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FIFTH COMMITTEE  
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at 11 a.m.  
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 68th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. TALIEH (Iran)

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

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The meeting was called to order at 11.05 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 100: PROPOSED PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 1978-1979 (continued)  
(A/32/6, A/32/8, A/32/38; A/C.5/32/12 and 13)

Administrative and financial implications of the draft resolution submitted by the Second Committee in document A/C.2/32/L.41/Rev.1 concerning agenda item 12 (A/32/8/Add.28; A/C.5/32/91 and Corr.1)

1. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions), introducing the Advisory Committee's report in document A/32/8/Add.28, said that one of the recommendations in draft resolution A/C.2/32/L.41/Rev.1 would be to transform the Committee on Housing, Building and Planning into a Commission on Human Settlements. The Secretary-General had indicated in his report (A/C.5/32/91 and Corr.1) that that transformation would have no additional financial implications. The Secretary-General was proposing to establish a new section 13B entitled "Habitat: Human Settlements".
2. In paragraph 6 of the Advisory Committee's report, reference was made to the criteria used by the Secretary-General to identify the resources to be earmarked for the Centre for Human Settlements. In paragraph 7, the Advisory Committee had indicated that, when the Fifth Committee considered the ACABQ report on administrative arrangements regarding the United Nations Habitat and Human Settlements Foundation (A/32/8/Add.6), it should bear in mind the Second Committee's recommendation to incorporate the Foundation into the new Centre.
3. The Secretary-General had indicated that 166 posts would be available for redeployment to the Centre (77 Professional and 89 local level), and that the regular budget would account for 48 of those posts. The Advisory Committee noted that the number of posts currently considered as being available for transfer was 43 less than the figure originally indicated.
4. In paragraph 10 of its report, the Advisory Committee had dealt with the question of costs relating to the establishment of the Centre. The Secretary-General had estimated that they would amount to a total of about \$2.9 million in non-recurrent costs, of which \$1.07 million would relate to the 1978-1979 biennium. The Advisory Committee disagreed with the Secretary-General's view that the savings in respect of common services costs resulting from the transfer could not easily be quantified, and it had therefore recommended that common services costs should be reduced by \$157,000 under section 22. The Advisory Committee also noted in paragraph 12 that the average cost of transfer of staff members from

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(Mr. Msele)

New York to Nairobi was calculated on the basis of the exercise of full entitlement under chapter VII of the Staff Regulations, and doubted whether in fact the full entitlement was always exercised. Accordingly, the Advisory Committee recommended that the costs of transfer of staff should be reduced from \$632,000 to \$450,000.

5. The Secretary-General had indicated that additional space would be needed as a result of the transfer. The Advisory Committee had noted that the Secretary-General had submitted a report (A/C.5/32/19 and Add.1) proposing the construction of a permanent headquarters at Nairobi to accommodate UNEP and the specialized agencies. When the building was occupied - which was expected to be in 1982 - it was envisaged that there would be a period up to 1985 when the space available in Nairobi could accommodate both the UNEP staff and the staff of various specialized agencies. The Advisory Committee took the view that the Centre for Human Settlements could be established without the need for additional construction at the current stage, for reasons given in paragraph 13 of its report.

6. The Secretary-General had also requested additional staff to provide financial, personnel and conference services for the Centre. The Advisory Committee thought that the precise additional requirements would become clearer when the Secretary-General submitted his 1978-1979 first performance report to the General Assembly at its thirty-third session. Indeed, the Secretary-General had indicated that his present recommendations under section 13B would need to be considered in depth in the context of the performance report at the thirty-third session. In view of the number of administrative, personnel and conference staff that would be available at Nairobi following the transfer of staff from New York, the Advisory Committee thought that the provision of additional staff could be postponed until the thirty-third session. The Advisory Committee therefore recommended in paragraph 14 of its report that requests for the posts could be resubmitted in the context of the first performance report, at which time they would be examined in the light of the justifications provided and on the basis of the actual experience thus far.

7. The Advisory Committee indicated in paragraph 15 of its report that it agreed to the Secretary-General's request for 19 posts (18 local level and 1 P-2), but recommended that all 19 posts should be provided on a temporary-assistance basis. The effect of the Advisory Committee's recommendations on the Secretary-General's proposals were indicated in paragraph 16 of its report. In paragraph 17, it made corresponding recommendations concerning estimates for various categories of recurrent costs. Paragraph 21 of the Advisory Committee's report contained a summary of the recommendations: should the draft resolution submitted by the Second Committee be adopted, a net additional appropriation in the amount of \$1,298,800 would be required.

8. Mr. SAFRONCHUK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that for a number of reasons he could not agree to the Advisory Committee's recommendations. In his delegations's view, the Secretary-General's requests for additional administrative

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(Mr. Safronchuk, USSR)

staff were completely unjustified. Indeed, there was already a significant imbalance between the number of administrative posts and other staff, and that imbalance would be increased by the requests for additional General Service posts. The increase would be unnecessary if full use was made of existing staff. The requests for both temporary and permanent staff were therefore unjustified.

9. With regard to the question of new construction, he agreed that, given the low level of current occupancy of the accommodation at Nairobi, the additional construction was quite unjustified at the current stage. His delegation would vote against the additional appropriations requested.

10. Mr. AKASHI (Japan) said that he regretted the hasty action that was being taken on such an important item. Although his delegation had voted in favour of draft resolution A/C.2/32/L.41/Rev.1, it noted that the net appropriation requested amounted to more than \$1 million, and that there were further significant administrative and financial implications. In his delegation's view, there should be a careful, phased approach to the question. It therefore fully endorsed the Advisory Committee's recommendation that the requirements should be closely scrutinized in conjunction with the 1978-1979 first performance report.

11. His delegation was very concerned about the possibility of massive duplication and overlapping of staff resources, and about the inexplicable discrepancy concerning 43 posts, to which the Advisory Committee had referred in paragraph 9 of its report (A/32/8/Add.28). It was difficult to understand why so many posts originally contemplated for transfer had somehow "disappeared". He hoped that, at the following session, there would be another opportunity to examine the requirements and that it would be possible to transfer further posts from the Secretariat.

12. With regard to space requirements, there was also a need to examine the Secretary-General's proposals. In that connexion, the Advisory Committee's comments in paragraph 13 of its report were very relevant. The priorities previously proposed for the use of space in the building should be completely reviewed in the context of the decision to establish the Habitat Centre.

13. At the following session, it would be necessary to examine what reductions would be needed in common services at Headquarters following the establishment of the Centre and the transfer of staff to Nairobi.

14. Mr. HAHN (Canada) supported the view expressed by the representative of Japan concerning the difference of 43 posts. He was particularly concerned about the peculiar arguments adduced in paragraph 8 of the Secretary-General's report (A/C.5/32/91). He found it most unusual that it had now been found that there were no activities in the Department of Economic and Social Affairs directly related to human settlements. With the transfer of the activities to the new Centre, there should also be a transfer of resources and a rearrangement of activities within the Department of Economic and Social Affairs. It was illogical

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(Mr. Hahn, Canada)

to state that there should be no transfer of resources because the posts were justified in terms of programmes other than human settlements.

15. In his view, the matter should be studied at the following session in terms of programme budgeting principles, and the full transfer of resources should be effected, in order to avoid duplication.

16. Mr. MILLS (Budget Division), referring to paragraph 8 of the Secretary-General's report (A/C.5/32/91), explained that the situation with regard to 12 of those posts dated back to the 1976 Habitat Conference. The 12 posts, supposed to have been available for transfer from the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, to the Habitat Centre, had been generated by a resolution adopted at that Conference, but had never been precisely identified as posts. Those resources had never been transferred to another programme. In the analysis of the resource requirements for 1978-1979, the work-months which added up to those 12 posts had never been justified under human settlements programmes. If there had been an error - and any error was regrettable - it must have already occurred the previous year.

17. With respect to the other posts, a total of 27 posts had been included the previous year and were therefore not specified in draft resolution A/C.2/32/L.41/Rev.1.

18. Mr. NAUDY (France) said that his delegation wished to reaffirm the reservations it had already expressed in the Second Committee with respect to the substance of the draft resolution. Despite the reductions justifiably recommended by the Advisory Committee, the resources allocated to the Secretary-General were still too large and he therefore agreed with the comments made by the representative of Japan. He drew attention to paragraph 6 (a) of the Advisory Committee's report (A/32/8/Add.28) regarding the Secretary-General's statement, which mentioned "a small but effective secretariat" already consisting of 200 persons.

19. Mr. STUART (United Kingdom) noted that the Secretary-General's performance report would appear only at the end of the session, which inevitably meant that again there would be no time to discuss so important an item. If there was to be a further report next year - and there should be - it should be a separate one and in it the Secretary-General should be encouraged to indicate the good reasons why there should be additional building at Gigiri to accommodate the extra secretariat unit and the needs of the specialized agencies. He supported all the comments made in the Advisory Committee's report and agreed to postpone a decision on how much accommodation should be provided but there were reasons to think that construction would be the most economical solution for the United Nations system.

20. Mr. SEKUYI (Ghana) supported the views expressed by the representatives of France, Japan and Canada and wished to stress that the arguments adduced by Mr. Mills to explain the disappearance of 43 posts were untenable.

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21. Mr. HART (Australia) said his delegation reserved its position with respect to paragraph 9 of the Advisory Committee's report.

22. Mr. PIRSON (Belgium) said that he was sorry that the Second Committee had been so late in reaching an agreement on institutional arrangements for international co-operation in the field of human settlements. Although the Advisory Committee's report was a good one, it had just been received and the Fifth Committee therefore had had no time to give proper consideration to the matter. He therefore suggested a formula that would allow the Secretary-General to begin to implement the arrangements: appropriations would be approved but with provisions ensuring constant supervision by the Advisory Committee in the coming months. An in-depth study of the financial implications of the draft resolution was essential. He also supported the views expressed by the representatives of France, Japan, Canada and the United Kingdom, and found it strange that 43 posts could no longer be transferred.

23. Referring to paragraph 13 of the Advisory Committee's report, he noted that approximately \$23 million had already been agreed on for the new building in Nairobi, but that the Secretary-General's report mentioned the need to build an additional wing. Only 18 per cent of the staff to be housed in the new building were paid under the regular budget of the United Nations; the rest of the staff would be paid from extrabudgetary funds or by specialized agencies. He therefore felt that the building should first be filled with United Nations staff before an additional wing was constructed. The matter required careful additional study and supervision in the following months.

24. Mr. OKEYO (Kenya), referring to the office facilities in Nairobi, said that the Advisory Committee's comments were acceptable to his delegation on the understanding that a special report would be issued next year on the desirability of extended office space for the Habitat Centre. The possibility should be left open of building an extension later, if that proved necessary. Otherwise, he supported the Advisory Committee's observations, as well as those made by the representative of the United Kingdom.

25. He shared the surprise of the representatives of Ghana and Japan at the disappearance of the 43 posts. Posts in New York involving similar functions might also be transferred to Nairobi.

26. Referring to paragraph 15, he noted that the Advisory Committee had proposed 18 General Service posts and one P-2 post to enable the Centre to start functioning. He proposed instead that three P-3 posts should be restored, including two in finance and administration and one in personnel services, so as to enable the Centre to meet the requirements of its activities at least for the time being. As to the question of the head of the Centre, the Advisory Committee had given no indication of the incumbent's rank. It was his delegation's understanding, however, that the post would be at the Under-Secretary-General level.

27. Mr. GAMBOA (Venezuela) said that his delegation had supported the draft resolution on institutional arrangements for international co-operation in the field of human settlements (A/C.2/32/L.41/Rev.1) in the Second Committee,

(Mr. Gamboa, Venezuela)

particularly the proposals regarding the creation of the Centre, because it had believed that the small secretariat would be absorbed in the Committee on Housing, Building and Planning, the Division in UNEP concerned with human settlements and the United Nations Habitat and Human Settlements Foundation. That had been its understanding and also the understanding of other members of the Second Committee. However, he was surprised to learn that 43 posts had disappeared. His delegation shared the view of the delegations of the United Kingdom, France, the Soviet Union and Japan that the Committee should not approve new appropriations for the expansion of buildings as it did not know what the exact requirements would be. The Committee would need a detailed report before it could approve such appropriations at the next session. He therefore urged the Committee to approve the recommendations made by the Chairman of the Advisory Committee.

28. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) pointed out that, whereas the Kenyan representative had proposed restoring three P-3 posts, the number of posts requested by the Secretary-General in that case included only two P-3 posts.

29. Mr. HAHN (Canada) endorsed the comments made by the United Kingdom representative concerning the need for a separate report to be received early in the next session of the General Assembly. His delegation looked forward to a full presentation of the case in favour of construction of premises in Nairobi and supported the views expressed by the Kenyan representative. The report should include the question of the transfer of posts and a thorough study of what activities should be transferred to the Habitat Centre. Finally, he endorsed the comments of the Kenyan representative concerning office facilities and the rank of the head of the Centre. It would welcome further comments on the restoration of posts.

30. The CHAIRMAN said that there seemed to be broad consensus on the recommendations of the Advisory Committee and on the views expressed by representatives, especially on the request by the United Kingdom for a separate report early in the thirty-third session of the General Assembly. He presumed that the Committee would agree to the Advisory Committee's recommendations with those provisos.

31. Mr. OKEYO (Kenya) said that his delegation would be willing to accept the recommendations of the Advisory Committee. His proposal would mean that two P-3 posts should be authorized for the Division of Financial Services, instead of one P-4 and one P-3, and that there should be one P-3 post in the Division of Personnel Services.

32. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that, traditionally, the Fifth Committee did not decide on the level of Professional posts. That was the function of the Secretary-General as chief administrative officer of the Organization.

33. Mr. OKEYO (Kenya) proposed that the Committee should simply authorize two P-3 posts; it could re-examine the issue the following year.

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34. Mr. FALL (Senegal) said that the revised proposal appeared to be in line with the comments of the Chairman of the Advisory Committee regarding the field of competence of the Secretary-General and that of the Fifth Committee. He suggested that the Committee should vote on the proposal to add two P-3 posts.
35. Mr. GAMBOA (Venezuela) urged the representative of Kenya to withdraw his proposal.
36. Mr. OKEYO (Kenya) withdrew his proposal, adding that he would raise the question at the following session.
37. Replying to a question from Mr. HAHN (Canada), the CHAIRMAN said that the Secretariat would start preparing the special report requested as soon as the Committee had voted on the issue.
38. Mr. MOHIOUD (Nigeria) asked whether the special report would also clarify the question concerning redeployment of posts, which had been referred to in paragraph 8 of the Secretary-General's statement (A/C.5/32/91 and Corr.1).
39. Mr. DEBATIN (Assistant Secretary-General, Controller) said that, if his understanding was correct, the special report would contain an analysis explaining the discrepancy pointed out in paragraph 9 of the Advisory Committee's report (A/32/8/Add.28) regarding the 43 posts.
40. Mr. ANVAR (Secretary of the Committee) said that the recommendations of the Advisory Committee would affect all the sections listed in paragraph 21 of the Advisory Committee's report and would entail a total additional appropriation in the amount of \$1,298,800.
41. The recommendations of the Advisory Committee were adopted by 79 votes to 3, with 3 abstentions.
42. The CHAIRMAN noted that the recommendations had been approved on the understanding that the Committee would receive a separate report early in the thirty-third session of the General Assembly.
43. Mr. PIRSON (Belgium) said that his delegation had voted in favour of the recommendations on that understanding. He assumed that his reservations concerning the substance would be reflected in the summary record of the meeting. His delegation intended to examine the question very closely at the following session of the General Assembly.

Financial implications of the decision of the World Food Council at a special session held on 16 November 1977 (A/32/8/Add.27; A/C.5/32/74)

44. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that the Advisory Committee had had some difficulty with the Secretary-General's note (A/C.5/32/74) concerning the World Food Council's decision to request that steps be taken to upgrade the post of Executive Director of the Council to the level of Under-Secretary-General. The Secretary-General had

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(Mr. Mselle)

not made it clear in his note whether he was in favour of the Council's recommendation for upgrading the post; neither was it clear what reasons had prompted the Council to make the request; the Secretary-General's note did not contain background information on why the post had been established at the Assistant Secretary-General level. The Advisory Committee had provided some of that information in its report. In view of the foregoing, the Advisory Committee was not in a position to make a definitive recommendation on the matter.

45. Mr. SEKYEI (Ghana) requested the Chairman of the Advisory Committee to comment on the reasoning that accompanied the Council's recommendation.

46. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) pointed out that, since the Secretary-General had made no case for the Council's recommendation, the Advisory Committee saw no reason why it should be approved.

47. The CHAIRMAN said that, if he heard no objection, he would take it that the Committee concurred with the Advisory Committee's view (A/32/8/Add.27, para. 6) that it was unable to recommend approval of the proposed upgrading.

48. It was so decided.

Financial implications of the draft resolution submitted by the Second Committee in document A/C.2/32/L.22/Rev.1 concerning agenda item 67 (A/C.5/32/102)

49. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) noted that the costs for fees and travel of the consultants required to prepare the study on the world inflationary phenomenon would amount to approximately \$15,000, but that that amount could be absorbed under section 11. Therefore no additional appropriation was required for the 1978-1979 programme budget. The Secretary-General had indicated that the group of experts would give rise to conference servicing costs in the amount of \$99,400 for a one-week session, and \$130,300 should a two-week session be necessary. The Advisory Committee expected the Secretary-General to indicate later that those amounts would be absorbed within the resources to be made available for conference servicing in 1978.

50. The CHAIRMAN said that, if he heard no objection, he would take it that the Committee concurred with the recommendations of the Advisory Committee.

51. It was so decided.

Financial implications of the draft resolution submitted by the Second Committee in document A/C.2/32/L.80 concerning agenda item 58 (A/C.5/32/103)

52. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that it should be possible to absorb the estimated cost of \$42,000 for the pre-conference meeting to be held in Manila under section 23B and that therefore there was no need for additional appropriations.

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53. The CHAIRMAN said that, if he heard no objection, he would take it that the Committee concurred with the recommendation of the Advisory Committee.

54. It was so decided.

Financial implications of the draft resolution submitted by the Second Committee in document A/C.2/32/L.78 concerning agenda item 58 (A/C.5/32/104)

55. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) noted that the Secretary-General had indicated that travel and per diem for representatives of organizations that had received a standing invitation from the General Assembly in accordance with resolution 3237 (XXIX) were estimated at \$2,300, while representation of national liberation movements in accordance with General Assembly resolutions 3280 (XXIX) and 31/152 was expected to require \$13,300. Thus costs for representation at the Conference were expected to amount to \$15,600. However, since they could be absorbed under section 11A, and since the estimated conference servicing costs of \$175,900 could be absorbed under section 23B, there was no need for additional appropriations.

56. The CHAIRMAN said that, if he heard no objection, he would take it that the Committee concurred with the recommendation of the Advisory Committee.

57. It was so decided.

Financial implications resulting from the decisions of the Trade and Development Board at its ninth special session and the first part of its seventeenth session (A/C.5/32/105)

58. The CHAIRMAN said that, if he heard no objection, he would take it that the Committee agreed to take note of the report of the Secretary-General in document A/C.5/32/105, since it had no financial implications.

59. It was so decided.

Administrative and financial implications of the draft resolution submitted by the Second Committee in document A/C.2/32/L.101 concerning agenda item 67 (A/C.5/32/106)

60. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that in paragraph 2 of the draft resolution the General Assembly would decide to convene a special session of the Assembly early in 1980 and noted that the Secretary-General had indicated in paragraph 8 a preliminary estimate of \$1,226,500 for conference servicing costs. That estimate, however, was extremely tentative. No additional financial requirements were foreseen in the present biennium, but the Secretary-General had indicated that requirements for the special session would be considered in the context of the proposed programme budget for 1980-1981. Thus no additional appropriations would be required for 1978-1979.

61. The CHAIRMAN said that, if he heard no objection, he would take it that the Committee concurred with the recommendation of the Advisory Committee.

62. It was so decided.

Financial implications of the draft resolution in document E/L.1793 of the resumed sixty-third session of the Economic and Social Council concerning agenda item 12 (A/C.5/32/107)

63. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that the Economic and Social Council draft resolution in document E/L.1793 would result in the enlargement of the membership of the Advisory Committee for the Application of Science and Technology to Development from 24 to 28 members. The Secretary-General had indicated that that would result in an increased requirement of \$23,600 for travel and subsistence expenses. It was the Advisory Committee's practice always to apply the factor of non-attendance or partial attendance, and the Secretary-General had taken that into account in preparing his estimate under section 4. The budget performance report indicated that expenditure under section 4 for the biennium 1976-1977 had nevertheless been \$49,000 less than the amount appropriated. The Advisory Committee recommended therefore that the sum of \$23,600 should be absorbed. If there were any difficulties, the Secretary-General could inform the General Assembly in the context of his performance report.

64. Mr. ABDALLAH (Tunisia) wondered why the members of the Advisory Committee for the Application of Science and Technology to Development were entitled to first-class travel.

65. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that the members of the Advisory Committee for the Application of Science and Technology to Development consisted of eminent individuals, including ministers, appointed in their personal capacity and for their competence. The General Assembly had already agreed that persons appointed in a personal capacity should travel first class.

66. Mr. GEORGESCU (Romania) said that, if the persons concerned were ministers, they could absorb the difference between first-class and economy-class fares themselves.

67. The CHAIRMAN pointed out that the question under discussion was the expansion of membership, which involved no financial implications. If he heard no objection, he would take it that the Committee concurred with the recommendation of the Advisory Committee.

68. It was so decided.

Administrative and financial implications of the draft resolution submitted by the Second Committee in document A/C.2/32/L.46/Rev.2 concerning agenda items 67 and 71 (A/C.5/32/108)

69. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that in paragraph 1 of the revised draft resolution the General Assembly would request the Secretary-General to prepare a report with the assistance of high-level experts. The Secretary-General proposed to implement the mandate contained in the revised draft resolution in two phases. The first phase would consist of the use of a number of consultants for the preparation of the report and would require \$58,600 for experts and consultants. The second phase would require the services of a group of experts, and would involve conference servicing costs of \$119,800.

70. Since the Fifth Committee was concerned with the need for strict economy in respect of funds for consultants, the Secretary-General should be able to absorb the amount of \$58,600 which would be required for consultants and experts, as well as the amount indicated for conference servicing. Therefore, no additional appropriations would be required.

71. The CHAIRMAN said that, if he heard no objection, he would take it that the Committee concurred with the recommendation of the Advisory Committee.

72. It was so decided.

Administrative and financial implications of the decision to include Arabic as an official language of the Third General Conference of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (A/C.5/32/111)

73. Mr. ANVAR (Secretary of the Committee) drew attention to an error in paragraph 1. "Algeria" should be replaced by "Egypt".

74. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that the Secretary-General had indicated that, if the General Assembly decided to accept a Fifth Committee recommendation to include Arabic as an official language of the Third General Conference of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization, an additional appropriation of \$44,800 would be required to carry out the preparatory activities for the Conference. The Secretary-General had also indicated that the total additional cost of adding Arabic was estimated at \$208,500. The Advisory Committee had already appropriated \$246,000 for the preparatory work for 1979 on the assumption that the entire amount was not likely to be used. The Fifth Committee had agreed with that recommendation and the Advisory Committee therefore thought that the \$44,800 could be absorbed in the amount already approved for the preparatory work and that therefore no additional appropriations would be required. Other requirements would be considered at the thirty-third session of the General Assembly.

75. Mr. DEBATIN (Assistant Secretary-General, Controller) said that the inclusion of Arabic constituted a new feature of the preparatory work and that there was no

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(Mr. Debatin)

basis for assuming that the sum of \$44,800, which was 20 per cent of a total estimate which had been calculated without taking it into account, could be absorbed without any effect.

76. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that the Secretary-General would be able to indicate in his report in the following year whether there had been any difficulty in absorbing the amount of \$44,800.

77. The CHAIRMAN said that, if he heard no objection, he would take it that the Committee concurred with the recommendation of the Advisory Committee.

78. It was so decided.

Financial implications of the draft resolution submitted by the Second Committee in document A/C.2/32/L.95 concerning agenda item 58 (A/C.5/32/112)

79. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) recalled that he had noted earlier that document A/C.2/32/L.95 was not included in the consolidated statement in respect of conference servicing costs in 1978, but noted that representatives of the Secretary-General had now informed him that, if there had been a consolidated statement for Geneva, that document would have appeared under the Geneva section. Therefore, the conference servicing costs of \$405,800 should be absorbable within the requirements for Geneva under section 23B.

80. The CHAIRMAN said that, if he heard no objection, he would take it that the Committee concurred with the recommendation of the Advisory Committee.

81. It was so decided.

#### Other matters

82. Mr. PIRSON (Belgium), referring to a point he had raised at an earlier meeting, said that his delegation would like to know the possible impact on the budget of using current exchange rates between the dollar and the Swiss franc. Those were, of course, delicate matters, but the Committee could not just ignore a situation that was likely to develop over the next biennium. He requested the Controller to provide the Committee with a short, uncomplicated document showing what would be the real size of the budget for the next biennium. Finally, he wondered why the Committee could not take a decision on the item relating to first-class travel in the United Nations organizations.

83. Mr. NOOM (United Republic of Cameroon) said that it was high time to take a decision on that item.

84. The CHAIRMAN said that the draft resolutions on the subject had only been introduced the previous day; besides, the Committee had other, more important issues to deal with.

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85. Mr. DEBATIN (Assistant Secretary-General, Controller), replying to the representative of Belgium, said that he had not yet submitted a document because he was awaiting certain decisions which he needed as a basis for his calculations. However, according to the most recent calculations, real growth of the budget was about 2 per cent.

86. The calculations currently before the Committee had been based on certain exchange rates for all currencies. Once his Office received the final answers of the Committee to certain matters, it could make new calculations. According to current estimates, \$944,966,000 would be required to finance the budget for the next biennium. That represented an increase of 20.5 per cent over the budgetary appropriations of \$783,932,900 for the biennium 1976-1977. However, those estimates were based on exchange rates which had changed drastically to the disadvantage of the dollar. An additional \$35,767,600 would therefore be required simply to carry out earlier decisions taken by the Committee; that would raise the estimates for the forthcoming biennium to \$980,734,500. Those figures were not final but were merely intended to give the Committee an idea of the order of magnitude involved.

The meeting rose at 1.50 p.m.