

Sixth report

Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters - United Nations
Institute for Disarmament Research: request for a
subvention to the Institute for 1991

[Original: English]

[7 November 1990]

1. The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, in accordance with article VIII of the statute of the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR), 1/ has considered the recommendation of the Board of Trustees of UNIDIR for a subvention towards meeting the costs of the Director and the staff of the Institute. The recommendation is contained in a note by the Secretary-General (A/C.5/45/6).
2. As stated in paragraph 2 of the note, the General Assembly, at its forty-fourth session, approved an appropriation of \$440,000 under section 2B (Disarmament affairs activities) of the programme budget for the biennium 1990-1991 as a subvention to UNIDIR from the regular budget for the biennium 1990-1991. The Committee further notes that an amount of \$220,000 has been earmarked for 1990, and \$220,000 for 1991. In accordance with the Committee's observations that a formal request for a subvention for 1991 would have to be made to the Assembly, notwithstanding the inclusion of that amount in the programme budget for the biennium 1990-1991, the Board of Trustees of the Institute has recommended a subvention from the regular budget amounting to \$220,000 for 1991.
3. As indicated in paragraph 5 of the Secretary-General's note, "in the report of the Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters in its capacity as Board of Trustees of UNIDIR (A/45/392, annex II), the Board 'noted with appreciation the vigorous efforts of the Director to encourage further voluntary contributions' on the one hand, but 'emphasized the importance of continuing in the future the annual subvention from the regular budget of the United Nations and the need to maintain the other support arrangements at their current level' on the other hand". The Secretary-General concurred with the observations made by the Board, on the understanding that "every effort will continue to be made by UNIDIR to encourage voluntary contributions towards defraying administrative costs of the Institute and eventually alleviating the need for a subvention from the United Nations".
4. The Committee shares the concern of both the Director and the Board of Trustees of the Institute about the serious financial situation of UNIDIR, and its requiring a continued subvention from the regular budget. The Committee stresses the need for eventual self-sufficiency of the Institute.
5. The Committee notes from paragraph 4 of the note by the Secretary-General that UNIDIR continues to apply the rate of 5 per cent for administrative and programme support costs to reimburse the United Nations for the financial and personnel services provided by the United Nations Office at Geneva to the

Institute. Additional information supplied to the Advisory Committee on programme support costs of the Institute indicates that since 1984 the rate of reimbursement has been reduced from 13 per cent to 5 per cent and that the cost of miscellaneous services to UNIDIR, such as rent, supplies and communications have been absorbed by the United Nations in view of the financial situation of the Institute; according to information supplied to the Advisory Committee, the cost of such miscellaneous services will amount to \$148,800 in 1990.

6. The Committee notes that most contributions to UNIDIR continue to be tied to specific projects, despite the efforts by the Director to encourage supplementary contributions to defray the administrative costs of the Institute. Under the circumstances, the Committee recommends that each time an earmarked contribution is received, a fair share of administrative costs should be charged by the Institute to the earmarked funds concerned, thereby eventually enabling the Institute to alleviate the need for a subvention from the regular budget.

7. The Committee believes that UNIDIR performs certain functions that closely relate to the work of other units in the Secretariat, United Nations subsidiary organs, or research institutions. In order to maximize the resources of the Institute, the Committee recommends that UNIDIR carefully review its activities with a view to avoiding possible duplication.

8. Bearing in mind what has been stated in the paragraphs above, the Committee recommends approval of the recommendation of the UNIDIR Board of Trustees for a subvention amounting to \$220,000 in 1991; in view of the fact that provision has already been made under section 2B of the programme budget for the biennium 1990-1991, no additional appropriation would be required.

Notes

- 1/ General Assembly resolution 39/148 H, annex.