

UNITED NATIONS  
GENERAL  
ASSEMBLY



Distr.  
GENERAL

A/2950  
1 September 1955

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

Tenth session

REVIEW OF THE STAFF REGULATIONS AND OF THE PRINCIPLES AND  
STANDARDS PROGRESSIVELY APPLIED THERETO

Report of the Secretary-General

1. The General Assembly on 9 December 1953 adopted resolution 782 C (VIII) as follows:

"The General Assembly

"1. Decides to undertake, at its tenth session in 1955, on the basis of a report to be submitted by the Secretary-General and of the comments thereon of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, including their recommendations as to such further action as may be required of the General Assembly, a review both of the principles and standards progressively developed and applied by the Secretary-General in his implementation of the Staff Regulations and of the Staff Regulations themselves;

"2. Requests the Secretary-General to circulate to the Governments of Member States, not later than four weeks before the opening date of the tenth session of the General Assembly, the report and comments referred to in paragraph 1 above."

2. The adoption of the foregoing resolution was preceded by a suggestion of the Secretary-General, in his report on personnel policy submitted to the General Assembly at its eighth session<sup>1/</sup> that if the proposed new grounds for termination of permanent appointments were adopted it would be desirable to provide for a review by the General Assembly of the principles applied by him

<sup>1/</sup> See Official Records of the General Assembly, Eighth Session, Annexes, agenda item 51, document A/2533, paras. 39-40.

in his interpretation of these new grounds to the extent that they were not of a nature which would put them under the control of the Administrative Tribunal. In paragraph 40 of his report, the Secretary-General stated: "As principles are evolved by the Secretary-General through his administrative interpretations of the newly specified grounds for termination, these principles should be brought to the notice of the General Assembly".

3. The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions in its twenty-first report to the eighth session of the General Assembly<sup>2/</sup> endorsed this suggestion of the Secretary-General. The Advisory Committee stated that "while not entering into the details of administration and the review of individual cases, the General Assembly, in the discharge of its responsibilities towards the staff, will, of course, consider, as occasion arises, the standards and principles applied under the proposed revisions". The Advisory Committee also made its approval of the text of sub-paragraph (iii) of the proposed amendment to Staff Regulation 9.1 (a) subject to the safeguard that the provision would come under General Assembly review within a period of not more than two years.<sup>3/</sup> It must be noted, however, that the text to which this comment related underwent considerable change before its adoption by the General Assembly.

4. The report of the Fifth Committee<sup>4/</sup> explained that resolution 782 C (VIII), which was proposed by the representative of Canada, was based on paragraphs 39 and 40 of the Secretary-General's report and on paragraph 13 of the Advisory Committee's report.

5. Although the text of General Assembly resolution 782 C (VIII) is comprehensive enough to suggest a review of the Staff Regulations as a whole, it is clear from the circumstances in which the resolution was adopted that the General Assembly was primarily concerned with the principles and standards progressively developed and applied by the Secretary-General in the implementation of the new grounds for termination of permanent appointments provided in the amendments to the Staff

---

<sup>2/</sup> Ibid., document A/2555, para. 11.

<sup>3/</sup> Ibid., document A/2555, para. 13.

<sup>4/</sup> Ibid., document A/2615, para. 56.

Regulations adopted by the General Assembly at its eighth session. As pointed out by the Secretary-General in his report on personnel policy of the United Nations to the General Assembly at its ninth session,<sup>5/</sup> underlying the decision of the General Assembly was the assumption that by 1955 sufficient experience should have been gained to make possible a spelling out of such principles and standards in greater detail.<sup>6/</sup>

6. It is now apparent that the basic assumption underlying the General Assembly's decision has not yet been realized. The Special Advisory Board held one session in 1954 and another in 1955, but it has reported to the Secretary-General on a total of only six cases; of these only two have been finally disposed of.

7. It is obvious that it was the intention of the General Assembly to review the principles and standards progressively developed and their application by the Secretary-General. As indicated above, experience in this matter has been incomplete and there has therefore been no opportunity to develop meaningful principles and standards of wide applicability. A report at this time would therefore be of very limited value.

8. The Secretary-General had also contemplated that his report to the tenth session of the General Assembly would be able to deal with the standards of conduct to be expected of staff members.<sup>7/</sup> The report of the International Civil Service Advisory Board entitled "Standards of Conduct in the International Civil Service"<sup>8/</sup> was distributed during 1954. This report has been the subject of continued study by the Secretary-General. The formulation of standards, however, is closely inter-related with the development and application of principles referred to in the preceding paragraphs. It is, therefore, still too early to submit comments in this respect.

9. On the other hand, it would not appear useful to review the Staff Regulations as a whole while omitting these important aspects of the regulations which had been the primary concern of the General Assembly at the time that it decided on the review.

---

<sup>5/</sup> See Official Records of the General Assembly, Ninth Session, Annexes, agenda item 54, document A/2777, para. 3.

<sup>6/</sup> Ibid., Eighth Session, Annexes, agenda item 51, document A/2533, para. 40.

<sup>7/</sup> Ibid., Ninth Session, Annexes, agenda item 54, document A/2777, para. 5.

<sup>8/</sup> See document Coord/Civil Service/5.

10. For these reasons the Secretary-General suggests that the review of the principles progressively developed and applied by the Secretary-General in his implementation of the Staff Regulations and of the Staff Regulations themselves envisaged in General Assembly resolution 782C (VIII) should be postponed from the tenth to the twelfth session of the General Assembly.

11. The Secretary-General presented a report making this suggestion to the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions on 3 June 1955. The Advisory Committee refers to this report in paragraphs 12 and 13 of its first report to the tenth session of the General Assembly.<sup>9/</sup>

-----

---

<sup>9/</sup> See Official Records of the General Assembly, Tenth Session, Supplement No. 7, document A/2921.