental structure and functions in the economic and social fields. His delegation maintained, nevertheless, that the final shape of the Secretariat in the economic and social fields should be determined only after the Economic and Social Council's Special Commission had completed its study.

42. Mr. HARAN (Israel) observed that, as the Secretary-General had pointed out, the Organization needed a sound financial basis. Such a message was often heard in the Fifth Committee, but it assorted in with the fact that, on the day the Secretary-General had introduced his budget proposals, only 69 of all Members of the United Nations had honoured full their financial obligations to the Organization for the current year. The entire budget of the United Nations was less than half that of the New York City Fire Department, although the United Nations was • ♦□□□□□□□ to function as a kind of fire brigade for the entire world community. Leaving aside those countries which were in truly extraordinary economic difficulties, the failure of so many Member States to meet their obligations opreaentad a massive vote of no confidence in the United Nations. Delegations might speak impreaavalily in the Ger -al Assembly, but in actual fact the United Nations evidently came low on their list of priorities. As future programmes of activity for the United Nations were planned, that fact must be taken into account.

43. His delegation could understand the vote of no confidence. The call for a leaner, more efficient Secretariat made in resolution 41/213 was not reflected in the perspectives on the work of the United Nations as described by the Secretary-General, which showed a lack of the naceaaary self-criticism. It had been suggested that the current medium-term plan should be extended for two years, so that the new one would begin not in 1990 but in 1992. But to try, in present circumstances, to see what the future might hold for the United Nations five years ahead was to attempt the impossible. The Committee would do better to set the matter aside and return to it in 1988, when the reforms had made some progress.

(Mr. Haran, Israel)

44. **What changes should be made?** To his delegation, it was clear that the basic ideas underlying the United Nations - the Organization's universality, and the sovereign equality of all Member States - must be recognized in all activities, and that the Organization's approach should be more balanced, drawing on a proper understanding of the positions of all countries concerned. It was inappropriate for plans for the future work of the United Nations to be discussed only in the Second or Fifth Committees: the United Nations was, first and foremost, a means to safeguard international peace and security, a subject dealt with by neither of those Committees. There should be less talk, fewer conferences and fewer documents, so that the United Nations could concentrate on the things that did reasonably well: operational activities for development, among other things. In short, when considering whether to support United Nations programmes, delegations should consider not only the resolutions adopted by the General Assembly but the attitude taken by each Member State to paying for them. The annexes to the report of the Committee on Contributions (A/42/11/Add.1), showing the sums paid by Member States both as assessed contributions and as voluntary donations, provided a striking indication of what could be accomplished when countries were prepared not only to talk about but to contribute to the United Nations.

Programme budget implications of draft resolution A/42/L.16 concerning agenda item 31 (A/C.5/42/27)

45. **Mr. MSELLE** (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that, during its discussion of the programme budget implications of draft resolution A/42/L.16, the Advisory Committee had been informed that the sum authorized by the General Assembly in connection with resolution 41/33, on the same subject, had been insufficient⁸ additional funds had had to be allocated to cover the activities called for. The additional expenditure incurred would be reported in the performance report to be discussed by the Fifth Committee before the end of the present session. For 1988, the Secretary-General requested the sum of \$104,000, roughly the amount which had been spent in 1987. The Advisory Committee recommended approval of that request.

46. **The CHAIRMAN** suggested that, on the basis of the recommendation of the Advisory Committee, the Committee should inform the General Assembly that, should it approve draft resolution A/42/L.16, an additional appropriation of \$104,000 would be required under section 1 of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1988-1989.

47. **It was so decided.**

40. **Mr. SADAT** (Afghanistan) said that his delegation had traditionally maintained that the annual resolution on the situation around Afghanistan was ineffective, inasmuch as it failed to take unbiased account of the positions of all parties involved and therefore was of no assistance in bringing the situation to an end. At the current session it had adopted a more positive attitude, as exemplified by the statement by his country's Minister for Foreign Affairs to the plenary Assembly. It had taken a constructive part in the Geneva talks organised by the Secretary-General and would continue to do so, in an effort to reach a political

(Mr. Sadat, Afghanistan)

settlement. To preserve the consensus in the plenary Assembly, his delegation would, if necessary, vote in favour of the draft resolution there. As the aim of the draft resolution was to bring about a settlement, his delegation had also refrained from obstructing its progress through the Fifth Committee.

49. Mr. HARAN (Israel) reaffirmed his delegation's view that perennial items of expenditure should be included in the initial budget estimates only after the entire new budget procedure had come into force. At present, the Secretary-General's initial estimates included about half the activities that might be described as "perennial", while others - such as those provided for in the draft resolution whose programme budget implications the Committee had just considered - were still submitted for individual consideration. His delegation did not object to the actual expenditure, which was justified and should be encouraged. In future, however, the cost of the Secretary-General's efforts to produce a settlement in the situation in Afghanistan should be included in the proposed programme budget under the provision for items of a perennial nature.

The meeting rose at 12.35 p.m.