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Forty-second session
FIFTH COMMITTEE
Agenda items 41 and 115

REVIEW OF THE EFFICIENCY OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL FUNCTIONING OF THE UNITED NATIONS

PROPOSED PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 1988-1989

Draft resolution submitted by the Chairman following informal consultations

Implementation of General Assembly resolution 41/213

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 41/213 of 19 December 1986 on the review of the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations,

Reaffirming that measures to improve the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations and to improve the planning, programming and budgeting process should aim at and contribute to strengthening the effectiveness of the Organization in dealing with political, economic and social issues in order better to achieve the purposes of and respect for the principles set out in the Charter of the United Nations,

Reaffirming also that all Member States must honour, promptly and in full, their financial obligations as set out in the Charter,

Emphasizing that the financial stability of the Organization will facilitate the orderly, balanced and well co-ordinated implementation of resolution 41/213 in all its parts,

* Reissued for technical reasons.

Recognizing that the implementation of resolution 41/213 by all concerned - the Secretary-General, Member States and intergovernmental bodies - is a continuing process,

Recalling the relevant parts of its resolutions 37/234 of 21 December 1982 and 38/227 of 20 December 1983,

Taking into account its resolutions 42/170 and 42/207 C of 11 December 1987,

Having considered the reports of the Secretary-General, 1/

Having considered also the relevant parts of the report of the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination 2/ and of the reports of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, 3/

Taking into account the views expressed by Member States during the consideration of this item at its forty-second session,

1. Calls upon Member States to demonstrate their commitment to the United Nations by, inter alia, meeting their financial obligations in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations;
2. Stresses that, in order to carry out successfully the process of reform and restructuring, it is essential that the present financial uncertainties be dispelled;
3. Reiterates its support for the Secretary-General in the fulfilment of his responsibilities as chief administrative officer of the Organization;
4. Reiterates also that the implementation of its resolution 41/213 must not have an adverse effect on mandated activities and programmes;
5. Stresses the importance of the timely and successful completion of the in-depth study of the intergovernmental structure in the economic and social fields being undertaken by the Economic and Social Council as mandated by the General Assembly in section I, paragraph 1 (c), of its resolution 41/213, and reaffirms its resolution 42/170, in particular paragraphs 3 and 4 thereof;
6. Requests the Secretary-General, in implementing those recommendations contained in its resolution 41/213 which are under his responsibility, to take into account the reviews, studies and decisions entrusted to the intergovernmental bodies and invites him to co-operate with those bodies as required;

1/ A/42/225 and Add.1, A/42/234 and Corr.1 and A/C.5/42/2/Rev.1.

2/ A/42/16 (Parts I and II).

3/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-second Session, Supplement No. 7 (A/42/7), A/42/7/Add.2 and A/42/640.

7. Also requests the Secretary-General, in implementing those recommendations contained in its resolution 41/213 which are within his purview, to seek the approval of the General Assembly for a departure from the approved recommendations;

8. Stresses the importance of the revised estimates for the biennium 1988-1989 that the Secretary-General will submit to the General Assembly at its forty-third session through the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination and the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions and requests the Secretary-General, in preparing those revised estimates, to reflect the state of implementation of the relevant provisions of resolution 41/213;

9. Notes that the implementation by the Secretary-General of certain recommendations adopted by the General Assembly in its resolution 41/213 is not in accordance with the decisions of the Assembly;

10. Requests the Secretary-General, in further implementing recommendations 5, 15, 19, 25, 29 and 37, and particularly when preparing revised estimates for the biennium 1988-1989 and proposals for revision of the medium-term plan for the period 1984-1989, to take into account the following guidelines:

(a) Regarding recommendation 5, the General Assembly takes note of the report of the Secretary-General 4/ and invites him to proceed as necessary on both already approved projects in accordance with the provision of section I, paragraph 1 (a), of resolution 41/213, on the understanding that no additional appropriation will be required in that regard for the biennium 1988-1989;

(b) Regarding recommendation 15 on the reduction of posts in the United Nations, the Assembly stresses the importance that it attaches to the submission by the Secretary-General to the Assembly of his plans for the implementation of this recommendation in accordance with the provisions of resolution 41/213 and reiterates its conclusion that the Secretary-General should implement this recommendation with flexibility in order to avoid, inter alia, negative impact on programmes and on the structure and composition of the Secretariat, bearing in mind the necessity of securing the highest standards of efficiency, competence and integrity of the staff, with due regard to equitable geographical distribution;

(c) Regarding the implementation of recommendation 19 on activities relating to Namibia, the Secretary-General is invited to implement this recommendation in consultation with the United Nations Council for Namibia;

(d) The Secretary-General is invited to consider the location of the functions related to liaison with non-governmental organizations in the context of the implementation of recommendation 25; the Secretary-General is further invited to review his decisions on this matter in the context of the decisions to be taken by the Economic and Social Council on the intergovernmental structure in the economic and social fields, as they will pertain to the functioning and servicing of the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations;

(e) Regarding recommendation 29, the Secretary-General is invited to review his decisions in the light of the debate of the Fifth Committee at the forty-second session of the General Assembly and to reflect the results of such review in his revised estimates;

(f) Regarding recommendation 37, the General Assembly takes note of the additional information provided by the Secretary-General with regard to the reform in the Department of Public Information of the Secretariat, stresses that such reform should fully respect the mandated programme of work of the Department as detailed in section 27 of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1988-1989, 5/ takes note of the assurances by the Secretary-General in that respect, including those provided in writing, 6/ requests the Secretary-General to complete the thorough review of the functions, working methods and policies of the Department of Public Information and the review of the functions and activities of the United Nations information centres called for under recommendation 37 as a matter of priority, and further requests the Secretary-General to reflect in his revised estimates the findings of those reviews, the concerns expressed by Member States at its forty-second session and the above-mentioned assurances when finalizing the reform and work programme of the Department of Public Information;

11. Further requests the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its forty-third session, through the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination and the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, a progress report on the state of implementation of resolution 41/213;

12. Concurs with the relevant observations and recommendations made by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions in its report; 7/

13. Approves the guidelines for the contingency fund as annexed hereto;

14. Requests the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its forty-third session, through the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination and the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, proposals for a provisional set of procedures on the use and operation of the contingency fund based on the above-mentioned guidelines;

15. Decides to review the procedures for the use and operation of the contingency fund in the light of experience no later than at its forty-seventh session;

5/ To be issued as Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-second Session, Supplement No. 6 (A/42/6/Rev.1).

6/ A/C.5/42/L.22.

7/ A/42/640, paras. 4-14.

16. Also decides to consider at its forty-third session the question of a comprehensive solution to the problem of all additional expenditures, including those deriving from inflation and currency fluctuations, on the basis of the reports to be submitted by the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination and the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions;

17. Reaffirms the relevant provisions of resolution 41/213 concerning the role and mandate of the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination;

18. Decides that the date of submission of the outline of the proposed programme budget shall be 15 August of the off-budget year.

ANNEX

Contingency fund

A. Criteria for use of the contingency fund

The following categories should apply:

(a) Additional resources that may be required as a result of the consideration of statements of programme budget implications;

(b) Revised estimates:

- (i) On the amounts required over and above the estimates of the proposed programme budget for the activity which had been included in the proposed programme budget but which were not acted upon at first reading pending the submission of additional information;
- (ii) For construction, only additional requirements related to changes in the scope of the projects which are so urgent that the matter cannot wait to be considered in the context of the budget outline; additional requirements related to cost increases should be handled under provisions for dealing with inflation and currency fluctuations; similarly, additional requirements related to the effects of natural disasters or unforeseen obstacles should be handled on an ad hoc basis and should not be covered by the contingency fund;
- (iii) Legislative mandates, such as those resulting from the decisions of the Economic and Social Council.

B. Period covered and pattern of use of the contingency fund

1. The fund covers additional expenditures relating to the biennium which are based on decisions taken in the year preceding and during the biennium.

2. While prudent use of the fund requires that it should not be exhausted before the end of the period of use, no pre-determined proportion for a given year should be set, pending review in the light of experience with the actual operation of the fund.

C. Operation of the contingency fund

1. In the off-budget year, the General Assembly would decide on the size of the fund in accordance with the provisions of annex I to its resolution 41/213.

2. Starting with the budget year (i.e., the year before the commencement of the biennium) and continuing throughout the biennium, the General Assembly would decide on the actual amounts to be utilized from the fund on the basis of statements of programme budget implications and revised estimates.

3. Each statement of programme budget implications and each proposal for revised estimates should contain a precise indication of how the alternatives mentioned in paragraph 9 of annex I to resolution 41/213 would be applied in case it is not possible to finance all or part of the additional requirements from the fund. It would be understood that each draft resolution that would be accompanied by such a programme budget implication would be adopted subject to the provisions of that programme budget implication.

4. The statement of programme budget implications and proposals for revised estimates, formulated as indicated in paragraph 3 above, would be considered by the Assembly as in the past. The resolution could be adopted by the Assembly subject to the understanding described in paragraph 3 above.

5. A deadline should be set for the consideration of programme budget implications and revised estimates. After that date, the Secretary-General would prepare and submit a consolidated statement of all programme budget implications and revised estimates considered at that session of the General Assembly. The amounts in that statement would correspond to those previously recommended by the Fifth Committee upon its consideration of individual statements and revised estimates (see para. 3 above). Should the consolidated amount be within the available balance in the contingency fund, the Assembly would proceed to appropriate the required amounts under the relevant section of the programme budget.

6. Should the consolidated amount exceed the balance available in the fund for that year, the Secretary-General would, in his consolidated statement, make proposals for revising the amount within the balance of the fund remaining for the year. In so doing, the Secretary-General would be guided by the indications of alternatives appended to each programme budget implication and included in each proposal for revised estimates. The respective legislative bodies should take action on such alternatives at the time they adopt the decision or resolution in question (see para. 3 above). The Secretary-General would also take into account such indications of relative urgency as each legislative body might wish to make as between the resolutions and decisions of that body. Upon consideration of this statement, the General Assembly would proceed to appropriate the funds necessary under the relevant sections of the programme budget.
