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PROPOSED PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 1978-1979

Revised estimates under sections 8 and 25 and income section 1:
Incorporation into the regular budget of the infrastructure
posts of the Latin American Demographic Centre (CELADE)

Twenty-fourth report of the Advisory Committee on
Administrative and Budgetary Questions

1. The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions has considered the revised estimates under sections 8 and 25 and income section 1 related to the proposed incorporation in the regular budget of the infrastructure posts of the Latin American Demographic Centre (CELADE) (A/C.5/32/45).
2. The Secretary-General proposes that 15 posts (1 D-1, 4 P-5 and 10 local level) in CELADE, which have hitherto been funded from voluntary resources, be transferred to the regular budget as of 1 January 1978 at a cost of \$673,100 net in the biennium 1978-1979. In paragraph 5 of his report, he states that voluntary financing for these posts will not be available after the end of 1977.
3. In paragraph 3 the Secretary-General recalls that the Economic and Social Council, at its sixty-third session, adopted decision 247 (LXIII) of 25 July 1977, in which it took note with satisfaction of the report of the Economic Commission for Latin America (ECLA) covering the period from 7 May 1976 to 6 May 1977, 1/ of the resolutions and recommendations therein, and also of the Commission's programme of work contained in volume II thereof. 2/
4. One of the resolutions in that report was resolution 376 (XVII) of 5 May 1977 on the regional population programme, in paragraph 1 of which the Commission:

1/ Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, Sixty-third Session, Supplement No. 11 (E/5945) and Supplement No. 11A (E/5945/Add.1).

2/ Ibid., Supplement No. 11A (E/5945/Add.1).

"Decides to incorporate the basic infrastructure of CELADE into the secretariat of ECLA in order to ensure the continuous conduct of its activities in population matters, and to request the Executive Secretary to take the necessary measures, as described in resolution 346 (AC/68), to ensure that this infrastructure comes under the regular budget of the ECLA secretariat as from 1978."

5. The Secretary-General, in his statement of financial implications submitted to ECLA, estimated the cost of the decision at \$449,000 in 1978-1979, including \$403,000 in staff costs 3/ (as against \$655,100 in document A/C.5/32/45). In the statement he submitted to the Economic and Social Council in accordance with rule 31 of the rules of procedure of the Council, the Secretary-General did not give any cost estimates; instead, he indicated his intention to undertake an over-all review of the requirements of ECLA in the field of population and to submit revised estimates for the 1978-1979 biennium to the General Assembly at its thirty-second session (E/6032, para. 20).

Observations of the Advisory Committee

6. The Advisory Committee notes that, although in paragraph 4 of his report the Secretary-General refers to his intention to undertake the over-all review which he had promised to the Economic and Social Council, the proposal for the transfer of the 15 infrastructure posts seems to have been made ahead of such a review. Indeed, the number and grading of the posts proposed for transfer to the regular budget correspond to the number and grades shown in the statement of financial implications as submitted to ECLA. In other words, the request in document A/C.5/32/45 is a revised estimate attributable to a decision of the Council, rather than an estimate based on the Secretary-General's own assessment of ECLA's regular-budget staff needs in the field of population.

7. The Advisory Committee would have expected a request for the transfer of posts to follow rather than precede the over-all review. In the case of the CELADE posts, however, a special situation exists because extrabudgetary funds will not be available for the Centre's infrastructure posts beyond the end of 1977 (see para. 2 above).

8. In this connexion the Advisory Committee recalls that when the question of the transfer of certain CELADE posts to the regular budget was before the General Assembly at its thirtieth session, the Advisory Committee submitted a report in which it reviewed the history of the Centre. 4/ The Committee pointed out, in paragraph 32 of its report, that CELADE had been "initially conceived and has since operated as a centre to be financed outside the regular budget of the United Nations". After reporting that - because of CELADE's existence - the regular-budget activities of ECLA in the population programme were carried out by only

3/ Ibid., Supplement No. 11 (E/5945), para. 526.

4/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirtieth Session, Supplement No. 8A (A/10008/Add.1-28), document A/10008/Add.6.

one Professional officer (P-4), and suggesting that one possible solution might be the establishment of a population division in ECLA to carry out such activities as properly fell under the regular budget, the Advisory Committee stated that

"... beyond the problem of how best to provide for population activities in the Latin American region there exists the even broader problem of whether the regular budget of the United Nations is to be used to pay for regional centres and institutes every time there is a decrease in voluntary funding, or whether the primary responsibility for the continued existence of such centres and institutes rests with the Governments in the region. While circumstances may differ from case to case, there is need for the General Assembly to give guidance on the principles involved." 5/

9. In response to inquiries the Advisory Committee was informed that the budget of CELADE exceeds \$2 million a year and covers 10 programmes; nine of them relate to research, training and advisory services, and one provides the infrastructure, i.e. the over-all management of the Centre. The posts proposed for transfer correspond to the latter programme, and they do not relate to the type of substantive and administrative support to projects which is normally financed from overhead costs.

10. The Advisory Committee notes that the proposed transfer of posts would have an impact on the relative growth rate of the population programme. Because of the timing of the proposal, this aspect of the question could not be discussed in the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination.

11. At the same time the Committee notes that inasmuch as ECLA does not now have a population division, the proposed transfer of posts would not give rise to duplication or overlapping. Furthermore, if the CELADE infrastructure posts were discontinued, the population activities in the Latin American region would be left without central direction. In the Committee's opinion, these considerations outweigh the procedural short-comings to which reference has been made above. As regards the number of the posts to be transferred, the Committee was not provided with adequate justification for all the 10 local-level posts; accordingly, the Committee recommends that the number of CELADE infrastructure posts to be transferred to the regular budget of ECLA should be reduced by five local-level posts, i.e. to a total of 10 (one D-1, four P-5 and five local level). The consequential reduction in salaries and common staff costs would amount to \$79,800; the reduction under section 25 (Staff assessment) and income section 1 (Income from staff assessment) would be \$12,400.

12. Should the General Assembly approve the Advisory Committee's recommendations, the additional requirements in 1978-1979 would be as follows:

5/ Ibid., para. 36.

	<u>(US dollars)</u>
Section 8	593,300
Section 25	<u>165,000</u>
	758,300
Income section 1	<u>(165,000)</u>
	593,300
