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ADMINISTRATIVE AND BUDGETARY CO-ORDINATION OF THE
UNITED NATIONS WITH THE SPECIALIZED AGENCIES AND
THE INTERNATIONAL ATOMIC ENERGY AGENCY

Inter-organizational machinery for matters of
pay and personnel administration

Report of the Secretary-General

1. In his previous report (A/5833) to the General Assembly on the measures taken in implementation of resolution 1981 B (XVIII) of 17 December 1963, concerning the revised terms of reference of the International Civil Service Advisory Board, the Secretary-General dealt with the working arrangements of the Board and matters considered by it at its twelfth session. The present report covers the work of the Board at its thirteenth session.

2. The Board met in Geneva from 17 to 28 May 1965. Its agenda included items referred to it by the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination or taken up on its own initiative. Among the questions submitted by ACC were:

(a) Determination or revision of conditions of service of staff in the General Service category;

(b) Review of salary scales of the professional and higher categories of the international civil service.

One of the items put on the agenda by the Board itself related to divergencies in the application of the United Nations common system.

Matters relating to General Service staff

3. The question of the determination or revision of conditions of service of staff in the General Service category was placed before the Board in accordance with a suggestion made by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary

Questions in its report (A/5859) to the nineteenth session of the General Assembly. The Board considered this question on the basis of a report prepared by a special panel which was convened for the purpose prior to the Board's session.

4. The Board recommended that the principle laid down in General Assembly resolution 470 (V) of 15 December 1950, under which the conditions of service of staff in the General Service category are to be based on the best prevailing conditions of employment in the locality, should be understood as the conditions prevailing among the best employers. In assessing the local conditions, account should be taken not only of salaries but also of all other measurable factors. Dependency allowances should be determined separately on the basis of rates paid locally by the best employers, including tax benefits. In cities where the local language was not a working language of the Organization, the salary scales might be fixed at a level slightly higher than the best prevailing rates outside, provided the latter related to employees required to work only in the local language.

5. As regards the method of determining local conditions of employment, the Board endorsed the proposals worked out by ACC under which surveys used for the purpose must be limited to those types of posts where a reasonable degree of comparison could be found between organizations and outside employers. It also agreed on the circumstances in which the organizations might be called upon to undertake a survey of the local conditions and on the number of outside employees to be covered by the survey.

6. At the same time the Board recommended that, in the particular circumstances of Geneva, the employees to be covered by the next survey should be determined on the basis of a random selection by recognized statistical methods of a number of firms employing together one-fourth of the total of salaried employees in the locality. As in previous years, the survey of local conditions in Geneva should be prepared, organized and evaluated by joint bodies consisting of representatives of the organizations having established offices in the locality. The selection of employers and the collection of data should, however, be entrusted to an independent outside body which should also be consulted on the evaluation of the data and on the conclusions to be drawn from them.

8. In response to a request by the UNESCO General Conference, the Board agreed to assist in the forthcoming survey of local conditions in Paris.

9. At its October session in New York, ACC agreed to accept the Board's advice with respect to the determination or revision of conditions of service in the General Service category and the conduct of the forthcoming salary surveys.

Review of salaries of professional and higher level staff

10. Following consideration of the question of the salary scales for staff in the professional and higher categories, the Board recommended that, with effect from 1 January 1966, new base scales should be established by consolidating three classes of existing post adjustment and adding certain increases ranging from about 4 to 8.5 per cent. Concurrently, revised staff assessment rates should be applied to the new salaries of the professional and higher level staff. In the case of General Service staff, the revised staff assessment rates should be applied as and when the occasion arose to revise their net salaries. Consequential changes were also recommended in the post adjustment system.

11. The Board at the same time agreed to undertake a review of the principles which should underlie the establishment of salaries for the international civil service in the future. In particular, it envisaged the examination of such questions as the scope and nature of the professional category, the applicability of an expatriation allowance, the operation of the post adjustment system and the frequency of base salary reviews.

12. The recommendations of the Board were considered and approved by ACC at its July session in Geneva. The Board's report has been issued as an addendum to the report (A/5918) of the Secretary-General on the salary review.

Operation of the Common System

13. The question of divergencies in the application of the common system was taken up by the Board on its own initiative under the authority conferred upon it by the revised terms of reference. These terms of reference provide that the Board may review and make recommendations on such divergencies, the extent to which they should be eliminated, and the manner in which this might be accomplished.

14. In its first report on the subject, the Board expressed the view that the successful operation of the common system required a measure of flexibility.

Complete uniformity was not necessary nor, perhaps, desirable. It thus agreed with the observations to the same effect made by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions in its report (A/5859, para. 49) to the nineteenth session of the General Assembly. It noted, however, that certain important elements of the common system were still in process of co-ordination. It referred in particular to the grading standards, the rules governing compensation for injury, illness or death attributable to the performance of official duties and to travel standards.

15. The Board decided to review the matter further at its next session and requested the organizations to submit to it at a later date a report on the progress made in the direction of achieving greater uniformity of practice in the application of the common system.
