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PROPOSED PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 1978-1979

Revised estimates under section 26 B (Alterations and improvement of premises at Geneva) resulting from the decisions of the Trade and Development Board at the first part of its ninth special session, Geneva

Report of the Secretary-General

1. By its resolution 31/159 of 21 December 1976, the General Assembly, inter alia, endorsed resolution 86 (IV) of 28 May 1976 of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development and decided to include Arabic among the official and working languages of the machinery of the Conference, particularly all sessions of the Conference, the Trade and Development Board and its main committees. This involved the need to adapt conference rooms at the United Nations Office at Geneva to provide them with facilities for six-language interpretation.
2. At present the required number of fully-equipped interpretation booths sufficient to accommodate Arabic exists only in the four large rooms in the Palais des Nations (XVII, XVIII, XIX and XX). This has meant that informal consultations and small UNCTAD meetings have had to be held in these larger conference rooms.
3. In decisions adopted on 10 September 1977, at its 482nd meeting, the Trade and Development Board noted with concern that the consultation and negotiation work of the permanent machinery of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) was being seriously hampered by the unavailability of small conference rooms equipped for interpretation in the six official languages of UNCTAD (A/32/15, vol. II, annex I). In this context, the Board invited the Secretary-General of the United Nations to propose to the General Assembly, at its thirty-second session, that it take steps to ensure that initially, as a matter of priority in 1978, at least one of the small conference rooms in the E building of the Palais des Nations, presently equipped for interpretation in five languages, be adapted for interpretation in six languages.

4. A technical survey of the seven smaller rooms in the new building (XXI to XXVII) has indicated that in the case of five of them (rooms XXII to XXV inclusive and room XXVII) the installation of an additional booth would entail complicated architectural and technical modifications and the cost would be prohibitive. In each of the two remaining rooms, XXI and XXVI, which are the largest of the seven, the required alterations can be made at reasonable cost. The estimated cost of these alterations is \$56,000 for room XXI and \$71,000 for room XXVI at the rate of exchange of 2.51 Swiss francs to the United States dollar.

5. In accordance with the decision of the Trade and Development Board, it is proposed that in 1978 room XXI, in view of its lesser cost, be adapted to accommodate interpretation in six languages at a total cost of \$56,000, estimated as follows:

	\$
Construction	14,000
Electrical installations	4,000
Air-conditioning equipment	28,000
Interpretation equipment	10,000
	<u>56,000</u>
Total	<u><u>56,000</u></u>