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at 10.30 a.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 70th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. PIRSON (Belgium)

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

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The meeting was called to order at 10.35 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 105: REPORT OF THE INTERNATIONAL CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION (A/34/30) (continued)

1. Mr. OKEYO (Kenya) said that the Chairman of the Advisory Committee had stated at a recent meeting that the Assembly might not be able to review the conditions of service and compensation of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of ICSC because the United States consumer price index (CPI), which was expected to have risen by 10 per cent by the end of November, might not be available before the end of the session; the CPI for any month normally became available one month later. As a result of a technicality, therefore, the living standards of the two full-time commissioners would be seriously eroded, since the annual rate of inflation in New York in 1979 was expected to be some 13 per cent. The Secretariat should be requested to prepare a short paper for the Advisory Committee so that the Assembly could review the compensation of the two commissioners before the end of the session. The paper should also include proposals for a system of automatic adjustment for rises in the cost of living of the compensation of the two commissioners, so as to give them the same treatment enjoyed by other Professional staff.

AGENDA ITEM 106: UNITED NATIONS PENSION SYSTEM (continued)

(a) REPORT OF THE UNITED NATIONS JOINT STAFF PENSION BOARD (A/34/9 and Add.1) (continued)

(b) REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (continued)

2. Mr. MAJOLI (Italy) said that some delegations seemed reluctant to support the proposal of the Joint Staff Pension Board for a change in the regulations of the Pension Fund to provide, where contributory service was 30 years or longer, that the reduction in the amount of early retirement benefits should be only 1 per cent per year instead of 2 per cent, and thus to facilitate early retirement (A/34/9, annex VI). Delegations which supported the Advisory Committee's recommendation that the proposed changes not be approved (A/34/721, para. 43) were probably doing so because of the actuarial implications. However, the Board's reasons for the changes (A/34/9, paras. 34-38) seemed to him convincing. He urged delegations to bear in mind that, although the question of burdening the Fund should certainly be considered, there were distinct advantages from the personnel policy point of view in not penalizing those who retired early and made room for younger entrants.

3. Mr. KEMAL (Pakistan) observed that the weighted average of post adjustments (WAPA) system of calculating pensionable remuneration had been replaced at the previous session of the General Assembly by a new system providing for the

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determination of a local currency pension which would protect the recipients against fluctuations of the local currency against the dollar. Under that system the basic statutory pension was calculated on the basis of final average pensionable remuneration multiplied by years of contributory service multiplied by 2 per cent per year. That dollar pension was thereafter adjusted by reference to movements of the United States consumer price index, with a mechanism for establishing a minimum guaranteed local currency pension, adjustable according to movements of the local consumer price index, so that existing pensions were fully protected against inflation and currency fluctuations.

4. It was claimed, however, that the existing arrangements did not go far enough to solve problems arising from currency fluctuations, and the question therefore arose whether the arrangements could be extended without destroying the universality of the pension system. The Committee had unfortunately not been provided with an analysis of the pension resulting under current arrangements, showing in particular how far the adjustments made by using an average exchange rate were still insufficient.

5. As matters stood, pensionable remuneration, defined as gross salary plus WAPA movements, compared favourably with similar remuneration in the highest-paying national civil service, that of the United States, and it would be reasonable to expect supporting evidence to be provided if any pension derived from such pensionable remuneration was claimed to be inadequate for persons retiring in any country. It was only natural that the real value or purchasing power of the universal pension should differ in different places, but differences in purchasing power were no reason for varying the amount of pension according to the place of retirement. Retiring staff members could exercise various options regarding their final place of retirement, so that if pension payments were to vary according to the place of retirement, the Fund might be adversely affected because some retirees might choose places where the post adjustment index was inordinately high; at the same time those who retired in low-cost countries would feel aggrieved, particularly if they knew that some of those who had retired in high-cost areas were not actually residing there all the year round.

6. The International Civil Service Commission had considered two conceptual approaches in its efforts to find an appropriate long-term pension system. The first would in effect fundamentally overhaul the system, replacing the universal framework by a selective system under which the pension would vary according to the post adjustment classification of the place of retirement. The second approach would maintain the universal character of the current system but would increase the local currency pension options, which had been in effect in one form or another since 1975, to provide for a basic minimum pension in local currency.

7. Under the first approach pension remuneration would vary, for contribution purposes, according to the staff member's duty station, and, for benefit purposes, according to the post adjustment applicable at the place of retirement. That seemed to be an equitable approach, in the sense that the staff member would contribute according to his level of earnings and would receive a pension, reflecting the cost

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of living at his place of retirement. However, a number of questions arose: whether, for example, all earnings should be considered as pensionable. In many Member States, not all elements of differential pay were taken into account in pension determination, and in the United Nations system many of those differential payments - for example, housing costs - were reflected in the post adjustment system. Again, pension calculations were based on salary and not on allowances at different duty stations. Secondly, it was difficult to verify whether a pensioner who had established residence in a particular place actually lived there and experienced its cost of living throughout the year. Thirdly, whether the Noblemaire principle lent itself to pension arrangements was debatable, in other words, whether it was really the case that the pension of a retiree in Switzerland had to be increased by some 60 per cent if he was to have a standard of living after retirement comparable with that of a retiree in New York.

8. It was relevant to ask whether the post adjustment system really brought about equivalent standards of living or whether it perpetuated differences in those standards by compensating for falls in the dollar from levels which many thought unrealistically high. The high value of the dollar in the 1950s, for example, had given officials in Geneva a higher standard of living than they would have had in New York, and it was legitimate to ask whether United Nations officials should be immune from making the hard adjustment to new economic realities which so many others had had to make. It was questionable, in any case, whether cost of living measurements used for serving staff should be applied to retired staff; for example, United Nations pensioners in Geneva above the D-1 level received considerably more than top-ranking civil servants of the Swiss Federal Government.

9. There was thus no evidence to support the claim that a pension based on the universal gross salary level plus WAPA movements was inadequate at places to which a post adjustment higher than that at New York, the base city, applied, particularly when it was remembered that post adjustment reflected the expenditure patterns and living costs incurred by expatriate officials rather than the living costs faced by individuals who retired to their home country. It seemed reasonable to require that any claim that a pension was inadequate in a particular place should be substantiated by reference to the levels of payments being received there by retirees of the better-paying national civil service. Even taking into account high living costs and the devalued dollar in some countries, the absolute pension payable to officials of certain grades seemed to be a good one by any standard. The International Civil Service Commission, in its continuing study of the question, should ignore considerations of the absolute levels of pension and should not pursue a system which would have that pension spiralling upwards by relating one United Nations pension to another without any regard to its relationship to the pensions paid by the better-paying national civil services.

10. The second conceptual approach considered by the International Civil Service Commission had been to maintain the universal aspects of the pension system while providing a floor to prevent the pension falling below a certain percentage of United Nations net remuneration at the place of retirement. The interim measures

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proposed by the Joint Staff Pension Board were based on such a provision. However, the floor provision was derived from the post adjustment, and his view was that the post adjustment should not be used as a factor in any interim proposal, inasmuch as it could prejudge the long-term solution.

11. For the reasons he had outlined, he intended to support the proposal of the Advisory Committee, which was based on current arrangements. It would provide a means of supplementing the current minimum pension guarantee in local currency which already applied. The minimum guarantee would be higher than the actual pension in places where the decline in the dollar was greater than the increased pension which would have resulted if the staff member had stayed longer in service, and it was based on the pensionable remuneration for each of the three years preceding 1 January 1978. The Advisory Committee's proposal would therefore ensure that the pensionable remuneration used in the minimum guarantee calculations could be augmented in accordance with a portion of the WAPA movement. Moreover, the Advisory Committee's interim measures did not prejudge the long-term solution.

12. He associated himself with those who had urged the International Civil Service Commission to come up with a long-term solution bearing in mind the actual levels of pension being paid in various countries rather than attempting to establish a simple link between pensions and post adjustment, which might undermine the financial position of the Pension Fund and increase the liabilities of Member States.

13. His delegation would have liked to see embodied in the Advisory Committee's interim proposals the important principle that in all measures designed to compensate pensioners for the effects of currency fluctuations and inflation, it had to be recognized that those effects could be absorbed less easily by those with a smaller pension than by those with a higher pension. The General Assembly had recognized that principle in resolution 31/196, section VII. He proposed that the Fifth Committee should in its resolution on the subject enjoin both the Commission and the Board, in their efforts for a long-term solution, to recognize that principle in any proposal for reforming pensionable remuneration; that would not only ensure true equity but facilitate the adoption of proposals which might otherwise prove too costly.

14. Mr. OKEYO (Kenya) said that a universal, rather than a selective approach should be taken to the problem of pensionable remuneration, which affected the lives of international civil servants in developed and developing countries alike. At the previous session his delegation had rejected any special arrangement for those retiring in the so-called high-cost areas, since the problems of inflation and exchange rate fluctuations were not confined to those areas; pensioners from developing countries should also receive fair treatment in any new system for calculating pensionable remuneration.

15. As a member of the Pension Board, his delegation had opposed proposals to include post adjustment in the calculation of pensionable remuneration. Post adjustment was similar to the allowance paid to staff posted abroad by national

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foreign services, and in no country were allowances of that kind included in pensionable remuneration.

16. His delegation would not oppose any measure to meet a genuine emergency, but it would not countenance measures which would benefit people who were in no real need for the sake of principles which were far from universally accepted and which did not stand up to the test of logic. When the Assembly had approved an interim measure in 1976 to compensate pensioners for losses resulting from currency devaluations, a clear distinction had been made between those who had enough even after suffering a loss and those who did not. Unfortunately, that distinction had been overlooked in the interim proposals of the Pension Board and ICSC. Moreover, there was no assurance that ICSC would produce proposals at the following session that were sounder than the four alternatives outlined in its report, none of which was acceptable to his delegation. Unless ICSC provided a convincing demonstration of the existence of the anomalies to be corrected, the Assembly might well conclude that nothing needed to be done. What was even more likely was that no proposal would command sufficiently broad support either in ICSC or in the Pension Board, with the result that the Assembly would be asked once again to extend the interim measures year after year until they became a permanent feature of the system. The interim measures proposed by the Pension Board and ICSC were costly in the short term and would unacceptably increase the long-term liabilities of the Fund. Accordingly, his delegation supported the measures proposed by the Advisory Committee, which entailed no new conceptual changes in the existing system, were cheaper, and did not introduce post adjustment as a factor in the calculation of pensionable remuneration. He urged the Committee to base its decision on the draft resolution submitted in annex II of the Advisory Committee's report (A/34/721) and to ask ICSC and the Pension Board to continue their efforts to work out a viable and universally applicable system of pensionable remuneration.

17. Mrs. DORSET (Trinidad and Tobago) observed that the documents on the pension item did not state the issues in clear terms, and that inevitably inhibited discussion.

18. ICSC was in effect, proposing selective variable pensionable remuneration to replace the existing system of universal non-discriminatory pensionable remuneration, the basic aim being to raise the level of benefits received by retirees in high-cost countries - largely developed countries - while trimming the benefits of retirees in low-cost countries - largely developing countries. It was argued that such an adjustment was equitable and necessary to ensure a comparable level of pension in any country in which a pensioner chose to retire. However, those who so argued apparently had not made comparisons with the pensions of national civil servants in, for example, Switzerland, which were well below the pensions currently paid to international civil servants. In any event not all pensioners were free to retire in any country they chose: immigration restrictions and traditional social disadvantages both prohibited and discouraged that possibility in a great many cases. Consequently, the benefits of the proposed adjustment were likely to accrue to only a few, and it was questionable whether a disproportionate amount of the Fund's assets should be used for the advantage of

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a few. As matters stood, in order to limit the erosion of pensionable income caused by foreign exchange losses, when converting pensions calculated in United States dollars into Swiss francs, staff retiring in Geneva already enjoyed the advantage of an exchange rate that was approximately 40 per cent above the commercial rate.

19. In order to establish the case for a differentiated pensionable remuneration it was argued that the existing system resulted in severe undercompensation in some places and overcompensation in others. Alternatives III and IV presented by ICSC (A/34/30, para. 77), which would provide a uniform percentage of the amount required to maintain the pensioner's standard of living whatever the local cost of living and the currency exchange rate, seemed to assume that cost-of-living increases in developing countries in real terms were less accelerated than in developed countries. That was not necessarily so, and it was not unlikely that the cost of living in many developing countries might outstrip that in developed countries. The situation therefore seemed to require a review of the entire system, rather than a piecemeal adjustment for the benefit of a few who could not really be regarded as hardship cases.

20. Developing countries were caught up in a chaotic world monetary situation that was not of their making. If, as a result of that situation, a pensioner retiring in a developing country could buy more with his United States dollar for the time being, there was no reason why he or she should be penalized. A major disadvantage of alternatives III and IV was that a staff member working in a high-cost country would pay large contributions based on a high post adjustment classification but, should he or she choose to retire to a low-cost country, probably his or her own, would receive a pension based on a lower pensionable remuneration as a result of a lower post adjustment classification in the country of retirement. As the table in annex V of the ICSC report showed, a $2,500 pension under the existing system would increase to approximately $4,000 in Geneva but would be reduced to approximately $1,900 in Colombo. It should come as no surprise, therefore, that the idea of redistributing the resources of the Fund should carry a somewhat emotive and perjorative connotation. ICSC had stated that it was incompatible with the principle of mutuality to maintain that no participant should receive any more than he had put into the Fund. Mutuality might mean a number of things. Mutuality might be said to exist in a relationship between a horse and a rider, but the rider was unlikely to want to be the horse. No final solution would be acceptable which, in the name of mutuality, was achieved at the expense of the majority of participants from developing countries.

21. Consideration should be given to the fact that pensions were highly taxed in some countries, while other countries were tax havens. It was most undesirable that retirement in any country should be made more attractive than in others; that could give rise to many unwelcome side-effects, including manipulation. It had been suggested that an optional system might be devised whereby a staff member might choose to receive a higher pension by contributing at a higher rate. Caution should be exercised in that respect, because a higher rate of contribution by the staff member required a higher contribution by Member States, and there was

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no justification for that burden to be borne collectively by Member States. Her delegation agreed that if the United Nations pension benefit was seen to fall below the pension payable to a national civil servant with a comparable record of service, consideration might be given to a supplementary payment for having served in an international organization: United Nations pensioners should not be worse off than their counterparts for having served abroad. Consideration might also be given to making expanded use of the Emergency Fund in cases of genuine hardship.

22. With regard to early retirement, in some countries there was an absolute right to retirement at age 55 without penalty. If it was felt, in amending the regulations on early retirement that a penalty must continue to be enforced, then it should be made less onerous. Accordingly, her delegation agreed with the Pension Board's recommendation that a reduction of only 1 per cent per year should be applied to early retirement benefits. The advantages of early retirement to the Organization and to the individual were obvious.

23. Her delegation agreed with the Advisory Committee that it would be difficult to go back on any interim improvements in benefits once they had been approved. Bearing in mind that resolution 33/120 had reaffirmed that no change in the pension adjustment system should entail an increase in the present or future liabilities of Member States, her delegation would be reluctant to support any interim measures taken outside the context of an over-all solution.

24. With reference to the Secretary-General's report on investments of the Pension Fund (A/C.5/34/30), her delegation asked what percentage of assets were placed in short-term investments and where. In paragraph 4, which gave a breakdown in percentage terms of investments by category, 6 per cent remained unspecified, and she asked how that segment was distributed. It was stated in paragraph 5 that in 1979 42 per cent or $691 million of investments were in the United States, as compared with 87 per cent in 1970, but the level of investments in dollars for 1970 was not reported. That information would have helped to give the Committee a total picture of the shift in the Fund's investments. It was also stated that the Fund currently had investments in 34 countries other than the United States, 12 of which were developing. While the developing countries had been listed, the remaining 22 had not. That information should be provided for the sake of completeness and in order to facilitate comparisons.

25. Paragraph 13 of the Secretary-General's report stated clearly that the two institutional investment firms retained by the Fund had well-established facilities for monitoring the major investment markets of the world, and yet it was also stated that those firms were not equipped to provide the in-depth investment research required by the Fund to diversify its investments, especially by investing in developing countries. Her delegation found it difficult to accept that assertion because there were few developing countries in the world that were not linked with the international banking and financial community in one way or another. Commercial banks were a part of an international network of financing and communication which was certainly accessible to the investment advisers. She asked whether the "major investment markets" and the "major economic regions" referred

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to in paragraph 13 were mutually exclusive or whether they overlapped. Those who knew the subject assumed that the "developing areas" mentioned in the last sentence of the paragraph referred to countries, but a layman might assume that it was a reference to new areas for investment. Since large sums of money were being discussed in the report it was necessary that all the facts be stated in clear terms.

26. The complicated nature of the pension system had created considerable confusion and might lead to a situation in which the Assembly would not be able to take an intelligent decision on the matter, a situation that was clearly undesirable. She urged that an effort be made to reverse that situation by producing reports for the following session which were clear and to the point.

27. Mr. DEBATIN (Under-Secretary-General for Administration, Finance and Management), replying to the questions asked by the representative of Trinidad and Tobago, reiterated his statement at the 64th meeting that percentages were not always the best indicator, especially with regard to short-term investments. If some relevant figures had been omitted from the Secretary-General's report (A/C.5/34/30), that was merely for the sake of concision, not because there was anything to hide. In 1970 $412 million had been invested in the United States. The 22 developed countries in which the Fund had invested were those normally involved in the international and European stock markets.

28. On the matter of investment advisers, while it was true that the banks which gave advice had branches all over the world, their purpose was to conduct normal banking transactions. The Fund required access to highly-qualified experts in long-term investment who could provide in-depth analysis and advice on the basis of market development, government economic policies, expansion prospects and so forth. Such expertise was rare, and extremely expensive; it could not be obtained in the manner suggested by the representative of Trinidad and Tobago.

29. On the question of the advisers' fees, he reiterated that they were already as low as possible. He hoped that delegations would trust the Secretary-General in the matter of investments and bear in mind the dimensions of the problem and the demands.

30. Mr. AKWEI (Acting Chairman, International Civil Service Commission) said that the debate on the subject of pensionable remuneration had been illuminating and, on the whole, very constructive. The tentative comments he was about to make would be without prejudice to any written statement that he might wish to submit later.

31. He stressed that the Commission had not made any proposals on the question of pensionable remuneration: it had merely reported on progress in its consideration of what was a highly complex, sensitive and emotional issue. He had taken note of the many suggestions and recommendations made in the course of the debate, and members could rest assured that he would faithfully convey them to the Commission.

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32. He had detected a very strong current of opinion that the Commission should proceed in a non-doctrinaire manner and that it might usefully consider imposing a ceiling on pensions, discussing the tax element and correcting anomalies in the post adjustment system before incorporating it in any long-term solution to the problem of pensionable remuneration. There had also been suggestions for a two-tier system and indications that it might be better to adjust, rather than fundamentally reform, the system. Serious doubts had been expressed about the principle of income replacement and its use in determining pensionable remuneration, and there had also been suggestions to take into account national pension levels and either to abandon proportionality or to accommodate it to a universally applicable principle of equity.

33. He had understood the comments made by the representative of Australia about the inadequacy of the Commission's report and had taken them in the spirit in which they had been intended. Others had apparently found the Commission's report informative, useful and correct in its analyses. It should be borne in mind that the Commission had wrestled with the problem over a long period and had finally managed to reduce the 15 or so different proposals it had received to four. All the facts, figures and graphs on which it had based its conclusions were provided in the annexes to the report (A/34/30).

34. Some had expressed the view that the post adjustment system should play no role in the calculation of pensionable remuneration. However, it was clear from the Commission's deliberations that it had to be taken into account in some form or another. Under the existing system it took the form of WAPA. The facts and figures submitted by the Commission showed conclusively that there was something wrong with WAPA, but not with the post adjustment system as such. The Pension Board had reached the same conclusion. Anomalies occurred because of the principle of averaging; the inequities became apparent when comparing the ratio of pension to net remuneration at various duty stations. In any event, the Commission could not abandon the post adjustment system which the General Assembly had approved in the form of WAPA. It was correct, as stated in paragraph 17 of the Advisory Committee's report (A/34/721) and reiterated by the representative of the United Kingdom, that in 1958 and 1959 the view had been that pensionable remuneration should not include post adjustment. However, the situation had changed radically, as reported in paragraph 21 of that report, and to exclude post adjustment from the calculation of pensionable remuneration would merely exacerbate existing anomalies. It was for that reason that the Commission favoured alternatives III and IV, with an across-the-board system of post adjustment allowances, as a way of ensuring equity.

35. Some delegations had expressed a preference for not adhering too strictly to the Noblemaire concept of total compensation. The Commission had, however, been directed to proceed on the basis that pension was part of total compensation, and it was a fact that pension benefits weighed heavily in the choice of employment. The Commission was also under instructions to relate compensation to the comparator civil service; it was the comparison of the respective ratios of pension to total compensation in the United Nations system and the United States

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civil service that led to the discrepancies between the various duty stations being identified.

36. As to the choice of a solution, while the majority of members of the Commission had expressed a preference for alternatives III and IV, others were keeping an open mind, and the views of the Fifth Committee would undoubtedly play a role in any final decision.

37. With regard to the comments made by the representative of Pakistan, he believed that a perusal of tables G and H in annex IV of the Commission's report (A/34/30) would show that the system was helping to correct some of the anomalies - for instance, were it not for the "floor" Switzerland would be much more adversely affected - but it was not equitable.

38. Many delegations had called for the reform of the post adjustment system to precede any long-term solution to the problem of pensionable remuneration. If the Commission was to be asked to report its recommendations on the post adjustment system at the thirty-fifth session, the inference would be that it could not complete its proposals for a long-term reform of pensionable remuneration until a decision had been taken on that matter. The Commission was awaiting information on the actuarial implications of alternatives III and IV based on the existing post adjustment allowance. He hoped that in the course of their consultations members of the Fifth Committee would try to reconcile what appeared to be contradictory instructions to the Commission.

39. Mr. GARRIDO (Chairman, United Nations Joint Staff Pension Board) said that the issues on which decisions were required were the interim measures, the long-term solution for removing the anomalies created by inflation and currency fluctuations through the restructuring of pensionable remuneration, and the anomalies in the Pension Fund Regulations on early and deferred retirement benefits.

40. The interim measures proposed by the Board had been criticized by some speakers and by the Advisory Committee on the grounds that they would prejudge the outcome of future studies on a long-term solution and would leave a residue of claims to acquired rights and to the fulfilment of rising expectations, so that the eventual cost might be greater than what would be acceptable as expenditure for one year only. It was not the Board's intention to smuggle in any principle for the future, and it did not envisage rights created under those measures for 1980 being carried over to future years. The cost cited was the estimate made by the Consulting Actuary for that year only. Similarly, the proposal that WAPA should be continued into 1980 had not been based on a desire to ensure that the pensions of those retiring from the Professional staff would in no circumstances be reduced. In any case, since pensions were established on a three-year average, the effect of a freeze in 1980 would affect only those leaving within the forthcoming three years and obviously could be rectified, if necessary, by the long term measures to be applied from 1980 onwards. The real reasons for the Board's view were clearly spelled out in its report (A/34/9). It was difficult

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to reconcile the views of those who rejected all improvements in the benefit system yet had no difficulty in supporting the freezing of WAPA in 1980, which so adversely affected the actuarial balance of the Fund. The Advisory Committee had agreed with the Board that WAPA should not be frozen; logic and equity demanded that it should remain unchanged as long as there was no clear intent with regard to the future of pensionable remuneration. In that instance, half-measures were far worse than no measures at all. For the sake of the Fund's financial stability, he hoped that there would be agreement on that, if on nothing else.

41. The alternative measures proposed by the Advisory Committee had essentially the same objectives as the Board proposal and should be given serious consideration if the latter proved unacceptable. Several delegations had remarked on the absence of a suggestion to apply interim measures to those who retired before 1980. The Board had made it clear in its report that it was painfully aware of that fact but, like ICSC and the Advisory Committee, had found it technically impossible to devise a means by which the required arrangement could be made for the time being. However, it was committed to the premise that under the long-term solution application to retired staff should be a cardinal feature. To the extent necessary, special arrangements should also be included to ensure the same compensation to staff retiring before 1980 as to those who retired in that year. However, it would take time and careful calculations to apply the new long-term measures. To give nothing to those who retired in 1980 for reasons of equity vis-à-vis those who retired before that date was the kind of equality of treatment symbolized by the graveyard and hardly appropriate in dealing with the living.

42. He hoped that the Committee would support the Board's proposals to remove inconsistencies and illogicalities in the area of early and deferred retirement benefits and would endorse the joint view of the Advisory Committee and of the Board on the other changes in the Regulations.

43. The only hope for an acceptable definition of pensionable remuneration in the continued search for a long-term solution lay in close co-operation between the Board and the International Civil Service Commission. The Board was ready to co-operate, but the degree to which it could usefully contribute its expertise and experience depended in no small measure on the willingness of others to utilize it.

44. With regard to the comments on documentation, he reminded the Committee that the Board was a tripartite body and its report reflected the views of all the legislative bodies, administrations and staff concerned. Considerable debate, study, consultations, expert advice and data were required and, in that connexion, it relied on the Consulting Actuary, the Committee of Actuaries, its Standing Committee and the local staff pension committees of all its member organizations. The resulting documentation was voluminous and considerable effort was expended on distilling its essence for the Fifth Committee in order to expedite its work. The Advisory Committee was provided with any additional information it might require, and there was nothing to prevent the Fifth Committee from obtaining additional information, provided it specified what was required. To cast doubt on material considered and found convincing by its elected representatives was hardly an expression of confidence.

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45. He strongly urged the Committee to adopt the draft resolution contained in the Board's report (A/34/9). If it was felt that some of the provisions required amendment, that could be done to the extent that the Advisory Committee had recommended in the resolution contained in document A/34/721. If the Committee took some other course, it might cast doubt on the role of its representatives on the Board and of the Advisory Committee in pension matters.

The meeting rose at 1.05 p.m.